

The Genoveva and Nibelungen Dramas of  
Ernst Raupach and Friedrich Hebbel -  
a comparative study, with special reference  
to the treatment of material and to the  
reception of these dramas by the  
contemporary public.  
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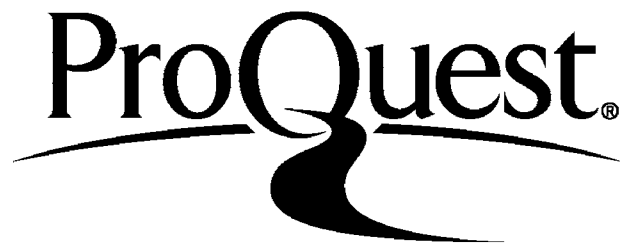
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## PREFACE.

I have set out in this thesis to compare the works which each of the German dramatists, Ernst Raupach and Friedrich Hebbel, wrote on the Genoveva and Nibelungen legends. These legends enjoyed great popularity in the nineteenth century, and were made the subjects of tragedies by many dramatists, both major and minor. Of them all, the adaptations of Hebbel were possibly the most successful, and of greater artistic worth than the majority, while Raupach provides a good example of a dramatist much praised in his time, who has since sunk into oblivion.

The first part of the thesis contains an appreciation of the four dramas in question, and a discussion of the merits or demerits of plot, construction, characterisation and theme. I have then gone on to examine the relationship of each drama to its source, touching also on other attempts by well-known poets to treat the same material. I have also given an account of the first performance of the dramas in Berlin and Vienna (these being the most important German-speaking cities and those in which Raupach had most success), and, in Hebbel's case, of the first performances in Weimar, since these are of some importance in the history of Hebbel's works on the stage. My aim in these chapters, as in the following chapter on the criticism in the contemporary press, was to show what were the opinions of the time of the dramatists and dramas concerned.

The final chapter deals with the relationship of Hebbel's dramas to Raupach's and draws a comparison between them. The Appendix shows how the four tragedies fit into the rest of the poets' work and indicates the relative success which all their works had on their first performance.

Genoveva has also been attempted,<sup>(1)</sup> but has failed to convince most scholars. The fairy-tale element is lacking, its place being taken by the influence of other saintly and miraculous legends.

All these differences in time, in setting, and in the components, go to make up a complete contrast in the atmosphere of the two legends. On the one hand we have a medieval legend of a saint, full of gentle piety and faith, the story of a wronged woman who is glorified by her sufferings. On the other hand we have a heroic legend, the origins of which reach back into the dark ages, full of passion, bloodshed and tragedy, the story of a wronged woman who determines on revenge, and who, in doing so, destroys herself and everyone around her. A greater contrast could scarcely be imagined, and yet both have attracted many modern poets, who have tried to recreate them in dramatic form. The way in which two particular dramatists, Hebbel and Raupach, approached the problems inherent in a dramatisation of the two legends, is instructive as regards their own method of working and their views on the relationship between the drama and its material.

(1) cf. J.Zacher Historie von der Pfalzgräfin Genovefa, Königsberg 1860.

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Chapter 1.Raupach's Genoveva. (1)

Raupach called this drama a tragedy, but it would have been more accurate to call it a 'Schauspiel', for the ending is happy. The plot is based on the old legend of the saintly countess who was unjustly accused of unfaithfulness to her husband, and whose innocence was only recognised after she had lived for seven years hidden in the forest. In adapting the material for a drama, however, Raupach made certain changes in the story.

The play shows a strange mixture of skilful construction and inconsistencies. The exposition is well managed. The first four scenes are devoted to the departure of Count Siegfried for the Crusades, leaving his wife Genoveva in the care of his servant Golo. The scene of parting between Golo and his sister Emma tells us all we need to know of the Crusade, and Emma gives a description of Genoveva before she appears. Golo's sudden and mysterious outbursts, his desire to leave the castle at once, hint at a secret which is revealed for the audience in the next scene by his protestations of devotion to Genoveva. The next two scenes show us the parting, while Sc.5 introduces the sub-plot, which provides a parallel to the main action. As Golo loves his mistress Genoveva, so Drago, Golo's Saracen slave, loves Emma, his master's sister. Scenes 5 and 6 are built on a similar plan. Each scene opens with a dialogue between the lover and the unconscious object of his affections, and closes with a monologue in which the lover determines to win the lady.

Thus at the end of the first act we have been introduced to all the main characters except one (Richsa the nurse) and the action is about to move forward.

In Act 2 it develops swiftly and logically. We are shown Genoveva's callousness and self-centredness in a series of episodes. Richsa, the nurse of Genoveva's son, prophesies evil after failing to persuade the Countess to abandon her hunting in order to look after her sick child. We are shown too

(1) Dramatische Werke ernster Gattung, Hamburg 1835. Vol.III pp.1-148.

how Genovevas' carelessness arouses Golo's passion until he can control himself no longer. The crisis comes during the hunt with his confession of love and its rejection, and the act ends with a scene in which Golo, prompted by Drago, plans to accuse Genoveva falsely to her husband.

The swiftness of the action means that the climax of the drama is reached very early, and this leaves Raupach with the problem of filling out three other acts without allowing the interest to slacken.

Act 3 contains the preparations for Genoveva's murder and her escape from death, but Raupach's treatment of the events is not entirely convincing and there are several inconsistencies. Siegfried, without further inquiry, orders the death of Genoveva and her child. The attempted murder is carried out secretly at night, so that none of the servants knows what has happened. Apart from the fact that it is strange that Siegfried should believe without question in his wife's guilt, why did he order her execution to be carried out so secretly, since it was the just punishment of a criminal? Why did not Genoveva, on returning from the hunt, immediately accuse Golo and have him arrested, as she said she intended to do when Siegfried returned? Why did she live more quietly after the events of Act 2 (as Dietrich reports in Act 4, Sc.1) when she had no need to? Why did not Emma and Richsa arouse the rest of the inhabitants of the castle when they discovered that Genoveva had disappeared? Why, since they were so suspicious, did they not afterwards tell the servants what they knew, for it appears from Act 4, Sc.1, that the servants know almost nothing? Why did the servants not ask questions when Genoveva disappeared, nor seem to worry about it? Would it be possible to keep all these events secret in so small a community?

No effort is made to explain these improbabilities, which, however, would probably be less noticeable on the stage than in the printed version, for the action moves quickly and the individual scenes are too exciting for an audience to ponder on every small detail. The act moves from Golo's horror at the deed before him through the interview with the chosen murderers and the frightened attempt at intervention of Emma and Richsa, to the climax, in which Genoveva pleads for her life in the forest. The dramatic effect is much heightened by the setting of darkness, thunder and lightning.

It is a commonplace that the fourth act of a drama is the most difficult for a dramatist to write without allowing the interest to slacken. Raupach must have found it particularly difficult in this case, for he had to allow a certain time to pass before Genoveva was found, and there was nothing in the legend to fill the gap except the story of Genoveva's life in the forest, and the incident of Siegfried's suspicions. It may have been this difficulty which caused Raupach to add a sub-plot. The story of Drago's desire for Emma and of his intrigues comes to its crisis at the end of Act 4, when Drago, who has incited Golo to crime in the hope of getting him into his power, demands Emma's hand and is killed by Golo. Thus the sub-plot provides some action and excitement to fill in the time between Genoveva's disappearance and her return. But the sub-plot serves more purposes than one. Drago's villainy is used to excuse Golo. Drago deliberately plans to lead Golo into crime. It is he who first suggests the false accusation, and by adding some lies of his own accord to Siegfried, and by failing to transmit to the murderers Golo's orders to save the child, he does his best to strengthen Golo's guilt. In comparison with Drago's black villainy, Golo seems less culpable, and his character appears in a more sympathetic light than if he had been alone in his evil doing.

On the other hand the sub-plot offers a parallel to the main action. In both cases a man seeks the love of a woman socially above him and denied to him by social conventions - in Golo's case by marriage, in Drago's case by the gulf between a free woman and a slave. Both use criminal means to gain their ends.

The beginning of Act 5 reveals Golo's desperate state of mind after the murder. The next scenes show something of Genoveva's life in the forest, and the play ends with the accidental finding of Genoveva amid general forgiveness and reconciliation. The conclusion is full of piety and sentimentality, and the moral is drawn that only through suffering are the wicked and thoughtless made good.

The characters are firmly drawn, and, except in the case of Genoveva's sudden change from worldliness to piety, consistent. But there is no depth

or subtlety of characterisation. Genoveva is the only character who undergoes any great development in the drama. Raupach has completely disregarded the saint of the Volksbuch. Golo at the end of the play hails her as 'Heilige', because she has been almost miraculously preserved, but even then, in spite of her piousness, she gives no impression of saintliness.

Until the end of Act 3 she is represented as a proud and selfish woman. Her character is summed up by Emma when she says

'Sie ist die Herrin, das vergisst sie nie'. (Act 1. Sc.1.)

In a series of small incidents her pride and self-centredness are clearly shown. She refuses to listen to Emma and Richsa when they disagree with her; she chooses Golo as a protector instead of the older man Siegfried had chosen, because she wishes to enjoy herself during her husband's absence. She spends her time in hunting and giving feasts, neglecting her son and ignoring the complaints of her tenants who come to her for justice. Her pride is shown in its worst aspects in her treatment of Golo. She encourages his devotion while it serves her love of pleasure, but treats him as a slave when he dares to confess his love.

'Hochmüth'ger Wurm! weil Dir die Sonn' erlaubt  
In ihrem Glanz zu kriechen, wähest Du  
Des Lichtes Kön'gin sey für Dich geschaffen,  
Du seyst ihr Liebling? Weil ich Dich genugsam  
Verachtet, Dich zum Sklaven meiner Launen  
Vor andern zu erwählen, sinnest Du  
Der Frevel ekelhaftesten mir an?'

But by Act 5 Genoveva's character has completely changed. The woman who would not postpone her hunting in order to hear a mass of thanksgiving, spends much time in prayer and thanks God for every small mercy. The woman who compared herself to the sun, and was proud of her dignity as 'Des Fürsten fürstliche Gemahlin' now declares that she realises all men are equally lowly.

'Ein Herr und König ist im Himmel droben.  
Hier aber alles gleich geringer Staub.'

The woman who was so proud of her own virtue admits her guilt.

She attributes this complete change of outlook to the conditions of her life in the forest -



'Den Tand der Welt, der Herrn und Knechte scheidet  
 In dieser Wildniss hab' ich ihn verlernt.  
 Es fragt der Stein nicht: wessen ist der Fuss  
 Den meine Schärfe ritzt? noch fragt der Sturm:  
 Wess ist das Haar, in dem ich sausend wühle?'

Raupach has therefore seen the story of Genoveva in terms of a development from worldliness to sainthood. The process of this development, however, is not shown. Genoveva does not appear in Act 4, and in Act 5 her change of heart is complete. The only hint of her future development is that at the end of Act 3 she takes refuge in prayer for the first time.

Thus the change in Genoveva's character is not sufficiently motivated nor is its development presented clearly enough to avoid an impression of inconsistency. Moreover, her conversion is ostentatious and its expression is exaggerated, so that even after her change of heart Genoveva makes no very sympathetic impression.

Just as Raupach tried to make the saint of the Volksbuch more human by giving her certain faults, so he tried to make the villain of the Volksbuch more human by showing how he was unwillingly forced into crime by circumstances and bad advice. Drago's share in Golo's guilt has already been indicated, and there are other extenuating circumstances. Genoveva's friendliness arouses hopes in Golo and she persuades him that his passion is returned, so that her insulting rejection of him wounds him the more deeply. On the other hand, his attitude to other people throughout the play does not show him in a very good light. His moral judgments are ambiguous. He has no qualms of conscience about his love for Genoveva, and his monologue in Act 1, Sc.6, shows nothing but unconcealed joy in the love he believes Genoveva to feel for him. But after Genoveva's rejection of him he allows himself to be persuaded that she is at fault and deserves to die for her treatment of him. Again he is righteously indignant at the idea that his sister might curse him

'Eine Schwester fluchen?  
 Es wäre ruchlos und ich trüg es nicht,'

but a little while later he himself contemplates killing his sister without any pangs of conscience. He hates Genoveva because she has treated him as a servant, and his monologues after Act 2 constantly return to this point, but

when Drago demands his sister's hand he considers himself justified in treating him as a slave and killing him for his temerity.

After the supposed murder he is terrified lest his crime should be found out, and is ready to commit more crimes to prevent this - he contemplates, for instance, killing Richsa and Emma - but when Genoveva is found, he rejoices to find himself innocent of her death and voluntarily confesses his guilt. He is forgiven and told to make a pilgrimage as a penance.

His character is, on the whole, presented more consistently than that of Genoveva. It is weakness and moral confusion that are the cause of his actions, and it is not surprising that the feeling of guilt sends him almost mad. But it cannot be said that he is an attractive hero.

Siegfried does not play a large part in the action and we are given no real impression of his character. The parting of Genoveva and Siegfried in Act 1 is formal and without tenderness, and at no time does Siegfried give the impression that he really loves his wife. He believes without hesitation in Golo's lies, and without the slightest investigation condemns both Genoveva and the child to death.

Raupach does not suggest a relationship of great trust and affection between Golo and Siegfried such as would make it difficult for Siegfried to disbelieve his accusation. Moreover, half the lies are told not by Golo, but by Drago, who adds on his own account the accusation that the child is the son of a page of Genoveva's, now dead. Siegfried has no reason to trust Drago, who is a prisoner of war and a slave, yet he does so.

He apparently feels no sorrow at Genoveva's supposed death. When she is found and declares her innocence he believes her as readily as he had believed Golo, and before the latter admits his guilt. Thus his judgments are arbitrary; and his harshness is stressed more than once. Drago mentions it in Act 2, Sc.8, and Siegfried himself refers to it in Act 1, Sc.4, and again in Act 4, Sc.3, when he doubts the justice of his own sentence:-

'Ein strenger Richter heiss' ich - hat der Fluch  
Den gegen mich Verbrecher ausgestossen  
Beim Himmel das bewirkt, dass meine Strenge  
Sich wieder mich bekehrt?'

Müller's treatment of the legend, he stated that he found the dramatic content of the story only in the character of Golo. He saw clearly the problem and how it could be solved:-

'Der dramatische Dichter kann den Golo des alten Volksbuchs nicht brauchen, nur, wenn es ihm gelingt, diesen flammenden, hastigen Charakter aus menschlichen Beweggründen teuflisch handeln zu lassen, erzeugt er eine Tragödie. Golo liebt ein schönes Weib, das seiner Hut übergeben ward, und er ist kein Werther: darin liegt sein Unglück, seine Schuld und seine Rechtfertigung.'

He goes on to map out the development of the character.

'Hass des Gegenstandes, der ihm, wenn auch unbewusst, mit sich selbst entzweite, mischt sich von Anfang an in sein süssestes Gefühl, und ist nicht einmal durchaus ungerecht. Die Harmonie seines Innern ist einmal gestört, er kann sich selbst nicht mehr achten; soll jenes umsonst geschehen sein? ..... Golo, nachdem er begann, muss vollenden, selbst dann, wenn er die Glut seines Herzens erstickt, er muss vollenden, um nur das zu retten, was er längst besass..... Ein Unverzeihliches, das Golo gegen die Gräfin begeht, erzeugt das andere; kann er vor dem letzten Schritt zurückbeben, nachdem nur noch dieser übrig blieb?'

Not only the character of Golo, but also the characters of Siegfried and Geneveva are clearly visualised:-

'Sie (Geneveva) ist ein durchaus christlicher Character, den der Scheiterhaufen nicht verzehrt, sondern verklärt; sie muss, (und dies ist in Bezug auf sie Hauptvorwurf der Darstellung) zu Gott in dasselbe Verhältnis kommen, worin sie einst zu Siegfried stand. .... Der schuldigste ist der Pfalzgraf; warum hat er eine solche Natur, die ihn bis auf den Grund in ihr klares Innere hinab schauen liess, nicht erkannt?'

The course of the action is sketched, including that part which was finally used in the Nachspiel,<sup>(1)</sup> proving that Hebbel was speaking the truth when he claimed<sup>(2)</sup> that the reconciliation of Siegfried and Geneveva had been part of the original plan.

But in spite of the fact that he had such a clear conception of how the material should be dramatically treated, he did not at this point start work on the drama. The idea rested until it was brought into his mind

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(1) First published in 1851 in the journal Europa, Leipzig, No.15.

(2) In a letter to Holtei, Feb.15th 1851. (Br. IV No.328).

by certain events of his own life. The final impulse which led to the writing of the tragedy, sprang, in the summer of 1840, from Hebbel's relationship with two women, Elise Lensing and Emma Schröder. While Elise, who had sacrificed everything for him, who had worked to earn money for him and helped him untiringly in business matters, who was at this moment expecting his child, was away from Hamburg, Hebbel fell passionately in love with Emma, a young girl whom he had recently met. Tormented by the conflict between his passion for Emma and feelings of guilt for his treatment of Elise, Hebbel found himself in much the same position as Golo. He loved, and he felt that his love was wrong. Emma's beauty aroused in him a passion akin to Golo's desire for Genoveva, while Elise's goodness made him regard her as an angel, and feel deeply how badly he had treated her; -

'Nie, nie, habe ich ihresgleichen gesehen. Sie hat einem Adel des Herzens, der allen Adel des Geistes übertrifft. Auch keine Spur von Egoismus. Ach, wenn ich sie oft quälte, sie satanisch im Tiefsten verletzte - immer sprangen nur schönere Funken aus ihrer Seele hervor, so dass ich mitten im leidenschaftlichen Frevel von ihrem Lächeln, ihren Thränen oft plötzlich erstarrte, als ob ich einen Engel gegeißelt hätte, der sich nur dadurch zu rächen vermag, dass er seine herrliche Natur zeigt'.(1)

The idea re-occurs in Genoveva.

'Ich peitschte einen Engel, er enthüllt  
Sich mir und ahmt nicht, dass er mich dadurch  
Wenn er nicht einhält, töten muss! (ll. 3844-6)

In Genoveva Hebbel gave his own feelings poetic form. Genoveva has the goodness of Elise with the beauty of Emma, and Hebbel recognised his artistic debt to Elise when he wrote 'Ich hätte ohne sie die Genoveva nicht schreiben können. '(2) (Tgb. Vol. II No. 2402). Into Golo Hebbel put all his own chaotic feelings, his love, his sense of guilt, his feelings of loneliness and his need for self-justification. That this subjective interest in one character harmed the work, Hebbel later admitted.

'Der Hauptfehler war, dass ich zu früh an diese Riesen-Aufgabe kam. Sie verlangte die höchste Reife des Geistes und ich hatte noch zu viel mit dem lieben Herzen zu thun. Denn warum läugnen, was schon mancher Kritiker heraus gefühlt hat; ich selbst steckte in einer gar heissen Situation, als Golo entstand.' (3)

(1) Tgb. II No. 2098.

(2) Tgb. II No. 2402.

(3) In a letter to Dingelstedt on June 14th. 1858 (Br. VI No. 607).

Hebbel started the drama on September 13th, 1840, and finished the first version on March 1st, 1841. In the following months he rewrote a great deal, and finally sent off the completed drama to the Berlin stage on August 27th of the same year. The first scenes were swiftly written in a state of great enthusiasm. Emil Kuh, in his biography of Hebbel, writes:-

'Zu manchem Acte brauchte er nicht mehr als acht bis zehn Tage. Es entstand in fieberischer Hitze und Eile, er ass zuweilen nicht zu Mittag, um nicht die wichtigsten Szenen, wie er sich einmal gesprächsweise gegen mich ausdrückte, mit der Suppe zu ertränken und mit dem Fleisch zu ersticken.' (1)

The notes in Hebbel's diary also show his excitement -

'Thränen des Danks, nimm sie Ewiger! Aus allen Tiefen meiner Seele steigt Genoveva hervor! Nur die Kraft, nur die Liebe - dann lass' kommen, was da will!' (2)

But on October 10th he recorded that the flow of production was checked.

'Genoveva stockt wieder, Ideen habe ich in Masse, aber sie kommen nicht in den Fluss.' (3) By the end of October, however, he was satisfied with his work:

'Heute schloss ich den zweiten Act von Genoveva ..... Bis jetzt darf ich zufrieden seyn,' (4) but this satisfaction did not last long.

'Was ich nach der Judith für unmöglich gehalten, das trifft doch wieder ein: die alten verzweifelten Stimmungen, worin mir mein Beruf für die Dichtkunst unzulänglich schien, kehren zurück. Dass es doch gar kein festes, inneres Kriterium giebt! ' (5)

There followed a time of great anxiety, accompanied by setbacks in his efforts to have Judith performed, which deprived him of all desire to write, and it was not until the end of the year that he again mentioned Genoveva. By then the third act was nearly finished. On January 11th, 1841, Hebbel recorded the completion of the third act, and his own satisfaction with it.

'Er ist sehr lang geworden, aber er scheint mir im dramatischen Sinne das Beste, was ich bis jetzt machte, denn er stellt alles, was geschieht, rein werdend dar.' (6)

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(1) Emil Kuh, Biographie Friedrich Hebbels, Vienna, 1877, Vol. I p. 503.

(2) Tgb. II No. 2133.

(3) Ibid. No. 2153.

(4) Ibid. No. 2170.

(5) Ibid. No. 2177.

(6) Tgb. II No. 2211.

The majority of Act 4 was written 'in einer Begeisterung, die mir Schlaf und alles raubte,'<sup>(1)</sup> and on March 1st. he wrote that the drama was finished.

A few days later he read it aloud to a circle of friends, but he was still unsatisfied. The alterations which he made occupied him for most of the summer for it was not until the end of August that he recorded that Genoveva was 'nach langen Wehen zu meiner Zufriedenheit abgeschlossen'.<sup>(2)</sup>

Again his satisfaction did not last long. In February 1842 he wrote:

'Mehr und mehr überzeuge ich mich, dass die Abänderungen, die ich im Sommer mit Genoveva vornahm, Nichts taugen, dass aber die ursprüngliche Gestalt auch nichts taugt und dass aus Beiden eine neue gewonnen werden muss.' (3)

That he was still working on the drama is proved by the inclusion in his diary of speeches he had omitted from the play,<sup>(4)</sup> but he was unable to rewrite it to his satisfaction. By the beginning of 1843 he had abandoned it.

'Judith und Genoveva sind, wie ich jetzt klar erkenne, nur noch Kraft - und Talentproben, keine Werke.' (5)

Eight years later, however, he wrote an epilogue at the suggestion of Karl Holtei. He was surprised how easy he found the work, and wrote 'mit wahrer Begeisterung.' 'Jetzt erst ist das Stück fertig,'<sup>(6)</sup> he wrote to Holtei, recalling that he had originally intended to include the finding of Genoveva in his drama, but had been prevented by his overwhelming interest in Golo.

In fact, although entitled Genoveva, the drama is mainly concerned with Golo. It begins with his awakening love and concentrates on his development throughout. The exposition has been often and justly praised. Siegfried's first few words give the whole atmosphere of the early autumn morning; the dialogue between Siegfried and Golo sketches in Golo's character - his youth and his eagerness for action - and his relationship to Siegfried, and then the

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(1) Tgb. II No. 2267.

(2) Ibid. No. 2376.

(3) Ibid. No. 2480.

(4) Ibid. No. 2508.

(5) Ibid. No. 2641.

(6) On February 13th. 1851. (Br. IV. No. 328).

Siegfried knows very well that Margaretha is in league with the devil. Why then should he place confidence in her, since she admits herself that her mirror can show nothing good? 'Ich weiss nur so viel, als der Teufel weiss.' And later she says explicitly: 'Der Teufel ist der Mann der Wahrheit nicht.' Moreover Margaretha's magic tricks contrast unfavourably with the spiritual conflicts in Siegfried and Golo.

In the fifth act the drama moves slowly and inexorably to its conclusion. Again there is a little incident which illumines the main action. As Golo persecutes Genoveva for refusing to love him, so Hans tells of how he once killed a woman who rejected him. The primitive and passionate crime of Hans is well contrasted with the more refined and unscrupulous villainy of Balthasar.

The Nachspiel gives a delightful picture of Genoveva's life in the forest, and shows how husband and wife are reunited. It is obvious, however, that Golo was the life of the drama, for without him the other characters seem shadowy and uninteresting. In spite of many beauties, the idyllic and gentle atmosphere of the sequel contrasts too strongly with the fierce passions of the drama for it to seem a necessary part of the tragedy.

From the notes in his diary about Genoveva it is clear that Hebbel was deeply interested in the character of Golo. His aim was to show how a fundamentally good man could be forced by passion into evil-doing. He found the explanation in a sentence twice quoted in his diary, and originally included in the text of the drama. 'Was einer werden kann, das ist er schon, zum wenigsten vor Gott.' (1) Golo is permeated with this belief, which he interprets in a fatalistic way. He becomes aware in himself of a love which he feels is his highest good, but which, considering its object, must lead to evil, since Genoveva is a married woman, and married to his lord.

Golo's love for Genoveva awakes as he watches her taking leave of Siegfried. It is the sight of love in others, and the realisation that Genoveva is not only a saint but a woman, that gives rise to it.

'Nur weil die Heil'ge Weib ward, lieb' ich sie,  
Nur, weil ich sah, wie süß sie küssen kann!'

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(1) Tgb. II Nos. 2290 and 2600.

Aware of the sinfulness of his love, he attempts to escape from the conflict by seeking the judgment of God, that is, he tries, as he does again later, to place the decision in someone else's hands. Therefore he climbs the tower, a reckless action almost certain to end in death,

'Nicht eines Stosses von des Höchsten Arm  
Bedurft' es noch, nur, dass er mich nicht hielt! '

But God does not intervene, and for Golo this can only mean that he is to be allowed to pursue what he has begun. Holding this conviction as he does, it is inevitable that his efforts to control his passion should be in vain. When Genoveva, in all innocence, blesses his sword 'zu schlimm bedrohter Frauen Schutz' he determines to kill himself rather than do her wrong, but he first of all demands that she shall approve his decision. Again he tries to lay the responsibility in someone else's hands, and again, when Genoveva refuses to decide for him, he considers himself justified in his wrong-doing:

'Ich bin ein Schurk'. Nun hab' ich Schurkenrecht!  
Denn auch ein Schurk' hat Recht. Er kann nicht mehr  
Zurück, drum muss er vorwärts.'

He feels himself in the grip of a destiny stronger than himself, against which he fights in vain. In his monologue in Act 5 Sc.7 he finally sums up this feeling.

'Das ist Dein Ende, Trotz! Du darfst den Spruch,  
Der Dich verdammt, bekämpfen, weil Du ihm  
Bestätigen, weil Du bekennen sollst:  
Gott thut mir Recht und Gott allein hat Recht! '

The explanation for this fatalism, for the strength of his emotions and for his lack of selfcontrol, lies in his immaturity.

'Der ist ein Mann geworden über Nacht  
Und blieb ein Kind dabei,'

says Siegfried of him in the first scene of the drama. The strength of his new emotions surprises him and he feels unable to control them. Therefore he always turns to someone else, to God or to Genoveva, pleading that he should be forced not to do what he wishes.

His conflict is aggravated by his situation. Although so young, he is left in absolute command of the whole estate, without either the experience or the sense of responsibility needed to carry out his duties.



A fundamental trait in his character, a trait common to youth, is his need for harmony and unity in himself. Whatever he does he wishes to do completely, and therefore he cannot understand Siegfried, who is capable of loving deeply and yet of leaving his wife when duty demands it.

'Kein Mann zu sein, das ist jetzt Deine Pflicht  
Nun sie gewagt hat, ganz ein Weib zu sein.'

He believes that his love is greater than Siegfried's, because he is unable to control it.

His love for Geneveva has destroyed the harmony within him and he is determined to restore it. At the same time he cannot help hating the person who destroyed it. Hebbel emphasised this in his diary, 'Hass des Gegenstandes, der ihn, wenn auch unbewusst, mit sich selbst entzweite, mischt sich von Anfang an in sein süssestes Gefühl.'<sup>(1)</sup> His feelings towards Geneveva are therefore unbearably confused, and his course of action is mainly dictated by the desire to clarify them to himself. His desire for inner unity makes it impossible for him to repent or even to despise himself.

'Das merk' Dir Freund! Du bist ein Schuft! Was schont  
Der Schuft sich noch? Willst Du den Tugendriss  
Mit Selbstverachtung flicken? Schäm Dich!  
Als ob dies schmöde Selbstverachten nicht  
Noch ein Sich-Achten wäre, ein Asyl  
Der Eitelkeit, worin sie Keiner sucht.'

Thus Geneveva becomes a secondary consideration. His love, although it still exists, is almost swallowed<sup>w</sup> up by hate and jealousy; but even these are not important. He does not hate Geneveva enough to wish to have her killed, and only goes so far as to order her death so as to understand himself and fulfil his destiny. To let her be killed is superfluous; when he finally understands himself he is satisfied.

'Doch, Trotz, ich schelt' Dich darum nicht! Du hast  
Mich mit mir selbst bekannt gemacht, ich weiss  
Jetzt wer ich bin, und was auch kommen mag:  
Gott thut mir recht und Gott allein hat recht! '

When his plan to save Geneveva fails and he believes her to be dead, his peace of mind is destroyed and he condemns himself to death by starvation.

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(1) Tgb. II No.1475.

Golo's conflict takes place entirely within himself. There is no real conflict with Genoveva because she remains completely passive and refuses to take action on her own behalf. Therefore she becomes less and less important to Golo, and he spends his time in reflection on his own feelings and efforts to understand himself and his relationship with God. Thus the action is held up while Golo holds long monologues and arguments with himself. Interesting and necessary as these are for the understanding of his state of mind, they constitute a weakness in the dramatic construction, and Hebbel admitted later that he had made a mistake in allowing the epic element to play too great a part in the fourth and fifth acts, and in giving Golo far more awareness of his feelings than he should have possessed.<sup>(1)</sup>

'Des Himmels reinster Blick entzündet die Hölle,'<sup>(2)</sup> wrote Hebbel of the relationship between Genoveva and Golo. Genoveva's saint-like goodness and pure love are the cause of evil in others, and expose her to great suffering. Golo realises how her goodness calls forth evil in him:-

'Nur, weil es Edelsteine giebt und Gold  
Giebt's Räuber. O ich fühl' es, dieses Weib,  
Wenn Du nicht schnell sie unserm Blick entziehst,  
Ruft Sünd' ins Dasein, ausserordentlich  
Wie ihre Schönheit, einzig wie sie selbst!'

Through the purity of her heart she is unable to understand the effect she may have on others, and is incapable of doing wrong to save herself, or even to save her child. When Golo gives her a last chance in prison to save herself by condemning him to death, she only prays: 'Führ mich nicht in Versuchung, Herr mein Gott.' Hers is the tragedy of a woman destroyed by her own beauty and goodness - an idea which Hebbel was to develop more fully in Agnes Bernauer. In Genoveva it is subsidiary to the conflict in Golo.

By her very nature, Genoveva is forced to remain passive in the action. She has nothing to do but offer passive resistance to Golo's attempts to subdue her, for her goodness and ignorance of evil prevent her from taking any steps to counter his designs. Her sufferings, however, are by no means only physical. She goes through as great an emotional tragedy as Golo, though

(1) Tgb. II No.2480.

(2) Tgb. I No.1475.

Great though his remorse is for the injustice he has done his wife, when he learns the truth, he has no real understanding of the way in which his lack of trust in her has destroyed the bond between them, for he imagines that after their reconciliation Genoveva's sufferings are over.

'Nicht wahr, an sieben Jahren war's genug?  
Nun fangen and're sieben Jahre an!  
Die sind das wenigste!'

This lack of comprehension is another reason why we feel that complete reconciliation is not possible.

The other personages are minor characters, but are well drawn. We have a clear idea of the character of all the servants at the castle; Drago - religious and conscientious; Casper - honest, quicktempered and intelligent (he is the only one who suspects Golo's guilt); Conrad - cheerful and careless; Hans - selfish and easily roused to fury, but not without good feelings (he is very reluctant to kill the child); Balthasar - a complete scoundrel; Katharina - unscrupulous but weak, and devoted to Golo.

Klaus is a small masterpiece of the grotesque. An idiot, with 'Schneeweisses Haar, und rote, runde Backen wie ein Kind,' he nevertheless has a strongly developed moral sense, and in saving Genoveva from her murderers he acts as the hand of God, the tool by which a miracle is worked. But, like Daniel in Judith, who was also the chosen of the Lord, he pays for this distinction with death, for Hebbel believed at that time, as he wrote in his diary when considering the story of Joan of Arc,<sup>(1)</sup> that those individuals who are used for divine purposes, are inevitably doomed to destruction.

Margaretha is drawn convincingly in the third act as a degraded and unscrupulous old woman. In the fourth act she appears as a witch with supernatural powers, who loves evil for its own sake. In this act she is not so convincing, for her diabolic tricks and her hysterical ecstasy seem exaggerated and out of harmony with the rest of the drama. Hebbel accounted for this by saying that she was 'individuell motiviert, statt aus dem mittelalterlichen Volksglauben einfach abgeleitet.'<sup>(2)</sup>

This double aspect of Margaretha's character, that she is both

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(1) Tgb. I No.1011.

(2) Letter to Dingelstedt, 14th June 1858 (Br.VI No.607).

the material in his diary. After recording the finishing of Genoveva on March 1st. 1841, Hebbel wrote on May 29th. -

'Genoveva liegt noch immer unfertig da. Ändern muss ich, aber kaum weiss ich was.'

He added 'die Idee ist die christliche der Sühnung und Genugthuung durch Heilige,<sup>(1)</sup>' and it was perhaps this aspect which he attempted to bring out in the alterations he made during that summer. If this was so, it would explain why his later interpretation is not successfully fused with his earlier conception, and why his final verdict was one of dissatisfaction with the work.

When Hebbel first read the play to a circle of friends, one of them, Janinski, said that the ending 'habe sein Gefühl erstarrt anstatt es zu erschüttern'.<sup>(2)</sup> Hebbel was disturbed by this opinion, for he realised that he could not alter the outcome 'denn eben diese letzte schrecklichste Konsequenz ist die natürlichste in Golo's Character.'<sup>(3)</sup> Any other ending was impossible, and the human tragedy finds its fitting conclusion in Golo's death. The divine action revealed by Drago's ghost, however, in which Genoveva plays the main part, remains unfinished. It demands the finding of Genoveva and the recognition of her innocence. Therefore, Hebbel later felt the play was unfinished and wrote the epilogue.

In his preface to the edition of 1843<sup>(4)</sup> Hebbel wrote -

'Übrigens ist ein jedes Drama nur so weit lebendig, als es der Zeit, in der es entspringt, d.h. ihren höchsten und wahrsten Interessen, zum Ausdruck dient, und auch ich hoffe, trotz dem aus dem Mythen- und Sagenkreise entlehnten Stoff, in meiner Genoveva, wie in meiner Judith, der Zeit, wie ich sie in Bedürfniss, Richtung und Bewegung auffasse, ein künstlerisches Opfer dargebracht zu haben.'

Hebbel, then, although he would have rejected the suggestion that he wrote his dramas only to illustrate some modern problem, felt that in spite of their legendary material, they had some relevance to modern life. Genoveva takes place in the time of the Crusades, and indeed the action can only be understood against the background of that time, when little communities lived together in castles cut off from contact with the outer world, when the forest

(1) 79b. II No. 2337

(2) 9bid. No. 2304

(3) 9bid.

(4) W. VIII Anhang I p. 32.

## Chapter 3.

Raupach's Der Nibelungenhort. (1)

Der Nibelungenhort first appeared, like Genoveva, in 1828, when both Raupach's dramatic production and his popularity were at their height. Raupach was primarily a writer for the theatre, the constructor of a large number of effective and successful dramas, and he was thus likely to be more concerned with the theatrical effect of his drama, than with loyalty to his sources. In the course of his adaption of the legend for the stage he made far-reaching alterations, some of which were certainly necessary if he was to concentrate the whole of the Nibelungenlied and the Seygfriedslied into one drama. A poet of less self-confidence might have hesitated to attempt this task, but Raupach never lacked confidence, as his dramatisation of the history of the Hohenstaufen dynasty shows. He doubtless chose to adapt the whole epic because it contained so many dramatic situations, and it is easy to see that his tragedy must have been effective on the stage.

He has taken many of the main crises and dramatic moments of the Nibelungenlied (as many as are absolutely necessary for the comprehension of the story) and has worked them into a row of effective scenes which, however, are only loosely linked together - the wooing of Brunhild, the quarrel of the queens, Siegfried's death, and Chriemhild's second marriage and revenge follow after one another without any real internal connection or development. The scenes in themselves, however, are skilfully constructed and the drama undoubtedly deserves the success it had, for Raupach made full use of all the theatrical effects at his disposal.

The prologue, which contains the story, taken from the Seygfriedslied, of Siegfried's fight with the dragon which has captured Chriemhild, is preceded by an overture depicting the dragon-fight,

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(1) Dramatische Werke ernster Gattung. Hamburg 1835, Vol.II pp.169-354.

and the curtain rises on an impressive tableau.

'Eine wilde Berggegend; im Hintergrunde hohe Felsen, auf beiden Seiten Wald. Sobald der Vorhang aufgeht, hört man donnerähnliches Gebrüll, und sieht über den Felsen zur Linken Flammen aufsteigen; beides aber ist im Abnehmen. König Eugel und mehrere Zwerge stehen lauschend zur Rechten.'

The unusually detailed stage direction shows that Raupach was concerned that the first view of the stage should be impressive. Except when dealing with large numbers of people, as in Act 5, he usually restricted himself to such short directions as 'Eine Halle in Günthers Burg <sup>zu</sup> Worms' or 'Ein Gemach in der Burg.'

The overture is not the only instance of music in the tragedy. Music ushers in Act 1, and accompanies the hunt in Act 3. Trumpets and drums mark the wedding festivities in Act 5, while Volker expresses his forebodings in song.

Rather than face the difficulties of presenting the dragon-fight on the stage, or weaken its effect by having it narrated, Raupach has arranged that it takes place off stage, and is nearly over when the curtain rises, but we see and hear some of its effects (flames and roaring from the dragon), while the explanation of these things is given by Eugel. The dwarf king, as suits his supernatural character, speaks in solemn and poetical language, and in a different metre (Spanish ballad metre instead of blank verse) from the other characters, in his soliloquies. The prologue opens and finishes with such a speech of his, and is in fact a small drama in itself, a drama which portrays the winning of a bride by some brave deed on the part of the hero - a common plot in fairy-tales; and indeed the prologue belongs to the fairy-tale world, with its dragons and dwarfs and magic treasure. But Raupach was a rationalist and unable to create a convincing fairy-tale atmosphere. Eugel's long and detailed accounts of the supernatural phenomena destroy any atmosphere of mystery, and his constant moralising is not in keeping with his

character as a fairy-tale being.

A scene showing the quick growth of love between Siegfried and Chriemhild is followed by an account of the Nibelungen treasure, which Siegfried has won by killing the dragon. Then the Burgundians are introduced by a useful, but not improbable coincidence. Günther, who has been searching for Chriemhild, finds her at this moment. The prologue ends with Günther's decision to woo Brunhild, and Eugel's gloomy prophecy gives a hint of the tragedy to come.

Act 1 is devoted to the winning of Brunhild. A dramatic climax is attained by the fact that Brunhild herself does not appear until after she has been defeated, when she bursts into the room in despair and fury. The Burgundians are greeted by one of her women, and the contest takes place off stage, with the women watching it through a window. From the moment of her entry Brunhild dominates the stage by her energy and determination and finally, after defying Gunther and swearing she will never be his wife, she makes a dramatic exit with the words

'Die Erde kann zergehen, die Sonn' erblassen,  
Ein rechter Geist nicht von sich selber lassen.'

The second act, which takes place about a year later, starts on a note of excitement with the quarrel between Günther and Brunhild and rises through the scene in which Chriemhild coaxes the secret of the wedding night from Siegfried, to the climax of the quarrel between the queens and Brunhild's vision of vengeance.

'Was sagst Du Mann? Es steigen nur Wolken auf?  
Du siehst nicht, Blinder, gehemmt der Sonne Lauf?  
Du hörst den Donner, das Krachen des Waldes nicht  
Der in der Windsbraut wilder Umarmung bricht?  
Walküren sind's auf Rossen von Blitzesgluth;  
Sie küren und kreischen hernieder: Blut! Blut! Blut!

To increase the solemnity of the speech Raupach has again used a different metre from the usual blank verse. This, however, does not end the act, and the scenes which follow, in which the murder of Siegfried is planned, prove rather an anti-climax, though the act ends on a note of tragic tension with Hagen's oath to kill Siegfried.

The third act begins with Hagen's preparations for the murder, passes on to Chriemhild's leave-taking from her husband, and finishes with Siegfried's death. The attitudes of the characters in this act are somewhat inconsistent. Chriemhild has no hesitation in telling Hagen of Siegfried's vulnerable spot, but as soon as he leaves her she is seized with fear and convinced of danger. Günther orders the murder, but immediately afterwards breaks out into lamentation and blames fate, and Volker, who approves of the murder, nevertheless speaks a long obituary over Siegfried, in which he praises him far beyond anything that Siegfried, as we see him in this drama, had ever deserved.

'Zum Säub'rer dieser Welt warst Du erkoren;  
Und eine ganze Zukunft ist mit Dir  
Und eine bess'ere Zeit mit Dir gestorben.'

The suspense of the murder scene is heightened by Hagen's conversation with Siegfried, with its discussion on love and loyalty, in the course of which Siegfried agrees that Hagen would be right to kill anyone who had insulted the king's honour.

The first scene of Act 4 serves as an exposition of the events that have happened since Siegfried's death. On Günther's return from a war with the Saxons, Hagen gives an account of what he has done as regent. The action immediately moves forward when Günther announces Etzel's visit and his wish to marry Chriemhild. Chriemhild's decision to accept Etzel's hand and to revenge herself is prepared carefully. Only seven months have passed since Siegfried's death, and in the space of three scenes we hear of the theft of the treasure, which was Siegfried's gift to her, of the forced parting from her son, whom Hagen has sent to Siegfried's father, and we see Günther's callous treatment of her, and hear him forcing her so quickly into another marriage. We see also Brunhild's gloating triumph over her rival, when Chriemhild appeals to her, and it is her words 'In Deiner Schande schwelgt dann meine Rache' which give Chriemhild the idea of revenge.



killed by the Huns, and Rüdiger and Dietrich are left to contemplate the dead while the dawn breaks, a symbol of better times to come

'eine bess're Zeit wird leuchtend kommen  
Wie dort der Morgen durch die Wolken bricht.'

Chriemhild in Raupach's drama is burdened with far less guilt than the Kriemhild of the Nibelungenlied, for Gerenot, Giselher and Ute do not appear, Rüdiger is not forced to take part in the battle against his will, and Etzel is responsible for the killing of Günther and Hagen. But in spite of this she is an unsympathetic character. She is depicted throughout the drama as vain and silly. Her love of fine clothes and jewels is continually emphasised; when she finds the girdle which Siegfried took from Brunhild, she is looking for more jewellery although the stage direction states that she is 'prächtiger noch als Brunhild gekleidet.' Brunhild refers to her vanity when Chriemhild begs her to prevent her marriage to Etzel:

'Was erschreckt Dich denn?  
Du warst ja sonst in Schmuck und Pracht verliebt  
Und hättest gern vom Himmel, Sonne, Mond  
Und Stern' herabgerissen, Dich damit  
Herauszuputzen. Hei! nun kannst Du glänzen -- '

She is also far too ready to betray both of Siegfried's secrets, and her quarrel with Brunhild is concerned mainly with the question of which is the richer and younger of the two. Her decision to revenge herself is developed in a convincing manner, but it is caused more by hatred of Brunhild than of Hagen, for it is Brunhild's taunts which give her the idea. Her insistence on punishing Hagen seems exaggerated when all her thoughts and reflections are concentrated on her hatred of Brunhild. On the latter she has her revenge, and her mockery of the queen who is fighting for her child's life is more repulsive than the fury of the Kriemhild of the Nibelungenlied, who did not hesitate to kill her own brothers. Thus her death, especially after her treacherous killing of Etzel, can arouse little sympathy.

Siegfried, instead of being a picture of naive and unselfconscious heroism, appears crude and vulgar. His vulgarity is

devotion which he expresses often, as, for instance, when warning Günther against trusting Siegfried;

'Ich Herr, bin Dein: die Treue gegen Dich  
Ist meine einz'ge Lieb auf dieser Welt,  
Und Ehre, sonst des Mannes Königin,  
Ist doch bei mir nur Dienerin der Treue.'

Of 'der grimme Hagen' of the epic there is no sign, for his part in Siegfried's death is dictated entirely by loyalty, and he shows no envy of Siegfried, indeed, he praises him warmly even when he is plotting the murder, and there is no suggestion that his words are insincere. He affirms several times that he believes that he is doing right, and even demands the approval of the others after the murder

'Seht, edle Recken, hier liegt Siegmunds Sohn  
In seinem Blut, von meiner Hand erschlagen,  
Weil er befleckt hat meines Königs Ehre.  
So sagt nun, that ich Recht? '

In the rest of the drama he takes the part of a warner, continually but vainly urging Günther to take another course of action. Compared with the other personages he makes an agreeable impression, but his character is without force or strength.

Brunhild, the 'Mannweib', whose only delight is in freedom and fighting has no womanly or even pleasant qualities. Before marriage she expresses her scorn of all womanly pursuits

'Die Götter gaben mir des Weibes Bildung  
Doch männlich schlägt das Herz in meiner Brust  
Und männlich denkt der Geist in meinem Haupt.  
Ein Abscheu sind mir alle Frauenwerke,  
Zu denen rohe Kraft sie zwingt.'

After marriage she becomes a nagging wife, angry because she is not so rich as her rival, for her enmity towards Chriemhild is inspired entirely by the latter's superior riches and beauty, and the fatal quarrel is started because, owing to Chriemhild's generosity, more knights fought on her side in a tournament than on Brunhild's. Since Brunhild feels no love for Siegfried, she has no regrets at his death, and apparently considers that the shame put upon her has been removed, although she is still married to someone she thinks unworthy of her.

The other characters are shadowy and without individuality, except for Etzel, who is a conventional theatrical tyrant. Dankwart, Ortwin, Volker, Rüdiger, Dietrich and Blödel, have little to do beyond acting as a retinue to Günther or Etzel. The atmosphere of primitive passion and heroism that prevails in the Nibelungenlied has been changed here for one of continuous petty quarreling from mean and usually mercenary motives. The whole drama is, however, full of moral sayings and Christian sentiments and the contrast between paganism and Christianity is continually emphasised by the characters. In particular the danger of wooing the heathen Brunhild is often stressed. Hagen tries to dissuade Günther from marriage in the first act for this reason. Chriemhild in the quarrel scene taunts Brunhild by calling her 'ein böses Heidenweib' and a little later she says to Siegfried

'Was brachtest Du, für meinen Bruder kämpfend  
Dies Heidenweib in unser christlich Haus? '

a sentiment which Siegfried echoes when he is dying:-

'O hätt' ich nie den bösen Hort gewonnen,  
Die Zauberkappe nie! so hätt' ich nicht  
Den Giftschwamm Deines heidnisch bösen Herzens  
Getragen in ein christlich reines Haus.'

In the same way the fact that Etzel is a heathen is emphasised, and Chriemhild urges the shame of marrying a Christian princess to him

'Schmach wär's für Dich und mich und meinen Sohn  
Für der Burgunden ganzes Königshaus  
Wünd' ich, die Christin, dieses Heiden Weib  
Denn solchen Bund verdammen Glaub' und Sitte.'

Finally, in the last scene of the play, Dietrich interprets the past events in a Christian fashion. The destruction of the Burgundians entailed also the destruction of the Huns, and in this way Christendom has been saved from the pagan yoke

'Der Erde langes Unglück ist gerochen:  
Die Völkergeißel hat der Herr zerbrochen  
Erbarmend hat er unser Volk befreit  
Von wilder Horden schnöder Dienstbarkeit,  
Erlöst von finstern Heidenthum die Erde:  
Nun lasst uns handeln, dass es besser werde.

The religious element, however, is only superficial. For all their Christian utterances none of the characters act according to Christian principles, and Raupach has made no attempt to present a picture of the difference between the Christian and the pagan way of life, or to show how little Christian principles have affected pagan characters. The religious sentiments remain fine phrases and no more.

If Raupach's drama is judged by the standard set by the great dramatists of his nation, it is at once obvious that Hebbel's judgment 'ein elendes Machwerk'<sup>(1)</sup> is not too harsh. On the other hand it must be admitted that its scenes are effectively constructed with a wealth of dramatic and visual effect, and that therefore it can claim to be, if not by any means a great tragedy, at least a successful stage-play.

(1) Letter to Ch. Rousseau, 11th April, 1846. (*Bv. III. No. 218*).

Hebbel's Die Nibelungen. (1)

It was in 1855, just over fourteen years after the composition of Genoveva, that Hebbel first seriously turned his attention to writing a drama on the Nibelungen legend. He had long been interested in the epic and had known it since his youth, for he first met it at the beginning of his literary career, 'als ich Amalie Schoppe, zum erstenmal, aus Ditmarschen zu dem Zweck herübergekommen, besuchte.' (2) He recorded his feelings on the occasion in his dedication of the trilogy to his wife (3) -

'Mir war, als säss ich selbst am Zauberborn  
 Von dem es spricht: die grauen Nixen gossen  
 Mir alle ird'schen Schauer durch das Herz,  
 Indess die jungen Vögel über mir  
 Sich lebenstrunken in den Zweigen wiegten  
 Und sangen von der Herrlichkeit der Welt!'

The deep impression it made on him aroused the desire to copy the figures himself -

'Und wär's auch nur in Wasser oder Sand.'

In his letter to Theodor Vischer of June 1st. 1862 (4) he again speaks of his 'Jugendwunsch' to dramatise the story, explaining that he was for many years held back by the seemingly irrefutable arguments against such an undertaking in Vischer's Kritische Gänge. Vischer, in the essay Vorschlag zu einer Oper had recommended the Nibelungen legend as the subject for an opera, while arguing that it was unsuited to dramatic treatment, because the material had become alien to us by time and custom.

'Man gebe diesen Eisen-Männern, diesen Riesen-Weibern die Beredtsemkeit, welche das Drama fordert, die Sophistik der Leidenschaft, die Reflexion, die Fähigkeit, ihr Wollen auseinanderzusetzen, zu rechtfertigen, zu bezweifeln, welche dem dramatischen Charakter durchaus nothwendig ist: und sie sind aufgehoben; ihre Grösse ist von ihrer Wortkargheit,

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(1) W. IV.

(2) Tgb. IV No.5555. 18th Feb. 1857.

(3) W. IV. P.5.

(4) Br. Vol.VII No.793.

as Kr.R., Act 4, Sc.6.)

'Des Weibes Keuschheit geht auf ihren Leib  
Des Mannes Keuschheit geht auf seine Seele',  
(11.4536-7).

A year after the beginning of the work he recorded the completion of the first act, in what he hoped would be the final form, and also a change of plan.<sup>(1)</sup> Instead of ten short acts in two dramas, he intended to write one long drama in five acts, since he felt that in this form the work would have more chance of being produced on the stage. The work progressed rapidly and by the end of the year he had completed two acts which he read to Christine and Emil Kuh.

There follows a long period in which no mention is made of Die Nibelungen. The next step was recorded over two years later, when, on October 26th 1859, Hebbel wrote 'Heute Abend den ersten Act von Kriemhilds Rache geschlossen. So giebt's am Ende wirklich noch eine Trilogie.'<sup>(2)</sup> In the interval, although no work had been done on the drama, the plan had gradually taken its final shape, and various entries in his diary show that the material was in his mind. The note entered on February 19th. 1859, for instance, although there is no reference to the Nibelungen legend, could serve as a characterisation of Brunhild:-

'Das Weib muss nach der Herrschaft über den Mann streben, weil sie fühlt, dass die Natur sie bestimmt hat, ihm unterwürfig zu seyn und weil sie nun in jedem einzelnen Fall prüfen muss, ob das Individuum, dem sie sich vis à vis befindet, im Stande ist, das ihm seinem Geschlecht nach zustehende Recht auszuüben. Sie strebt also nach einem Ziele, das sie unglücklich macht, wenn sie's erreicht.'<sup>(3)</sup>

Suddenly inspiration returned and by the end of 1859 he had finished three acts of the third part. He wrote to Julius Campe<sup>(4)</sup> that he had not experienced such a flow of dramatic inspiration since the writing of Genoveva,

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(1) Tgb. IV. No.5477.

(2) Ibid. No.5754.

(3) Ibid. No.5648.

(4) On 17th Nov. 1859. (Br. VI No.667).

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(3) Ibid. No.5648.

(4) On 17th Nov. 1859. (Br. VI No.667).

and to the Princess von Wittgenstein<sup>(1)</sup> that the composition was his greatest joy on earth. In the new year production was hindered by illness, but by March 7th he had finished Act 4, and on March 22nd. he recorded the completion of the drama, 'Eben, Abends 7 Uhr, schreibe ich die letzten Versen des fünften Actes von Kriemhilds Rache nieder.'<sup>(2)</sup> He was still not satisfied, however. In his letters to Dingelstedt about the performance of the trilogy he gave an account of the arduous business of cutting and filling in the gaps left by too hasty composition,<sup>(3)</sup> and on one occasion, after the first performance in Weimar, he wrote that he had composed another scene (Kr.R. Act IV. Sc.7), which Dingelstedt had suggested.<sup>(4)</sup>

It is not surprising that the trilogy took so long to write, for the task was tremendous, and Hebbel's aim and his attitude to the problems imposed further limitations on him. His aim, as he stated often,<sup>(5)</sup> was not to write a new drama on the Nibelungen story, but to transfer the epic as faithfully as possible on to the stage, in order to bring it nearer to the general public. He regarded himself, as he told the Duke of Weimar, merely as 'Der Dolmetsch eines Höheren',<sup>(6)</sup> for he had a great admiration for the Nibelungenlied, and was convinced that the author was at heart a dramatist, - 'Ein Dramatiker vom Wirbel bis zum Zehe.'<sup>(7)</sup> His high opinion of the epic led him to feel strongly that the whole of it must be dramatised if the action were to be convincing:-

'Die Menschen der Englischen Rev. haben alle eine gemeinschaftliche Nabelschnur. Es ist derselbe Fall, wie bei den Nibelungen, in denen auch, so locker die Episoden scheinen, kein Glied übersprungen werden kann, wenn nicht zum Schluss, statt der furchtbaren Stimme des Schicksals Hüons Wunderhorn ertönen soll, nach dem Alles sich im Wirbel dreht, ohne dass man ahnt, warum.'<sup>(8)</sup>

(1) On 13th Oct.1859 (Br.VI No.664).

(2) Tgb. IV No.5798.

(3) Br. VI Nos.690, 698. VII No.712.

(4) Br. VII No.732.

(5) cf. W. XIII Anhang I p.22; letter to Dingelstedt of 15th.Jan.1861 (Br.VII No.700); letter to Hettner of 2nd.Feb.1862 (Br.VII No.764).

(6) Letter to Christine, 3rd.Feb.1861 (Br.Vol.VII No.704. )

(7) W. XIII Anhang I p.22.

(8) Tgb. IV No.5791. 7th March 1860.



Because of this, he wrote to Uechtritz<sup>(1)</sup> he allowed himself to take Shakespearian liberties with place and time, which he had so far avoided as much as possible. The main problem, he felt, was to make the characters human and comprehensible, while leaving them their primitive simplicity and greatness - 'den Gestalten..... menschliches Eingeweide zu geben, ohne ihnen die riesigen Umrisse zu nehmen.'<sup>(2)</sup> As the work progressed he was continually surprised at how easily all the actions could be made to spring from simple human motives, and his admiration for the author of the epic grew.<sup>(3)</sup>

In spite of his determination to follow the epic closely, the difference between the epic and the dramatic form forced him to make certain changes, and his own enthusiasm led him possibly into more invention than he realised. The form of a trilogy was a happy choice, for the story falls naturally into two parts, with a break after Siegfried's death, and to these Hebbel added a prologue which serves as exposition. The action of the prologue shows Siegfried's arrival at Worms, and during the course of it we learn about his previous adventures and about Brunhild. It ends with Siegfried's decision to help Gunther to win Brunhild and with Hagen's warning to keep silence. Since the prologue also introduces Kriemhild and Ute, by the end of it all the main characters of the first part, except Brunhild, have been introduced and clearly sketched, and the decision has been taken which is the cause of all following events.

The action is continuous and there are no scene changes. In the original version Hebbel changed the scene from the great hall to the women's apartments and back again, but he was pleased when Dingelstedt pointed out that this was unnecessary.<sup>(4)</sup> Hebbel was always reluctant to change the scene, especially in the middle of an act, as he felt it destroyed the illusion. It was inevitable, however, considering the broad canvas and many events of the epic, that he should make more use of scene-changes than he had previously done, (especially as he did not now feel the break

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(1) On Nov.21st.1856 (Br. V. No.557)

(2) Letter to Vischer, 1st. June 1862 (Br. VII No.793.)

(3) Tgb. IV No.5756. 26th Oct. 1859.

(4) Letter to Dingelstedt, 19th Dec.1860 (Br.VI No.698.)

in the illusion as keenly as he had done in earlier years. (1)

S.T. Act 1 takes place in Isenland, in a hall of Brunhild's castle, and ends just before the contest between Brunhild and Gunther begins. The conversation between Brunhild and her nurse Frigga, in which they discuss Brunhild's birth, and her vision later in the act, suggest something of the mighty forces at work behind the destinies of the characters.

The supernatural and visionary atmosphere of Act 1 is contrasted with the gay preparations for the wedding and the arrival of Brunhild in Worms in Act 2. In this act Siegfried meets Kriemhild for the first time, and Hebbel was very proud of this scene, in particular of Siegfried's shyness and awkwardness:-

'Ich bin ordentlich stolz auf manches Steife und Ungelenke, z.B. Siegfrieds hölzerne Werbung bei Kriemhild, was unleidlich und fehlerhaft seyn würde, wenn es nicht durch den Styl des ganzen bedingt wäre.' (2)

Brunhild's arrival at Worms is a scene of quiet beauty disturbed by suggestions of future trouble. While Brunhild wonderingly makes the acquaintance of blue skies, sun and flowers, and she and Kriemhild swear to love each other, Hagen whispers to Siegfried that he must help to conquer Brunhild again.

The forebodings expressed by Siegfried and Frigga are realised in Act 3. The action develops swiftly and logically from Kriemhild's finding of Brunhild's girdle to the quarrel of the queens and Brunhild's oath of vengeance. In Act 4 Hebbel shows the preparations for the murder and the ruse by which Hagen learns of Siegfried's vulnerability. He also takes care to show the absolute necessity for the murder, as well as Siegfried's lack of guilt. Even Hagen does not deny Siegfried's innocence, but since Brunhild has sworn not to eat until Siegfried is killed, his death is inevitable.

Volker sums up the situation:-

'Zwar hast Du Recht, er ist nicht Schuld daran,  
Dass dieser Gürtel sich wie eine Schlange  
Ihm anhing, nein, es ist blosses Unglück,  
Allein diess Unglück tödtet, und Du kannst  
Nur noch entscheiden, wen es tödten soll.'

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(1) Tgb. IV No.5489. 30th Oct. 1856.

(2) Letter to Hettner, 8th Dec. 1861. (Br. VII No.755).

Act 5 is divided into three scenes, unlike the previous acts, where the action is continuous. The first is in the forest, the second in Kriemhild's rooms and the third in the cathedral. The tense scene of Siegfried's murder is followed by scenes showing Kriemhild's grief. Great attention is paid to depicting her state of mind, and the act ends with her demand for justice and her rejection of the chaplain's plea for forgiveness.

The two sections of the drama pose different problems to the dramatist. The story of Siegfried's death, though stretching over many years in the epic, can be condensed into a swiftly moving plot concerned with few people, which rises to its first climax in the quarrel of the queens and moves forward quickly to the following climaxes, the death of Siegfried and Kriemhild's sorrow. The story of Kriemhild's revenge, on the other hand, is necessarily spread over many years, and moves slowly but inexorably towards its one climax, the outbreak of hostilities between Huns and Burgundians. What follows shows the long drawn out and inevitable results. Its action is slower and less complicated than that of Siegfried's death, but the large number of small but significant events in the epic which had to be compressed into a clear picture created a problem which needed all Hebbel's skill, if he were to solve it.

Act 1 of Kriemhilds Rache shows how Kriemhild comes to accept Etzel's hand. In Act 2, which is separated from Act 1 by the space of seven years, we see two incidents on the journey of the Burgundians to Etzel - the crossing of the Danube, with the episode of the mermaid's prophecy, and the interlude at Bechlarn.

The last three acts are devoted to the events at Etzel's castle, and every step leading up to the outbreak of the final battle is depicted with great care. Of the three acts two are concerned with the events before the battle and only one with the fighting itself. Even in the last act the struggle is kept in the background, the fighting taking place in the hall at the back of the stage, while the interest is concentrated on the figures in the foreground - Kriemhild, Rüdiger, Dietrich, Hildebrandt and Etzel.

The scene at Bechlarn, with its atmosphere of calm and friendship,

and the betrothal of Giselher to Rüdiger's daughter, provides a welcome contrast to the grim slaughter which follows. There are many such moments throughout the trilogy. The arrival of Brunhild at Worms, for instance, and her fleeting happiness after the wedding night, contrast with her defiance in S.T. Act 1 and her anger in the quarrel scene. In S.T. Act 5 amid the scenes of murder and grief, there are the delightful interludes of Siegfried's happy praise of hunting (Act 5 Sc.2) and of Ute's humorous conversation with Kriemhild before the discovery of Siegfried's body (Act 5 Sc.3). In Kriemhilds Rache, except for the scene at Bechlarn, such moments are rare and the atmosphere is one of almost unrelieved tension.

The chief character in Hebbel's trilogy, as in the epic, is Kriemhild. With her dream it begins and with her death it ends. We see the gentle girl grow into a loving wife, and then into a fury who destroys everyone in the path of her vengeance. All the steps of Kriemhild's development are indicated in the epic, but Hebbel brought them out more clearly, adding incidents and speeches so that every change is clear and credible.

Everything Kriemhild does is dictated by her love for Siegfried. At her first appearance she is as yet untouched by love, but we see the effect on her of the first sight of Siegfried, and the quick growth of love as she watches his prowess in the contest with her brothers. Her love is strong enough to make her ignore the forebodings caused by her falcon-dream:-

'O, Ich habe nicht  
Vergessen, was ich träumte, und der Schauder  
Ist nicht entflohn, er warnt mich mehr als je,  
Doch eben darum sag' ich mutig: Ja! '

Love and jealousy cause her to force the secret of the girdle from Siegfried and to quarrel with Brunhild, but well as Hebbel has introduced and developed the quarrel, Brunhild's provocation does not seem adequate to cause Kriemhild, who has shown no signs of an ungovernable temper, to betray such an important secret. But it is obvious that she has no comprehension of the seriousness of what she has done, nor of the state of Brunhild's feelings, and this again is the result of her deep love for her husband, which she believes Brunhild must also feel:-

himself invulnerable and therefore put himself beyond the bounds of knightly conduct:-

'Glaubt's oder zweifelt, wie es euch gefällt:  
Ich hätt' mich nicht in Schlangenblut gebadet  
Darf denn noch fechten, wer nicht fallen kann? '

He cannot but recognise Siegfried's superiority in everything, and this infuriates him, as he admits to Kriemhild (Kr. R. Act 4 Sc. 4), but Siegfried's accusation at the moment of his death:-

'Das that  
Dein Neid! '

is unjust, for Hagen himself had answered it beforehand:-

'Nicht läugnen will ich's, dass ich meinen Arm  
Mit Freuden leihe und mit einem Jeden  
Erst kämpfen würde, der sich zwischen mich  
Und ihn zu drängen suchte, doch ich halte  
Die That darum nicht minder für gerecht.'

Seeing the possibilities in Kriemhild's character before she is aware of them herself he does everything he can to prevent her second marriage and then to warn Gunther against her, but once he is convinced by the mermaid's prophecy that destruction is inevitable he challenges and invites it, rejoicing in the prospect of battle.

The only moment when his behaviour seems out of character is at Siegfried's death. The placing of Siegfried's body at Kriemhild's door is a piece of unnecessary brutality out of harmony with his usual respect for her, and his mockery of Siegfried at his death is also hard to reconcile with his normal ruthless grandeur, and gives colour to Siegfried's accusation of envy, which is not supported by anything else in the drama.

Siegfried's behaviour at his death is also out of character. It is natural that he should be revolted at his friend's treachery, but his words:-

'Man wird  
Euch immer mit verfluchen, wenn man flucht,  
Und sprechen: Kröten, Vipern und Burgunden!  
Nein, Ihr voran: Burgunden, Vipern, Kröten, '

and his accusation of envy are unlike the unselfconscious naive Siegfried, who never suspects evil in others. Otherwise we have a splendid picture of Siegfried - cheerful, highspirited, good-tempered, almost unconscious of his superiority, and painfully shy at his first meeting with Kriemhild. His

is based on love. Her youth was spent waiting for the man who should conquer her. She feels from the first that this man is Siegfried, and betrays her feelings by her over-hasty greeting. She is happy while she is convinced of Gunther's superiority, but when she is disillusioned her whole world falls about her. After Siegfried's death she lives on like a ghost, already half dead:-

'Stumpf blickt sie d'rein, als wär' ihr Blut vergraben  
Und wärme eines Wurmes kalt Gedärm,  
Wie man's in alten Mähren hört.'

The rest of the characters are of less importance, but are carefully drawn. One has a vivid impression of Giselher, Volker, Gudrun and Ute and even such minor characters as Dankwart, Rumolt, Iring and Thüring are given individual traits. Gunther is difficult to make convincing or attractive, for besides such characters as Hagen and Volker he inevitably seems weak and uninteresting. In Kriemhilds Rache he is shown in a better light than in Siegfrieds Tod for his determination not to abandon Hagen and his fearlessness in face of possible or actual danger make up to some extent for his vacillation in the earlier part.

Kriemhilds Rache introduces three important characters who were absent from the first parts of the trilogy, Rüdiger, Etzel and Dietrich. Rüdiger is portrayed exactly as he is in the Nibelungenlied, and his character presented no difficulties. Etzel, in the epic a passive and rather shadowy figure, has in Hebbel's trilogy become more important. He is one of the 'Drei Starke' of whom he himself speaks:-

'Es sind drei Freie auf der Welt,  
Drei Starke, welche die Natur, wie's heisst,  
Nicht schaffen konnte, ohne Mensch ind Tier  
Vorher zu schwächen und um eine Stufe  
Herab zu setzen..... Der Erste ist -  
Vergieb! er war! [Siegfried] Der Zweite bin ich selbst  
Der Dritte und der Mächtigste ist Er [Dietrich]'

In his youth he was a terrible conquerer, but a vision which he saw while besieging Rome changed him. Hebbel used this old legend<sup>(1)</sup> to explain Etzel's unexpected gentleness. Although not a Christian himself, he respects Christian

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(1) cf. A. Periam Hebbel's Nibelungen: its sources, methods and style.  
Columbia University Germanic Studies, Columbia, 1906, Vol.3.No.1 p.90.

beliefs and practices. He refuses to break the laws of hospitality in order to avenge Kriemhild, but when his son is killed his former ferocity is aroused and it is he who gives orders for the hall to be set on fire. The resulting massacre, however, is too much for him, and he delegates his power to Dietrich.

Dietrich appears as the ideal Christian hero. Although himself a mighty king he has come to Etzel of his own free will, in order to practise obedience:-

'Ich selbst erschrack, als er  
Mit abgelegter Krone vor mich trat  
Und seinen Degen senkte,'

says Etzel, who does not understand his motives. Nor do Kriemhild and the other vassal kings, but everyone respects him for his goodness and strength, and he is regarded more as a power of nature than a human being:-

'Euch nennt die Welt den edlen Dieterich  
Und blickt auf Euch, als wär't Ihr dazu da,  
Um Feuer und Wasser einen Damm zu setzen  
Und Sonne und Mond den rechten Weg zu zeigen  
Wenn sie einmal verirrten auf der Bahn.'

Unlike Siegfried, however, he has no specifically supernatural powers, and his strength is used in the service of religion, and therefore he is the strongest of the three men to whom Etzel refers.

Dietrich's role is closely linked with the theme of the conflict between Christianity and paganism. This conflict is suggested in the first words of the prologue - in Hagen's anger that he may not hunt on a holy day - and is continually emphasised throughout the trilogy, in the figure of the chaplain, who vainly preaches Christian submission and forgiveness to Kriemhild and in such incidents as that of the pilgrim who enters Etzel's hall and asks for some bread and a blow for his sins. Hagen laughs at him, and his attitude is typical of most of the other characters, but the new belief proves stronger than the old and rises triumphant in Dietrich, when the Burgundians, who have never been Christians at heart, have destroyed themselves. At the end of the trilogy, when Etzel feels that he is not strong enough to continue ruling, Dietrich receives his crown with the words:-

'Im Namen dessen, der am Kreuz erblich.'

In these words, which recall the chaplain's vain warning at the end of

Siegfrieds Tod

'Gedenke dessen, der am Kreuz vergab'

the new belief proves itself stronger than the old.

There is, however, another factor in this conflict, represented by Siegfried and Brunhild and the visions and prophecies connecting them. Siegfried stands outside religion altogether, for although he is nominally a Christian, the teachings of the church do not affect him, since he has no need of them. He is the last giant, as Hagen calls him (S.T. Act 4 Sc.10) as Brunhild is the last giantess. According to Frigga's story in S.T. Act 1 Sc.1, Brunhild is the child of the old gods, and was brought to Isenland by a mysterious stranger. The runic tablet which prophesies her future confirms this as does Brunhild's trance in which she sees the destiny before her. Dietrich's explanation of the importance of Siegfried and Brunhild shows that in spite of being a Christian he believes in the reality of the old gods. In a scene which Hebbel later omitted, <sup>(1)</sup> Dietrich gives a non-Christian interpretation of the action. Every thousand years a giant is born and at the same moment the old gods awake a bride for him. If these two marry they will bear giant children who will destroy mankind. In order to prevent this the earth prepares another bride. If she triumphs over the first the world is saved for another thousand years, but all three are doomed to destruction.

By means of such accounts as this, as that of Brunhild's birth, of her vision, of Volker's story of the curse on the treasure, of Dietrich's experience at the well of the water sprites, Hebbel creates an impression of the conflict of great cosmic forces, while leaving that impression confused and inexplicit owing to the many contradictions, for he felt that a certain 'Rembrandtsches Helldunkel', <sup>(2)</sup> was desirable. Such mythical elements, however, are never allowed to influence the actions of the characters, which always spring from human motives.

(1) cf. W.XIII Anhang I pp.371-4.

(2) V. Uechtritz, 25th Oct.1862 (Br.VII No.828.)



## Chapter 5.

The Relationship to the sources  
of Raupach's and Hebbel's 'Genoveva'.

As sources for their Genoveva dramas both dramatists had before them the legend as it was told in the Volksbuch, and the dramas of Müller and Tieck. The source of the Volksbuch was a short narrative work, which, according to B. Seuffert, who published in 1877 a detailed study of the legend,<sup>(1)</sup> was composed in the late fourteenth or early fifteenth century by a monk of the monastery of Maria Lasch. In the seventeenth century the Jesuit René de Cerisiers published a work entitled L'innocence reconnue ou Vie de Sainte Geneviève de Brabant (the earliest dated copy gives the year 1638), adding to the original legend many extra miracles and an account of Genoveva's youth. A translation into German in 1687 by the priest Martinus Kochemius<sup>(2)</sup> omitted the story of her youth and decreased the number of miracles. It was this version which, because of its popularity, became a Volksbuch.

The story it tells is as follows. Count Siegfried, who is about to take part in a crusade, leaves his pious wife, Genoveva, and all his possessions in the care of his friend Golo. Soon afterwards Golo declares his love to the countess, the first time before her portrait, the second time in the garden. Angry at her rejection, he accuses her of adultery with the pious cook Droganes and has both of them imprisoned. In vain he and his nurse try to shake the loyalty of the countess, who has borne a son in prison and called him Schmerzenreich. Golo sends a messenger to Siegfried, who orders Droganes' death, whereupon the cook is poisoned by Golo. Then Golo travels to Strassburg to meet Siegfried, and with the help of a witch, his nurse's sister, convinces the count by means of a magic mirror, that Genoveva has been unfaithful. Siegfried condemns Genoveva to death. She leaves a letter of justification with the daughter of the nurse and is led into the forest to be executed. The murderers spare her life and she lives with her son in the forest where the child is fed by a doe. Siegfried, now returned home, is troubled by dreams

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(1) Die Legende von der Pfalzgräfin Genovefa, Würzburg 1877.

(2) Auserlesenes History-Buch, Dillingen 1687.

and almost perfect character detracts from the dramatic qualities of the work, for although in one place Genoveva betrays a secret liking for Golo, the idea is not developed, and Genoveva undergoes no real inner conflict.

Raupach, on the other hand, presents the story of Genoveva as a development through sin to repentance and betterment. The analysis in Chapter I has shown how far he diverged from his source, for, in fact, all his drama has in common with the Volksbuch is the name Genoveva, the forest episode and a false accusation, which differs from the original one in that Genoveva is accused not of actual, but attempted adultery. Genoveva, far from being a pious and loving wife, is a wilful and pleasure-seeking egoist, who, on her husband's departure on a crusade determines to lead a life of pleasure. Her tragic guilt is frivolity and selfishness, and the whole story of guilt and suffering is to teach her that a wife should not amuse herself while her husband is fighting. The means seem rather out of proportion to the end, and at no time can we feel any sympathy for this Genoveva, whose virtue springs more from pride of rank than chastity and whose conversion seems as superficial and external as her former life.

Like Müller, Raupach tries to excuse Golo by shifting half the blame on to someone else. To accomplish this he has taken a name from the legend and completely changed the character who owns it. Drago, originally a pious cook, whose simplicity led him to be a tool in Golo's hands, is transformed into a Saracen slave, an unscrupulous villain, in whose hands Golo is a tool, to be used to further his own purposes. Golo's sister Emma, with whom he is in love, is an entirely new character. Perhaps Raupach found the idea for her in the nurse's daughter of the legend, but if so, every trace of her former rôle has disappeared, except that she is a faithful servant to her mistress. The nurse has also undergone a transformation. Instead of being Golo's nurse, she is the nurse of Siegfried's son, and instead of helping Golo in his intrigues she spends her time prophesying evil and delivering solemn curses on wrong-doers. Siegfried remains as shadowy a character as in the Volksbuch, and no effort is made to make his actions more comprehensible.

So much for the characters. Equal liberties have been taken with the

story. Certain changes are due to dramatic concentration, such as the reduction of Golo's two declarations of love in the Volksbuch, to one. This confession takes place, not in the garden, nor before Genoveva's portrait, but during a hunt. Genoveva's child, which she later re-christens Schmerzenreich, has been born before the action opens. Golo accuses Genoveva, not of adultery with the cook, but of trying to seduce him (Golo), and Drago adds the accusation that the child is the son of a page of Genoveva's who has since died - this was presumably added to account for Siegfried's order to kill the child, since otherwise there would be no suggestion that it was illegitimate. There is no attempt to convince the servants of Genoveva's guilt, and she is not arrested; on the contrary she is left in perfect freedom while a messenger travels to and from Siegfried.

When Siegfried's letter arrives she is taken away secretly by night, and no one knows what has happened to her, whereas in the Volksbuch the execution is carried out quite openly. Siegfried finds Genoveva on a hunt, but not through following a doe. Ironically enough, the discovery is made through Golo's efforts to keep the count away from the scene of the supposed murder. Golo repents, and is not killed, but required to make a pilgrimage. Such incidents of the legend as Siegfried's visit to the witch, Genoveva's letter of justification, and the appearance of Drago's ghost have no place in Raupach's version of the story.

Besides these changes certain additions were also made. The whole of the sub-plot, in which Drago is killed by Golo after demanding his sister as the price of silence, is an invention of Raupach's. Several little incidents, such as Schmerzenreich's illness and the petition from the peasants whose village has been burnt down are added in order to illustrate Genoveva's callousness. Finally there is Golo's strange decision to murder both his sister and the nurse, which serves to show the confusion of mind to which fear and remorse have led him.

It is obvious that such great changes have entirely transformed the legend and made it almost unrecognisable. The change in the character of Genoveva in particular destroys the whole basis and meaning of the original

legend. What has the patient saint to do with Raupach's callous and selfish sinner? It is difficult to see why Raupach insisted on giving his characters the names of the legend, instead of producing the drama as an entirely new work, especially in view of the fact that names with religious associations were banned from the Burgtheater in Vienna, and the play was re-named Schuld und Busse for the performance there, while the main characters were called Magelone, Boso and Bertram.

Hebbel's approach to the legend he set out himself at length in his diary. His conception is based on two principles; that Golo must be the dramatic centre of the tragedy and that the Golo of the Volksbuch is dramatically impossible. He rejected therefore, the course suggested by Tieck and followed by Raupach and Otto Ludwig, of making Genoveva the centre of the action and the bearer of the dramatic conflict. She was to be only 'der mildernde linde Mond hinter Sturm- und Gewitterwolken'.<sup>(1)</sup> His main interest was centred on Golo. This is significant considering Hebbel's life-long interest in unusual and complicated characters, and also considering his own situation at the time of composition. There is, as all commentators have recognised, a great deal of himself and his own conflicts in Golo, and it is not surprising, therefore, that he declared himself unable to use the Golo of the Volksbuch, who is inhuman in his complete villainy. Although the drama is entitled Genoveva, it is Golo who takes the centre of the stage, his conflict catches our sympathies and his death ends the original tragedy. Hebbel admitted later that he had been unable to carry out his original plan to end the drama with the finding of Genoveva, 'weil ich zu tief in Golo verstrickt war.'<sup>(2)</sup>

This was the first time that Golo had taken the principal place. In Müller's drama he had shared it with Genoveva and Mathilde, in Tieck's and Raupach's tragedies he had taken second place to Genoveva. In the

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(1) Tgb. I. No.1475. 2nd.Feb.1839.

(2) Letter to Arnold Ruge of Sept.15th.1852. (Br. V. No.412).

original legend he had been nothing but the tool of the powers of darkness, interesting only in so far as he was the cause of Genoveva's sufferings. The emphasis is, therefore, shifted in Hebbel's drama from the original protagonist to her opponent.

But Hebbel made no other change in the character of Genoveva, except this one of relative importance. She remains a saint, cool and passive and beyond temptation. Hebbel considered later that this passivity in Genoveva was a fault in the drama, but he maintained that it was a fault necessary to his conception of his material:-

'Genoveva selbst, an sich nicht eben ärmlich ausgestattet, hat man doch mit Recht zu Bildmässig passiv gefunden. Das konnte freilich bey meiner Absicht nicht anders seyn, aber es fragt sich, ob ich diese Absicht haben durfte, worüber ich nicht zu entscheiden wage.' (1)

Golo, on the other hand, is a completely new creation of Hebbel's. The problem which interested him was the growth of evil in an essentially good character. His predecessors had tried to show something of this, but had only managed to make *Golo* indecisive and sentimental, a character more or less pushed into crime by some other person. Hebbel's Golo also has his evil genius in Margarethe, but she is much less important in influencing Golo's course of action than Müller's Mathilde or Raupach's Drago. Her influence is confined to suggesting the means, not the crime itself. She plans the trick by which Genoveva is convicted of adultery.

Hebbel's conception of Golo is essentially modern, as compared with the medieval Volksbuch. Instead of complete and unmotivated villainy, we are shown a man struggling with a passion he does not understand, and fascinated by his own condition. In his long monologues and unceasing reflections, Golo is trying more to understand himself and to restore the harmony of his nature, than to conquer love and temptation.

Hebbel's Siegfried is also a new creation. Former Siegfrieds had tended to be colourless. They were there merely to perform their part in the story, while the main interest lay, not in the relationship of Siegfried to Genoveva, but in the relationship of Golo to Genoveva. Hebbel tried to motivate Siegfried's behaviour, and in the plan in his diary he made of this

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(1) Letter to Dingelstedt 14th. June, 1858. (Br. VI No. 607).

exclusively, as each made use of other material.

The form of it to which they turned, however, was certainly in Hebbel's case and presumably in Raupach's, not the original. Hebbel knew best Braunfels' translation,<sup>(1)</sup> probably also Simrock's.<sup>(2)</sup> His verses often show verbal similarities with the first, but are sometimes closer to the second.<sup>(3)</sup> If Raupach did not read the original, which is unlikely as he had not made a study of medieval German literature at the University, and as the translations were well known and popular, he probably used either Simrock's translation which was published in 1827, a year before Raupach's drama appeared, or Von der Hagen's prose translation of 1824,<sup>(4)</sup> since these were the best known. But he changes events and speeches too much for a comparison of his drama with the two different versions to show any conclusive similarities.

Raupach attempted the formidable task of compressing the entire Nibelungenlied, together with certain additions from other sources (the Seyfriedslied and the Edda), into one five-act drama with a prologue. His decision naturally entailed heavy cutting and simplification, some of it sensible and praiseworthy, some unfortunate. Although we may regret the absence of several attractive characters, it was wise of Raupach to cut ruthlessly away those who were not essential. Gerenot, Giseler and Ute, together with Rumolt and Hildebrand and many other Burgundian, Hunnish and Gothic heroes, do not further the action in any way and could, therefore, be omitted. In the same way all episodic characters, such as Siegfried's parents and the Saxon kings, have been left out. Less successful is the cutting down of the parts played by those who remain. Volker, Dankwart, Ortwin, Rüdiger and Dietrich have almost nothing to do or say, and no attempt is made to differentiate one from the other, except that Volker is called 'Spielmann.'

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(1) L. Braunfels, Der Nibelunge Not, Frankfurt am Main 1846.

(2) K. Simrock Das Nibelungenlied, Übersetzt, 2 Theile, Berlin 1827.

(3) The similarities between the two translations and Hebbel's drama are set out and compared in Annina Periam's Hebbel's Nibelungen, its methods, sources and style, Columbia University Germanic Studies, Columbia 1906, Vol.III No.1 pp.24-42.

(4) F. von der Hagen, Der Nibelungen Lied, erneuet und erklärt, Zweite umgearbeitete Auflage, Frankfurt am Main 1824.

instant revenge as the price of her hand, is responsible for the change in the character of Etzel, who, unlike the mild monarch of the epic, is savage and treacherous, and lives up to the reputation of the historical Attila for being the scourge of God. Instead of being unwittingly drawn into the conflict, he knowingly swears to avenge Chriemhild, and takes a far greater part in the catastrophe than he does in the epic. It is he who fires the hall, and who has Günther and Hagen killed.

Other compressions of events in time are neither so obvious, nor so striking, but they are considerable nevertheless. The whole action takes place in under two years. The wooing of Brunhild follows immediately on the events of the prologue. Between the wooing and the quarrel of the queens there is the space of about a year, for both Brunhild and Chriemhild have borne a son in the meantime. Seven months elapse between Siegfried's death and Chriemhild's second marriage, for Hagen greets Günther at the beginning of Act 4 with the words:-

'Wohl mir, mein Herr und König, dass ich Dich  
Nach sieben Monden endlich wiedersehe.'

In one place Raupach lengthens the amount of time allowed by the epic - three months pass between the quarrel and Siegfried's murder. There is no obvious reason for this departure from the source. Instead of making the Saxon war an invention of Hagen's, as the epic does, he has made of it a real war, which Hagen uses as a pretext, and he may have wished, by leaving a three months' interval, to make the war seem less of a useful coincidence. His reason for making the war real and not invented was perhaps to combine Hagen's pretext for discovering Siegfried's secret with Günther's absence (which occurs later in the Nibelungenlied), during which Hagen steals the Nibelungen treasure from Chriemhild. In any case Günther's absence and return are a useful dramatic device, for Hagen's report to Günther tells the audience what has happened since Siegfried's death.

The majority of other changes can be accounted for by an effort to tidy up the loose ends of the plot and to explain what the epic leaves obscure and uncertain. A characteristic of all Raupach's work is this attempt to motivate and explain everything, even the supernatural, plainly and

unambiguously. This leads him to avoid any half-lights or suggestion, and it was this of which Hebbel complained in his criticism of Der Nibelungenhort:-

'Denn, wie alle, denen die Einsicht in die Natur des Mythos versagt ist, will er das Ungeheure, das auf Glauben rechnen muss, weil es alles Mass überschreitet, motivieren, und lässt dabei die Momente, wo die Recken zum Menschlichen zurückkehren, und wo der Dichter sie dem Gemüt näherzuführen vermag, unbenutzt.' (1)

Thus Brunhild's girdle, which was, in the Nibelungenlied, unconnected with her superhuman strength, and was at the most a symbol of her virginity, in which her powers lay, is made by Raupach into a definite magical property. Thus Brunhild's strength lies not in herself, but in something extraneous. Raupach also attempts to explain Brunhild's position, and instead of being a mysterious queen of unknown parentage from a mysterious land, she is an energetic and obstinate woman, fond of undertaking Viking raids, whose father and mother are responsible for the conditions of her marriage, and whose land is appraised by Günther immediately he arrives as being economically very profitable (Act 1, Sc.1). There is no glamour or mystery about this Brunhild, and equally there is no hint of a relationship with Siegfried. Her enmity towards Chriemhild spring solely from envy of her wealth. In this way Raupach avoids the difficulties of explaining a relationship between Brunhild and Siegfried at the expense of degrading the former's character. Certainly the Brunhild of the Nibelungenlied is a difficult character to make convincing in a modern drama, and a further difficulty is that after Siegfried's murder she fades into the background and is scarcely mentioned again. A dramatist cannot allow such an important character to disappear without trace, and Raupach solved the problem by giving Brunhild a larger share in Siegfried's murder, and a part in the final catastrophe. Brunhild is present at Siegfried's death, although the actual murder is done without witnesses (there is no obvious reason for this departure from the source), and she urges Chriemhild's marriage to Etzel. The result is that Chriemhild's hatred is turned more against her, than against Hagen or Günther, and she

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(1) Der Wanderer 'Theaterwoche' Jan.26th.1853. (W.XII P.19).



thinks more of humiliating Brunhild than of killing Hagen. In the final catastrophe Brunhild is captured while defending herself and her son, pleads for his life, but drowns herself and him in the Rhine rather than admit that he is a bastard. This solution to the problem of Brunhild's end is developed logically, and the behaviour of Brunhild and Chriemhild agrees with their characters. On the other hand, Chriemhild's character is degraded one step more and Hagen loses his original importance as Chriemhild's chief opponent. He has shrunk altogether in this drama from a protagonist of dark grandeur and daemonic force to a well-meaning and loyal vassal, who gives a great deal of good advice.

There are other minor changes. There is no question, in the quarrel scene, of Brunhild's believing that Siegfried is a vassal. The cause of the quarrel is purely the amount of personal wealth. A scene has been invented, in which Chriemhild discovers Brunhild's girdle and forces Siegfried to tell her where it came from - in the epic it is merely stated that Siegfried gave the girdle to his wife and told her the secret. Hagen not only steals the treasure from Chriemhild when Günther is away, but he also immediately sinks it in the Rhine, without Günther's permission, and refuses to tell anyone where to find it. Hagen also sends Chriemhild's son to Siegfried's father, but refuses to send Chriemhild after him, which angers both Brunhild and Chriemhild. Raupach presumably made Hagen and not Chriemhild send the child away to save her from the charge of lacking mother-love.

Many changes are made in the final battle, partly on account of the need for compression, partly because of Raupach's conception of the characters. Some of the changes have already been indicated. Others are that there are only two attacks, one by the Huns and one by Dietrich's men (it is nowhere suggested that all the Huns are killed in the first attack), that Günther and Hagen are captured before the rest (sleeping in another hall) are killed, that Etzel sets fire to this hall after their capture in order to kill the rest, and that finally Chriemhild, after a long monologue of regret for her lost innocence, kills Etzel and is killed by the Huns, while Dietrich suddenly takes command.

For the Prologue Raupach used as sources the Lied des Hürnen Seyfried and the Edda. The Seyfriedslied, a crude poem of the sixteenth century relates one of Siegfried's youthful adventures as follows. Kriemhild, sister of King Gunther of Worms, is kidnapped by a dragon, who is a man transformed by a jealous woman and who will in five years regain human form. Siegfried comes by chance to the dragon's lair. Eugel, the dwarf king and owner of the Nibelung treasure, which he and his brothers have stolen from their father, warns Siegfried of the dangers ahead. Siegfried fights and overcomes the giant Kuperan with the help of the Tarnkappe Eugel gives him. He then fights and kills the dragon and releases Kriemhild, who has fainted through fear. Eugel prophesies coming misfortune. Siegfried finds the treasure, and, thinking it belonged to the dragon, takes it with him to Worms.

Raupach takes over the essentials of the Seyfriedslied, the kidnapping of Chriemhild, Siegfried's fight with the dragon, helped by the dwarf king, and his subsequent wooing, but leaves out all that is repetitive or obscure, such as the fight with Kuperan and Siegfried's previous acquaintance with Chriemhild. He links up this adventure with the following events by bringing Günther and his followers on the scene immediately after the fight.

True to his habit of explaining even the supernatural as rationally as possible, Raupach puts into the mouth of Eugel a clear account of the history of the treasure, combining the accounts given in the Seyfriedslied and in the Edda. The treasure originally belonged to the dwarfs, until stolen by Hreidmar and his two sons. Fafnir kills his father and his brother Regin flees, whereupon Fafnir is turned into a dragon for his crimes, but we are told that after a certain time he will regain human form. The names Hreidmar, Fafnir and Regin, and the story of the killing of one and the flight of another are taken from the Eddie lay Reginsmól, but whereas in the Edda Regin sends out Siegfried to kill the dragon Fafnir, Siegfried in Der Nibelungenhort has no knowledge of Regin and comes upon the dragon by chance. In the Seyfriedslied it is the dwarfs who have driven out their father and appropriated the treasure, while the dragon has nothing to do with it. In Raupach's drama Eugel is the victim of the dragon, and he hands the treasure to Siegfried as a reward for killing it, at the same time warning him of the

scenes in the final struggle. Many of these things are mentioned in passing, or implied, or described afterwards. We hear something of Siegfried's youth in his delightful account of what his mother says of him in S.T. Act 2, Sc.6. The Saxon war is represented as having taken place on the journey to Brunhild and is discussed by Giselher, Rumolt and Siegfried in the first two scenes of S.T. Act 2. The preparations for Brunhild's reception are hinted at in S.T. Act 2, Sc.1. We hear of Kriemhild's wedding from Rüdiger's daughter Gudrun (Kr.R. Act 2, Sc.3). The result of the battles which take place between Acts 4 and 5 of Kriemhilds Rache is shown in Dietrich's catalogue of the slain in Act 5, Sc.6, which also serves to throw light on Kriemhild's implacable determination. This is, in fact, an important aspect of Hebbel's technique. A fact which is not represented on the stage, and therefore has to be told, is used at the same time to illuminate something else. Thus Ute's dream of the dead birds on the eve of the journey to the Huns is not narrated at the time, but is told to Kriemhild by her messengers, and her reaction to it reveals her feelings.

Hebbel also cut down the amount of time required as much as possible, leaving out Siegfried's journey home with Kriemhild, and placing the quarrel on the morning after the wedding, and also cutting down the amount of time between Siegfried's death and Kriemhild's revenge. It is, for instance, in the seventh and not the thirteenth year of her marriage to Etzel that Kriemhild invites her brothers.

Other things are omitted, or merely narrated, which were impossible to show on the stage, such as the contest between Gunther and Brunhild, Siegfried's letting loose a wild bear among the servants on the hunt, and the race to the spring which precedes the murder in the epic, Hagen's meeting with the mermaids and the killing of the boatman. The following battle with the boatman's overlord is left out altogether as being unimportant. Many minor characters are only mentioned, or omitted altogether, for instance, Siegfried's parents, Ortwin, Blödel, Irnfried, Gere, Hawart, Hunolt and Pilgrim. Certain events are compressed. The three stages of the quarrel are combined into one, and Rüdiger's two interviews with Kriemhild are also combined into one. Only one of Kriemhild's two dreams before Siegfried's death is mentioned.

the chaplain and Dietrich von Bern. Both Brunhild and Dietrich play an important part in the epic, but they have there none of the symbolic significance with which Hebbel invests them. To Brunhild he has given back some of the supernatural qualities she has in the Norse poems and has lost in the medieval epic. The account of her birth and the future in store for her are inventions based on Norse ideas. Like the Brynhild of the Edda her dwelling is surrounded by flames, and Brynhild has the gift of prophecy which Brunhild is promised in her vision. Brynhild has knowledge of runes; Brunhild also studies them, and her fate is connected with a runic tablet.

The chaplain plays only a small part in the epic and Hebbel has expanded his rôle considerably. He has given him in S.T. Act 2, a small scene with Siegfried in which he indicates the superficiality of the Christian belief among the Burgundians, and in S.T. Act 4, Sc.8, he has a longer scene in which he tells of his own conversion and preaches the power of faith and forgiveness. But his greatest scene is at the end of Act 5 when he confronts Kriemhild with the demands and ideals of the Christian church, which she rejects in her cry for justice - a development of the episode of Siegfried's burial in the Nibelungenlied which is entirely Hebbel's own.

After the chaplain's disappearance in Kriemhilds Rache Dietrich takes over his rôle in a different form. In the epic Dietrich is a king driven out of his own land by treachery, the greatest knight at Etzel's court and the only man capable of defeating Hagen and Gunther. In Hebbel's drama he is greater still, for he has come to serve Etzel of his own free will, although he is, according to Etzel and Hildebrand (Act 3, Sc.3, Act 5, Sc.13), the strongest man in the world. Because he has thus conquered himself he is able, in the name of Christ, to take over the burden of rule from Etzel, who can no longer support it. Thus Hebbel's drama ends on a note of hope, while the only conclusion of the epic is that 'diu liebe leide zaller jungeste gît.' (1)

Dietrich's character is brought out and emphasised in many small incidents and anecdotes. By introducing him at Bechlarn, for example, instead of at Etzelburg as in the epic, Hebbel has both increased his importance in

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(1) Der Nibelunge Not ed. by K. Bartsch, Leipzig 1870, Verse 2378.

the action and ennobled his character, for he makes the journey of his own free will to warn the Burgundians.

In working out this idea of the struggle between paganism and Christianity, Hebbel turned to the Edda as a source. But he took from it not so much incidents as ideas and motifs from the Norse mythology and folklore, often changing them to suit his own purpose. After he had thought out his conception of Brunhild as a mixture of Norn and Valkyrie, he was pleased to find that, according to Grimm, the two had originally been indistinguishable.<sup>(1)</sup> Volker's imaginative description of Brunhild (Vorspiel Sc.1) is an invention of Hebbel's, based on the northern belief in runic magic. The blood of the dragon which Siegfried kills gives him invulnerability when he bathes in it, and understanding of bird-language when he tastes it; this is a combination of the Norse and German versions. These are some examples of the way in which Hebbel adapted ideas from the northern sources for his own purposes. There are many others. The whole story of Siegfried's previous visit to Brunhild is suggested by the Eddic poems which relate how Sigurd found a Valkyrie sleeping in a ring of fire and betrothed himself to her, and how Gudrun's (Kriemhild's) mother made him forget this by giving him a magic drink. Hebbel's version, however, is original, for he dispenses with the magic drink and the betrothal by making Siegfried turn back after seeing Brunhild, but before she sees him.

Almost at the same time as Hebbel, Emanuel Geibel also wrote a drama on the Nibelungen legend.<sup>(2)</sup> Each disapproved of the other's work; but this was not surprising, as each had approached the subject from a different angle. Geibel's answer to the problems of the material was to dramatise only one episode, and to strip his characters as far as possible of their supernatural qualities. He therefore deprived Siegfried of his invulnerability and his adventures with dragons and dwarfs, and Brunhild of her mysterious origin, and he substituted a mere change of armour for the trick with the Tarnkappe. But he could not eliminate everything superhuman -

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(1) cf. Letter to Uechtritz, 21st. Nov. 1856, (Br. V. No. 557).

(2) Brunhild Stuttgart 1858.

Brunhild had to retain her great strength - and so, in spite of many beauties in the verse, and of subtlety in the psychological motivation, his drama stands awkwardly, neither wholly on the human nor the superhuman plane. Hebbel compared Geibel's Brunhild, with some truth, to a whale among butterflies<sup>(1)</sup>. Moreover, although Geibel places the emphasis on Brunhild, we cannot help remembering that the legend does not end with her death, and the vision of Sigrun at the end is a poor substitute for the second half of the epic.

(1) Illustrierte Zeitung Leipzig May 15th. 1856, 'Literaturbrief' V. W. XII p. 166

their opinion of the tragedy as a drama, were united in praise of the performance. One critic wrote simply 'die Aufführung war ausgezeichnet.' (1)  
 The others<sup>(2)</sup> went into more details. All agreed that Sophie Schröder (Brunhild) and Löwe (Siegfried) left nothing to be desired. Sophie Müller (Chriemhild) was also much praised, but the critics felt that she was unable to give the character inner unity, owing to the contradictions within the character itself, in particular the sudden and unmotivated repentance in the last act:-

'Die schwierigste Aufgabe aber, nicht nur an Umfang, sondern auch an inneren Gebrechen der Rolle, die gut zu machen waren, hatte wohl Dlle. Müller als Chriemhild. Wir können schon in dieser Beziehung nicht einen unbedingten Massstab an das Gelingen setzen, und das etwa Mangelnde um so leichter über den vielen Glanzstellen übersehen, die ihre Darstellung zierten.'  
 (Sammler).

Anschütz (Hagen) was greatly praised by the critic of Die Wiener Zeitschrift. The others, who considered that Raupach's portrayal of Hagen was not a success, commended the actor for doing his best in an impossible part. Heurteur (Günther) received more commiseration for the difficulty and thanklessness of his part than praise. The only other actors mentioned, both with approval, were Wilhelmi (Etzel) and Fichtner (Volker).

All three critics mentioned the beauty of the scenery and costumes, which were especially made for the drama and seem to have been unusually magnificent. The public, according to the critics, applauded heartily but not continuously. One reviewer gave an analysis of the applause:-

'Die drey ersten Acte waren sehr beyfällig gewürdigt, der Schluss des dritten Actes liess kalt. Im vierten fühlte sich das Publikum durch die tragischen Verhältnisse Chriemhilds abermals erwärmt, aber die Glut war nicht dauernd, und der Eindruck des letzten Actes verlöschte dieselbe wieder.' (3)

On the whole, however, the public was enthusiastic, for the same critic also noted:- 'Das Trauerspiel wurde indessen bereits mehrere Male bei vollem Hause wiederholt.'

(1) Der Morgenblatt. Tübingen, 1829, No.100.

(2) Der Sammler. Vienna, 1829, Nos.12-17, Die Wiener Zeitschrift. Vienna, 1829, Nos.16 and 17. Die Theaterzeitung. Vienna, 1829, No.12.

(3) Die Wiener Zeitschrift, 1828, No.17.

Genoveva, being a Catholic saint, was not allowed to appear on the stage of the Burgtheater, although she could be presented at any other theatre. The title of the play was, therefore, changed to Schuld und Busse and the characters were renamed. Genoveva became Magelona, Golo - Boso, Siegfried - Bertram, Drago - Wulfo; even Richsa, whose name does not occur in the original legend was changed to Prisca, and the child's name was altered from Schmerzenreich to Thränenreich. No other important alterations were made, but religious references were cut or altered throughout, and many expressions which were thought too strong were softened. For instance, in Richsa's speech in Act 2, Sc.2 about Genoveva's son:-

'Dein Söhnlein Herrin, ist gar unwohl heut,  
Es hat die ganze Nacht gestöhnt; ich meinte  
Es wär' der Alp, und macht' ihm über Stirn  
Und Mund und Brust des heiligen Kreuzes Zeichen,'

the reference to the cross was omitted. Genoveva's command to Emma in Act 2, Sc.3 :-

'Du, Emma, sag' dem Mönch, er soll zum Danke  
Für meines Herrn Erhaltung in der Schlacht  
Drei Messen lesen,,'

was altered to:-

'Man soll das Volk versammeln zum Gebet  
Für meines Herrn Erhaltung in der Schlacht.'

Similar changes were made throughout the drama, and all references to the cross which Eudo made for Genoveva, and which she afterwards put in her cave, were omitted.

Certain passages were cut, presumably in order to shorten the drama. Golo's monologue on his love at the end of Act 1 suffered in this way, as did Siegfried's monologue on the justice of his judgment in Act 4, Sc.3. The end of Act 5 also was much shortened. Genoveva's speech:-

'Nein, meine Lieben! Heisst mich nur willkommen'

was omitted, and so was the whole of the last scene, except for the last four lines, which, in a slightly changed form, were added to the end of the previous scene. This had the effect of considerably weakening the emphasis which Raupach laid on Genoveva's conversion to humility and love for her fellow men.



There were also a few additions to the drama. At the end of Act 2, for instance, in Golo's speech beginning:-

'Ha lustig, Teufel - lustig!'

the words -

'Ein Knecht? Ein Knecht?'

were cut and the following substituted:-

'Die Lieb' ist todt  
Du hast den Durst der Liebe nicht gestillt  
Der Durst nach Rache soll schon Kühlung finden.  
Ein Werkzeug Deiner Lust bin ich gewesen,  
Ein Werkzeug Deiner Thränen will ich werden.'

These lines serve to emphasise Golo's sudden change of feeling and his desire for revenge.

Golo's scene with the boy in the forest (Act 5, Sc.3) was slightly expanded. After the words:-

'Kinder tödt' ich nicht'

the following lines were added:-

Golo: Sprich! Waren sie allein?  
Knabe: Mit einer Magd.  
Golo: Gut! Weisst Du, wer ich bin?  
Knabe: Wie sollt' ich's wissen?  
Golo: Ich bin der Fürst der Finsterniss. Wenn je  
Dein Mund verrät, was Du gesehn, gehört,  
So bist Du mein, und ewig in der Hölle.'

In this way Golo's precautions lest his crime should be discovered (and the derangement of his mind) were stressed even more than in the original version.

Genoveva did not have the success of Der Nibelungenhort. One reviewer reported :-

'Gegenwärtiges Trauerspiel hat am Abende der ersten  
Aufführung kein gunstiges Schicksal erfahren; aber  
sich später in der Gunst des Publikums mehr befestigt.' (1)

This later popularity, however, did not continue, for the piece did not survive the seventh performance. The fault obviously lay in the drama itself, for Halirsch wrote:-

'Die Aufführung dieses Trauerspiels gehörte zu den  
besten, welche ich im tragischen Fache auf dieser  
Bühne gesehen habe,' (2)

(1) Der Sammler Vienna 1830, No.138.

(2) Die Theaterzeitung Vienna 1830, No.133-5.

and Ermin, the critic of Der Sammler, also praised the performance.

Both considered Julie Gley (Magelona) excellent, and Halirsch concluded :-

'Ihre Darstellung liess, als Ganzes betrachtet, kaum etwas zu wünschen über.'

Both also praised Löwe's Boso as beyond criticism and one of his best performances. Anschütz (Bertram) was commended particularly for his playing in the fifth act, in the first and fourth acts, on the other hand, he spoke too slowly. Neither considered Fichtner's Wulfo really successful. The actor, wrote Halirsch, was not yet mature enough for such a part. Ermin praised Mad. Lemberg for her performance as Frisca. Halirsch, on the other hand, thought that the hostility of the audience towards this character prevented her from giving her best. The other actors, not mentioned individually, were said to be satisfactory, as were also the costumes and scenery.

It is interesting to see how the opinions of the critics differed from those of an actor. Costenoble reported on the first night of Schuld und Busse in his diary. <sup>(1)</sup> He praised Julie Gley only moderately, and whereas Ermin particularly praised her performance in the third and fifth acts as 'ein tragisches Meisterstück', Costenoble was of the opposite opinion:-

'Julchen erfüllte die Anforderungen an eine Genoveva nur in den ersten Acten, wo der Leichtsinne vorherrscht, später, wo Todesangst und Verzweiflung eintritt, machte sie wieder ihre Theaterfaxen in zuckenden, abgerissenen Silben und Lauten.'

He was also far from considering Boso to be one of Löwe's best parts. 'Löwe mühte sich mit seinem Golo, der hier Boso heisst, schrecklich ab, und erzielte nicht viel.' Mad. Lemberg, far from giving a good performance, declaimed her rôle 'mit möglichstem Fleiss, aber ohne den Geist des Dichters erfasst zu haben.' Fichtner was criticised much more severely than in the journals and only Anschütz was praised without reservation.

Costenoble also reported that the audience on the first night behaved badly and did not hesitate to show its disapproval. Ermin thought the fault lay with the drama. Costenoble, on the other hand, sought the cause in

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(1) Aus dem Burgtheater, C.L.Costenoble, Vienna 1889, 29th Oct. 1830.

the bad taste of the public:-

'Das Publikum begriff die Dichtung Raupachs nicht, und belachte manches, was unsereinen schaudern machte und tief bewegte.'

His high opinion of Raupach's work led him to compare their reception of Genoveva with their reception of another unsuccessful drama:-

'Das Publikum lachte, applaudierte und zischte. Was lässt sich aber von einem Volk erwarten, das ehemals Kleists Prinzen von Hessen-Homburg förmlich ausgelacht hat? '

Chapter 8.The First Performances of  
Hebbel's 'Genoveva' and 'Die Nibelungen' in  
Weimar, Berlin and Vienna.

Genoveva, although written in 1841, did not appear on the stage for some years. Hebbel, commenting in 1852 on this fact, stated<sup>(1)</sup> that it was first performed in 1849, in Prague, in translation. Its first performance in German was at the Burgtheater in Vienna in 1854. Until that time, according to Hebbel, Raupach's Genoveva had stood in the way of its performance both in Vienna and in Berlin.<sup>(2)</sup> Another hindrance in Vienna was the director's dislike of Hebbel's work, for Heinrich Laube was convinced that Hebbel's dramas were unsuited to the stage and could never be successful. On the subject of Genoveva he wrote:-

'Es war ein Akt der Selbstverleugnung und der Billigkeit, welchen ich mir auferlegte, indem ich ein Stück von Hebbel in Szene setzte.'<sup>(3)</sup>

In spite of his initial reluctance, however, he determined to make an attempt with Genoveva, in order to satisfy the admirers of the poet.

Since the censorship still forbade the presentation of saints on the stage, the tragedy had to undergo extensive alterations. The difficulties connected with this adaption<sup>at</sup> caused Hebbel much worry,<sup>(4)</sup> although Laube found him helpful and ready to agree to all the necessary changes,<sup>(5)</sup> for the tragedy had to be considerably shortened, as well as altered to satisfy the censor.

As with Raupach's drama, the names of the chief characters were changed. Genoveva became Magellona, Golo - Bruno, Siegfried - Sigurd, Drago - Dankwart, Schmerzenreich - Emmerich. Genoveva's reference to baptism (1.256) was cut, as were also her reference to God and the saints

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(1) In a letter to Arnold Ruge, 15th.Sept.1852 (Br.V No.412)

(2) Ibid. cf. also Tgb.II No.2381.

(3) Das Burgtheater II, Gesammelte Werke, ed.by H.Houben, Leipzig 1908-9, Vol.30 p.50.

(4) Tgb.III No.5217, 28th Dec.1853.

(5) Das Burgtheater, ed.cit.p.56.

when blessing Golo's sword (11.773-6), Golo's 'Gottesmörder' (1.1555) and his blasphemous reference to the Saviour in the same scene (11.1482-5). In the same way all words with religious associations were altered throughout the play. Margarethe's speeches in particular suffered, for all her irreverent remarks were softened or omitted. For instance, her reply to Drago's ghost:-

'Ja, ich will's gesteh'n  
Doch nicht nach sieben Jahren, morgen schon  
Damit er, der mich zwingt, zum Lügner wird,'  
(11.2871-3)

was cut short at the beginning of the third line by Drago's words:-

'Du bringst die Lästerung nicht heraus.'

The alterations made in the name of decorum were more numerous, and affected mainly the parts of Golo and Margarethe. Golo's monologue in which he imagines Siegfried's return (11.1186-96) was cut, also part of his monologue in Genoveva's room; 11.1408-16, for instance, were transformed into:-

'Er flüstert ihr  
Etwas ins Ohr, sie drückt die kleine Hand  
Ihm auf den Mund, und als sie mich erblickt  
Erglüht sie.'

Margarethe's frank brutalities were much changed or omitted. (1)

'Das Vergnügen, das sie Sünde nennt'

became

'Eine Liebe, die sie Sünde nennt.'

Her explanation of Genoveva's behaviour at Golo's declaration of love (11.1604-26) was cut. The part where Margarethe and Katherina tell the servants of Genoveva's supposed adultery was so much abridged that it is remarkable that they understood at all:-

'Margarethe:	Bloss Ehebruch. Die Krankheit und die Unschuld paarten sich In süsser Sünde.	
Katherina:	In Dragos Armen.	Ja, die Gräfin liegt
Margarethe:		Oder lag darin. (11.1912-5)

became :-

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(1) cf. The omission of the term 'Bastard' in her description of Golo (1.1160).

in which she marvels over her hatred of Genoveva:-

'Sonderbar!  
Kein Häscher lebt im heiligen Römischen Reich  
Dem ich nur halb so gram bin  
Wie diesem Weibe, das mir gar nichts tat.'

Another monologue by Margarethe was also inserted in Act 3, Sc.4. This clarifies her motives by emphasizing <sup>is</sup> her grudge against the rich and fortunate, and her bitterness at her own poverty.

As a result of these alterations the drama was reduced from four thousand verses to two thousand three hundred, <sup>(1)</sup> and the version which the Viennese public saw thus differed considerably from the printed text. In spite of this the first performance on January 20th.1854 was a great success. 'Ich wurde nach jedem Act und am Schluss zwei Mal gerufen,' <sup>(2)</sup> noted Hebbel in his diary. In a letter to Gutzkow he spoke of an 'eben so nachhaltiger als glänzender Erfolg', <sup>(3)</sup> and to Röttscher he wrote that the tragedy was attracting full houses. <sup>(4)</sup> This success, however, did not last, for the drama disappeared from the repertory after the sixth performance; according to the Salzburger Kirchenzeitung it was forbidden on religious grounds. <sup>(5)</sup> Laube no doubt made little effort to prevent its disappearance, indeed he claimed that the tragedy had no real success. <sup>(6)</sup>

Only two critics agreed with him, however. <sup>(7)</sup> These, while admitting the enthusiasm of the audience on the first night, considered that this indicated only a 'succès d'estime' and doubted whether later performances would be so well attended. Other critics, <sup>(8)</sup> on the contrary, reported that the enthusiasm of the public was growing with each performance, and this agreed

(1) cf. Hebbel's letter to Laube, Dec.2nd.1855 (Br.V. No.454).

(2) Tgb.III No.5220

(3) 26th Jan.1854 (Br.V.No.457).

(4) 10th Feb.1854 (Br.V.No.458).

(5) cf. Hebbel's letter to Schoenbach, April 19th.1854 (Br.V No.462) Meine Magellona ist nach sechs vollen Häusern wieder verschwunden, wenigstens einstweilen. Ich wusste anfangs nicht, warum, aber die Salzburger Kirchenzeitung gab bald Auskunft: sie ist aus sogenannten kirchlichen Gründen verboten.

(6) Das ihm wohlwollende Publikum geht bereitwillig an die geistigen Strahlen und weiss sich nicht zu erklären warum sein Anteil so rettungslos ermattet. .... Das Stück erhielt sich dann nicht, und was schlimmer; ich war für immer abgeschreckt von diesem dramatischen Dichter (Burgtheater, ed.cit.p.54).

(7) Recensionen, Vienna, 1854 No.6; Wiener Lloyd, Vienna 1854, No.18.

(8) Der Humorist, Vienna, 1854, No.19; Die Wiener Zeitung, Vienna, 1854 No.21; Der Wanderer, Vienna, 1854, Nos.37, 47; Die Ostdeutsche Post, Vienna, 1854 Nos.18, 20.

with Hebbel's own observations.

The opinions of the critics on the production varied considerably according to their opinion of the drama. It was generally considered that Wagner's performance as Bruno, though good at the beginning, lacked conviction towards the end. Hebbel, in the letter to Röttscher referred to above, had a higher opinion of him, but also thought him best at the beginning. Saphir,<sup>(1)</sup> on the other hand, whose high opinion of the tragedy led him to judge the interpretations of the actors more severely than his colleagues did, thought Wagner's performance uniformly bad.

Christine Hebbel (Magellona), on the other hand, he considered excellent. The other critics also praised her, but felt that she was not suited to the part. This feeling was summed up by the critic of Recensionen:-

'Gewiss begreift Frau Hebbel das eigentliche Wesen der Rolle ganz gut, aber wir zweifeln sehr, ob die geistreiche Künstlerin dasselbe zur Klarheit zu bringen vermöchte, indem bei ihr alles - Organ, Gestalt, Geberde - dem Bilde, das wir uns von der Heldin des Stückes entwerfen, zu sehr widerspricht.'

Opinions on Löwe (Sigurd) varied remarkably. Saphir, for instance, thought him excellent, and wished he had taken Wagner's part, while other critics considered him weak. Julie Rettich's Margarethe was praised by the critic of the Wiener Lloyd, but the others agreed that her performance was not convincing. Saphir blamed the actress - 'Sie konnte sich nicht in den Ton der Dämonologie zurecht finden.' The critic of Der Wanderer, on the other hand, whose opinion of the drama was lower than Saphir's, considered that she had done her best with an impossible part. The only actor who was generally praised was La Roche, whose acting as Der Tolle Klaus was said to be admirable. The other actors were not mentioned, except by the critic of Recensionen, who regarded them as satisfactory and especially praised Körner (Dankwart) and Franz (Caspar).

The next performance of Genoveva was in Weimar in 1858, when Hebbel's

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(1) Der Humorist, loc. cit.

Genoveva and Matkowsky Golo. The actress was greatly praised, but Matkowsky was said to lack the daemonic force necessary for his part.<sup>(1)</sup> It is interesting that the critics were on this occasion greatly impressed by the epilogue, which the Viennese critics had dismissed as an unfortunate concession to public taste.

Die Nibelungen was first performed at Weimar, the first two parts on January 31st. 1861, and the third part on May 18th of the same year. Laube was not anxious to attempt a production, and Hebbel neither hoped nor really wished for a performance in Vienna.<sup>(2)</sup> Dingelstedt, on the other hand, was eager to have the honour of first producing the work, although he was doubtful about the ability of his actors.<sup>(3)</sup> Hebbel shared his doubts, but after some hesitation, he finally gave his permission.

In January Frau Hettstedt played Brunhild and Frl. Daun Kriemhild, but in the full performance of the trilogy in May, Christine Hebbel, having obtained leave from the Burgtheater, played Brunhild in Siegfrieds Tod and Kriemhild in Kriemhilds Rache. W. Landgrebe, in his work on Hebbel's Nibelungen on the stage,<sup>(4)</sup> states that cuts were made mainly for the purpose of shortening the drama, but a few were made in the interests of decorum, or in the interests of the actors. Many of the references to Brunhild's unusual strength, for example, were omitted, as the <sup>first</sup> actress was small and delicate.

Dingelstedt, who was at his best when producing a play which contained large numbers of people and lent itself to visual effect,<sup>(5)</sup> took great pains over the trilogy. The repeated praise in the local press<sup>(6)</sup> of the scenery, technical effects and crowd scenes, showed that he had been

(1) cf. Die Magazin für Literatur, Berlin, 1897 No.3 and Die Vossische Zeitung, Berlin, 1897 Jan.15th.

(2) Letter to Uechtritz, 20th. July 1860, (Br.VI No.684).

(3) Letter to Hebbel, 7th Dec.1859, (Hebbels Briefwechsel mit Freunden und berühmten Zeitgenossen [afterwards referred to as Bw] ed. F.Bamberg. Berlin, 1890-92 Vol.II p.58)

(4) Hebbels Nibelungen auf der Bühne, Forschungen zur Literatur- Theater- und Zeitungswissenschaft, Oldenburg 1927.

(5) cf. R.Roencke, Franz Dingelstedts Wirksamkeit an dem Weimarer Hoftheater, Greifswald, 1912.

(6) Die Weimarer Zeitung, 1861, Nos.30, 31, 115, 117; Die Leipziger Illustrierte Zeitung, 1861, No.936.



successful. Indeed, the production was a great event. 'Die beiden Abende machten Sensation im ganzen Thüringer Lande', wrote Dingelstedt, 'Unser stilles Weimar summt wie ein Bienenkorb.'<sup>(1)</sup> Court circles and general public were equally enthusiastic. Hebbel's letters tell of the praise he received from the Duke and other eminent men,<sup>(2)</sup> while the critics bear witness to the approval of the audiences. The success was lasting, for Hebbel wrote to Gustav Kühne in 1863 that the trilogy had been performed four times in nine months, 'das ist so viel, wie in einer grossen Stadt 20 mal, und geht über den fatalen succès d'estime bedeutend hinaus.'<sup>(3)</sup>

The critic of Die Weimarer Zeitung had nothing but praise for all the performers. In particular he singled out Lehfeld (Hagen) and Frau Hettstedt, who, though hampered by an appearance which made her unsuited to play Brunhild, gave a brilliant performance. His greatest praise, however, he reserved for Christine Hebbel, in whom he found 'eine Künstlerin von ächtrtragischer Kraft', well suited by her appearance and her gifts to the parts of Brunhild and Kriemhild. The critic of Die Leipziger Illustrierte Zeitung, on the other hand, felt that the sharpness of her delivery sometimes destroyed the illusion.

The first two parts were performed in Berlin on December 15th 1862. Landgrebe<sup>(4)</sup> states that the Berlin version followed closely that of Weimar. The main alteration was at the end of Siegfrieds Tod, where, after Hebbel's last line - 'Es mag geschehn! Denn hier ist's überzahlt!' six others were added in which Kriemhild swore to avenge her husband. These verses, which are in the style of conventional theatrical rhetoric, were presumably included in order to remind the audience of Kriemhild's vengeance, since the third part was not to be performed. All the critics agreed that the production was a

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(1) Literarisches Bilderbuch, ed.cit. p.228.

(2) To Christine, 2nd. Feb. 1861 (Br.VII No.703), 3rd. Feb. 1861 (Br.VII No.704).

(3) 9th March, 1863 (Br.VII No.850)

(4) Hebbels Nibelungen auf der Bühne, ed. cit.

great success.<sup>(1)</sup> Even Karl Frenzel,<sup>(2)</sup> who felt that the work was not moving, and claimed that the majority of the audience agreed with him, was forced to admit the enthusiasm of the applause, which, however, he ascribed to the efforts of a claue.

The Berlin press was more interested in criticising the drama<sup>(3)</sup> than in commenting on the performance. The majority felt that the production was a daring but successful venture on the part of the court theatre. The most praised among the actors were Hendrichs (Siegfried), Fräulein Pellet (Kriemhild) and Frau Jachmann-Wagner (Brunhild), and of the others Berndal (Gunther) and Frau Crelinger (Ute) were mentioned with approval. Kaiser (Hagen) was unfavourably criticised, 'Er war zu unruhig, hastig, vielbeweglich', wrote Frenzel, and the critic of the Vossische Zeitung complained that he exaggerated Hagen's villainy.

'Die Nibelungen machen viel Spectakel', wrote Hebbel to Campe on May 1st. 1862, 'so viel, dass Freund Laube schon gegen meine Frau erklärt hat, er werde sie im nächsten Herbst geben.'<sup>(4)</sup> The successes in Weimar and Berlin made Laube willing to risk a production in Vienna, although he was convinced that Hebbel's plays would never be popular. The first two parts only were performed on February 19th 1863, some months later than Hebbel had expected in his letter. The third part was not given until 1871, after Laube had left the Burgtheater.

Although the censorship had become much less stringent since 1848, it was still necessary to cut the two parts severely, since prologue and five act drama had to fit into one evening. The censor was presumably responsible for the omission of most of Hagen's remarks on religion at the beginning of the prologue, and for the cutting of the chaplain's speech in S.T. Act 5 Sc.7 (ll. 2628-35), together with a few other small changes, such as:-

'Gedenk' der ewigen Barmherzigkeit'

instead of

'Gedenke dessen, der am Kreuz vergab'

(S.T. 1. 2704)

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- (1) Die Neue Preussische Zeitung, Berlin, 1862 Dec.16th; Die Spenersche Zeitung, Berlin, 1862 Dec.17th; Die Vossische Zeitung, Berlin, 1862 Dec.17th.  
 (2) Die Nationalzeitung, Berlin, 1862 Dec.17th.  
 (3) This aspect will be discussed in Chapter 9.  
 (4) Br.VII No.784.

Other changes were made for theatrical reasons. Certain minor scenes were completely omitted; the scene between Wulf and Truchs, for instance, (Act 2 Sc.7), and the first two scenes of Act 3, together with the procession. In Act 5 the change of scene to the cathedral was omitted, and the act ended in Kriemhild's apartments. At the end of Act 4 Sc.1, eight lines were added in which Hagen explains his plot. These verses, which are trite and unnecessary, are unlikely to have been written by Hebbel.<sup>(1)</sup> The conclusion of the drama was expanded, eight lines from Kriemhilds Rache (ll. 3212-19) being added after Kriemhild's words:-

'Ich bitte um Gericht',

and the six lines found in the Berlin version being added at the end.

In Kriemhilds Rache the cuts were made almost entirely for the purpose of shortening the drama. In Act 4 alone four whole scenes were omitted (Scenes 7, 16, 17, 18); a large part of the first scene at Bechlarn was also cut and the change from 'Empfangssaal' to 'Schlosshof' in Act 3 was avoided.

Some alterations were made in order to make parts more comprehensible or to make the staging easier. Siegfried in the prologue, for instance, referred to Kriemhild's 'volle Locken' instead of 'goldene Locken' (l. 463), presumably because, as the pictures of her as Kriemhild show, Charlotte Wolter had dark hair. The flower which Kriemhild picks for Brunhild (S.T. Act 2 Sc.6) was named, so that the audience should know what it was.

The first performance was again an undoubted success. 'Neun mal gerufen und nicht einmal gekommen',<sup>(2)</sup> noted Hebbel, who had refused to be present on the opening night. He saw the next performance himself, however, and wrote:-

'Gesteckt voll, grosse Aufmerksamkeit, nicht  
einmal Gelächter bei der Nachahmung der Vogelstimmen.  
Ich wurde wieder fünf Mal gerufen.' (2)

At the third performance the house was so full 'dass kein Apfel zur Erde konnte',<sup>(3)</sup>

(1) See W.XIII Anhang I p.358.

(2) Tgb. IV. No.6084.

(3) Tgb. IV. No.6087.

and all seats for the fourth performance were sold.

Laube, on the other hand, maintained that Die Nibelungen never attracted full houses, and that such success as it had was due to Charlotte Wolter's acting.<sup>(1)</sup> Since, however, the critics were unanimous in reporting that the drama was a great success, Laube may be thought to have been blinded by his conviction that no work of Hebbel's could possibly be successful.

Although all the critics agreed that the production was on the whole good, and worthy of the drama, their opinions on individual actors varied considerably. While Emil Kuh,<sup>(2)</sup> for instance, felt that Gabillon had made Hagen too much of a villain - his innate defiance 'bekam durch Herrn Gabillon eine Färbung, als ob uns ein nackter Bösewicht gegenüberstände' - another critic<sup>(3)</sup> considered him not wicked enough - 'Herr Gabillon war ein zwar etwas ungeschlachter, aber höchst zahmer Hagen'. Similar differences of opinion were expressed over Charlotte Wolter's Kriemhild, some critics considering her better at the beginning of the drama<sup>(4)</sup> and some at the end.<sup>(5)</sup> Opinions also differed on Wagner (Siegfried). Michael Klapp<sup>(6)</sup> complained that he represented no more than 'einen anständigen Theaterhelden', and that his interpretation of the part lacked simplicity, while another critic<sup>(7)</sup> praised him for attaining 'den rechten Ton jener edlen Naivetät, die den jungen König der Nibelungen auszeichnet'.

All were agreed, however, that Christine Hebbel's Brunhild was unsatisfactory. Her most forthright critic was Michael Klapp, who spoke of 'einen Aufwand von Leidenschaft, der für den bürgerlichen Hausbrauch kaum ausreicht, um wie viel weniger ein Riesenweib auszufüllen vermag'. But when the critics considered Sonnenthal (Gunther) varying opinions were again heard.

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(1) cf. Das Burgtheater ed. cit. p.194.

(2) Die Presse, Vienna, 1863 Nos. 49, 51.

(3) Der Wanderer, Vienna, 1863 No.51.

(4) Ibid., also Die Ostdeutsche Post, Vienna, 1863 Nos.51-2.

(5) Die Presse, No.51, and Die Constitutionelle Oesterreichische Zeitung, Vienna, 1863 No.85.

(6) Die Ostdeutsche Post, No.52.

(7) Der Botschafter, Vienna, 1863 No.51.

One critic<sup>(1)</sup> praised him for the dignity with which he played a thankless part, while another<sup>(2)</sup> dismissed him with these words:-

'Herr Sonnenthal stellte den König Gunther noch tiefer als ihn schon der Dichter gestellt hat, das heisst, er liess ihn ganz fallen.'

Julie Rettich (Ute) was the only person whose performance was praised by all. The other actors received only fleeting mention, and scenery and general production were not commented on at all.

In 1871, under Dingelstedt's direction, the first two parts were revived and performed together with the third part for the first time. Unlike the critics of Laube's production, Gaiger, who reviewed the 1871 production in Der Morgenpost,<sup>(3)</sup> commented at length on the scenery, grouping and general production:-

'So weit die Dichtung ein Prachtgewand verträgt, ist es ihr gegeben worden, und was in ihr dunkel geblieben, das wurde durch Nachhilfe in der Dekoration, im Comparsenwerk u.s.w. in einer Art, die von einer Vorliebe und einem tiefen Vorstudium Zeugnis legt, dem Verständnisse des Publikums näher gerückt.'

He also praised Dingelstedt's return to the original text, for the director produced S.T. Act 5 as it was written, with the change of scene to the cathedral.

The first performance of Kriemhilds Rache was a gala event and, as had been expected, an unqualified success. Production and acting were better than in the first two parts:-

'Die schauspielerische Darstellung von Kriemhilds Rache musste in ihrer fast tadellosen Art jede Erwartung um so mehr überraschen, als die Aufführung der beiden ersten Theile der Trilogie eine nicht ganz tadelsfreie war.'

In particular Gaiger praised Förster (Rüdiger), Hallenstein (Dietrich), Franz (Hildebrand) and Mitterwurzer (Etsel), but above all Charlotte Wolter and Gabillon. For these two he considered no praise too high.

(1) Die Oesterreichische Zeitung, Vienna, 1863 No.85.

(2) Das Vaterland, Vienna 1863, No.45.

(3) Der Morgenpost, Vienna, 1871, 24th, 27th Sept.

'Die Ausführung ist in allen ihren Theilen, hauptsächlich aber in der Szenirung und im Dialoge, so vollkommen, dass sie jeden Einwurf von selbst widerlegt.' (1)

He considered that the legend as it stood was not suitable for dramatic treatment and that Raupach had, therefore, wisely changed the character of the heroine:-

'Diese Veränderung ist auch keineswegs beleidigend; sie ist nur ein leichter Schatten, mit Künstlerblick und Künstlerhand vertheilt, weil er nothwendig war.'

In the whole drama he found only two small faults, one being the fact that Golo was too given to reflection and self-analysis - an interesting criticism in view of the fact that it has often also been directed against Hebbel's Golo. The other fault was that the character of Drago and his part in the plot were unconvincing and unnecessary.

The critic of Ermin of Der Sammler (2) was by no means so enthusiastic. He felt in the first place that Raupach had been at fault in his choice of material:

'Streift man, wie es Raupach gethan hat und thun musste, das Wunderbare von dem Stoffe ab, so bleibt in der That nichts mehr übrig, als eine gemeine Intrigue.'

The characters themselves were uninteresting, he considered, once the idea of the conflict between good and evil had been removed, and the character of Geneveva in particular was unconvincing:-

'Der Dichter hat ihr recht absichtlich eine tragische Schuld aufkleben wollen, und daher Züge an Züge gehäuft, wo es en wenigen schon genug gewesen wäre.'

Golo he regarded as 'der vollendetste Charakter des Stückes', but he found the fourth act weak, consisting only of unnecessary monologues and dialogues, and complained that the ending was not logically developed but came about by pure chance.

(1) Die Theaterzeitung, Vienna 1830, Nos.133-5.

(2) Der Sammler, Vienna, 1830, No.138.

(B)     Hebbel.

Although the critics of Raupach's time held many widely differing opinions about his works, the controversy about him was not as great as that which fell to Hebbel's lot throughout his life; and unlike Raupach, who maintained an aloof silence, Hebbel himself took part in the battle and attacked his critics in his aesthetic writings. Of the literary critics of the time, only a few recognised Hebbel's originality and praised his works; the majority, while allowing him great talent, tended to severity in their criticisms.

These criticisms followed a pattern; similar complaints were heard from many different critics at many different times during Hebbel's life. From Meyen's review of Judith in 1840,<sup>(1)</sup> and Gutzkow's of Genoveva in 1842<sup>(2)</sup> to the series of articles which Julian Schmidt wrote for Die Grenzboten<sup>(3)</sup> from 1847 to 1862 (and which roused Hebbel to reply in the Abfertigung eines ästhetischen Kannegiessers)<sup>(4)</sup> the same charges can be heard. Hebbel was too pessimistic, he was attracted only by abnormal people and pathological problems, his language was extravagant and sordid, he attacked morality, and he introduced modern problems into historical or legendary stories.<sup>(5)</sup> Meyen called Judith 'ein Conglomerat von psychologischen Empfindungen' and complained that Hebbel had planted 'moderne Elemente in einen Boden ..... wohin sie gar nicht gehören.' Gutzkow found in Genoveva 'etwas Fieberhaftes', 'eine krankhafte Stimmung' and considered that Hebbel intended to show in Golo the attractiveness

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(1) E. Meyen, Hallische Jahrbücher für deutsche Wissenschaft und Kunst. Leipzig, 1840 Nos.193-4.

(2) K. Gutzkow, Telegraph für Deutschland. Hamburg, 1842, Nos.203-4.

(3) Die Grenzboten, Leipzig 1847 Vol.1 pp.501-13; 1850, Vol.11 pp.721-33 1851, Vol.1 pp.493-504; 1862, Vol.IV p.172ff.

(4) W. XI p.387.

(5) cf. also R.Bollman, Blätter für literarische Unterhaltung (hereafter referred to as B.F.L.U.) Leipzig, 1847, Nos.335-40; R.Gottschall, Die deutsche Nationalliteratur in der ersten Hälfte des 19. Jahrhunderts. Breslau, 1855; A.Henneberger, Über das deutsche Drama der Gegenwart. Greifswald, 1853, and B.F.L.U. 1851, No.130; R.Prutz, Deutsches Museum. Halle, 1855, No.20.

of evil.<sup>(1)</sup> The feeling that Hebbel's interest in unusual characters and situations was unhealthy was so strong during the middle years of Hebbel's life, that more than one person seems to have seriously feared that Hebbel would follow in the steps of Hölderlin and Lenz.<sup>(2)</sup>

Julian Schmidt's articles are typical of the majority of the criticism which was hostile to Hebbel. Praise of 'die ursprüngliche Kraft, die grandiose Naturwahrheit' of Hebbel's works is followed by severe and detailed criticism, often of small, unimportant works. He complains that the problems Hebbel treats in his dramas are 'anonyme, individuelle Krankheitsgeschichten', that his characters are absorbed in one passion to the point of madness, and that instead of developing they jump from one extreme to the other, (as an example he cites *Gold*). He finds the world of *Maria Magdalena* repellent and all the characters immoral. Finally he comes to the conclusion that Hebbel, far from being 'Naturwahr' as he said in his first article, is a 'Verstandesdichter,' and that everything in his works is based on reflection and invention, not on reality. Hebbel, he says, is the extreme example of the modern tendency to delight in the sordid and unhealthy aspects of life, 'Seine Muse ist überall die Hyäne, die Leichen aufwühlt.'

It is no wonder that Hebbel was infuriated by this kind of criticism, but Schmidt, whose charges he answered, was only a little more outspoken than Treitschke, whose similar remarks in the *Preussische Jahrbücher* of 1860<sup>(3)</sup> he ignored. Treitschke speaks of Hebbel's love of abnormal problems, of an 'unnatürliches Überwiegen der Intention über die lebendige Ausführung', of situations which are 'gemacht und geklügelt', of unconvincing symbolism and the forced application of an unsuitable idea to an absurd fable.

Such critics, however, although in the majority, did not by any means represent the only view of Hebbel's works. Bamberg wrote some very favourable reviews, in particular a long article on *Maria Magdalena* in Röttscher's *Jahrbücher für dramatische Kunst*,<sup>(4)</sup> Röttscher also spoke favourably of the

(1) For Hebbel's indignant comment on this opinion cf. his letter to Campe, 28th. March, 1843, (Br.ll No.152).

(2) cf. *Die Grenzboten*, 1847 p.501-13; Hettner's letter to Keller of 17th Oct. 1850, (J.Bächtold, *Gottfried Kellers Leben*, Seine Briefe und Tagebücher. Berlin 1874-7, Vo.II p.140); and Braunthal's letter to Hebbel, 28th April, 1861, (Bw.ll p.374f.)

(3) *Preussische Jahrbücher*, Berlin, 1860, Vol.5 No.6, pp.552ff.

(4) *Jahrbücher für dramatische Kunst*, Berlin, 1848, Vol.I pp.135-50.



drama in a criticism of the performance in Berlin in 1848,<sup>(1)</sup> and he published a review of Ein Trauerspiel in Sizilien by Emil Pallaske in the same year, in which the writer, unlike most of the other critics, had nothing but praise for the work.<sup>(2)</sup>

Genoveva in particular, among many criticisms that were mostly unfavourable, received enthusiastic notices from Duller in Vaterland, an unnamed writer (probably W.Alexis)<sup>(3)</sup> in Blätter für literarische Unterhaltung<sup>(4)</sup> and from Deinhardstein in the Jahrbücher der Literatur.<sup>(5)</sup> All three praised the characterisation, particularly that of Golo and Genoveva, and the beauty of many individual scenes. Deinhardstein, almost alone among the critics, insisted that the tragedy was very suitable for stage performance. Alexis also praised the 'phantaastisches Colorit', which Duller felt was overdone and unconvincing. The latter was not alone in his opinion. The great majority of critics<sup>(6)</sup> had no comprehension for such figures as Margarethe and der tolle Klaus or for the appearance of Drago's ghost. The whole of the witch's scene in Act 4 was generally dismissed as unnecessary 'Hexenapparat':-

'Für die Eifersucht und die Rache hat der Mensch die Teufel  
in sich selbst; dazu bedarf es keines Zauberspiegels,  
keiner magischen Phantome'. (Gutzkow).

The other charges most commonly heard were that Hebbel had destroyed the naive atmosphere of the legend by introducing modern elements, (Vischer wrote that in this respect Hebbel 'verpfeffert und versalzt seinen Stoff derart, dass einem die Augen übergehen') and that the end of the tragedy was unsatisfactory. Critic after critic complained that the conclusion was 'Ein Ende mit schreiender Dissonanz',<sup>(7)</sup> and wished that Hebbel had not omitted the finding of Genoveva and Schmerzenreich.<sup>(8)</sup> Besides these specific criticisms there were

(1) Jahrbücher für dramatische Kunst, Berlin, 1848, Vol.II pp.145-54

(2) Ibid. Vol. I, pp.451-6

(3) Hebbel assumed he was the author. cf. Letter to Elise 17th Dec.1843 (Br.11 No.172)

(4) B.L.F.U. Oct.1843 Nos. 298-9.

(5) Jahrbücher der Literatur. Vienna, 1844 Vol.107 p.244.

(6) F.T.Vischer, Tübinger Jahrbücher, May 1847, pp.410ff.; K.Gutzkow, Telegraph für Deutschland, Hamburg, 1842 No.204; R.Bollman, B.L.F.U. 1847 No.339.

(7) A.Henneberger, Über das deutsche Drama der Gegenwart, ed. cit. p.69.

(8) F.T.Vischer, Tübinger Jahrbücher. loc. cit.; R.Bollman, B.L.F.U. 1847 No.338; R.Gottschall, Das deutsche Nationalliteratur. ed.cit. p.354  
H.Treitschke, Preussische Jahrbücher, loc. cit. p.553.

the usual charges of abnormality, exaggeration and repellent imagery. Henneberger summed up this feeling when he wrote:-

'Die Liebhaberei, seine Metaphern von verfaulten Leichnamen, Würmern, und dergleichen Hässlichkeiten herzunehmen ist nur ein weiteres Symptom der pessimistischen Sucht, die Welt auf den Kopf zu stellen und dann über das selbstgeschaffene Schreckbild in Verzweiflung die Hände zu ringen.'

Among most of the critics, however, there was the recognition that whatever its faults, Genoveva was a work of considerable talent and contained many individual beauties. The characters of Genoveva and Siegfried, and the scenes of the first act in particular were often praised.<sup>(1)</sup> The thundering disapproval of the ultra-Catholic journal Der Zuschauer, which called the tragedy 'ein geistiges Monstrum ..... ein ziemlich hohles Werk, das vor dem Auge des Kenners in Phrasen und eitel Flickwerk zerfällt',<sup>(2)</sup> is an isolated example of unusual incomprehension, as is the common-sense approach of the critic of Die Presse, who considered that the drama contained no conflict:-

'Golo liebt, und Genoveva liebt ihn nicht wieder. Das ist kein Sieg der Sittlichkeit, keine Leistung der Pflicht; das ist ganz einfach ein zufälliger Mangel an einer bestimmten Empfindung.'<sup>(3)</sup>

The appearance of Die Nibelungen caused something of a revolution in the contemporary opinion of Hebbel. Critics who had always judged his works severely greeted the trilogy with surprise and approval. Julian Schmidt, for instance, saw in the drama 'ein neues Zeichen der Rückkehr Hebbels von den Experimenten des grübelnden Verstandes zur ächten lebendigen Dichtung.'<sup>(4)</sup> Henneberger also took the trilogy as proof that Hebbel had discarded all his earlier faults and eccentricities.<sup>(5)</sup> Both of them, while finding fault with unimportant details, praised the characterisation, the heroic atmosphere, and the religious theme, particularly the conclusion, which Henneberger found 'wahrhaft genial und von tief poetischem Gedankengehalt.' Hettner too, who in 1851 had stated that except for Judith and Maria Magdalena, Hebbel's works

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- (1) F.T.Vischer, Tübinger Jahrbücher, loc. cit.; O.Prechtler, Gegenwart. Berlin, 1846 No.1; Saphir, Der Humorist, Vienna 1854 No.19.  
 (2) Der Zuschauer, Vienna 28th Jan. 1854.  
 (3) Die Presse, Vienna, 1854 No.17.  
 (4) Die Grenzboten, 1862 Vol.IV p.172ff.  
 (5) B.F.L.U. 1862 No.23.

consisted only of 'lauter Ungeheuerlichkeiten',<sup>(1)</sup> wrote to Hebbel with enthusiasm:-

'Welcher Dichter vermag Ihnen die grossen Gestalten Hagens und Kriemhilds nachzuzeichnen, diese grimme Tatkraft und diese unbändige Leidenschaft!' (2)

Zimmermann claimed that Die Nibelungen was one of the greatest works of German Literature, (3) and Strodtmann wrote:-

'Angesichts dieser grossartigen Schöpfung, die sich würdig dem Besten zur Seite stellt, was die dramatische Literatur aller Zeiten und aller Völker aufzuweisen vermag, wird, hoffen wir, das neidische Gekrächz der Tadler verstummen.'<sup>(4)</sup>

His hope was not fulfilled, for a few people refused to join in the chorus of praise. Laube, for instance, stubbornly held to his opinion that Hebbel was no dramatist for the stage and was reluctant to produce the trilogy at the Burgtheater because the action showed too much epic breadth.<sup>(5)</sup> But the most extreme criticism undoubtedly came from Richard Wagner, who had other ideas as to how such a theme should be treated and considered that the drama was meant as a parody:-

'Der gebildete, moderne Literat scheint hier offenbar die ihm so scheinende Grotteske des mittelalterlichen Gedichtes durch lächerliche Übertreibung zu verhöhnen.'<sup>(6)</sup>

Others expressed less strong views, but felt all the same that the trilogy left much to be desired. The critics of the Berlin press<sup>(7)</sup> at the first performance there all considered that it was impossible to turn an epic into a successful drama, and that the mythical and magic element in the story made it difficult, if not impossible, for a modern audience to sympathise with the characters. Their objections were thus directed more towards the material chosen than towards Hebbel's handling of it. Karl Frenzel, however, writing

(1) B.F.L.U. 1851 No.1.

(2) 28th Dec. 1861 (Bw.11 p.391).

(3) Beilage zur Wiener Zeitung, 1862 Nos.19-23.

(4) Bremer Sonntagsblatt, 1862 No.25.

(5) Das Burgtheater. ed. cit. p.263.

(6) 'Über Schauspieler und Sänger' Gesammelte Schriften, ed. by W.Golther, Berlin, N.D. Vol. IX p.168.

(7) Spencersche Zeitung. Berlin 1862 17th Dec.; Vossische Zeitung. Berlin, 1862 17th Dec.; Die Nationalzeitung, Berlin 1862 17th Dec.; Neue Preussische Zeitung, Berlin 1862 16th Dec.

Chapter 10.Raupach's and Hebbel's  
Genoveva and Nibelungen Dramas.(A) The Genoveva Dramas.

In the thirteen years which separated the first appearance of Raupach's Genoveva drama from the completion of Hebbel's, the literary scene had undergone considerable changes. In 1828 the figure of Goethe dominated literature - the years 1820 to 1830 saw, among other things, the appearance of Wilhelm Meisters Wanderjahre, the publication of his complete works, and of the Helena episode of the second part of Faust - and the influence of the Romantic school was still strong. During the latter years of the decade Grabbe began his series of strange but impressive dramas, and Grillparzer, not yet embittered by the difficulties which led him later to withdraw from the stage, produced a number of brilliant tragedies. The most popular plays on the stage, however, (apart from those of Raupach) were still the dramas of Kotzebue and Iffland, while the fate and horror-dramas of Werner, Müllner and Houwald also enjoyed a certain success.

By 1841 Goethe was dead and his reputation was being attacked by the writers of Young Germany, whose aim was to point out social abuses in literature and to make art deal with the problems of the day. Romanticism, and with it the vogue for the fate-dramas, had declined; Grillparzer had withdrawn from the theatre. The more successful works of Kotzebue and Iffland were still performed, but Raupach's reign in the theatre was over. After 1840 he produced no new plays, and those which were still performed were long established favourites, the majority of his later plays having had little success. His place had been taken by Friedrich Halm and Charlotte Birchpfeiffer, whose plays enjoyed a popularity rivalled only by that of certain dramas by the young German writers Heinrich Laube and Karl Gutzkow. The rejection of Hebbel's Genoveva on the part of the authorities of the court theatre in Berlin, on the grounds that Raupach's drama of the same name was in the repertory<sup>(1)</sup>, can hardly have been more than a polite excuse, as the latter

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(1) cf. Chap. 8 p. 86

had not been performed since April 1829, twelve years previously.

Since public interest in the Volksbücher and the old legends had been stimulated by the Romantic writers, it was not strange that a dramatist in 1828 should choose the legend of Genoveva as a subject for a drama. Indeed, it was not the only time that Raupach used a Volksbuch as a source, for he also wrote a drama entitled Robert der Teufel. The preoccupation of the majority of writers with subjects taken from contemporary life, or at least from factual and not legendary history, made the Volksbuch a more unusual choice for a dramatist in 1840. This difference is typical of the two men, for while Raupach was always quick to seize on any material that might attract the public, Hebbel throughout his lifetime paid little attention to public taste.

The circumstances in which the dramas were written also show little resemblance. Hebbel's Genoveva was only his second completed drama, whereas Raupach's was written at the height of his career, after a long series of earlier plays. While Hebbel's tragedy was an intensely personal work, written and re-written with great care, Raupach's was the work of a man noted for his incredibly swift productions, and it appeared in a year which saw the first performance of six other plays by the same dramatist.

Since Raupach took considerable liberties with his source, while Hebbel followed it more closely, there is little resemblance between the plots of the two plays. But not only are the plots dissimilar, the whole approach to the material is different. Raupach removed everything miraculous from the legend, and tried to make his characters as human as possible. There is nothing in his drama to correspond to the appearance of Drago's ghost in Hebbel's, no hint that the events have a wider significance. The action remains an isolated incident, whereas Hebbel raised the sufferings of Genoveva to an event of great importance, linking it to divine plans for the salvation of the world. With this in mind, he allowed the miraculous element in the legend to remain.

This difference of conception is clearly shown in their approach to the heroine. Raupach transformed the saint into a frivolous woman who learns wisdom through suffering, that is, he interpreted her in human terms. Hebbel, on the other hand stressed her saintliness, her unearthly goodness. In each

it becomes uncontrollable. Golo's outburst before Genoveva's portrait is prepared by a long series of monologues and incidents which illuminate his state of mind. In Raupach's drama, on the other hand, we are not shown the beginning of Golo's love, his confession occurs in Act 2, and of the previous one and a half acts the majority of the scenes are devoted to showing Genoveva's frivolity, or to developing the sub-plot.

There are similar contrasts in the handling of the action in the later parts of the two dramas. Raupach devotes all the third act to the preparations for and the frustration of Genoveva's execution, which Hebbel deals with in the first six scenes of Act 5. Hebbel uses two long scenes, however, to show how Siegfried comes to give the order for the execution, an aspect which Raupach ignores altogether. Hebbel, moreover, shows how Genoveva's supposed death affects Golo, whereas in Raupach's drama we first meet Golo again two years after Genoveva's disappearance. It is also significant that Raupach adds a sub-plot, which increases the amount of action in the drama, while Hebbel, whose tragedy is considerably longer than Raupach's, nevertheless made no such addition, but spent much time on analysing the motives of the characters. The result is that Raupach's play presents lively action at the expense of careful characterisation and the consistent development of a theme. Hebbel was interested above all in the characters and theme of his tragedy to the detriment of dramatic economy, for his drama is too long for performance without cutting, and at times the epic element predominates.

The fate of the two dramas on their appearance was similar in that neither was able to maintain itself on the stage. Raupach's Genoveva, although immediately performed in Berlin, and two years later in Vienna, was not a great success in either city. Hebbel's Genoveva, as has already been shown, was not performed at all until eight years after its completion, and then the performance was not in Germany, nor even in German, but in translation in Prague. Another five years passed before the first performance in German at Vienna. Although the critics were on the whole favourable, and particularly praised the performances of the actors, both plays disappeared soon after from the repertories. In the case of the production of Hebbel's Genoveva in Vienna, however, the lack of success was due not to public indifference, but

to hostility on the part of the authorities.

It is not certain whether Hebbel knew Raupach's drama. His remark to Arnold Ruge in a letter of 1852, referring to it as a 'triviales Machwerk',<sup>(1)</sup> suggests that he did, but nothing in his writings provides conclusive proof. When the drama appeared he was still in Wesselsburen and cannot possibly have seen it. He may have seen it later at Hamburg or Munich, if it was still in the repertory at either of those places. It is possible that it was, but hardly probable, since the drama was not a great success. If he read the Dramatische Werke ernster Gattung when they first appeared in 1835, he gave no indication of it. He could have seen the drama in Vienna, as it was still being performed once a year at the Theater an der Wien in 1854,<sup>(2)</sup> but he did not go to Vienna until some years after his own drama was written.

There are, however, a few lines in Hebbel's Genoveva which show a certain similarity to verses in Raupach's drama. Golo's soliloquy in Act 3, Sc.16, for example:-

'Ein Mord! was ist ein Mord? Was ist ein Mensch?  
Ein Nichts, so ist denn auch ein Mord ein Nichts' ,

recalls the monologue of Raupach's Golo in Act 3, Sc.3:-

'Ein erster Fluch - haha! - Was ist ein Fluch?  
Kein Pfeil, Kein Dolch, kein Gift; ein leerer Schall.'

In both dramas Siegfried, meditating on Golo's accusation refers to the laws of nature:-

'Noch immer geh'n ja Sonne, Mond und Sterne  
Von Ost nach West und meerwärts fliesst der Strom.'  
(Raupach, Act.4 Sc.3.)

Wie sieht's am Himmel aus?  
Die alte Wirtschaft noch mit Sonn' und Mond?  
Jetzt ist es Nacht. Kann man mit Sicherheit  
Drauf bauen, dass es morgen wieder tagt?  
(Hebbel, Act 4. Sc.6.)

It is also possible that Genoveva's remark in the epilogue, that she has lived

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(1) 15th Sept. 1852 (Br. V No.412).

(2) cf. Hebbel to Gutzkow, 26th Jan.1854. (Br.V No.457).

in the forest without fire, may be a comment on Raupach's drama, in which Genoveva's fire, which she obtains from a tree struck by lightning, plays a large part. Considering these similarities, together with Hebbel's remark to Ruge, it seems probable that he had either read or seen Raupach's Genoveva.

(B.) Die Nibelungen.

While it is doubtful whether Hebbel knew Raupach's Genoveva, it is certain that he knew Der Nibelungenhort, for it had a great influence on his own life. It was the performance of Christine Enghaus in the tragedy, (so he wrote to Dingelstedt)<sup>(1)</sup> which decided him to stay in Vienna when he had intended to leave, and thus changed the whole course of his life. The notes in his diary,<sup>(2)</sup> and his letters to various friends<sup>(3)</sup> show how great was the impression made, but Hebbel's enthusiasm for Christine's performance did not extend to the drama itself. In a criticism of the play written for the journal Der Wanderer after a revival in 1853,<sup>(4)</sup> he did not conceal his low opinion of the work.

He compared it to a picture made up of pieces in different styles, and disparaged Raupach's treatment of scenes and characters:-

'bald zieht er Siebenmeilenstiefel an, bald geht er im Hahnenschritt, und Beides gewöhnlich zur unrichten Zeit.'

His main criticism, however, was that Raupach had attempted to rationalise the supernatural element, which, he believed, should be left unexplained, relying on the faith of the beholder. Significantly, he ended the article with the wish that some other dramatist should undertake the task of adapting the epic for the stage:-

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(1) 3rd March, 1861. (Br.VII No.711).

(2) Tgb.III No.4244-5.

(3) To Charlotte Rousseau, 11th April, 1846. (Br.III No.218) and to Arnold Ruge, 15th Sept., 1852. (Br.V No.412).

(4) W. XII p.19.



'Wir können es nicht unterlassen, bei dieser Gelegenheit einen Wunsch auszusprechen, den wir längst auf dem Herzen hatten. Welch ein Gewinn für die Nation wäre es, wenn der "dramatische Nibelungenhort" endlich einmal wirklich gehoben würde.'

At this time he had not started his own drama. In the following years, while he was preparing to supply himself the tragedy he wished for, the faults of his predecessors, in particular Raupach, became yet clearer to him, and he enclosed his criticisms of them in his letters to Dingelstedt. Their greatest mistakes had been to cut up the epic and adapt it at their own convenience, to introduce too much modern thought and culture<sup>(1)</sup> and to pay too little attention to the secondary characters, in particular Dietrich.<sup>(2)</sup> Dissatisfaction with Raupach's drama thus led Hebbel to form his own ideas on how the subject should be treated.

In spite of this dissatisfaction, however, there are certain similarities between the two dramas, many of them due, no doubt, not to conscious borrowing but to unconscious memory of Raupach's work. It is probable that Hebbel found in Raupach's drama the idea for the scene in the prologue in which Ute and Kriemhild watch from the window the contest between Siegfried and the Burgundians. But Hebbel's use of the idea is more skilful, for while the scene in Der Nibelungenhort in which Sirith and the other women watch the contest between Günther and Brunhild serves only to inform the audience of what is happening off-stage, Hebbel uses the scene for a double purpose; we not only hear the result of the contest, we also see the sudden growth of Kriemhild's love. Other incidents which Raupach's drama may have suggested are the scene in which the dwarfs bring the treasure to Worms (S.T. Act 2, Sc.7), which recalls the dwarfs in Raupach's prologue, the idea of making Etzel set fire to the hall, and the scene in which Kriemhild persuades Siegfried to tell her the secret of the wedding night. Hebbel's treatment of this latter incident again shows his superiority, for he avoids the aspects of the situation, which, in Raupach's drama, degrade the characters of the two personages concerned.

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(1) 15th Jan. 1861 (Br. VII No. 700).

(2) 31st. March, 1860 (Br. VI No. 675).

Occasionally there are even verbal similarities, which prove how well Hebbel knew Raupach's tragedy:-

- 'Kriemhild: Ist von Menschen  
Dem edlen Siegfried einer nachgestorben  
Nicht einmal ich, doch wohl sein treuer Hund.  
..... Der verkroch sich unter seinen Sarg  
Und biss nach mir, da ich ihm Speise bot.'  
(Kr.R. Act 1, Sc.4)
- 'Siegfried: die treue Dogge legt  
Sich auf das Grab des Herrn, und alle Nahrung  
Verschmähend stirbt sie dem Geliebten nach.  
Was könnte mehr der Mensch?'  
(Nibelungenhort Act 3, Sc.4)
- 'Gunther: Ich will  
Nicht warten bis der Heunen König mir  
Ein Spinnrad schickt.'  
(Kr.R. Act 2, Sc.11)
- 'Chriemhild: Nehmt Spindeln in die Hand  
Und gürtet Euch mit einem Weibergürtel  
Den Rocken d'rein zu stecken.'  
(Nibelungenhort Act 5, Sc.7)
- 'Brunhild: (after the wedding) ich möchte  
Jetzt lieber lauschen, wie die Spinnen weben'  
(S.T. Act 3, Sc.4)
- 'Brunhild: (before the Wedding) Ich will  
Nicht weben gleich der missgeschaff'nen Spinne.'  
(Nibelungenhort Act 1, Sc.7)

But the differences in treatment of the material, in characterisation and in conception of the theme, are far more prominent than the similarities. Nothing need be said of the differences in the course of the action in the two dramas. They are sufficiently obvious, since Hebbel kept closely to one source, the Nibelungenlied, while Raupach, besides borrowing also from the Edda and the Seyfriedslied, added much of his own invention. More important are the varying approaches of the two dramatists.

Although he made no effort to discard the supernatural elements as he did in his treatment of the Genoveva legend, Raupach nevertheless did his best to explain them in as rational terms as possible. Hebbel, on the other hand, added to the supernatural elements already found in the epic (in his treatment of Brunhild, for instance) and made no attempt to give a coherent explanation of them. In fact, he omitted from the final version the most

explicit statement about the transcendental meaning of the action (that originally given by Dietrich in Kr.R. Act 2, Sc.2). Hebbel's treatment of the miraculous was linked with his emphasis on the religious aspect and the world-wide importance of the action. Raupach did not attempt to show that the events had any wider significance than that of a family quarrel, except in the last few lines of the play, when Dietrich gives a Christian interpretation, thus introducing suddenly a new idea for which the rest of the drama has made no preparation.

The different approach affected the conception of the characters, and also the course of the action. While Hebbel insisted on the involuntary, half unconscious love of Brunhild for Siegfried, Raupach omitted this aspect of Brunhild's character altogether, and therefore the way in which he developed the quarrel-scene and presented Brunhild's behaviour after it, differed widely from Hebbel's method. His treatment of Gunther also differed from Hebbel's, for the development of the plot in Der Nibelungenhort demanded that Günther should force Chriemhild into a second marriage. Hebbel, on the other hand, followed the Nibelungenlied in making Gunther leave the decision to his sister. Another contrast in the conception of the characters concerns Hagen. Raupach stressed Hagen's loyalty to Günther at the expense of his daemonic grandeur, but although he attempted to depict him as favourably as possible, he made no use of the aspect of the situation which Hebbel emphasised: namely, that since Siegfried was almost invulnerable he could not be killed in fair combat. Hebbel, although he made no effort to mitigate Hagen's unscrupulousness, succeeded nevertheless in making him a sympathetic character. His Kriemhild also makes a more favourable impression than Raupach's, although she is more guilty, since Giselher and Gernot do not appear in Der Nibelungenhort and Chriemhild is not finally responsible for the deaths of Hagen and Günther.

It is interesting to see which scenes of the Nibelungenlied the two dramatists chose to depict, and which they omitted. In order to introduce his characters, Hebbel used the third 'Aventiure' of the epic 'Wie Sifrit ze Wormse kom', while Raupach adapted the Seyfriedslied, which

contains more exciting incident. In the scenes concerning the wooing of Brunhild, Hebbel concentrated on Brunhild and her history, spending more time in depicting the characters of Brunhild and Frigga and their life in Isenland, than in showing the adventures of the Burgundians. He did not show the contest nor its sequel, for the contest in the prologue had sufficiently demonstrated Siegfried's strength and made the outcome of the fight with Brunhild inevitable. Raupach, on the contrary, included a scene in which the contest takes place off-stage, and also a scene showing the arrival of the Burgundians on the shore. He then allowed a year to pass before the next act, whereas Hebbel included Brunhild's arrival at Worms and the double wedding.

In dealing with the events leading up to Siegfried's murder, both poets used similar means. Each drama contains a scene showing Brunhild's dislike of Siegfried, a scene in which Kriemhild learns the secret of the wedding-night from Siegfried, the quarrel-scene, the planning of the murder, a scene in which Hagen learns of Siegfried's vulnerability, the farewell between husband and wife, and the murder. After Siegfried's death, however, their treatment of events diverges so much that there can be no comparison. In contrast to Hebbel who followed the epic as closely as possible, Raupach did not include a scene showing Kriemhild's grief, and compressed all subsequent events into two acts.

Raupach's tragedy, although quite popular at its first appearance, was not by any means so successful as Hebbel's. Written quickly by a prolific dramatist and first performed in a year which, as has already been stated, saw the appearance of six other dramas by the same author, Der Nibelungenhort was only one of a great number of similar dramas and was not accorded any unusual attention. Although by no means the least popular of Raupach's dramas, it's success fell a long way behind that of some of his other works (see Appendix). What a contrast to the reception of Hebbel's trilogy! Written at the height of his career, and destined (although the public were not aware of this) to be his last completed work, Die Nibelungen was received with enthusiasm, performed with great success in four different towns within

two years (a distinction which was not accorded to any other of Hebbel's works), hailed (except by a few critics) as his greatest work, and, as a final honour, was awarded the Schiller Prize as the best drama to have appeared in the last three years.

Appendix.Ernst Raupach. Main Works.

<u>Title.</u>	<u>Published.</u>	<u>First Performance.</u>	<u>Number of Performances.</u>
Die Fürsten Chawansky	1818	Berlin 1820-32	11
		Vienna 1819-36	22
Die Erdennacht	1820	Berlin 1821-22 - -	2
Isidor und Olga	1826	Berlin 1825-53	39
		Vienna 1827-68	40
Lasst die Todten ruhn!	1826	Berlin 1825-41	25
		Vienna 1841-42	4
Rafaele	1828	Berlin 1826-33 - -	6
Die Tochter der Luft (nach Calderon)	1829	Berlin 1827-34	18
		Vienna 1826-27	8
Der Nibelungenhort	1834	Berlin 1828-31	12
		Vienna 1828-57	34
Die Schleichhändler	1830	Berlin 1828-63	167
		Vienna 1830-53	67
Der versiegelte Bürgermeister	1829	Berlin 1828-34 - -	17
Vormund und Mündel	1835	Berlin 1828	4
		Vienna 1827-45	32
Genoveva	1834	Berlin 1828-29	7
		Vienna 1830-31	7
Der Bettler	1832	Berlin 1829-43	39
		Vienna 1829-41	36
Der Müller und sein Kind	1835	Berlin 1830-33	8
		Vienna 1830-75	109
Denk' an Cäsar	1832	Berlin 1833 - -	2
Tassos Tod	1835	Berlin 1833-46	13
		Vienna 1834-40	8

<u>Title.</u>	<u>Published.</u>	<u>First Performance.</u>	<u>Number of Performances.</u>
Die Schule des Lebens	1841	Berlin 1835-63 - -	29
Vor Hundert Jahren	1848	Berlin 1838-84 Vienna 1850	122 5
<u>Cromwell: Eine Trilogie</u>	1841-4		
1. Die Royalisten		Berlin 1829-55 Vienna 1853-56	31 10
2. Cromwell Protector		Berlin 1833 - -	4
3. Cromwells Ende		Berlin 1833-40 Vienna 1839-57	9 27
<u>Die Hohenstaufen.</u>	1935-43		
1. Kaiser Friedrich I.			
i. Friedrich und Mailand		Berlin 1835-7 - -	4
ii. Friedrich und Alexander		Berlin 1835-37 - -	4
iii. Friedrich und Heinrich der Löwe		Berlin 1835 - -	3
iv. Friedrichs Abschied		Berlin 1836 - -	3
2. Kaiser Heinrich VI.			
i. Heinrich und die Welfen		Berlin 1837 - -	2
ii. Heinrichs Tod		Berlin 1830-43 - -	16
3. König Philip		Berlin 1830-37 - -	6
4. König Friedrich		Berlin 1831 - -	3
5. Kaiser Friedrich II			
i. Friedrich im Morgenlande		Berlin 1832-37 - -	11
ii. Friedrich und seine Söhne		- -	
iii. Friedrich und Gregor		Berlin 1833-4	6
iv. Friedrichs Tod		Berlin 1837 - -	1

<u>Title.</u>	<u>Published.</u>	<u>First Performance.</u>	<u>Number of Performances.</u>
Die Nibelungen	1862	Weimar 1862 Berlin 1862-9 Vienna 1863-74	2 17 32
Demetrius (unfinished)	1864	Berlin 1869	2



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