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FRANZ GRILLPARZER'S DRAMATIC HEROINES AND
WOMEN'S EMANCIPATION IN NINETEENTH-CENTURY AUSTRIA

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Short Abstract

Recent decades have seen an increase in feminist critiques of the works of Franz Grillparzer (1791–1872), and a growing awareness that these deal with contemporary issues around the social roles of women. This study builds on existing feminist-themed examinations of Grillparzer's works to show more fully how they fit into the context of calls for women's rights in nineteenth-century Austria.

New interpretations of Grillparzer's heroines are made possible by considering the full spectrum of the author's intellectual interests and examining his dramas through the lenses suggested by his reading. *Des Meeres und der Liebe Wellen* is seen in the context of the Enlightenment, and *Sappho* and *Libussa* are analysed with reference to social contract theory. Contemporary feminist approaches are combined with Schiller's thought on stadial history, and with Grillparzer's analysis of Shakespeare's *Macbeth*, to give new insight into *Das goldene Vließ* and *Die Jüdin von Toledo* respectively.

Consideration of the lives and works of Grillparzer's female friends provides the context for my analysis, and helps define the original nature of this thesis. While several earlier studies have argued for the influence of Grillparzer's romantic interests on the construction of his heroines, sufficient attention has not been given to these heroines in the context of the intellectual women Grillparzer knew. While I do not argue that Grillparzer's heroines were influenced by the authors and other prominent women he knew, examination of the lives and works of Caroline Pichler, Betty Paoli, Marie von Ebner-Eschenbach, Sophie Schröder and others shows that Grillparzer was on friendly terms with intellectual women throughout his career, and that all of these women were to some degree critical of the contemporary social situation of women.

Long Abstract

This study aims to reevaluate the works of Franz Grillparzer (1791–1872), his depiction of women, and the relation of his dramas to the burgeoning women's rights movements in nineteenth-century Austria. My research focuses on the following questions: Why, in an age characterised by the domestication of women, did Grillparzer choose to portray so many women in the public sphere? What was the relation of his works to the perceptions of femininity and to the women's rights movement? Does his representation of female characters indicate sympathy with the ideas of women's emancipation? And how can we reconcile the very different opinions of women presented in his private and dramatic writings?

The importance of Grillparzer's heroines was recognised by his contemporaries, and they have also been the subject of monographs including Francis Wolf-Cirian's *Grillparzers Frauengestalten* (1908) and Karin Hagl-Catling's *Franz Grillparzers Frauenbild im Widerspruch* (1997), and featured prominently in Heinz Politzer's *Franz Grillparzer oder das abgründige Biedermeier* (1972) and Dagmar Lorenz's *Grillparzer, Dichter des sozialen Konflikts* (1986), as well as in other comprehensive texts such as Bruce Thompson's *Franz Grillparzer* (1981) and Ian F. Roe's *An Introduction to the Major Works of Franz Grillparzer* (1991) and *Franz Grillparzer: A Century of Criticism* (1995). Numerous articles and book chapters have been dedicated to Grillparzer's heroines, in particular Sappho, Rahel and Libussa. In recent decades there has also been an increase in the number of feminist-themed studies of Grillparzer's works, notably Lorenz's book, mentioned above, but also numerous articles, and the present study is particularly indebted to these. Although some earlier scholarship, Anna Tizia Leitich (1948 and 1965) and Politzer (1972), for example, investigates the possible influence of Grillparzer's love interests on his dramatic work, it does not address in sufficient detail Grillparzer's relationships with intellectual and literary women of the age. Lorenz investigates four of the dramas in the context of gender, but I believe this approach should be applied to all Grillparzer's major dramas. My study will place Grillparzer's dramas more firmly in their social context than has been done before in order to argue for these as his contribution to the debate around women's role in society.

Because this thesis is primarily interested in Grillparzer's ideas, the focus throughout is on his creative processes, and on the dramas as texts, rather than the dramas' performance history or reception. This is because Grillparzer's dramas, and his other writings, give more insight into his ideas than can either performance history or reception. Analysis of Grillparzer's notes, diaries, correspondence, fragmentary dramas, juvenilia and prose supports the interpretations of the dramas by demonstrating his interest in powerful women and women's social roles, while the frank engagement with women's issues in two early

dramas *Wer ist schuldig?* and *Der Zauberwald* indicates that censorship might have forced Grillparzer to modify his views in his later works which were written with performance in mind. Interest in Grillparzer's ideas means that, in Chapter 1, I focus on the writers Grillparzer knew, rather than the actresses, although the latter are also mentioned. This is because these women writers wrote in detail about women's issues, whereas the actresses mentioned did not.

The consideration of the lives and works of many of Grillparzer's female friends helps define the original nature of this thesis. While several earlier studies have argued for the influence of Grillparzer's romantic interests on the construction of his heroines, sufficient attention has not been given to these heroines in the context of the numerous intellectual women with whom Grillparzer was acquainted. The discussion of women known by Grillparzer does not attempt to argue for, much less demonstrate, links between the lives and works of these women and Grillparzer's portrayal of women in his dramas. Rather, this discussion serves to situate Grillparzer's dramas and heroines more firmly in their social context than has been possible before. Examination of the writings of Caroline Pichler, Johanna Franul von Weissenthurn, Betty Paoli, Marie von Ebner-Eschenbach and Auguste von Littrow-Bischoff, and of his relationships to the famous Burgtheater actresses Sophie Schröder, Julie Rettich and Charlotte Wolter, shows that Grillparzer was on friendly terms with famous and intellectual women throughout his career, and that all of these women were to some degree critical of the contemporary social situation of women. By looking at Grillparzer's friendships with these women, I build on earlier scholarship and strengthen arguments for Grillparzer's sympathy with women's issues. These friendships mitigate the importance of Grillparzer's numerous diary entries which display his often negative attitude towards women, and which stand in stark contrast to the images of women he created for the stage.

The publications of Pichler, Paoli, Littrow-Bischoff and others provide important insight into the arguments and positions of women's rights advocates in nineteenth-century Austria. The primary concern of these writers was not full equality or women's enfranchisement, but rather the improvement of living conditions for women who were forced to fend for themselves. When these writings are taken into consideration, it becomes clear that Grillparzer was addressing issues which were of great concern to many women at the time, and that he was in tune with the thinking of women who advocated women's education and employment. This allows us to see Grillparzer in the context of contemporary discussions regarding the social role of women, rather than through anachronistic terms such as 'feminist', and further strengthens arguments for Grillparzer's interest in the *Frauenfrage*.

New interpretations of Grillparzer's heroines are made possible by considering the full spectrum of the author's social context and intellectual interests, and by examining his dramas through the lenses suggested by his own reading. While this approach in itself is not new to Grillparzer criticism, the dramas are simultaneously seen from a broad feminist perspective. Where Grillparzer was writing in an established tradition, particularly in *Sappho* and *Libussa*, these traditions are investigated to show that Grillparzer increased the importance of female characters, and often added philosophical complexity to his dramas. The combination of these approaches allows for interpretations which illuminate Grillparzer's criticism of the position of women in society. *Die Ahnfrau* and *König Ottokars*

Glück und Ende, for example, are analysed with reference to the legal status of women in Grillparzer's time; *Ein treuer Diener seines Herrn* and *Des Meeres und der Liebe Wellen* are seen in the context of the Enlightenment; *Sappho* and *Libussa* are analysed with reference to social contract theory; finally, ideas from feminist biblical and legal studies are combined with Schiller's thought on stadial history, and Grillparzer's analysis of Shakespeare's *Macbeth*, to offer fresh insight into *Das goldene Vließ* and *Die Jüdin von Toledo*, respectively. Showing the possible influence of philosophy and political theory on the creation of Grillparzer's female characters strengthens arguments for the emancipatory message of these dramas. By portraying women as representatives of Kant's thoughts on enlightenment or of social contract theory as propounded by Rousseau and others; as the victims of laws regarding inheritance and marriage; or as mistreated by other women because of religion or ethnicity, Grillparzer challenges contemporary discourse which saw women as less than men and sought to restrict their sphere of activity.

In each case, my analyses focus on the dramas' female protagonists. For those with titular heroines, such as *Sappho* and *Libussa*, this is not a new approach. However, in the case of *König Ottokars Glück und Ende*, the focus on the women in the drama allows for new interpretations. By looking at Margarete, Berta and Kunigunde, questions arise regarding their role in society, the importance of marriage and family in their lives, and the extent to which their options are limited by the expectations which male relatives place on them. This represents a strong contrast to approaches which focus on the larger political issues which *Ottokar* raises, and permits the drama to be seen in the context of contemporary laws. Where *Die Jüdin von Toledo* is concerned, my analysis takes the focus away from Rahel, investigating instead Eleonore, who has not received enough critical attention, and exploring the extent of her political role in the drama. In combination with consideration of Grillparzer's views on *Macbeth*, this allows for an interpretation in which Eleonore and her agency are put under the spotlight. In my analysis of *Sappho*, I again use Grillparzer's intellectual interests to shift the focus, not onto another character, but onto Sappho's political, rather than artistic role. This opens up new interpretations of the drama and of Sappho's death.

The original nature of my thesis lies primarily in these three elements: 1) consideration of the lives of the intellectual and literary women with whom Grillparzer was acquainted; 2) discussion of contemporary texts on the *Frauenfrage* by women known to Grillparzer, which have hitherto not received much critical attention; and 3) my interpretations of Grillparzer's dramas which focus on his female characters and the issues which affect them, but also take into account his wider intellectual and literary interests, as well as the social and legal situation of women in this period. These women's lives and works show conclusively that, whatever Grillparzer's private statements regarding intellectual or otherwise unconventional women, he was not always hostile towards such women. This supports the broadly feminist interpretations presented in this thesis. The focus on Grillparzer's heroines means that fresh interpretations are made possible which show the author's criticism of contemporary attitudes towards women. Together, this represents a significant contribution to Grillparzer scholarship, but also suggests many avenues for further research. The focus here has been on non-fiction works by female authors. The considerable catalogue of dramatic, poetic and prose works by Pichler, Artner, Paoli and others, much of which has benefited from little or no scholarly attention, could be examined to investigate how these women related to their

society and their status as women. Comparison with Grillparzer's works could allow for interesting new interpretations of his works, and could indicate the influence of Grillparzer on women writers of the period, or their influence on him.

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Abbreviations

- ABGB* *Allgemeines bürgerliches Gesetzbuch für die gesammten deutschen Erbländer der Oesterreichischen Monarchie*. Vienna: k.k. Hof- und Staats-Druckerey, 1811.
- HKA* Franz Grillparzer. *Sämtliche Werke*. Historisch-kritische Ausgabe. 42 vols. Ed. August Sauer. Vienna; Leipzig: Gerlach & Wiedling, 1908–48.
- JdGG* *Jahrbuch der Grillparzer-Gesellschaft*.
- SW* Franz Grillparzer. *Sämtliche Werke*. Ausgewählte Briefe, Gespräche, Berichte. 4 vols. Ed. Peter Frank and Karl Pörnbacher. Munich: Hanser, 1960–65.

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Introduction

An unpublished manuscript in the Wienbibliothek im Rathaus lists sixty-seven wreaths and other tributes which were laid at Grillparzer's funeral.¹ Those who paid their respects include the Gesellschaft der Musikfreunde in Wien, the Theresianisches Gymnasium, and the management and members of the Hofburgtheater. We also find several women: Frau Iduna Laube, Frau von Littrow, Frau Baronin Ebner, Fräulein von Kudriaffsky and Fräulein Betty Paoli. Sophie Baronin Todesko remembered 'dem Ideale ihres Lebens', while her sister, Frau Josefine von Wertheimstein left a wreath 'in Liebe und Verehrung'. Frau von Gerold honoured the poet with a laurel wreath and a poem.

This devotion is surprising in the context of the misogynistic views which Grillparzer expressed in his diaries. W. E. Yates points to a discrepancy between his private writings, and the 'sensitivity [...] to the tensions underlying the stirrings of the early Women's Movement' in his dramas.² Grillparzer was also acquainted and on good terms with numerous intellectual women: Laube and Littrow(-Bischoff) were instrumental in the foundation of the Wiener Frauen-Erwerb-Verein; Ebner(-Eschenbach) was one of the foremost prose writers of the late nineteenth century; Paoli was a poet and journalist. How are we to reconcile Grillparzer's seemingly contradictory attitudes towards women?

Grillparzer's diaries, letters and unpublished prose sketches contain numerous references to women, and have often been cited as evidence of his misogynistic views. There are

¹[Verzeichnis der Kranzspenden zu Grillparzers Begräbnis.] Undated manuscript. Wienbibliothek im Rathaus. H.I.N. 82372.

²W. E. Yates. 'Grillparzer and the Fair Sex'. *Grillparzer und die Europäische Tradition. Londoner Symposium 1986*. Ed. Robert Pichl et al.. Vienna: Hora, 1987. 71–83, p. 77.

numerous entries which show that he did not always treat his paramours with respect and decency. Although I do not defend these statements, nor this aspect of Grillparzer's character, these entries are tempered by an obvious interest in prominent and powerful women throughout the ages, an interest which is also reflected in his choice of dramatic material. It should also be noted that Grillparzer expressed other prejudices of his time, for example antisemitism and racism. In 1819, he wrote that 'die Orientalen' like riddles '[w]eil sie weniger denken als wir, und es ihnen daher wohlthut die Denkkraft manchmal aufzuregen ohne sie zu ermüden.'³ In 1826, he wrote of the Jewish quarter in Prague: 'Schmutz. Schmutz. Schmutz. Man begreift warum dieß Volk keine Schweine ißt es wäre eine eigentliche Hyophagie (Anthropophagie)' (Nr. 1495. *HKA* II/viii, p. 226).

Despite numerous romances, Grillparzer would never marry, and discarded lovers without onerous psychological consequences.⁴ Grillparzer's indifference in the face of his lovers' suffering is in some cases chilling. On the death of Marie Piquot, who had been infatuated with him, he was 'heftig erschüttert; obgleich mehr über das Unerwartete, als über die Sache selbst, obschon ich das Mädchen wahrhaft geschätzt hatte [...]' (1822. Nr. 1109. *HKA* II/viii, p. 48) When visiting the sickbed of Charlotte von Paumgarten, a former lover who married his cousin, Grillparzer was unmoved: 'Außer einem grimmigen Abscheu, den ich über meine eigene Theilnahmslosigkeit empfand, fühlte ich keine große Bewegung'. (1827. Nr. 1614. *HKA* II/viii, p. 289.) When Charlotte died, Grillparzer was moved to self-reflection and self-castigation rather than mourning: 'Ich war vielleicht [*sic*] Mitursache ihres Todes. [...] Der einzige poetische Punkt in ihrem Leben war diese Liebe—und daran starb sie.' (16 September 1827. Nr. 1615. *HKA* II/viii, p. 290.) In a rather sombre review of his romantic history, he laments his inability to give his partners what they wanted from him

³Franz Grillparzer. *Sämtliche Werke*. Historisch-kritische Ausgabe. 42 vols. Ed. August Sauer. Vienna; Leipzig: Gerlach & Wiedling, 1908–48. Nr. 594. II/vii, p. 236. All further quotations from this edition will be indicated in the body of the text by the initials *HKA*. Upper-case and lower-case Roman numerals refer to the *Abteilung* and volume respectively. Grillparzer's works are quoted as in the *HKA*, including his sometimes erratic and non-standard orthography and punctuation.

⁴Anna Tizia Leitich. *Zwölfmal Liebe. Frauen um Grillparzer*. Vienna: Georg Fromme & Co., 1948, p. 37.

and the unfortunate consequences: 'Ich habe auf diese Art das Unglück von 3 Frauenzimmern von starkem Charakter gemacht. Zwei davon sind nun bereits tot.' (1827. Nr. 1616. *HKA* II/viii, p. 291.) In 1831, he lamented the passing of a time when women bore his mistreatment, and blamed them for enabling his bad behaviour: 'Einige liebenswürdige Frauenzimmer, die sich geduldig von mir mißhandeln ließen haben mich verwöhnt.' (Nr. 1921. *HKA* II/ix, p. 39.)

As Ian Roe writes, Grillparzer's life was far from conventional, and he did not conform to bourgeois ideals.⁵ For example, his relationship with Kathi Fröhlich, the 'ewige Braut' who would play a role in his life for almost fifty years, shows traits similar to those evident in his earlier affairs. Grillparzer admired Fröhlich's independence, but he could not accept a working woman as a wife, and so she gave up her stage career. Fröhlich and her sisters earned their own keep, which for the time was unusual,⁶ and she held progressive and feminist views.⁷ The relationship was clearly passionate and explosive, and irritating for the poet: 'Warum mußte dieses Wesen in meine Hände gerathen, oder je darauf verfallen sich gleich auf gleich mir gegenüber zu stellen!' (1831. Nr. 1933. *HKA* II/ix, p. 47.)

Grillparzer's *Selbstbiographie* (1853), one of the biggest surprises among the unpublished works discovered on his death, also affords insight into his personality. This was not his first foray into the genre: in total he composed six pieces of 'conscious autobiography'.⁸ None was published during his lifetime, and of these six attempts, only the *Selbstbiographie* attained any meaningful length. Arno Dusini argues that the *Selbstbiographie*, despite being one of the most remarkable works of autobiography, was more or less forgotten because of the ways

⁵Ian F. Roe. *Franz Grillparzer: A Century of Criticism*. Columbia, SC: Camden House, 1995, pp. 31–32.

⁶Leitich. *Zwölffmal Liebe*, p. 122.

⁷Dagmar C. G. Lorenz. 'Frau und Weiblichkeit bei Grillparzer'. *Der Widerspenstigen Zähmung. Studien zur bezwungenen Weiblichkeit in der Literatur vom Mittelalter bis zur Gegenwart*. Ed. Sylvia Wallinger and Monika Jonas. Innsbruck: Institut für Germanistik der Universität Innsbruck, 1986. 201–16, pp. 202–03.

⁸William A. Little. 'Grillparzer's Excursions into Autobiography'. *Kentucky Foreign Language Quarterly* 11 (1964). 142–51, p. 143.

it defies the conventions of autobiography.⁹

Sauer and Hartmann observe that Grillparzer's autobiographies are unique among his writings, being the only ones that were written on external impetus (*HKA* I/xvi, p. ix). The short text *Anfänge einer Selbstbiographie* (1822) was probably written after the bookseller Friedrich Arnold Brockhaus had requested an autobiographical note for his *Konversationslexikon* (*HKA* I/xvi, p. xiv); *Anfang einer Selbstbiographie* (1834/35) in response to a request from the French literary historian Saint-René Taillandier (*HKA* I/xvi, p. xvi). These autobiographical writings were therefore ostensibly written with an audience in mind. However, none was submitted to the party which requested it, and it is not clear to what extent Grillparzer presents a censored image of himself. This makes them problematic sources as their objectivity is difficult to gauge.

Grillparzer's *Selbstbiographie* was written after the Akademie der Wissenschaften requested autobiographies of each member.¹⁰ It was only after a third request, in 1853, that Grillparzer reluctantly set to work. William A. Little argues that this reluctance stems from an aversion to making public the details of his life, rather than from an unwillingness to write an autobiography.¹¹ The Akademie's request carried more weight than those which preceded it, and Grillparzer had a duty towards the institution, but he still had to overcome his own reluctance before beginning (*HKA* I/xvi, p. xvi). Grillparzer started work on the *Selbstbiographie* in early 1853, and it was finished perhaps later that year, and certainly by the middle of 1854 (*HKA* I/xvi, pp. xii–xiii). It was written 'in rascher Folge, in einheitlichem Zuge', with little preparation and few notes, and was never fully revised. In essence, it is a first draft (*HKA* I/xvi, p. xix). It covers the period between his birth and 1836, and Dusini notes that the closer Grillparzer comes to the period in which he was writing, a

⁹Arno Dusini. "...wenn nicht vernichtet, so doch verkümmert...". Zur Struktur der Grillparzerschen *Selbstbiographie*. *Autobiographien in der österreichischen Literatur. Von Franz Grillparzer bis Thomas Bernhard*. Ed. Klaus Amann and Karl Wagner. Innsbruck: Studien Verlag, 1998. 27–43, p. 28.

¹⁰Little, p. 147.

¹¹*Ibid.*, p. 148.

period he breaks off before reaching, the less he develops the episodes recounted.¹²

Although he began under external impetus, Grillparzer continued writing the *Selbstbiographie* because he enjoyed it, and because he wished ‘to formulate within the scope of a single work his aesthetic, cultural, and political impressions and opinions.’¹³ It is not an ‘*apologia pro vita*’; nowhere does the poet attempt to defend or justify his actions. He attempts rather to clarify them and to show them in perspective.’¹⁴ Diary entries find their way into the text, often with little revision, and the 1822 *Anfänge einer Selbstbiographie* was also used as a source. Although Grillparzer wrote the *Selbstbiographie* with no intention of publishing it, Little argues that he ‘cannily foresaw that future literary historians and critics would scrutinize it.’ This in part motivated him to write it. Hartmann and Sauer indicate that caution is needed when using the *Selbstbiographie* because it was written from memory, with only brief and occasional use of sources, and breaks off prematurely (*HKA* I/xvi, p. xlvii). Nevertheless, Heinrich Laube, who knew Grillparzer, writes that ‘das Eine ist unverkennbar in dieser Selbstbiographie: die ungeschminkte Wahrhaftigkeit.’¹⁵ Dusini argues that some scenes are ‘erzählerisch arrangiert, rhetorisch effektiv voll gegliedert und zu nahezu eigenständigen Geschichten ausgeformt.’¹⁶ Hartmann and Sauer write that it lacks the ‘romanartige Technik, das breite Ausmalen des landschaftlichen Hintergrundes, die reizende Ausführung der Liebesszenen.’ (*HKA* I/xvi, p. xviii) Indeed, his relationships with women are almost completely ignored. As Little argues, the *Selbstbiographie* is Grillparzer’s solution, as someone who was ‘[s]imultaneously attracted and repelled by self-revelation’: he ‘sought [...] to expose only the outer course of his life and remain silent on those intimate matters which conditioned his spiritual and artistic development.’¹⁷ To be

¹²Arno Dusini. *Die Ordnung des Lebens. Zu Franz Grillparzers “Selbstbiographie”*. Tübingen: Niemeyer, 1991, p. 7.

¹³Little, p. 149.

¹⁴*Ibid.*

¹⁵Heinrich Laube. ‘Einleitung’. Franz Grillparzer. *Sämtliche Werke*. Ed. Josef Weilen. 10 vols. Stuttgart: Cotta, 1872. I. v–xl, p. xxi.

¹⁶Dusini. ‘Zur Struktur der Grillparzerschen *Selbstbiographie*’, p. 33.

¹⁷Little, p. 148.

able critically to approach the *Selbstbiographie*, Little continues, we have to accept that 'Grillparzer's "Innerste" is a *noli me tangere* and that his refusal to discuss it is explicit'.¹⁸

The abundance of autobiographical writings, diaries, notebooks and correspondence has not translated into a surfeit of biographies of the author. In 1946 Douglas Yates noted the need for a biography of Grillparzer in English, but that such a work was not possible at the time.¹⁹ The hope he expressed regarding the publication of a Grillparzer biography has remained unfulfilled. Indeed, Yates's *Franz Grillparzer. A Critical Biography* (1946) is less a biography than an analysis of Grillparzer's literary works, although he argues that similarities between Grillparzer's life and his work are almost 'too detailed and too sensational to be believed.'²⁰

Heinrich Laube furnished the 1872 edition of Grillparzer's works with a brief biographical sketch. Personal experience and that of Grillparzer's friends, as well as the *Selbstbiographie*, which had been recently discovered, along with Grillparzer's diaries, were probably Laube's sources for this sketch. Laube covers his childhood, family life, education and career briefly. He mentions some themes of Grillparzer's life, such as the struggle with censorship, politics, his Austrian character and patriotism. Laube also talks about his personality: he was 'schüchtern und anspruchslos', but also proud because he knew exactly 'wie viel er werth sei neben Anderen.'²¹ Katharina Fröhlich is the only love interest mentioned, and Laube asserts that Grillparzer wanted to marry and start a family, but could not due to financial issues.²² Laube does not fail to mention that Grillparzer's dramas fell out of favour at the Burgtheater, nor the revival which began in the 1850s under his, Laube's, directorship. Laube's relationship with Grillparzer, as well as his responsibility for the renewed interest in Grillparzer's works from the middle of the nineteenth century onwards should encourage caution when using this biographical sketch. To what extent is Laube's view of Grillparzer affected by their personal relationship? And could Laube's portrayal of

¹⁸*Ibid.*, p. 149.

¹⁹Douglas Yates. *Grillparzer. A Critical Biography*. Oxford: Blackwell, 1946, p. v.

²⁰*Ibid.*, p. 57.

²¹Laube. 'Einleitung', p. xxx.

²²*Ibid.*

the author be motivated by self-interest?

These issues must also be considered when discussing Laube's 1884 book *Franz Grillparzers Lebensgeschichte*. Laube sees the *Lebensgeschichte* as an extension and continuation of the *Selbstbiographie*, but also as a work which looks at Grillparzer's life from another point of view. The *Lebensgeschichte* deals with Grillparzer's life and works in a largely chronological fashion, with some thematic diversions. From the outset, Laube's tone is familiar. He refers to Grillparzer as '[u]nser Dichter', and this tone calls into question his objectivity.²³ Laube also seems rather too dependent on Grillparzer's *Selbstbiographie*, other autobiographical writings, and diaries as sources for the biography, sources the impartiality of which he does not question.

Three women writers of the period produced memoirs of their acquaintance with Grillparzer. In 1873, Auguste Littrow-Bischoff published *Aus dem persönlichen Verkehre mit Franz Grillparzer*. In 1875, Betty Paoli published *Grillparzer und seine Werke*, and she also dedicated several essays to the author. And in 1916, Marie von Ebner-Eschenbach published *Meine Erinnerungen an Grillparzer*. These works do not attempt to be biographies; rather, their authors recount their own personal experiences of Grillparzer, and caution is again necessary when analysing them.

Littrow-Bischoff recounts her visits to the poet between 1865 and 1871, the year before his death. Because she did not converse with Grillparzer with the aim of publishing a memoir, she leaves out 'alles, was im Sinne des Dahingeshiedenen als Vertrauensäußerung gelten konnte'.²⁴ This selective reporting makes Littrow-Bischoff's memoir dubious as a source, and is compounded by her stated aim, namely the portrayal of 'das nur wenigen bekannt gewordene, aber dennoch gleichfalls wahrheitsgetreue Bild des ernstesten Greises im Gewande der ihm ganz eigenthümlichen schlichten und liebenswürdigen Weise'.²⁵ Her attempt proves

²³Heinrich Laube. *Franz Grillparzers Lebensgeschichte*. Stuttgart: Cotta, 1884, p. 1.

²⁴Auguste von Littrow-Bischoff. *Aus dem persönlichen Verkehre mit Franz Grillparzer*. Vienna: Rosner, 1873, p. 18.

²⁵*Ibid.*, pp. 18–19.

successful, and her memoirs provide an intimate account of the time they spent together. Her frequent visits led to a very close acquaintance with him. The close relationship between Littrow-Bischoff and Grillparzer, which the former presents in her memoirs, again confirms that Grillparzer was not the enemy of educated, independent, public women.

Several of Paoli's essays, as well as a lengthy prose work, *Grillparzer und seine Werke* (1875), deal directly with Grillparzer. In 'Studie über Grillparzer' (1872), Paoli presents a portrait of the poet which is at odds with the image of him in the popular imagination. He was not the closed personality which people believed him to be, and indeed 'das Spontane in seinem Wesen brachte es mit sich, daß er sich im Gespräche unbefangen gehen ließ [...] und keinen der humoristischen oder witzigen Einfälle, an denen er reich war, unterdrückte.'²⁶ Already in his own lifetime Grillparzer had a reputation as a somewhat misanthropic individual, but Paoli recalls the fierce loyalty which he nevertheless inspired in his admirers: 'Eine gegen ihn gerichtete Unbill verletzte uns empfindlicher als jeder Tadel, der uns selbst treffen mochte.'²⁷ Paoli's *Grillparzer und seine Werke*, as its title suggests, is a mixture of memoir and literary analysis. She recounts conversations they shared to inform the reader about Grillparzer's creative life, his influences, and issues, such as censorship, which affected him. Although a fascinating read, it is not particularly useful as a biographical source.

Ebner-Eschenbach mentions several visits to Grillparzer in her diaries. In a short note on a visit in November 1864, she captures his lighter side: 'Er war sehr gesprächig und heiter. In einer Beziehung, sagte er, freue er sich seiner Taubheit, sie entschuldige sein Wegbleiben aus dem Reichsrat.'²⁸ She recounts their acquaintance at greater length in *Meine Erinnerungen an Grillparzer* (1916), and paints a vivid and intimate picture of the author without denying

²⁶Betty Paoli. 'Studie über Grillparzer' (1872). *Grillparzers Gespräche und die Charakteristiken seiner Persönlichkeit durch die Zeitgenossen*. Ed. August Sauer. Schriften des Literarischen Vereins in Wien I. Vienna: Verlag des Literarischen Vereins in Wien, 1904. 243–71, p. 244.

²⁷*Ibid.*, p. 255.

²⁸Entry for 16.11.1864. Marie von Ebner-Eschenbach. *Kritische Texte und Deutungen*. Ed. Karl Konrad Polheim et al. 8 vols. *Tagebücher I. 1862–69*. Ed. Karl Konrad Polheim and Rainer Baasner. Tübingen: Niemeyer, 1989, p. 36.

his flaws. Ebner-Eschenbach provides more biographical detail than Paoli, including insight into Grillparzer's relationship with Katharina Fröhlich. Ebner-Eschenbach's account starts in the 1860s, when she asked Grillparzer if she could read him one of her dramas. She does not share his reaction or his judgment with her readers, but notes on a separate occasion that he expressed his happiness at the success of her drama *Doktor Ritter*, which was performed at the Burgtheater in 1869. It is unclear whether Grillparzer engaged with the works of Ebner-Eschenbach, but his pleasure at her literary success suggests that he was not opposed to women writers or women's writing.

Although Ebner-Eschenbach does not ignore Grillparzer's morose, melancholy attributes, she shows us his happy side as well, for example his reaction to a birthday present: 'Er [...] stand auf, legte den Arm um meine Schulter und gab mir einen langen, ernsthaften Kuß.'²⁹ Ebner-Eschenbach's account also shows her devotion to the aged poet, a devotion shared by many, perhaps all, of the women who knew him in the later period of his life. Grillparzer was clearly fond of them in return. In a well-known aphorism, Grillparzer compared himself to Jesus because only women visited him. He referred to Littrow-Bischoff, one of these 'Pilgerinnen zum Grabe', as 'die Astrologin' on account of her husband's job as director of the Vienna Observatory, and Ebner-Eschenbach remarks that 'wir wußten sehr gut, daß jede von uns gelegentlich mit einem sehr boshaften Scherzworte bedacht wurde. Das änderte aber nicht das geringste an unsrer Liebe für ihn.'³⁰

Although Laube's *Lebensgeschichte* has flaws, it remains the most comprehensive biography of Grillparzer in English or German. Grillparzer's love life, largely overlooked by Laube, has nevertheless attracted much biographical interest. Anna Tizia Leitich, for example, has written two books about the women in Grillparzer's life, *Zwölfmal Liebe. Frauen um Grillparzer* (1948) and *Genie und Leidenschaft. Frauen um Grillparzer* (1965). Both are defined by Leitich's attempts to analyse Grillparzer's dramas, and his female

²⁹Marie von Ebner-Eschenbach. *Meine Erinnerungen an Grillparzer. Aus einem zeitlosen Tagebuch*. Berlin: Verlag von Gebrüder Paetel, 1916, p. 50.

³⁰*Ibid.*, p. 45.

characters in particular, through the lens of his personal life, and she argues that Grillparzer's female characters must have been inspired by the women he knew.³¹ Heinz Politzer also provides a detailed resume of Grillparzer's love life, linking Grillparzer's affair with Marie Smolk von Smolenitz with his depiction of Rahel.³² More recently, Pia Janke has argued that speculative biographical details generally have little or no value for serious literary analysis. Janke criticises the use of Grillparzer's love life as an analytical tool when studying his dramas, and the use of these dramas as sources for biographical study.³³

Given the paucity of biographical works on Grillparzer; the reliance of these on the *Selbstbiographie*, other autobiographical writings, and diaries (which themselves were sources for the *Selbstbiographie*); and the lack of a comprehensive biography, Grillparzer's autobiographical works inevitably play a large role in the attempts of this thesis to understand his relationships with women. As mentioned above, the *Selbstbiographie*'s composition was quick and relied heavily on Grillparzer's memory, a fact which led to numerous factual errors in the text (*HKA* I/xvi, pp. xlv–xlvii) and which necessitates its cautious and critical use. However, Grillparzer by no means presents a universally flattering portrait of himself, which is perhaps an indication that, in accordance with the text's ostensible original purpose as a record for the Akademie, he strove for impartiality. Indeed, Grillparzer's diaries show that he was harshly critical of himself and aware of his flaws. This tallies with the image he presents of himself in these autobiographies, and with the image which his acquaintances present.

In two episodes from Grillparzer's childhood we see that, while women played important roles in his life at this stage, he already had the tendency to distance himself from women as soon as he was disappointed in them. Grillparzer inherited his father's 'hypochondrische Zurückgezogenheit' and spent his 'erste Jugend in fast völliger

³¹ Anna Tizia Leitich. *Genie und Leidenschaft. Die Frauen um Grillparzer*. Vienna: Speidel, 1965, p. 10.

³² Heinz Politzer. *Franz Grillparzer oder das abgründige Biedermeier*. Vienna: Molden, 1972, p. 121.

³³ Pia Janke. 'Gescheiterte Authentizität. Anmerkungen zu Grillparzers Frauenfiguren'. *Lenau-Jahrbuch* 26 (2000). 57–72, p. 58.

Einsamkeit’ ‘beinahe ohne Umgang mit seinen Altersgenossen und durch Neigungsverschiedenheiten von seinen Brüdern entfernt gehalten’.³⁴ A maid in his parents’ household played an important role in his early education and the two would read together. However, she was sidelined once the young Grillparzer felt that his intellectual capacity had outgrown hers.³⁵ Just one transgression was enough to see the maid exiled from Grillparzer’s presence and interest. His mother similarly proved a disappointing assistant in the young Grillparzer’s literary adventures: ‘Meine Mutter, zu der ich Vertrauen hatte, habe ich vielleicht manchmal um Erklärung angegangen, da sie mir aber für jeden Fall keine geben konnte, so blieb ich still und las fort.’ (*HKA* I/xvi, p. 12–13.) His mother clearly functioned as a key reference point for her son, even if she could not be much help to him.

Grillparzer’s remarks on women in general also display misogynistic tendencies. So, for example, he argues that male and female artistic judgment differ because women ‘in der Regel keiner Abstraktion fähig sind, und nur das bewundern können, was sie zugleich auch vollkommen billigen.’ (1821. Nr. 900. *HKA* II/vii, p. 351.) Similarly, he copies an excerpt from Swift, presumably in a spirit of approbation, which plays on women’s supposed vanity: ‘Der Grund warum Männer sich gern schmeicheln lassen, ist gemeiniglich, weil sie eine schlechte Meinung von sich haben; bei Frauenzimmern ist es gerade das Gegentheil. Swift.’ (1822. Nr. 1060. *HKA* II/viii, p. 26.) He also argues that differences between the sexes mean that infidelity has asymmetric results depending on the sex of victim and perpetrator: ‘Die Frau eines untreuen Mannes bedauert man, über den Mann einer untreuen Frau spottet man.’ (1822. Nr. 1216. *HKA* II/viii, p. 89.) Men, according to Grillparzer, do less damage than women when they are unfaithful, and this is because of difference between the sexes. Grillparzer seems to link this discrepancy to nature, when surely society is responsible for the attitudes towards adulterers and cuckolds. Perhaps this piece of commentary primarily serves to exonerate the author.

³⁴Grillparzer. ‘[Anfang einer Selbstbiographie]’ (1835). *HKA* I/xvi. 17–20, p. 17.

³⁵Grillparzer. ‘[Anfänge einer Selbstbiographie]’ (1822). *HKA* I/xvi. 11–15, p. 12.

Grillparzer's interest in historical women stands in contrast to his misogynistic statements. He read works by Françoise Bertaut de Motteville, whose *Mémoires* depict life at the court of Anne of Austria, and Madame de Genlis (Nr. 321. *HKA* II/vii, p. 141). Grillparzer's library contained the memoirs of Princess Wilhelmine of Prussia, Madame Roland (the subject of Ebner-Eschenbach's 1867 drama) and Jeanne de Valois-Saint-Rémy (notorious for her role in the Diamond Necklace Affair), as well as works on Marie Antoinette, Catherine II and Rahel von Varnhagen (*HKA* II/xii, pp. 112–13). Alongside numerous references to female rulers, he mentions the situation of women in Africa, ancient Egypt and Greece, and Europe. He notes: 'Große Achtung der Frauen in Egypten, doch Eingeschlossenheit der Vornehmern.' (1822. Nr. 1163. *HKA* II/viii, p. 68.) He mentions the education of Pindar under the guidance of Myrtis, and his eventual defeat by the poet Corinna, an anecdote which would surely have interested a male writer who was acquainted with so many female writers during his life, and who achieved fame with a drama focused on the life of Sappho (1822. Nr. 1144. *HKA* II/viii, p. 64). Grillparzer's reading of J.-B. Douville's *Voyage au Congo et dans l'intérieur de l'Afrique équinoxiale* (1832) yielded many quotations on the lives of African women, including mentions of African laziness, immoral dancing, and toleration of promiscuity. He noted, for example, the '[g]roße Abhängigkeit der Weiber'; 'Galanterieen der Negerinnen', and that the more lovers a woman had, the more she and her husband were respected; and that the chiefs only let their daughters marry local men 'unter der Bedingung, daß wenn es dieser einmal belieben sollte, sich einem Weissen [*sic*] zu ergeben, sie es thun könne, und der Mann, wenn er es hindern wollte, in die Strafe der Sklaverei verfiel.' (1833. Nr. 2069. *HKA* II/ix, pp. 118–21.) There is much here which might have intrigued or disgusted the poet: paying a bride price; a society in which women's sexual freedom is encouraged; matrilineal inheritance; a husband's impotence in the face of his wife's desire to lie with a white man. Grillparzer's diaries show the extent of his intellectual interests, which ranged well beyond the borders of the Habsburg monarchy.

Grillparzer's diaries, notebooks and letters provide a wealth of material which contradicts his own misogynistic statements, and suggests that he was interested in intellectual women. Germaine de Staël (1766–1817) features prominently in Grillparzer's notes. Although his reaction to de Staël was ambivalent, he read her work and did not consider her achievements trivial because of her sex. His analysis of the autobiographical work *Dix années d'exil* combines literary criticism with personal attacks against the author, citing her 'lächerliche Eitelkeit' and his disgust at 'das ganze Wesen dieser Frau'. For Grillparzer, de Staël was the epitome of writers 'die nicht ihren Gegenstand zeigen wollen, sondern sich', and he questioned the validity of her suffering. (1822. Nr. 998. *HKA* II/viii, p. 10.) Karin Hagl-Catling sees Grillparzer's 'emotionale Unsachlichkeit' in his assessment of de Staël as a result of her refusal to bow to censorship, which might have challenged his view of his own masculinity.³⁶ Grillparzer was also critical of the morality she advocated in the foreword to her novel *Delphine* (1802), which he labelled 'die Moral eines debauchirten Weibes' (1830. Nr. 1868. *HKA* II/ix, p. 19). He did, however, see fit to praise the content of the novel itself: 'Es ist ein Schatz von gefühlten und treffenden Bezeichnungen in dieser Delphine wie nicht leicht in einem andern Buche.' (1830. Nr. 1884. *HKA* II/ix, p. 23.)

On his travels, Grillparzer came into contact with the German writers Wilhelmine von Chézy and Ida von Hahn-Hahn. He is happy to reestablish the acquaintance with 'die leibhafte Frau von Chezy, Dichterin der Euryanthe u.s.w.' (5 May 1836. Nr. 3017. *HKA* II/x, p. 67). Grillparzer's notes concerning Chézy display no animosity, and he recognises her as an author. It is also clear that he was at least aware of European women writers of the age. Grillparzer met Hahn-Hahn during his trip to Constantinople in 1843. He noted: 'Sie scheint natürlich, wenigstens spricht sie so. Gefiel mir weit besser als ich erwartete.' (1843. Nr. 3665. *HKA* II/ii, p. 41.)

The question of Grillparzer's attitude towards women becomes more complicated in the

³⁶Karin Hagl-Catling. *Für eine Imagologie der Geschlechter. Franz Grillparzers Frauenbild im Widerspruch*. Frankfurt/Main: Peter Lang, 1997, pp. 113–14.

context of his contemporaries. In comparison with the playwright Eduard von Bauernfeld (1802–90), Grillparzer's positive pronouncements on women are less forceful and explicit. Karl Glossy writes that critics recognised Bauernfeld as an author who attempted to apply a 'Lustspielcur' as a solution to social problems.³⁷ In Bauernfeld's *Xenien*, written in the early 1870s, are two aphorisms which are stronger defences of women than we find in Grillparzer. The first, 'Gegenseitige Schwäche', reads: "'Schwachheit, dein Namen ist Weib!'" so meint ein Dichter, ein großer;/ Aber das Weibchen, es weiß : Schwachheit, dein Namen ist Mann!"³⁸ The second, 'Stuart Mill', indicates Bauernfeld's approval of John Stuart Mill's views on women: "'Tauglich für jegliches Tun der Männer erklär' ich die Frauen!'"—/ Recht! Und ein Superplus noch: Kinder gebären nur sie.'³⁹

As far as the *Frauenfrage* is concerned, Bauernfeld's *Bürgerlich und Romantisch* (1835) provides an interesting contrast to the historicising restraint of Grillparzer's dramas. Bauernfeld presents a discussion of the *Frauenfrage* directly and explicitly, and in a contemporary setting rather than in the mythical or historical settings which Grillparzer chose as part of his efforts to pass censorship. Perhaps Bauernfeld was treated with more latitude than Grillparzer as *Bürgerlich und Romantisch* is a comedy rather than a drama, but the contrast is nevertheless startling. The comedy centres on the character of Katharine, a female artist staying by herself in a spa town. At the opening of the drama, the councillor's wife and daughter, Cäcilie, discuss Katharine's arrival in the town. While Cäcilie seems enchanted with the idea of a female artist, her mother considers this a breach of morality: 'Eine reisende Malerin? Es klingt doch immer ein bißchen abenteuerlich.'⁴⁰

Against a misogynistic backdrop, Katharine tries to assert her independence. She explains her unusual behaviour to the Baron: 'Mein Vater galt für einen Sonderling. Er gab mir die Erziehung eines Knaben. Ich lernte reiten, schwimmen, klettern.' (p. 320) It is this

³⁷Karl Glossy. 'Aus Bauernfelds Tagebüchern'. *JdGG* 5 (1895). ix–xviii, 1–217, pp. xiii–xiv.

³⁸Eduard Bauernfeld. *Bauernfelds ausgewählte Werke in vier Bänden*. 4 vols. Ed. Emil Horner. Leipzig: Max Hesse, no date. I, p. 113.

³⁹*Ibid.*, p. 118.

⁴⁰Bauernfeld. 'Bürgerlich und Romantisch'. *Bauernfelds ausgewählte Werke*. II. 289–349, p. 290.

background which allows Katharine to assert her independence and challenge restrictions on her freedom:

Wir armen Frauen! Warum sind wir die Unterdrückten? Haben wir nicht Verstand, Geist, Gefühl, so gut als die Männer? Besser als die Männer? Sollen sie Gesetze geben für uns und sie brechen gegen uns? Laß sie Gelehrte sein, Staatsleute und Soldaten, aber laß uns nicht ihre Sklavinnen werden. Ich habe keinen Vater, keinen Bruder, keinen Mann. Ich stehe allein in der Welt. Soll ich mich deshalb vor der Welt verbergen? [...] Ist es ein so großes Verbrechen, ohne männliche Begleitung spazieren zu gehen? Verlang' ich denn mehr? Und kann man weniger verlangen? (pp. 294–95)

The Baron gives the context for Katharine's complaints, and for some of the difficulties which Grillparzer's female friends must have faced: 'Sie sehen, mein Fräulein, [...] wie schwer sich eine Dame, bei allem Geist und Witz, in der Welt allein behaupten kann. Die Tugend und Sittsamkeit selbst sind vor bösen Zungen nicht sicher, wenn sie ohne Paß und männliche Begleitung reisen.' (p. 332) Katharine's references to concrete problems of the time—a growing number of unmarried women, women's disenfranchisement, questions regarding men's and women's cognitive and emotional faculties, legal issues regarding majority—as well as the play's contemporary setting make this a much more direct engagement with the *Frauenfrage* than anything in Grillparzer's *œuvre*. As Roy C. Cowen writes, Grillparzer 'stops short of social realism as a criticism of specific conditions' and avoids contemporary settings.⁴¹

Grillparzer wrote many of his dramas with the intention of having them performed on stage, and, as the foreword to the first edition of *Die Ahnfrau* shows, he was well aware of their theatrical elements (*HKA* I/xiv, pp. 3–4). Grillparzer's struggles with the censors are well known, and, as diary notes testify, censorship was a major source of frustration in Grillparzer's life. In his *Selbstbiographie* he writes that, after early problems with the censors, it was natural to choose subject matter which would not pose such problems (*HKA* I/xvi, p. 203). His reaction to criticism of *Sappho*, also recounted in the *Selbstbiographie*, again suggests self-censorship: contemporary critics argued that the drama was not Greek enough,

⁴¹Roy C. Cowen. 'Franz Grillparzer'. *Major Figures of Nineteenth-Century Austrian Literature*. Ed. Donald G. Daviau. Riverside, CA: Ariadne, 1998. 252–77, p. 259.

which was fine by Grillparzer, 'da ich nicht für Griechen sondern für Deutsche schrieb.' (*HKA* I/xvi, p. 203.) His settings, then, were not contemporary, but the issues in them were. His decision not to release *Die Jüdin von Toledo*, *Ein Bruderzwist in Habsburg* or *Libussa* during his lifetime, and the request that these manuscripts be destroyed on his death, is perhaps the biggest act of self-censorship he committed.

The Austria of Grillparzer's time had one of the strictest censorship regimes in Europe.⁴² Throughout the first half of the nineteenth century, censors adhered to the guidelines laid out by Franz Karl Hägelin in his *Denkschrift* (1795). The regulations were tightened up in 1801, especially as regards printed works, and by the 1830s the petty restrictions of censorship had become a running joke. In general, censorship was stricter in the theatre than in publishing as performed works could have an immediate impact upon people of all classes, whereas printed books were in effect restricted to the educated classes.⁴³ Different theatres were also held to different standards: coarser language was allowed in the *Vorstadttheater*, while at the *Burgtheater* every offensive part of a text was removed.⁴⁴

One of the basic duties of theatre censorship was safeguarding public morality;⁴⁵ all indecent language, including references to adultery, had to be eliminated. No references to the Church were allowed. The monarchy could not be disparaged, and portrayals of rebellion were banned. Political liberty as a subject was not permissible. Until 1848, all texts to be performed in a theatre had to be pre-approved. Special police agents attended rehearsals and first-night performances to make sure that the censors' changes had been incorporated.⁴⁶ The police ensured that in the *Burgtheater* both text and performance adhered to the highest moral standards.⁴⁷ In 1822, Schreyvogel's adaptation of *King Lear*

⁴²W. E. Yates. *Theatre in Vienna. A Critical History, 1776–1995*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1996, p. 27.

⁴³*Ibid.*, p. 25.

⁴⁴Julius Marx. *Die österreichische Zensur im Vormärz*. Vienna: Verlag für Geschichte und Politik, 1959, p. 57.

⁴⁵Yates. *Theatre in Vienna*, p. 28.

⁴⁶Norbert Bachleitner. 'The Habsburg Monarchy'. *The Frightful Stage. Political Censorship of the Theater in Nineteenth-Century Europe*. Ed. Robert Justin Goldstein. New York; Oxford: Berghahn, 2009. 228–64, p. 234.

⁴⁷Yates. *Theatre in Vienna*, p. 29.

was banned as it portrayed the downfall of a monarch.⁴⁸ An application to stage Schiller's *Maria Stuart*, which violated Hägelin's principle that depictions of monarchs' executions could not be performed in monarchist states, was summarily rejected in 1810. The performance of a modified version was allowed in 1814 and strictly overseen by censors.

Many of those who took on the role of censor did so out of necessity, and in some cases police officers, civil servants, lawyers and members of other professions were assigned these roles alongside their existing duties.⁴⁹ Censors often complained that they received insufficient guidance regarding objectionable material, and erred on the side of caution from fear of punishments for allowing material to pass censorship which later generated complaints.

Therefore, the texts as we know them, and as they were performed at the time, may have presented merely Grillparzer's censored version of his own views. Unfortunately, only *Die Ahnfrau* survives in a complete first draft available to readers, and in the relevant chapter this is compared with the final version to identify elements which Grillparzer might have changed. In other cases, Grillparzer's notes and plans are analysed to the same ends. However, it is seldom possible to establish Grillparzer's own views, and the extent to which he portrayed them faithfully and openly in his dramas, from the dramas and his preparatory work alone.

One indication that Grillparzer may have self-censored the dramas he wrote for the stage comes from a play written in 1811. In *Wer ist schuldig?*, a one-act *Lustspiel* which was probably not written with public performance in mind, Grillparzer presents a marital feud in a presumably contemporary setting in Vienna. Holl expresses negative stereotypes of women, while his wife, Marie, inveighs against the male sex and women's subordinate social position:

Herrschsüchtiges und ungezügelter Geschlecht!
So stempelt denn dein Wille jede That zum Recht?
Euch schmückt des Ruhmes Kranz, euch blüht des Sieges Krone,

⁴⁸*Ibid.*, pp. 31–32.

⁴⁹Katy Heady. *Literature and Censorship in Restoration Germany. Repression and Rhetoric*. Rochester, NY: Camden House, 2009, pp. 15–16.

ihr herrscht im Haus, im Lernstuhl, auf dem Throne
 die ganze Welt ist euer ungeheures Reich
 [...]
 indeß die Frau verbannt in Kindesstub' und Küche,
 dem Herrn der Erde dient als kaum bemerkte Magd
 [...]
 Genug! In Wien wie in dem Lande der Chinesen
 ist eine Frau das unglücksel'gste aller Wesen! (HKA II/iv, p. 98)

In conversation with Holl, Marie also criticises the institution of marriage: 'Für uns [Frauen] ist die Eh' wohl die schlimmste Lotterie,/ Verlieren können wir allein, gewinnen nie' (p. 127).

She even seems to address the contemporary legal issue of women's majority:

MARIE: Die Zeiten sind vorbei
 wo man geglaubt, daß eine Frau nie mündig sei!
 HOLL: Wie, mündig? O an Mund fehlt' euch's in keinen Zeiten,
 allein mit der Vernunft sind wir noch jetzt im Weiten. (p. 126)

While Grillparzer's mature works often deal with the social role of women, and present women who do not conform to contemporary ideals, they do not directly address legal issues in the way that *Wer ist schuldig?* does, even if the import of Marie's words is somewhat masked by Holl's disdainful reply. Here, Holl responds with the misogyny which characterises his statements about women. In a similar vein, he claims: 'Zwei Klößen Weiber gibt's: Die Schlimmen und die Schlimmern', and refers to his wife as 'ein Lexikon von Weiberschwächen' (p. 127).

Wer ist schuldig? shows that Grillparzer was aware of women's issues, and thinking and writing about them from an early age. It is also a more direct engagement with the *Frauenfrage* than in later dramas, and demonstrates a desire to position these issues in a contemporary setting. This suggests that Grillparzer censored the content of his dramas beyond giving them historical or mythological settings. The likelihood of self-censorship in issues related to the *Frauenfrage* supports the present thesis insofar as it suggests that Grillparzer's views may have been stronger than he felt comfortable portraying on the stage.

The abundance of misogynistic statements in Grillparzer's private writings cannot be denied, nor can the fact that such statements outnumber by far his shows of sympathy for

women. It should, however, be noted that the vast majority of such statements originate from the first decades of his life, and in particular from his late teenage years and his twenties. Hagl-Catling identifies a time lag between his hostile and friendly behaviour, and concludes that he was more tolerant of female writers in his later years.⁵⁰ Dagmar Lorenz argues that, despite his ‘Anwürfe gegen “die Weiber”’, Grillparzer was not anti-feminist or misogynistic.⁵¹ It is not inconceivable that such opinions belong to his youth, and betray the strong influence of upbringing and social trends, and that he moderated and reversed these opinions as he matured. It is possible that his later female acquaintance, who feature in Chapter 1, contributed to this change in his attitude. However, even his juvenilia evidence his deep sympathy with the plight of women in patriarchal societies, and his contempt for brutish misogyny. Is it possible to reconcile the conflicting views on women which appear in private prose and public dramatic works?

In *Das Kloster bei Sendomir* (1828), Grillparzer himself helps us reconcile these disparate public and private conceptions of women. The *Rahmennovelle*, in which an incognito Count Starschensky tells two travellers his story, offers some potential insights into Grillparzer’s self-conception and his relationships with women. The tale begins with the arrival of two travellers at a monastery. A monk provides them with accommodation and victuals, and they ask him to tell them the history of the monastery. The monk tells the story of Count Starschensky, whose wife Elga cuckolded him, and tricked him into raising the child fathered by her former lover. On discovering this betrayal, Starschensky gave her the choice between death or salvation by murdering her baby daughter. When she showed herself more concerned with self-preservation than her daughter’s life, Starschensky murdered her. Starschensky left his child with a local couple, sold his remaining property and founded the monastery. It is only when the abbot enters looking for Starschensky that

⁵⁰Hagl-Catling, p. 119.

⁵¹Dagmar C. G. Lorenz. ‘Grillparzer, Dichter des sozialen Konflikts’. *Grillparzer oder Die Wirklichkeit der Wirklichkeit*. Ed. Bernhard Denscher and Walter Obermaier. Vienna: Historisches Museum der Stadt Wien, 1991. 31–38, p. 32.

the travellers, and the reader, find out that the monk-narrator and Starschensky are one and the same.

While caution is necessary when linking an author to one of his fictional characters, there are many similarities between Grillparzer and Starschensky. Starschensky begins his narrative with a description of himself (in the third person, as he does not wish to betray his identity), and in this description we see Grillparzer's diffidence, reserve, and desire for independence.⁵² This third characteristic, in particular, suggests an overlap between author and protagonist as it reinforces Grillparzer's assertion that he could not consider marriage because he detested the sacrifice of privacy which it entailed. Grillparzer is perhaps indulging in self-mockery when he describes the count's chastity:

Über Eines wunderten sich die Leute am meisten: nie hatte man ihn einem weiblichen Wesen mit Neigung zugetan gesehen, sichtlich vermied er den Umgang mit Frauen. Er galt daher für einen Weiberfeind; doch war er keiner. (*HKA* I/xiii, p. 9.)

Here, Grillparzer wryly pokes fun at his own catalogue of romantic exploits while anticipating and calling into question his reputation as a misogynist. If Grillparzer were to be accused of misogyny, it would not be because he avoided women. In the context of this study, this quotation raises important questions regarding Grillparzer's self-perception, particularly as it could be seen as a rejection of claims that he was anti-women. If we take Grillparzer and Starschensky to be one and the same person as far as the quality of not being a *Weiberfeind* is concerned, then in *Das Kloster bei Sedomir* Grillparzer is perhaps giving us a means of navigating the discrepancy between his private musings and his dramas, of correcting the inaccurate picture which emerges from this discrepancy.

Grillparzer's expressed views on women and his female protagonists must be seen in the context of wider debates on sex/gender and on the roles of men and women in society. Gender was a contentious issue at the end of the eighteenth century, at least partly in the wake of the French Revolution, which, according to Thomas Laqueur, created a 'genuine

⁵²Grillparzer. 'Das Kloster bei Sedomir'. *HKA* I/xiii. 5–33, p. 9.

new feminism'.⁵³ However, this was accompanied by antifeminism and a new fear of women. The Revolution also formed new political boundaries and commensurate gender boundaries. The creation of a bourgeois public sphere meant that it was necessary to decide which sex could legitimately occupy it. Throughout Grillparzer's creative period, the *Frauenfrage* was 'ein heißumstrittenes Thema.'⁵⁴ As we will see, Grillparzer's life and work both replicate and reject contemporary ideals of womanhood. On the one hand, diary entries and his treatment of his love interests, including Fröhlich, betray his misogyny. On the other, he counted some of the most atypical women of the era amongst his acquaintance, and his dramas question a social order in which women are marginalised and mistreated. In the following chapters, I analyse eight of Grillparzer's dramas, drawing on his other writings as well, in an attempt to explain the discord between his private views and the subversion of these in his dramatic works, and to analyse Grillparzer's problematisation of prevailing social norms.

As has been stated already, the aim of this thesis is to investigate the degree to which Grillparzer incorporated criticism of the social position of women into his dramas. It is, therefore, primarily about Grillparzer's *ideas*. The aims of this thesis, and its primary interest in Grillparzer's ideas, inform the methodological approaches which have been chosen, and explain the omissions which have been made. The focus is on Grillparzer's dramas as texts, rather than as dramas written for a stage, and on Grillparzer's other writings, rather than on the dramas' reception. This is for the simple reason that Grillparzer could control *what* he wrote more closely than he could control how his dramas were performed or received. Similarly, Grillparzer's other writings—juvenilia, diaries, letters, prose—provide more insight into the reading, reflection and ideas which went into creating these dramas than can contemporary reception.

In order to understand better Grillparzer's ideas and their genesis, his notes, diaries, correspondence, fragmentary dramas, juvenilia and prose are analysed. This contextualises

⁵³Thomas Laqueur, *Making Sex: Body and Gender from the Greeks to Freud*. Cambridge, MA; London: Harvard UP, 1990, p. 194.

⁵⁴Lorenz. 'Frau und Weiblichkeit bei Grillparzer', p. 205.

the dramas which are the focus of the study, and helps to show that, although he made misogynistic comments, he was interested in women's social roles, and in powerful women from myth and history, from an early age. Two early dramatic works, *Wer ist schuldig?* and *Der Zauberwald*, also indicate that Grillparzer might have censored his later dramas, and removed or amended material that was explicitly critical of the contemporary social position of women. This analysis also makes up for the lack of early drafts of the dramas considered here. Analysis of drafts would have allowed the development of socially critical ideas to be studied. Unfortunately, only *Die Ahnfrau* exists in a complete first draft.

Original plans for a chronological progression through Grillparzer's *œuvre* gave way to the thematic approach in which this thesis is presented. Not only does a thematic approach allow for similarities between texts to be exposed, but the development of many of Grillparzer's dramas over a period of decades makes a strictly chronological approach inappropriate. Analysis of Grillparzer's notebooks and diaries provided inspiration for the approaches taken in two of the four main sections. In 'Women and Enlightenment', I demonstrate Grillparzer's engagement with Kant, and argue that Enlightenment philosophy influenced *Ein treuer Diener seines Herrn* and *Des Meeres und der Liebe Wellen*. In 'Female Rulers', I contend that interest in powerful female figures from history and myth was combined with his reading in political philosophy to produce his portrayals of Sappho and Libussa. Taking inspiration for the analytical approaches from Grillparzer's writings means his dramas are analysed in the context of ideas which interested him. This mitigates a lack of evidence that he actively portrayed social contract theory or Enlightenment philosophy in his dramas. In 'Women and the Law', I suggest that the contemporary legal situation of women is a useful tool with which to analyse *Die Ahnfrau* and *König Ottokars Glück und Ende*. The final section, 'Grillparzer and Kyriarchy', consciously breaks with this approach, seeking analytical inspiration in the recent concepts of kyriarchy and intersectionality to understand the ways in which Grillparzer portrays complex interlocking patterns of discrimination and subjugation in *Das goldene Vließ* and *Die Jüdin von Toledo*.

Interest in Grillparzer's ideas influenced other methodological choices. The focus on Grillparzer's dramas as texts means that, in Chapter 1, the focus is on women writers rather than actresses. The actresses with whom Grillparzer was acquainted are considered. However, unlike Pichler, Weissenthurn et al., Schröder, Rettich and Wolter did not engage critically in print with the contemporary debates around the *Frauenfrage* which provide the broad context for this analysis of Grillparzer's dramas. Here it should be noted that I do not attempt to prove links between the women Grillparzer knew and their works, and his portrayal of female characters. Rather, the discussion of women Grillparzer knew serves to: show how women's rights were being debated at this time in Austria; show that women Grillparzer knew engaged actively with these debates in writing, and possibly also in salons Grillparzer would have attended; and suggest that Grillparzer was more open to intellectual, 'emancipated' women in real life than his diaries might make us think. The focus has been placed on female writers whom Grillparzer knew as their writings allow us to gain insight into the concerns of contemporary feminist thinking, and therefore to contextualise Grillparzer's dramas. This also explains why these women's fictional writings are ignored in favour of non-fictional writings. Their fiction does not engage with the *Frauenfrage* in the explicit way in which their non-fictional works considered here do. Fictional works would also need to be analysed through the lens of these non-fictional works. On the one hand, the limits of a doctoral thesis preclude the thorough and lengthy analysis of these fictional texts—Pichler's many historical novels, for example—which would be necessary. On the other, it would have seemed perversely at odds with the broadly feminist methodology of this thesis to treat fictional works by these women—works which are voluminous, and, although now largely forgotten, even by scholarship, were very popular in their time—as a sideshow in a thesis dedicated to a male writer. Instead, I offer a thorough-going analysis of non-fictional texts, most of which have hitherto received little scholarly attention.

Grillparzer's dramas, and their female characters more specifically, have been the subject of much scholarship, and this study owes a debt to those authors upon whose works it builds.

A brief review of the key publications specific to the present study will afford an overview of what has already been accomplished, and highlight some of the gaps which I hope to fill.

The importance of Grillparzer's female characters was already recognised during his lifetime. In 1848, an anonymous writer in the *Sonntagsblätter* compared Grillparzer's 'edle[], oft großartige[] Frauengestalten' with his male characters, all of whom appear 'mehr oder weniger erbärmlich'.⁵⁵ Jaromir is 'unmännlich', Ottokar 'zerbrochen und männlich unwürdig'. The author concludes: 'Die Frauen sollten unsere[n] Grillparzer [...] lieben und verehren. Uns Männer hat er wenig verklärt.' In 1856, the English translator Archer Gurney wrote to Grillparzer, praising his portrayal of women, and of Sappho in particular. Gurney concluded: 'Ach, wie viel schulden Ihnen die Deutschen Frauen! Sie allein habe die Rechte des Geschlechts vertheidigt, und eben dadurch Sich den Haß der meisten Männer zugezogen.' (Nr. 851. *HKA* III/iii, pp. 174–75.) In 1877, Bauernfeld called Grillparzer 'der weibliche Dichter *par excellence*' and noted that his female characters 'enthalten feine Züge, wohl auch Widersprüche, wie sie der Dichter dem weiblichen Herzen abgelauscht', while his male figures excited little interest.⁵⁶ Reception by Grillparzer's contemporaries focuses on the ways in which Grillparzer's portrayal of women agrees with stereotypes and prejudices regarding the female character, rather than on the feminist messages which I see in these dramas. Grillparzer's depiction of women has since been mentioned by many critics. Franz Forster notes that Grillparzer 'gehört überhaupt zu den großen Frauendarstellern unter den Dramatikern' and that his dramas often deal with 'die Situation der Frau in einer von Männern dominierten Gesellschaft'. Forster identifies the frequent juxtaposition of a formidable woman and a weak man in Grillparzer's dramas. His female characters are 'eigenwillig, selbstbewußt, scharfzüngig, teils auch mit einem guten Anflug

⁵⁵ 'Grillparzers männliche und weibliche Charaktere'. *Wienerbote. Beilage zu den Sonntagsblättern*. 9.1.1848, p. 10.

⁵⁶ Eduard Bauernfeld. 'Kleine dramatische Studien' [1877]. *Eduard von Bauernfelds Gesammelte Aufsätze*. Ed. Stefan Hock. Schriften des Literarischen Vereins in Wien IV. Vienna: Verlag des Literarischen Vereins in Wien, 1905. 227–65, p. 253.

verbaler Aggressivität ausgestattet'.⁵⁷ Walter Weiss notes that Grillparzer favours 'seine Frauengestalten [...] und sich oft mit ihnen identifiziert, im Kontrast übrigens zu seinem biographisch belegten Verhalten'.⁵⁸

An early study dedicated to Grillparzer's female figures was Francis Wolf-Cirian's *Grillparzers Frauengestalten*, which aimed to provide a thorough analysis of his heroines. She⁵⁹ finds it puzzling that no one had previously devoted a monograph to them, despite the fact that 'die Frauen Grillparzers vor seinen Männern eine größere Bestimmtheit, eine erhöhte Lebenskraft, zum wenigsten ein ursprünglicheres Triebleben voraushaben'.⁶⁰ Wolf-Cirian does not place Grillparzer's heroines in a social context, which is one major flaw which the present study aims to address. Anna Tizia Leitich argues that scholarship has overlooked Grillparzer's 'großartiges Frauenbrevier', and that he depicts psychological developments 'die wir uns erst im Laufe der modernen Frauenbewegung sozusagen erobern mußten'.⁶¹ Brigitte Prutti goes further when she states that the 'beeindruckende Statur und das emanzipatorische Potential von Grillparzers mythischen Heroinnen und Amazonen ist nicht zu leugnen'.⁶²

Lorenz has dedicated several studies to Grillparzer's heroines, among whom are 'jene merkwürdig schillernden, androgynen Charaktere, denen [...] die ihnen angestammten Rollen zu eng sind'.⁶³ Lorenz sees Grillparzer as an iconoclastic figure whose dramas demand a critical and radical attitude towards Western society in order to effect change.⁶⁴

⁵⁷Franz Forster. 'Grillparzer—ein Dichter des Alternativen, mit besonderer Berücksichtigung des Dramas "Libussa"'. *Franz Grillparzer 1791–1991. Vorträge anlässlich einer Grillparzer-Gedenkfeier an der Universität Oslo 25.–26. September 1991*. Ed. Kurt Erich Schöndorf and Elsbeth Wessel. Oslo: Germanistisches Institut der Universität Oslo, 1993. 37–66, p. 44.

⁵⁸Walter Weiss. 'Opfer bei Grillparzer'. *Études Germaniques* 47 (1992), 235–43, p. 238.

⁵⁹There seems to be some confusion regarding Wolf-Cirian's sex. Most writers use masculine pronouns when talking about Wolf-Cirian, but Frederic E. Coenen asserts that she 'was a woman, not a man.' 'Review of *The Inspiration Motive in the Works of Franz Grillparzer. With Special Consideration of "Libussa"*'. *Monatshefte* 49/3 (1957). 131–32, p. 132.

⁶⁰Francis Wolf-Cirian. *Grillparzers Frauengestalten*. Stuttgart; Berlin: Cotta, 1908, p. v.

⁶¹Leitich. *Zwölffmal Liebe*, p. 19.

⁶²Brigitte Prutti. *Grillparzers Welttheater: Modernität und Tradition*. Bielefeld: Aisthesis, 2013, p. 309.

⁶³Dagmar C. G. Lorenz. 'Ambivalenz und Erkenntnis in Franz Grillparzers Werk'. *Grillparzer heute—wiederentdeckt oder vergessen?* Vienna: Picus, 1993. 51–66, p. 60.

⁶⁴Dagmar C. G. Lorenz. *Grillparzer. Dichter des sozialen Konflikts*. Vienna: Böhlau, 1986, p. 111.

This analysis stands in opposition to the conclusions of Heinrich Laube and others. Laube, for example, writes that Grillparzer's works were not 'polemisch [...], ja nicht einmal theoretisch' and that even 'das feinste politische Mißtrauen konnte ihnen nur wenig Bedenkliches absehen'.⁶⁵ In her 1986 study, *Grillparzer, Dichter des sozialen Konflikts*, Lorenz analyses several of Grillparzer's dramas from a feminist perspective. She argues that Grillparzer constantly questioned the division of life into public and private spheres, and so should be placed 'auf einer Linie, die von Kleist über Marx/Engels und Bebel hinreicht in das 20. Jahrhundert und den zeitgenössischen Feminismus.' In his dramas, 'die Übergänge von Mann zu Frau, männlichem und weiblichem Verhalten' are fluid, and '[i]n der Hinterfragung der traditionellen Geschlechterrollen liegt die Kritik an der Machtverteilung'.⁶⁶ She also notes that his heroines are far more complex and developed than those of his contemporaries. Lorenz argues that his acquaintances with emancipated women show he was open to new gender roles. Elsewhere, Lorenz suggests that Grillparzer's female acquaintance is the reason why he did not fill his dramas with 'ausgeleiteten Klischees von Tugend, Treue, mütterlicher Opferbereitschaft, Passivität, Unterwürfigkeit' and other idealised male conceptions of femininity.⁶⁷ In part, the present study elaborates on these points and shows in detail the attitudes of Grillparzer's female acquaintances to the *Frauenfrage*.

In a 1991 article, Lorenz argues that Grillparzer's 'Reaktionen zu den Emanzipationskomplexen und sozialen Fragen [sind] unkonventionell, ja revolutionär [...]'.⁶⁸ She shows that the Fröhlich sisters, who provided for themselves financially, did not comply with the expectations of patriarchal society, and argues that Grillparzer's female characters reflect his circle. Lorenz writes that Grillparzer's experiences with the women he knew, particularly the Fröhlich sisters, helped shape the way he thought about women: he

⁶⁵Heinrich Laube. 'Dramaturgische Briefe über das Burgtheater'. *Blätter für Theater, Musik und Kunst*. 8.9.1865, p. 285.

⁶⁶Lorenz. *Dichter des sozialen Konflikts*, pp. 23, 28–29, 19.

⁶⁷Lorenz. 'Frau und Weiblichkeit bei Grillparzer', p. 201.

⁶⁸Lorenz. 'Dichter des sozialen Konflikts', p. 31.

saw man as the ‘Normalmensch[]’ but did not believe gender differences to be categorical or unchangeable.⁶⁹

Hagl-Catling has produced a larger feminist-themed study of Grillparzer’s dramas. Central to this is a psychological examination of Grillparzer. She argues that the opposition of a strict father and depressive, artistic mother sowed the seeds of self-alienation in the young Grillparzer,⁷⁰ and that this resulted in ‘einer lebenslangen, erst im Alter abklingenden Identitätskrise’.⁷¹ She links these psychological issues with his heroines.⁷² Hagl-Catling identifies a lack of positive comments on female writers, and argues that a ‘tief verborgene Misogynie’ influenced his reaction to de Staël and other literary women.⁷³ She sees the various portrayals of women in *Die Jüdin von Toledo* as representative of Grillparzer’s personal *Frauenbild* which contains ‘Elemente des spätaufklärerischen, des romantischen und des bürgerlich-biedermeierlichen Zeitgeistes sowie Elemente des misogynen Frauenbildes der Wiener Gesellschaft des 19. Jahrhunderts’.⁷⁴

Lorenz, Hagl-Catling, and others have posited Grillparzer’s female acquaintances as possible influences on his female characters. Cowen mentions Grillparzer’s ‘deep attachments’ to several women who might have influenced his portrayal of women.⁷⁵ Bruce Thompson writes that Grillparzer’s love life was a focus for many critics because ‘it provided him with the source material for [...] his depiction of female characters.’⁷⁶ Masato Ikuta sees Grillparzer’s experiences with women as the inspiration for his portrayal of the relationship between the sexes, but argues that ‘im Werk der intersubjektive Konflikt überwiegend vom frauenemanzipatorischen Standpunkt dargestellt wird.’⁷⁷

⁶⁹Lorenz. ‘Frau und Weiblichkeit bei Grillparzer’, p. 203.

⁷⁰Hagl-Catling, p. 97.

⁷¹*Ibid.*, p. 98.

⁷²*Ibid.*, p. 108.

⁷³*Ibid.*, pp. 111, 114.

⁷⁴*Ibid.*, p. 260.

⁷⁵Cowen. ‘Franz Grillparzer’, p. 265–66.

⁷⁶Bruce Thompson. *Franz Grillparzer*. Boston, MA: Twayne, 1981, p. 23.

⁷⁷Masato Ikuta. *Geschichte und Individuum in Grillparzers dramatischer Welt. Zur Entwicklung der Grillparzerschen Geschichtsdramatik*. Frankfurt/Main: Peter Lang, 1990, p. 167.

Grillparzer criticism has not been immune to the political vagaries of the decades since his death. A year after his death, he was already considered the great Austrian national poet.⁷⁸ It was Laube who initiated the author's 'fatale Beförderung zur österreichischen kulturellen Leitfigur'.⁷⁹ In a process designed to cement German cultural hegemony in the multicultural Habsburg lands, Grillparzer came to be seen as a symbol of the Austrian bourgeoisie. The canonisation of Grillparzer served cultural politics by suggesting the intertwining of German and Austrian-German culture and supporting the claim that German Austria was the rightful heir of Weimar. In the 1930s and 1940s, Grillparzer and his works 'became ammunition in a war of words' as Austria first sought to distance itself from Nazi Germany, before being integrated into it after 1938.⁸⁰ The Viennese press often stressed his Austrian credentials in the 1930s. From 1938 onwards, National Socialist and antisemitic tones became increasingly dominant in the rejection of 'the image of Grillparzer the weakling', with some critics portraying him as a pan-Germanic ideal of strength and vitality. 1941, the 150th anniversary of Grillparzer's birth, was dominated by praise of the author as a man of 'Greater German' ideas. In the years after World War II his Austrian credentials were again promoted, and Austrian critics portrayed him as 'the classical Viennese'.⁸¹ Ekkehart Krippendorff argues that the post-war celebration of Grillparzer as an Austrian national author was an insult: 'man [hat] ihn erneut tief beschädigt, weil gewissermaßen "ethnisiert" als eine Art besseren Heimatdichter.'⁸²

Josef Nadler, who is quoted in this thesis, established 'deutschnationale[], antisemitische[], antiziganische[] und antislawische[] Ideologeme als Grundlage einer neuen

⁷⁸Yates. *Theatre in Vienna*, p. 79.

⁷⁹Ekkehart Krippendorff. 'Grillparzer, der Fortschrittliche'. *Politics in Literature. Studies on a Germanic Preoccupation from Kleist to Améry*. Ed. Rüdiger Görner. Munich: Iudicium, 2004. 83–98, pp. 87–88.

⁸⁰Roe. *A Century of Criticism*, pp. 13–17.

⁸¹*Ibid.*, p. 17.

⁸²Krippendorff, p. 88.

Literaturgeschichtsschreibung'.⁸³ His work ascribed particular importance to theatre as a forum for specifically national issues, and attempted to interpret literature anew in the service of National Socialism; Grillparzer and his works became mere material for analysis. Key Nazi ideologies were built around Grillparzer, who was reinvented as a central figure in the new Nazi literary canon. Ernst Fischer, also quoted here, was a KPÖ member and government minister after the war, and his study of Grillparzer is an example of the post-war trend for emphasising the Austrian qualities of Grillparzer's works and characters. For example, Fischer sees Grillparzer's heroines as 'Wiener Frauen und Mädchen; und aus den Tiefen der allumfassenden Volkerstadt steigen auch die Medea und die Jüdin von Toledo hervor.'⁸⁴ Hildegard Essler, writing in Vienna during and after the war, shares this view.⁸⁵

The present study shares its central aim with that of Pia Janke's 2000 article, 'Gescheiterte Authentizität', namely an interpretation of Grillparzer's heroines 'aus einer sozialgeschichtlichen Perspektive heraus, die das kulturelle Bewußtsein des 19. Jahrhunderts mitreflektiert'.⁸⁶ Janke sees this as a more suitable alternative to the common approach of making Grillparzer's romantic life central to literary analysis of his heroines.⁸⁷ Janke identifies a major issue faced when placing Grillparzer's works in the context of the women's rights movement: it has yet to be proven that he engaged with this movement at all. Although this study cannot *prove* Grillparzer's engagement with the movement, more thorough analysis of Grillparzer's relationships with some of its proponents, and of the feminist writings of the women he knew, than has previously been attempted, allows Grillparzer's dramas to be placed more firmly in this context than has previously been possible. As I show, Grillparzer's friendships with many women who were involved in the

⁸³Birgit Peter. 'NS-ideologische Metamorphosen am Beispiel von Heinz Kindermann: Ferdinand Raimund und Franz Grillparzer als deutsche Volksdramatiker'. *Der Dichter und sein Germanist. Symposium in Memoriam Wendelin Schmidt-Dengler*. Ed. Stephan Kurz, Michael Rohrwasser and Daniela Strigl. Vienna: New Academic Press, 2012. 81–95, pp. 81–82.

⁸⁴Ernst Fischer. 'Franz Grillparzer'. *Von Grillparzer zu Kafka. Sechs Essays*. Vienna: Globus, 1962. 9–56, p. 24.

⁸⁵Hildegard Essler. 'Die Frau Grillparzers'. Diss., Vienna, 1945, p. 148.

⁸⁶Janke, p. 59.

⁸⁷*Ibid.*, p. 58.

Austrian women's movement suggest that he was not wholly inimical to the movement's aims.

Chapter 1

Grillparzer and Women

The Nineteenth-Century *Frauenbild*

Before we proceed to examine Grillparzer's dramas and their relationship to the role of women in nineteenth-century Austria, we must get a better understanding of the real situation of women in this period, as this forms the framework within which these dramas must be viewed. This section focuses on the lives of several notable women, mostly writers, whom Grillparzer knew. The lives and works of these women give this thesis its socio-historical and cultural context. They show how intellectual women acquainted with Grillparzer managed their public careers, which issues they faced because of their sex, and how they approached the *Frauenfrage*. Their non-fictional works also grant insight into contemporary feminism.

The limits of this study prohibit a lengthy engagement with the gender debates of the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries, but a brief examination is necessary as these debates created the *Frauenbild* against which Grillparzer's protagonists must be measured. They also created the atmosphere in which Grillparzer's female acquaintances wrote and published, and therefore the emancipatory import of these women's publications can only be appreciated against this background. This section sets out the broad European context of the

gender debates, showing that these issues aroused much interest in England, France, Germany and beyond. In the next section, responses to these debates by Austrian women known to Grillparzer are discussed. This shows two things: first, Grillparzer's dramas were written in the context of debates around the social role of women; and second, that these debates were very much a pan-European phenomenon in which texts from France and England were received and influenced thinking in German-speaking lands.

While it may seem strange that no Austrian texts are quoted in this introductory section, this is for the simple reason that Austrian texts on the *Geschlechtscharaktere* were not definitive or groundbreaking. The Austrian texts in the next chapter were responses to an existing debate, sparked by texts such as Mary Wollstonecraft's *A Vindication of the Rights of Woman*, Olympe de Gouges's *Déclaration des droits de la femme et de la citoyenne*, Johann Gottlieb Fichte's *Grundriß des Familienrechts*, and Theodor Gottlieb von Hippel's *Ueber die bürgerliche Verbesserung der Weiber*, rather than texts which launched the discussion and were widely received outside their national borders. By contrast, Wollstonecraft's *Vindication* was widely read in Europe, including in Austria. Indeed, even today scholarship on the *Geschlechtscharaktere* tends to ignore the contributions discussed in this study, focusing instead on German, French and British contributions. The tendency displayed here, i.e. seeing Austrian debates as part of larger German and European traditions, is by no means revolutionary. Despite the image of Austria as an intellectual backwater, and despite the efforts of the censors, foreign texts did penetrate the borders of the Habsburg Empire, and were often widely received. Grillparzer read Kant, as well as Rousseau and a number of English philosophers. Caroline Pichler and her mother both read Wollstonecraft's *Vindication* and de Gouges's *Déclaration*.¹

Jean-Jacques Rousseau's writings, in particular *Émile* (1762), were important for the

¹Caroline Pichler. *Denkwürdigkeiten aus meinem Leben*. 2 vols. Ed. Karl Blümml. Munich: Georg Müller, 1914. I, p. 48.

development of gender debates in Germany.² According to Rousseau, society was divided in such a way that men had to be educated for the world, and women for the home. Barbara Becker-Cantarino argues that Rousseau created a modern housewife who was exemplary in both spiritual and practical household matters. Rousseau's vision of the model woman was adopted wholesale by the German bourgeoisie, and it became the benchmark of real-world expectations. Women's role, defined from the male perspective, was not questioned, but became the goal of women's education. Under Rousseau's influence, numerous literary and educational figures published works on women's education and what it meant to be a woman.³ These texts have as their goal the education of good wives and mothers as conceived of by men. Foreign to all participants was the idea of women's education for its own sake, or as preparation for a career. Mary Wollstonecraft's *A Vindication of the Rights of Woman*, which appeared in a German translation in 1793, was therefore greeted by incomprehension and the fear that its influence would create viragos.

One strand of scholarship holds that the period around 1800 saw a redefinition of femininity as the result of biological rather than sociological factors. Gerhard Dilcher writes of class as the most important social factor in *ancien régime* Europe.⁴ People lived in a 'Rechtsordnung der Ungleichheit', the legitimacy of which was accepted as God-mandated, natural, or, later, as rational. Women's social position was therefore not only determined by their status as the other sex, but also, and perhaps more so by the confines of a class-based society. Then, in the late eighteenth century, 'the debate [about gender] became more deterministic by emphasizing biological, rather than social factors' and by the 1790s, gender was increasingly conceived in monolithic binary terms.⁵ The result of this shift was the

²Barbara Becker-Cantarino. *Der lange Weg zur Mündigkeit. Frau und Literatur (1500-1800)*. Stuttgart: Metzler, 1987, pp. 156–58.

³*Ibid.*, pp. 159–60.

⁴Gerhard Dilcher. 'Die Ordnung der Ungleichheit. Haus, Stand und "Geschlecht"'. *Frauen in der Geschichte des Rechts. Von der Frühen Neuzeit bis zur Gegenwart*. Ed. Ute Gerhard. Munich: Beck, 1997. 55–72, pp. 55–56.

⁵Helen Fronius. *Women and Literature in the Goethe Era 1770–1820. Determined Dilettantes*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2007, pp. 17–18.

concept of the *Geschlechtscharaktere*, a term which describes the mental characteristics which were supposedly inherent to each sex. Michaela Krug also argues that the late eighteenth century saw the class-based social order giving way to a new one based on sex.⁶ Rita Morrien talks of the period as an 'Übergangskultur' in which gender difference came to be seen as a 'natürliche[r] Geschlechtscharakter[]' rather than one of several social classifiers.⁷ Ingrid Spörk writes that bourgeois ideology endowed gender difference with new meanings and values, 'da etwa das Bild der Frau aus der Negation des Ideologems des männlichen Bürgers entstand.'⁸

Irmgard Götz von Olenhusen challenges this narrative. Pre-modern societies in Europe, she writes, did not question male economic, political or cultural dominance, and it is therefore strange to credit bourgeois society of the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries with the creation of the gender binary, as some scholars have done.⁹ According to Olenhusen, the two-sex model of the post-revolutionary and Romantic eras was based on pre-modern scientific understanding, and sex had always been self-explanatory as a distinction in class-based society.¹⁰ It was the Enlightenment's ideas of equality and the dismantling of the Christian worldview which necessitated a new gender order.¹¹ In order to find biological grounds for denying women equality, the tenets of modern science were largely ignored as its practitioners created links between their prejudices and observable facts with the goal of establishing a supposedly natural gender dualism: 'Die modernen

⁶Michaela Krug. *Auf der Suche nach dem eigenen Raum. Topographien des Weiblichen im Roman von Autorinnen um 1800*. Würzburg: Königshaus & Neumann, 2004, p. 42.

⁷Rita Morrien. *Sinn und Sinnlichkeit. Der weibliche Körper in der deutschen Literatur der Bürgerzeit*. Cologne; Weimar; Vienna: Böhlau, 2001, p. 7.

⁸Ingrid Spörk. 'Gesten der Herrschaft—Zeichen der Macht. Zur Annektierung des Anderen bei Grillparzer'. *Études Germaniques* 47 (1992). 215–34, p. 216.

⁹Irmtraud Götz von Olenhusen. 'Das Ende männlicher Zeugungsmythen im Zeitalter der Aufklärung: Zur Wissenschafts- und Geschlechtergeschichte des 17. und 18. Jahrhunderts'. *Ordnung, Politik und Geselligkeit der Geschlechter im 18. Jahrhundert*. Ed. Ulrike Weckel et al. Göttingen: Wallstein, 1998. 259–83, p. 259.

¹⁰*Ibid.*, pp. 259–60.

¹¹For similar interpretations of the *Geschlechtscharaktere* as a reaction to Enlightenment ideas of equality, see Andreas Gestrich. *Geschichte der Familie im 19. und 20. Jahrhundert*. Enzyklopädie deutscher Geschichte Band 50. Munich: Oldenbourg, 2010; Vibha Bakshi Gokhale. 'Geschlechtscharaktere'. *The Feminist Encyclopedia of German Literature*. Ed. Friederike Eigler and Susanne Kord. Westport, CT: Greenwood, 1997. 211–12.

Naturwissenschaften haben das dualistische Bild von Mann und Frau nicht nur nicht erfunden, sondern weitgehend destruiert.¹²

The image of woman which these debates created came to embody the highest ideals of bourgeois society. Women became emblematic of a new approach to life and the world, but the old model of the *gelehrte Frau* was not a suitable emblem. While some exceptional individuals in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries had benefited from their status as erudite women, the term soon became one of abuse and scorn for women who were seen to be appropriating male academic privilege.¹³ Women's diseases came to be regarded as indications that female physiology had been corrupted by unnatural lifestyles: 'Scholarship and reading [...] were unnatural, and carried dire health warnings.' These anatomical interpretations, argues Helen Fronius, were not the result of advances in knowledge, but of a political agenda which sought to justify men's cultural and political dominance and keep women in their place.¹⁴

Scholarship also displays conflicting views regarding the effectiveness of the *Geschlechtscharaktere* in fulfilling their regulative ends. Susanne Kord defines this period as the passage from an era of greater intellectual freedom to one in which all intellectual activity was considered incompatible with real femininity. Kord argues that the gender debates were successful in limiting women's activities, writing that they prevented women from participating in intellectual public life, and that women's public intellectual activity was 'judged as an assumption of male prerogative'.¹⁵ Kord's research has identified the methods used by women writers of the age to hide or obscure their identities. They knew they were overstepping the boundaries of proper femininity and 'taten ihr Bestes, um

¹²Olenhusen, p. 261.

¹³Hannelore Scholz. *Widersprüche im bürgerlichen Frauenbild. Zur ästhetischen Reflexion und poetischen Praxis bei Lessing, Friedrich Schlegel und Schiller*. Weinheim: Deutscher Studien Verlag, 1992, p. 49. On the differentiation between *gelehrte* and *gebildete* women, see also: Becker-Cantarino. *Der lange Weg*, p. 117; Susanne Kord. 'Erudite Woman/Gelehrte'. *The Feminist Encyclopedia of German Literature*. 124–26.

¹⁴Fronius, p. 33.

¹⁵Susanne T. Kord. 'Eternal Love or Sentimental Discourse? Gender Dissonance and Women's Passionate "Friendships"'. *Outing Goethe and His Age*. Ed. Alice A. Kuzniar. Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 1996. 228–49, p. 233.

bekannt zu werden, dabei aber unerkant zu bleiben.'¹⁶

More recently, scholars have begun to challenge the idea that widespread contemporary propagation of the doctrine of separate spheres led to effective exclusion of women from public life. Wendy Arons writes that women's active participation in the public sphere in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries means that the separate spheres approach does not provide an accurate or adequate portrayal of women's lives in this period.¹⁷ Similarly, Fronius contends that women were central to German literary culture from the very beginning, and focuses her study on the opportunities that were open to women, rather than on the ways in which they were excluded. Fronius argues that the real position of eighteenth-century German women writers has been obscured firstly by contemporary gender debates, and subsequently by modern feminist scholarship. She points to a rising number of women writers from the 1790s onwards to argue that, although dominant, the restrictive discourse of Humboldt and others did not go unchallenged.¹⁸ Linda L. Clark argues that the proscriptions of Rousseau and others were reactive rather than preemptive, and appeared after men had seen that women were gaining recognition and financial benefit from their literary endeavours.¹⁹

The *Frauenbild* developed at the end of the eighteenth century survived into the nineteenth and dominated in the Biedermeier era.²⁰ Hagl-Catling writes that the period in which Grillparzer wrote reacted to instability by reinforcing the Rousseauian *Frauenbild* in order to crush women's growing subjectivity.²¹ At the same time, however, Grillparzer lived in 'einer Zeit des erstarkenden weiblichen Selbstbewußtseins' 'dem er nicht zuletzt in seiner

¹⁶Susanne Kord. *Ein Blick hinter die Kulissen. Deutschsprachige Dramatikerinnen im 18. und 19. Jahrhundert*. Stuttgart: Metzler, 1992, p. 40.

¹⁷Wendy Arons. *Performance and Femininity in Eighteenth-Century German Women's Writing. The Impossible Act*. New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2006, p. 1.

¹⁸Fronius, p. 52.

¹⁹Linda L. Clark. *Women and Achievement in Nineteenth-Century Europe*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2008, p. 12.

²⁰Marsha Meyer. 'The Depictions of Women in Gutzkow's *Wally, die Zweiflerin* and Mundt's *Madonna*'. *Beyond the Eternal Feminine. Critical Essays on Women and German Literature*. Ed. Susan L. Cocalis and Kay Goodman. Stuttgart: Hans-Dieter Heinz, 1982. 135–58, p. 136.

²¹Hagl-Catling, p. 91.

nächsten Umgebung begegnete'.²² In the 1840s, there was only incipient debate on the emancipation of women in Austria.²³ Indeed, Richard J. Evans argues that it is surprising that a women's movement emerged in Austria at all, given the opportunities which Catholicism offered middle- and upper-class women in the female regular clergy, the stronger resistance to female public engagement in Catholic than Protestant societies, and the lack of impetus which Protestantism gave the women's movement in Germany.²⁴ When an organised movement emerged in the form of the Wiener Frauen-Erwerb-Verein, it was at a time of political and economic instability after Austrian defeats in the Six Weeks' War, and the Verein, although its aims were economic, owed its existence to political circumstances.²⁵ The early feminists of the *Vormärz* aimed for the improvement of education and for women's legal independence; the end of marriages of convenience; and wider occupational openings.²⁶ But the demands of feminists at the end of the nineteenth century, which were largely similar, show how little progress had been made.

Many of the women whom Grillparzer knew took part in this debate through their own writings, and it is possible to see the extent to which these women conformed to, or undermined, the role expected of them. Examining their lives and works will also show that many emancipated women were among Grillparzer's acquaintance.

Grillparzer's Female Friends

Grillparzer had steady contact with prominent women throughout his career, but it is helpful to differentiate between the friendships of his early years, which centred around Caroline

²²*Ibid.*, p. 110.

²³W. E. Yates. 'Nestroy, Grillparzer, and the Feminist Cause'. *Viennese Popular Theatre: A Symposium/ Das Wiener Volkstheater. Ein Symposium*. Ed. W. E. Yates and John R. P. McKenzie. Exeter: University of Exeter, 1985. 93–107, pp. 97–99.

²⁴Richard J. Evans. *The Feminists. Women's Emancipation Movements in Europe, America and Australasia 1840–1920*. London: Croom Helm, 1977, p. 30, p. 92; Richard J. Evans. *The Feminist Movement in Germany 1894–1933*. London: Sage, 1976, p. 3.

²⁵Evans. *The Feminists*, p. 92.

²⁶Yates. 'Feminist Cause', pp. 98–99.

Pichler, and those of his later years, which were defined by Marie von Ebner-Eschenbach and women in her circles. Here, I also differentiate between the actresses and the female authors whom Grillparzer knew. To the former group belong Sophie Schröder, Julie Rettich and Charlotte Wolter. Through Pichler, Grillparzer came into contact with her friends Therese von Artner (1772–1829), Marianne Neumann von Meißenthal (1768–1837), and Marie von Zay (1779–1842). These women published works of prose and poetry in various journals and in discrete volumes. Johanna Franul von Weissenthurn (née Grünberg, 1773–1847) was a popular actress turned dramatist who was friends with both Grillparzer and Pichler.

Many of Grillparzer's female friends from the later part of his life have already been mentioned in the Introduction. Of those, only Marie von Ebner-Eschenbach (1830–1916) can be said to enjoy the notice and respect of posterity. Iduna Laube (1808–79) and Auguste Littrow-Bischoff (1819–90) were prominent members of Viennese society, *salonnières*, and founding members of the Wiener Frauen-Erwerb-Verein. Betty Paoli (real name Barbara Elisabeth Glück, 1814–94) was a successful poet and journalist who wrote extensively on the condition of women. Euphemia von Kudriaffsky (1820–81) was a writer and painter and gave lectures on aesthetics. Sophie von Todesco (1825–95) and Josephine von Wertheimstein (1820–94), sisters from the Gomperz family, were prominent *salonnières*, and Wertheimstein was one of Ferdinand von Saar's patrons.

Several of these women led salons in Vienna, and there Grillparzer came into contact with literary and intellectual women of the age,²⁷ and would possibly have engaged with their writing. Salons played a central role in the literary culture of the age. They were a space in which members of different social classes, and men and women, could interact freely.²⁸ Salons provided a space in which interested parties could share knowledge and encounter new literary works, and they provided members with access to newly published works.²⁹ Members

²⁷Gertrude Prohaska. *Der literarische Salon der Karoline Pichler*. Diss., Vienna, 1946, pp. 159–60.

²⁸Johannes Frimmel. *Literarisches Leben in Melk. Ein Kloster im 18. Jahrhundert im kulturellen Umbruch*. Vienna: Böhlau, 2005, p. 129.

²⁹Peter Seibert. *Der literarische Salon. Literatur und Geselligkeit zwischen Aufklärung und Vormärz*. Stuttgart: Metzler, 1993, p. 348.

shared and circulated publications between them, and thereby promoted a form of equality among guests.³⁰ Salons also played an important role in receiving and translating foreign literature: Charlotte Greiner's salon helped to spread English and German literature, while the salon of her daughter, Caroline Pichler, did the same for contemporary French literature.³¹ Although salons took place in the home, the *salonnière* did not embody the role of passive housewife, but was the intellectual cynosure, and helped to craft the literary, theatrical and musical offerings of the event.³² Salons also played an important role in fostering relations between Viennese and Austrians and their foreign guests. The German Georg Forster visited the Greiner salon,³³ while Pichler played host to the Schlegels and de Staël. At salons, politics and other issues were also discussed, including women's emancipation.³⁴

Pichler's salon began in 1802, after she had become famous with her *Gleichnisse* and the literary world desired to be in contact with her.³⁵ Pichler's was influenced by Romanticism, partly due to an influx of Romantics from Germany in the wake of the Napoleonic Wars.³⁶ The statesman Anton von Prokesch attended Pichler's salon, and recalls that she would read her literary works to the assembled audience before publishing them.³⁷ Pichler and Weissenthurn both read their dramas at Pichler's salon.³⁸ It was also an important focal point for Austrian national writers in the first decades of the nineteenth century. Gertrude Prohaska writes that it was 'ein Verdienst Karoline Pichlers, ja vielleicht überhaupt ihre Lebensaufgabe gewesen, Vermittlerin dieses patriotischen Gedankenguts zu sein'.³⁹ Pichler's salon gave preference to

³⁰Frimmel, p. 130; Seibert, p. 348.

³¹Frimmel, p. 130; Seibert, p. 387.

³²Barbara Becker-Cantarino. 'Caroline Pichler und die "Frauendichtung"'. *Modern Austrian Literature* 12 (1979). 1–23, p. 8.

³³Frimmel, p. 130.

³⁴Hagl-Catling, p. 110.

³⁵Karl Blümml. 'Einleitung'. Caroline Pichler. *Denkwürdigkeiten aus meinem Leben*. I. vii–lxxxvii, p. xii.

³⁶Blümml. 'Einleitung', p. xv; Johann Sonnleitner. "'Krasse Sinnlichkeit und frömmelnde Tendenzen". Wiener Salonszenen und Ansichten der Romantik'. *Paradoxien der Romantik. Gesellschaft, Kultur und Wissenschaft in Wien im frühen 19. Jahrhundert*. Ed. Christian Aspalter et al.. Vienna: Facultas, 2006. 256–72, p. 259.

³⁷Hans Lohberger. 'Anton Prokesch über "Caroline Pichler und ihr Kreis"'. *Blätter für Heimatkunde* 46 (1972). 80–83, p. 81.

³⁸Prohaska, pp. 146–47.

³⁹*Ibid.*, p. 68.

Austrian authors, particularly those writing on national topics, and without Pichler and her salon, they would not have been able to establish contact with each other.⁴⁰ The presence of Joseph Hormayr in particular meant that Pichler's salon was an important focus of anti-Napoleon sentiment.⁴¹ Later in the century, the salon of Josephine von Wertheimstein was a focal point of opposition to Metternich's regime, and a meeting point for those of liberal views.⁴² Although Grillparzer does not provide us with any information regarding his visits to the city's salons, we know that he was in attendance at Pichler's and Wertheimstein's. This means that he met the literary and intellectual women of the age, and that, although he does not seem to have read the works of the women he knew, he may well have been familiar with them, either through a book he received from a fellow guest, or because he heard these authors reading from their own works. His attendance at salons may have also exposed him to discussion of the *Frauenfrage*.

When discussing Austrian women writers' engagement with the gender debates, there can be no better place to start than with Pichler (1769–1843), who wrote about women's issues in several texts. She was a prolific writer in both fiction and non-fiction genres whose collected works comprise 60 volumes. Grillparzer and Pichler maintained a correspondence for a few years after 1818, and he even wrote to her during his 1819 trip to Italy. In 1844, he read parts of Pichler's *Denkwürdigkeiten* 'mit Rührung und dem Gefühle nie vergessener und nie gebrochener Freundschaft' (*HKA* I/xvi, p. 23).

Pichler enjoyed a wide education, including modern languages, and even received music lessons from Mozart. Her mother's salon was one of the first places in Austria where Wollstonecraft's *Vindication* was discussed.⁴³ Pichler tempers this picture of a broad education by stressing that her parents taught her to consider 'Häuslichkeit [...] als die erste

⁴⁰ André Robert. *L'idée nationale autrichienne et les guerres de Napoléon. L'apostolat du Baron de Hormayr et le salon de Caroline Pichler*. Paris: F. Alcan, 1933, p. 322.

⁴¹ Sonnleitner, p. 259.

⁴² Karlheinz Rossbacher. *Literatur und Bürgertum. Fünf Wiener jüdische Familien von der liberalen Ära zum Fin de Siècle*. Vienna: Böhlau, 2003, p. 157.

⁴³ Hagl-Catling, p. 110.

und wichtigste Bestimmung des Weibes'.⁴⁴ Pichler's productivity and success were admired by other writers. Therese von Artner, for example, praised her friend in a letter from 1820:

Wie ganz anders ist es mit deinem litterarischen Wirken? Allenthalben kommen dir Antheil, Beyfall und Aufmunterung entgegen; das erhält und vermehrt deine Produktionskraft, die schon von der Natur so reich ausgestattet ist. Und dem Himmel sey dank, daß es so ist! So können sich Tausende wieder einer erquickenden Geistesnahrung erfreuen.⁴⁵

Several of Pichler's essays deal directly with the social role of women, and with women's education in particular. In 'Über die Bildung des weiblichen Geschlechtes' she makes clear that she is writing within the larger context of contemporary *Geschlechterdebatten* which accepted that women's intellectual and physical capabilities determined their roles as wives and mothers. She argues that women's education should prepare them for these roles, and that anything which distracted women from their purpose was 'der Natur zuwider, und daher verwerflich.'⁴⁶ Here, she appears to adhere to the idea that women's physicality destines them for particular social roles, and in doing so reaffirms the ideas of Humboldt and others who propagated this idea. On the same page, however, she offers a much less conservative view of gender constructs as she argues for the influence of historical and political developments on the social role of women. Social changes, she writes, destroy 'die altgewohnten Formeln', and the female sex '[kann] sich dem Einflusse derselben nicht entziehen; es muß daher mit dem Zeitgeiste fortschreiten [...] und die Mittel ergreifen, die ihm eine würdige und sichere Existenz schaffen können.'⁴⁷ Pichler is critical of the restrictions under which women are placed: if she hopes that change in the future will secure women a better existence, then she must take issue with the domestic limitations of contemporary Europe. In this second quotation, she argues against the deterministic idea of gender which she supported in the

⁴⁴Caroline Pichler. 'Überblick meines Lebens'. *Sämmtliche Werke*. Vienna: Anton Pichler, 1828–45. 60 vols. xxv. *Prosaische Aufsätze. Zweyter Theil*. 187–209, pp. 193–94, p. 195, p. 196.

⁴⁵Therese von Artner to Caroline Pichler. 14.3.1820. Wienbibliothek im Rathaus. H.I.N. 347. Also cited in Magdalena Bauer. 'Therese von Artner und Marianne Neumann von Meißenthal. Zwei Repräsentantinnen der ersten Generation schreibender Frauen im österreichischen Raum. (Studien zu einer Doppelbiographie.)'. 2 vols. Diss., Vienna, 1992. I, p. 173.

⁴⁶Caroline Pichler. 'Über die Bildung des weiblichen Geschlechtes. Als Gegenstück zu dem Aufsatz: Über den Volksausdruck: Ein ganzer Mann' [1810]. *Sämmtliche Werke*. xxiv. 150–61, p. 151.

⁴⁷*Ibid.*, pp. 151–52.

first. She sees gender as a social construct which can be reevaluated and changed, and is not the direct result of the physical body. For Pichler, in this quotation at least, gender belongs to the 'altgewohnten Formeln' which can be destroyed and envisioned anew. Support for this conceptualisation of gender indicates that the characterisation of Pichler as a conservative is not wholly accurate. Friedrich Weissensteiner, for example, argues that Pichler rejected the emancipatory ideals of German women such as Dorothea von Schlegel.⁴⁸ Yet here Pichler's own desire for greater freedom for women is clear.

Another essay, 'Kindererziehung', also deals with the subject of women's education. Pichler criticises the fact that many girls from the middle and upper classes received an education very similar to the one she herself received. Pichler does not fail to stress, albeit at the very end of this essay, that it is not her intention to restrict women's intellectual development and 'die Töchter des neunzehnten Jahrhunderts, gleich unseren Großmüttern, zu bloßen Nätherinnen [*sic*] und Köchinnen erziehen zu wollen'.⁴⁹ She sees the nineteenth century as an age in which the educational opportunities of women have been widened, and this is a development which she welcomes. But, while women should be allowed to be more than just cooks or seamstresses, their true destiny should not be obscured by education. In calling for women to be educated just as well as men, 'nur in einer andern Richtung und in einer solchen, die sie nie von dem Hauptzwecke ihres Lebens und Wirkens entfernt', Pichler echoes the 'different but equal' thinking which was common in this era.⁵⁰

Pichler's contradictory attitude towards women extends to her attitude towards women writers. In an essay on Germaine de Staël's novels *Delphine* (1802) and *Corinne* (1807), Pichler sees a conflict between women's preordained role as wife and mother and their intellectual activities. Pichler emphasises that she is writing in the context of wider debates which criticise any woman who finds 'eine edlere Verwendung ihrer Kräfte' than

⁴⁸Friedrich Weissensteiner. 'Karoline Pichler'. *Zwischen Idylle und Revolution. Ungewöhnliche Biedermeierporträts*. Vienna: Ueberreuter, 1995. 257–66, p. 261.

⁴⁹Pichler. 'Kindererziehung'. *Sämmtliche Werke*. Iv. 49–65, p. 62.

⁵⁰*Ibid.*, p. 63.

housework.⁵¹ Pichler's judgments on de Staël's heroines, however, indicate that she too imposed limits on women's behaviour and roles. Pichler claims that the portrayal of Corinne and Delphine as women motivated by the heart mitigates the horror which was aroused by such accomplished women. Corinne, the famous and adored poet and improviser, 'war zu weit aus der weiblichen Sphäre geschritten, um in irgend einen häuslichen Zirkel zu passen.'⁵² Despite views which seem to favour the social rather than biological origins of gender and the *Geschlechtscharaktere*, Pichler's attitudes are rooted in the concept of male and female as binary opposites, each having defined social roles. Pichler therefore wonders why de Staël created two exceptional characters who have been alienated from their feminine destiny by 'höhere Geistesbildung und einen kühneren Schwung des Charakters', and will therefore never find domestic bliss.⁵³ Pichler, perhaps, fails to see the emancipatory message of the novels and de Staël's criticism of the limits placed on women. Women, writes Pichler, can and should develop their intellectual abilities, but only within the limits of what is suitable for women.

Pichler's friend, the actress and playwright Johanna Franul von Weissenthurn (1773–1847), whom George Reinhardt calls 'an alert woman in an age of transition',⁵⁴ was aware of the conflict which was perceived to exist between femininity and authorship. Weissenthurn was an actress, and later became a prolific author. Her plays were published in fifteen volumes between 1809 and 1848, and in total she composed sixty, forty-eight of which were performed at the Burgtheater.⁵⁵ Although not critically successful, they were very popular with audiences,⁵⁶ and between 1800 and 1853 they received no fewer than 912

⁵¹Pichler. 'Über die Corinne der Frau von Staël' [1807]. *Sämmtliche Werke*. xxiv. 29–39, p. 31.

⁵²*Ibid.*, pp. 34–35.

⁵³*Ibid.*, p. 35.

⁵⁴George W. Reinhardt. 'Female Self-Determination in the Early Dramas of Franul von Weissenthurn'. *Austria in the Age of the French Revolution 1789–1815*. Ed. Kinley Brauer and William E. Wright. Minneapolis, MN: Centre for Austrian Studies, University of Minnesota, 1990. 151–62, p. 160.

⁵⁵Ludmilla Antonia Steyskal. 'Johanna Franul von Weissenthurn als Schauspielerin am Burgtheater'. Diss. Vienna, 1963, pp. 183–84.

⁵⁶Reinhardt, p. 152.

performances.⁵⁷ In 1835, Bauernfeld wrote that her achievements 'im Felde des bürgerlichen Schauspiels und Lustspiels sind seit einer Reihe von Jahren in jedermanns Andenken',⁵⁸ and a contemporary wrote that her plays, 'sind angenehm zu sehen, interessant, unterhaltend und belehrend' and that 'eine Gesamtausgabe ihrer Werke wäre sehr wünschenswerth'.⁵⁹ Emperor Franz was among her fans, as she recalls in an essay from 1840.⁶⁰ In 1829, Grillparzer wrote a poem commemorating Weissenthurn's fortieth anniversary at the Burgtheater (*HKA* I/xi, p. 88). The second stanza reads: 'Aber vierzig Jahr dem Spiele/ Holder Musenkunst geweiht,/ Sind nur Flügel zu dem Ziele,/ Teile einer Ewigkeit!—' By this time, she had already developed a reputation as a writer, yet Grillparzer's paean focuses solely on her work as an actress. Perhaps he was not familiar with, or did not value, her plays. Or perhaps he thought her talents as an actress far outshone her talents as a writer. Grillparzer nevertheless admired her talents, and valued her contribution to the Burgtheater.

Scholars have found very tentative criticism of women's social position in Weissenthurn's dramas. Ian Roe writes that the comparisons Weissenthurn invites between conventional and emancipated women 'might indicate an, admittedly very cautiously, critical female perspective.'⁶¹ Reinhardt argues that Weissenthurn, in her comedy *Die beschämte Eifersucht* (1810), 'point[s] to the revolutionary and enlightened moral that men must include women in the call for "égalité"'.⁶²

Critical reception of Weissenthurn's theatrical works reveals much about the attitudes of her contemporaries to women writers and shows the widespread influence of the *Geschlechterdebatten*. An 1818 review of Weissenthurn's *Johann, Herzog von Finnland*

⁵⁷Ian F. Roe. 'The Comedies of Johanna von Weissenthurn'. *The Austrian Comic Tradition. Studies in Honour of W. E. Yates*. Ed. John R. P. McKenzie and Lesley Sharpe. Austrian Studies IX. Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 1998. 41–57, p. 42; Steyskal, p. 184.

⁵⁸Bauernfeld. 'Die schöne Literatur in Österreich'. *Eduard von Bauernfelds Gesammelte Aufsätze*. 137–75, p. 158.

⁵⁹E. Norbert. 'Weissenthurn'. *Die Gegenwart. Politisch-literarisches Tagblatt*. 22.5.1847. 545–46, p. 545.

⁶⁰This anecdote appears in the essay 'Meine Ansicht über den Verfall der dramatischen Bühnenerzeugnisse'. Paul Alfred Merbach. 'Zwei Aufsätze von Johanna Franul v. Weissenthurn. Aus der Handschrift mitgeteilt'. *JdGG* 24 (1913). 211–24, p. 219.

⁶¹Roe. 'The Comedies of Johanna von Weissenthurn', p. 49.

⁶²Reinhardt, p. 160.

reports that the drama was more or less popular depending on the ‘Verschiedenheit der Ansichten des Publikums vorzüglich in Rücksicht auf den Einfluß des weiblichen Geschlechts, da die Frau Verfasserinn die Rollen der Marie und Katharina überaus glanzreich zu halten bestrebt gewesen ist.’⁶³ A reviewer in 1820 used a performance of *Ruprecht Graf zu Horneck* to criticise women who attempted the *Trauerspiel* genre. The reviewer claimed that *Ruprecht* was instantly recognisable as the work of a woman, that ‘jedes Trauerspiel, das den Nahmen in der That verdienen soll, weit außer dem Kreise weiblicher Kräfte [liegt]’, and that even ‘weiblich gesinnte Männer’ often fail in the genre due to ‘die vorwaltende Weiblichkeit ihrer Natur’.⁶⁴ He further recommends that female writers stick to *Schauspiele*, a genre to which they have a well founded claim because they take place ‘nur zwischen den vier Wänden eines Gesellschaftszimmers [...], und also nothgedrungen die enge Häuslichkeit immer wiederkauen [müßen]’. He finishes by unashamedly claiming tragedy as part of the male domain,

denn sollten die Damen je in ihrer Mitte einen weiblichen Shakespear [*sic*] aufzustellen vermögen, so kann das sicher gelten als Zeichen einer neuen Zeit, und—wohl dem Manne, der diese Revolution nicht erlebt!

Despite this criticism of Weissenthurn and of ‘unsuitable’ female literary engagement, the reviewer cannot deny that Weissenthurn’s plays were ‘fortwährend so entschieden begünstigt’ by audiences.

Weissenthurn’s critical approach to contemporary ideals of womanhood is evident in the preface to the first volume of her collected works. Here she grapples with the topic of women writers, and begins by reiterating the conflict with which Pichler deals:

Oeffentlich als Verfasserinn aufzutreten,—der Schritt ist gewagt; er führt auf eine Bahn, die die sanfte Weiblichkeit scheuen sollte—er führt zum Krieg.⁶⁵

⁶³ ‘Johann, Herzog von Finnland’. *Wiener Zeitschrift für Kunst, Literatur, Theater und Mode*. 31. 12.3.1818. 251–52, p. 251.

⁶⁴ ‘Ruprecht Graf zu Horneck’. *Wiener Zeitschrift für Kunst, Literatur, Theater und Mode*. 20. 15.2.1820. 158–59, p. 159.

⁶⁵ Johanna Franul von Weissenthurn. ‘Vorrede’. *Schauspiele von Johanna Franul v. Weissenthurn, gebornen Grünberg, kaiserl. königl. Hofschauspielerinn*. 15 vols. Vienna: Degen, 1804–48. I. iii–vi, p. iii.

Weissenthurn here seems aware of her status as an interloper in what many considered a male domain. Almost as a defence, she reminds the reader of the numerous other women who have gone before her and published literary works which, she humbly writes, were far more worthy. Weissenthurn refuses to apologise for her writing, as that would be an admission of wrong-doing. Instead, she defends her literary career and defiantly refuses to cease writing, even if she is censured for doing so: 'Ich habe allerdings wider die Kleiderordnung gefehlt und—statt Strümpfe zu stricken, ein paar Federn stumpf geschrieben.'⁶⁶ In defence of herself, Weissenthurn also addresses herself directly to the critics. By not publishing anonymously, she fears putting herself at risk of censure. She plays up her helpless femininity, referring to herself as 'eine ganz Wehrlose' who is determined to endure all criticism with humble silence.

Weissenthurn also seeks to deflect attention from her own activities by joining in the scorn which, as was discussed above, was directed at erudite women at this time:

Wie lächerlich uns der Nahme einer Gelehrten macht, weiß ich nur allzuwohl, und wie freygebig deßhalb Jede, die etwas schreibt, damit beschenkt wird, weiß ich auch.⁶⁷

Weissenthurn is reluctant to be seen as an erudite woman because of negative social attitudes towards such women. She shares Pichler's fear that activity outside the boundaries of femininity removes women from the binary gender construct. This cannot be Weissenthurn's fate, however, as she has nothing of erudition about her: 'Alle, die meine Stücke lesen, werden erfahren, daß sie sich nur auf Menschenkenntniß, und die, einer Schauspielerinn angemessene Lektür [*sic*] gründen.'⁶⁸ The fact that Weissenthurn distances herself from erudite women should not, however, distract from the social criticism which finds its way into this prologue.

The correspondence between these two authors, of which thirty-one letters remain, reveals nothing of this contradictory attitude to their writing. Rather, Pichler and Weissenthurn come

⁶⁶*Ibid.*, p. v.

⁶⁷*Ibid.*, p. iii.

⁶⁸*Ibid.*, p. vi.

across as defiantly defensive both of their writing and of their right to publish. Weissenthurn defends her own publications and criticises the androcentric nature of literary institutions when she addresses male critics:

Schämt euch! wenn ich auch nicht das Außerordentliche geleistet habe—nützlicher, als so manches was ihr geschrieben, war es doch, und Ihre Werke werden, trotz dem verderbten Zeitgeschmack, ewig leben.⁶⁹

Gone is the mock-apologetic tone of the introduction to her printed works, replaced with a firm declaration that she is a more capable author than many men and anger at the injustice of posterity. Writing about rehearsals for her drama *Die Freunde*, Weissenthurn anticipates criticism because she is ‘ein Fraunzimmer [sic], die nicht wie gewiße Leute mit der Degenspitze—nur mit einem Fächerschlage antworten könnte’. [...] ⁷⁰

Later in his life, Grillparzer was acquainted with Betty Paoli and Auguste Littrow-Bischoff, who were prominent figures in Viennese social circles and who authored books about their dramatist friend. Paoli was a well-known Viennese poet who befriended Grillparzer and Stifter. Eufemia von Kudriaffsky, a contemporary, remarked in a letter to Josephine Knorr that Paoli was ‘eine interessante doch emancipirte Schriftstellerin’.⁷¹ For many years, she wrote for various Austrian and foreign newspapers on literature, art and the Burgtheater. In 1895, she was feted as ‘die letzte große Erscheinung jener Epoche [...] welche mit der “Ahnfrau” anhebt und mit den “Neuesten Gedichten” Betty Paoli’s abschließt.’⁷² Grillparzer considered Paoli to be Austria’s greatest lyric poet.⁷³ In 1852, Grillparzer wrote an epigram titled ‘Die Dichterin’: ‘Willst du dich öffentlich entkleiden/ Wie Phrynes Beispiel weist,/ So prüfe vorher dich bescheiden/ Wie schön du etwa seist.’ (Nr. 1301. *HKA* I/xii/i, p. 239) Backmann argues that this was a warning against Paoli’s desire to write an autobiography, and was motivated by the fear that such an endeavour

⁶⁹Weissenthurn to Pichler. 8.3.1843. Wienbibliothek im Rathaus. H.I.N. 590.

⁷⁰Weissenthurn to Pichler. 21.4.1838. Wienbibliothek im Rathaus. H.I.N. 589.

⁷¹Eufemia von Kudriaffsky to Josephine Knorr. 21.6.1861. Wienbibliothek im Rathaus. H.I.N. 39919.

⁷²Josef Lewinsky. *Gedenkrede auf Betty Paoli*. Vienna: Verlag des Vereins der Schriftstellerinnen und Künstlerinnen in Wien, 1895, p. 6.

⁷³Friedrich Beck. ‘Betty Paoli’. *Österreichischer Rundschau* 9 (1906). 260–72, p. 264.

would not be well received (*HKA* I/xii/ii, p. 264). Perhaps the most significant evidence of Grillparzer's respect for Paoli is Laube's assertion that she was one of the few people with whom Grillparzer discussed *Die Jüdin von Toledo*, which was discovered on his death.⁷⁴

Karin Wozonig identifies Paoli as an individual who surpassed the limits which society attempted to place on her, and who succeeded in creating opportunities for herself outside the confines of house and family.⁷⁵ Paoli's journalistic career is part of the unusual level of mobility which Wozonig mentions. Paoli's interests extended beyond art and literature, and her essays deal with important social and political questions, such as 'jene brennende Frage [...] die niemand besser als sie, die rastlose Kämpferin im Lebensstreite, beurteilen konnte:—die Frauenfrage.'⁷⁶ In choosing her pseudonym, Paoli alluded to the Corsican freedom fighter Pasquale di Paoli, embracing with this choice a 'foreign, male identity associated with revolutionary impulses.'⁷⁷ Geber considers Paoli to belong to the first generation of the women's movement, which manifested itself in the foundation of the Wiener Frauen-Erwerb-Verein in 1866. Paoli's engagement with the *Frauenfrage*, writes Geber, is characterised by a strategic feminism which uses the tools of enlightenment to end an iniquitous state of affairs: Paoli's 'vorgebliche Anpasstheit' granted her a prominent role in the media, and she could therefore communicate her message very effectively.⁷⁸ Helene Bettelheim-Gabillon argues that Paoli was interested in the *Frauenfrage* when 'jenes Wort, dem jetzt bereits ein etwas polemischer Beigeschmack anhaftet—noch gar nicht existierte.'⁷⁹

⁷⁴*Neue Freie Presse*. 28.1.1872, p. 2.

⁷⁵Karin S. Wozonig. *Die Literatin Betty Paoli. Weibliche Mobilität im 19. Jahrhundert*. Vienna: Löcker, 1999, p. 21.

⁷⁶Helene Bettelheim-Gabillon. 'Einleitung'. *Betty Paolis Gesammelte Aufsätze*. Ed. Helene Bettelheim-Gabillon. Schriften des Literarischen Vereins in Wien IX. Vienna: Verlag des Literarischen Vereins in Wien, 1908. v–cxi, p. xciii.

⁷⁷Ferrel Rose. 'Betty Paoli'. *Major Figures of Nineteenth-Century Austrian Literature*. Ed. Donald G. Daviau. Riverside, CA: Ariadne, 1998. 387–416, p. 390.

⁷⁸Eva Geber. 'Mir aber ward solch sanfte Milde von der Natur nicht eingeflößt'. Betty Paoli. *Was hat der Geist denn wohl gemein mit dem Geschlecht?* Ed. Eva Geber. Vienna: Mandelbaum, 2001. 7–65, p. 37.

⁷⁹Helene Bettelheim-Gabillon. 'Zur Charakteristik Betty Paolis. Nach alten und neuen Quellen'. *JdGG* 10 (1900). 191–250, p. 236.

Paoli's journalistic success brought with it money, influence and power.⁸⁰ She used this power in the service of women, thereby giving the incipient women's movement a serious and respected forum for discussion.⁸¹ In her articles, Paoli urges the Austrian government to create the basis for unmarried women's financial independence, and to open education and employment to women so that they are not dependent on marriage for survival.⁸² Wozonig writes that Paoli does not argue for the destruction of the social order, but rather uses 'eine Abfolge subtiler Strategien, mit denen sie auf Ungerechtigkeiten und Diskriminierungen hinweist und Abhilfe fordert.'⁸³ 'Eine Zeitfrage', for example, which appeared in the *Neue Freie Presse* in 1865, calls for women to be better able to provide for themselves financially. Paoli is careful to distance herself from 'törichten und unsauberen Emanzipations-Gelüsten', arguing that it is the right of every human being to utilise his or her talents for their own benefit and society's.⁸⁴

In 'Ein Wort Pombals' (alluding to the 1st Marquis of Pombal, the enlightened eighteenth-century Portuguese statesman), Paoli decries the prejudices which prevent women from obtaining gainful employment. She finds it particularly strange that such prejudices should be so common in Austria, given that the law allowed for female rulers and that Maria Theresa occupied such an illustrious position in Austrian history. Despite, or perhaps because of her arguments for women's right to work, Paoli emphasises that women only work: 'Weil die "ungestüme Drängerin, die Not", sie dazu zwingt!', and because they have no one to rely on.⁸⁵ Like Pichler before her, Paoli argues for wider women's education as a way of underpinning financial independence, and the role of women as wives and

⁸⁰Geber. 'Mir aber ward solch sanfte Milde von der Natur nicht eingeflößt', p. 48.

⁸¹*Ibid.*, p. 55.

⁸²Karin Wozonig. 'Betty Paoli, die Lyrikerin als Journalistin'. *The German Quarterly* 76 (2003). 56–67, p. 65.

⁸³Karin S. Wozonig. 'Betty Paoli, Journalistin'. Betty Paoli. *Was hat der Geist denn wohl gemein mit dem Geschlecht?* 66–77, p. 76.

⁸⁴Paoli. 'Eine Zeitfrage' [*Neue Freie Presse*, 4.11.1865]. Betty Paoli. *Was hat der Geist denn wohl gemein mit dem Geschlecht?* 80–87, p. 80.

⁸⁵Paoli. 'Ein Wort Pombals' [*Neue Freie Presse*, 12.8.1866]. *Was hat der Geist denn wohl gemein mit dem Geschlecht?* 88–94, p. 93.

mothers. Contemporary education, writes Paoli, fails to endow women with the ability to think and reason, yet society complains about 'die Oberflächlichkeit der Frauen, über ihren Mangel an Logik und Konsequenz.'⁸⁶ Aware of social concerns regarding 'gelehrte Frauen', Paoli is quick to reassure her readers that nothing could be further from her mind than *femmes savantes*: 'Beruhige dich, lieber Leser! Ich habe es nicht auf eine gelehrte, sondern nur auf eine vernünftige Erziehung abgesehen.'⁸⁷ Paoli advocates women's education as the basis of a career as teachers for intelligent girls and women who must support themselves, but is careful elsewhere in the article to highlight the importance of women's education as the bedrock of the family.

Paoli's unpublished essay, 'Die Wandlungen der Frauenfrage', is an excellent example of the pragmatic nature of the contemporary women's movement, which sought practical solutions to the problems faced by women while accepting contemporary ideas regarding the relationship between the sexes. Paoli argues that Wollstonecraft goes too far in desiring to see women's dependence on men eliminated: 'Diese Abhängigkeit wird immer bestehen, denn sie beruht auf einem Naturgesetz, nämlich auf der geringeren physischen Kraft des Weibes.'⁸⁸ For Paoli, the contemporary women's movement has modest aims, and is a 'Brotfrage' which has 'ein Gewicht und eine Dringlichkeit, die nur von der Gedanken- oder Herzlosigkeit geleugnet werden kann.'⁸⁹ The women's movement has moved away from the aims of Wollstonecraft and George Sand, and seeks practical solutions: 'es [handle] sich vor allem darum [...], die Erwerbsfähigkeit der Frauen zu entwickeln und ihr weitere Gebiete zu erschließen.'

Paoli's letters show that she did not let herself be restricted on the same terms she advocates for other women. In her correspondence with Leopold Kompert we see Paoli

⁸⁶Paoli. 'Über weibliche Erziehung' [*Neue Freie Presse*, 4.6.1869]. *Was hat der Geist denn wohl gemein mit dem Geschlecht?* 95–103, p. 96.

⁸⁷*Ibid.*, p. 99.

⁸⁸Paoli. 'Die Wandlungen der Frauenfrage'. Undatiertes Manuskript, 12 Seiten. Laut Tagebuch Marie von Ebner-Eschenbach: 1885. *Was hat der Geist denn wohl gemein mit dem Geschlecht?* 113–20, p. 116.

⁸⁹*Ibid.*, p. 117.

negotiating publication of her work, and justifying her decision to write. In 1850, Paoli asks that her article be included, despite Kompert's negative views of female authorship, views she claims to agree with.⁹⁰ In another letter from the same year, she demonstrates that she does not shy away from self-publication. Not only does she publish literary works, but she actively seeks to have them discussed in the press:

Ich bitte Sie, das Buch [*Nach dem Gewitter* (1850)] im Lloyd zu besprechen [...] Sie würden mich sehr verbinden, wenn Sie die Güte hätten, in ihrer [*sic*] Besprechung die schreiendsten Druckfehler hervorzuheben; das wäre zugleich eine Ehrenrettung für mich und eine erlaubte Rache an diesem scheußlichen Bösewicht von Setzer.—⁹¹

By requesting that Kompert highlight the failures of the typesetter, Paoli locates the source of her honour in her writing, thereby subverting contemporary ideas which held that a woman's purity could be damaged by too much contact with the world. Her desire to seek revenge against the typesetter also defies contemporary gender ideals. After Kompert published his review, Paoli even wrote to tell him that it was not quite what she had envisioned: 'die Individualisierung mangelt. Ich glaube nicht, daß jemand, der meine Gedichte nicht kannte, sich durch die Recension einen richtigen Begriff davon zu machen vermöchte'.⁹²

Paoli is not a feminist in today's understanding of the word, not least because she believes that every young woman accepts and welcomes her destiny as a housewife and mother. Rose asserts that in embracing this conservative feminism, 'Paoli astutely recognized the limits of her culture's tolerance for change', while Wozonig argues that, regardless of her own opinions, it was important for Paoli to refer positively to traditional gender ideals if she wanted her writing to be accorded a prominent place in publications.⁹³ She allowed those readers who would always see women as subordinate to consider her texts harmless: 'Dieselbe Taktik führt dazu, dass auf den zweiten Blick und bei Bedenken

⁹⁰Paoli to Kompert. 25.11.1850. Stefan Hock. 'Briefe Betty Paolis an Leopold Kompert'. *JdGG* 18 (1908). 177–209, pp. 190–91.

⁹¹Paoli to Kompert, 11.12.1850. *Ibid.*, p. 193.

⁹²Kompert's review was published in *Lloyd*, 20.1.1851. Paoli to Kompert, 31.1.1851. *Ibid.*, pp. 195, 197.

⁹³Rose, p. 401; Wozonig. 'Betty Paoli, die Lyrikerin als Journalistin', p. 66.

der Konsequenzen und Implikationen ihrer Argumente das durchaus revolutionäre Potenzial der Forderungen zutage kommt.⁹⁴ Paoli's essays give us insight into contemporary discussions around the *Frauenfrage*, and allow us to place Grillparzer's dramas, and their portrayal of emancipated women, in an appropriate context. Notably, Paoli demonstrates that the discussion was concerned almost exclusively with designing practical solutions to the problems faced by (mainly single) women who struggled to support themselves, rather than with issues of equality or women's suffrage.

While some considered Paoli to be Grillparzer's Eckermann, others assigned this position to Auguste Littrow-Bischoff.⁹⁵ In a touching and emotional letter of 1866, Grillparzer thanks Littrow-Bischoff for a Christmas gift, and expresses warm affection for his friend:

Nicht als ob ich nicht so unzählige Beweise Ihrer Theilnahme empfangen hätte, aber daß an dem Tage, der der häuslichen Freude gewidmet ist, Sie sich meiner erinnert hatten, das überraschte mich. Haben Sie von allen Österreichern [*sic*] allein ein so langes Gedächtniß, daß Sie sich der Zeit erinnern, wo ich noch etwas werth war [...] (1866. Nr. 1404. *HKA* III/iv, p. 279.)

Like Paoli, Littrow-Bischoff was a prominent figure in Vienna, and she also entered the debate on the social position of women. Additionally, she published a memoir, *Aus dem persönlichen Verkehre mit Franz Grillparzer* (1873), which concentrates on her acquaintance with the dramatist. She and her husband were the centre of a large social set, with guests at their salon including Paoli, Bauernfeld, Ebner-Eschenbach, Hebbel and Saar.⁹⁶ After her death, her friend Fanny Meißner-Diemer wrote that Littrow-Bischoff had been 'eine Vorkämpferin für die bessere Erziehung und für die Erwerbsfähigkeit des weiblichen Geschlechtes' and had shown 'daß höhere weibliche Bildung und häusliche Tugenden einander nicht ausschließen, wie es nur zu oft angenommen wird.'⁹⁷

⁹⁴Wozonig. 'Betty Paoli, die Lyrikerin als Journalistin', p. 66.

⁹⁵Carl Steiner. 'Franz Grillparzer and Marie von Ebner-Eschenbach: A Father-Daughter Relationship'. *Für all, was Menschen je erfahren, ein Bild, ein Wort und auch das Ziel. Beiträge zu Grillparzers Werk*. Ed. Joseph P. Strelka. Bern: Peter Lang, 1995. 211–29, p. 212.

⁹⁶Angela Scheider. 'Auguste und Carl von Littrow. Detailstudie einer bürgerlichen Familie des 19. Jahrhunderts'. Diss., Vienna, 1999,, pp. 214–15.

⁹⁷Fanny Meißner-Diemer. 'Auguste Littrow-Bischoff. (Erinnerungsblatt einer Freundin)'. *Neue Freie Presse* Nr. 9279, 24.6.1890. Abendblatt p. 2.

Littrow-Bischoff has been described as ‘eine vielseitig interessierte Frau und besonders sozialen Gedanken aufgeschlossen’⁹⁸ whose intellectual independence made her ‘eine der Wegbereiterinnen der Emanzipation des 19. Jahrhunderts’.⁹⁹ This activity brought her into contact with John Stuart Mill and Florence Nightingale in England. Littrow-Bischoff helped Nightingale with research into women’s institutions in Germany and Russia, and she turned to Nightingale for help in writing an article on Mill.¹⁰⁰ Mill, to whom Littrow-Bischoff sent copies of her work in the hope that he would attach a preface to it, wrote that he was ‘very happy to learn from your testimony that there is already a widely spread interest among German women for the cause of political & social equality of the sexes.’¹⁰¹ In a second letter, Mill thanked her for her ‘valuable contribution to the cause both of women & of education & I hope it is not the only one which they are destined to receive from you as a writer.’¹⁰²

In *Die sociale Bewegung auf dem Gebiete der Frauen* (1868), published under her pseudonym Otto August, Littrow-Bischoff argued for more economic opportunities for women. She begins by identifying an obsession with theory, which did not originate in ‘der Noth des wirklichen Lebens’, rather than practice, as one of the reasons why the cause of women’s emancipation had made little progress.¹⁰³ Like Paoli, Littrow-Bischoff distances herself from these theories, as well as from the idea of equal rights for women, which she argues would be a denial of women’s nature. She argues that the focus of the contemporary women’s movement is on allowing women the means to earn an independent living and protecting them ‘vor dem Abgrund des Lasters und der Schmach’.¹⁰⁴ Pichler, writes

⁹⁸Scheider, p. 58.

⁹⁹Vladimira Bousska. ‘Der Salon der Johanna Bischoff von Altenstern und ihrer Tochter Auguste von Littrow-Bischoff’. *Meidling, Blätter des Bezirksmuseums* 42 (1996). 30–37, p. 36.

¹⁰⁰Florence Nightingale to Edwin Chadwick. 21.6.1873. Lynn McDonald (ed.). *Florence Nightingale on Society and Politics, Philosophy, Science, Education and Literature*. Collected Works of Florence Nightingale, vol. 5. Waterloo, Ontario: Wilfred Laurier University Press, 2003, p. 410.

¹⁰¹John Stuart Mill to Auguste Littrow-Bischoff. 9.8.1871. John Stuart Mill. *Additional Letters of John Stuart Mill*. Ed. Marion Filipiuk et al.. Toronto: University of Toronto Press; London: Routledge, 1991. 228–29, p. 229.

¹⁰²Mill to Littrow-Bischoff. 25.10.1871. *Additional Letters of John Stuart Mill*, p. 234.

¹⁰³Otto August (Auguste Littrow-Bischoff). *Die sociale Bewegung auf dem Gebiete der Frauen*. Hamburg: Hoffmann und Campe, 1868, p. 3.

¹⁰⁴*Ibid.*, p. 4.

Littrow-Bischoff, recognised that women never make it to the highest levels even 'in den [ihnen] zugehörenden Verrichtungen und Thätigkeiten' such as dressmaking, hairdressing or cooking.¹⁰⁵ In arguing for greater emancipation, Littrow-Bischoff does not break new ground. Indeed, the similarities between her arguments and standpoint and those of Pichler several decades earlier indicate that, as in much of Europe, the arguments for women's emancipation did not change much over the course of the nineteenth century.¹⁰⁶ That Littrow-Bischoff's starting point and aims seem to be those of Pichler also shows the minimal impact of the 1848 revolution on the position of women.

Littrow-Bischoff's engagement with the *Frauenfrage* extended beyond authorship, and she was one of the women who, in 1866, founded the Wiener Frauen-Erwerb-Verein. Run exclusively by women and consisting almost exclusively of female members, the Verein's statutes listed its aim as 'die Unterstützung der wirtschaftlichen Thätigkeit der Frauen und Mädchen, sie mögen in Familien leben, oder auf sich allein angewiesen sein.'¹⁰⁷ This aim was to be achieved by a variety of means, including 'durch Bekämpfung und Beseitigung der Vorurtheile und Hindernisse, welche mancher Frauenarbeit im Wege stehen', 'durch Berufs-, Gewerbs- und Handelsgeschäfte der Frauen', and 'durch Förderung entsprechender Arbeit und Beschäftigung, insbesondere durch Gründung weiblicher Genossenschaften, Arbeitsnachweisungsanstalten u. dgl'.¹⁰⁸ Evans sees the Verein's cautious approach as a reaction to strict authoritarianism which could close the organisation if its programme were too radical.¹⁰⁹ He notes that the Verein did not aim to have the *Allgemeines bürgerliches Gesetzbuch* (ABGB) amended, although he shows how that law book shaped the character of the Verein's work. Because of the legal powers the ABGB granted women over their property, the Austrian women's movement initially focused on improving the lives of

¹⁰⁵*Ibid.*, p. 45.

¹⁰⁶Silvia Bovenschen. *Die imaginierte Weiblichkeit. Exemplarische Untersuchungen zu kulturgeschichtlichen und literarischen Präsentationsformen des Weiblichen*. Frankfurt/Main: Suhrkamp, 1979. p. 66.

¹⁰⁷*Statuten des Wiener Frauen-Erwerbs-Vereines*. Vienna: Verlag des Wiener Frauen-Erwerbs-Vereines, 1866. Unpaginated. I, Zweck des Vereines. Absatz 1.

¹⁰⁸*Statuten des Wiener Frauen-Erwerbs-Vereines*. I, Mittel zur Erreichung dieses Zweckes. Absatz 2.

¹⁰⁹Evans. *The Feminists*, p. 93.

unmarried middle-class women.¹¹⁰ Impetus for the foundation of the Verein came less from theoretical and philosophical publications than from the terrible, increasingly documented conditions in which many women lived.¹¹¹ Unmarried women often relied on the kindness of relations for survival, and Littrow-Bischoff and others saw this as an undignified situation. For Margret Friedrich, the creation of the Verein shows that women had lost faith in the patriarchal, class-based social order.¹¹² She argues that the Verein ‘trug mit seinem Wirken zur Entwicklung und Verbreitung einer bürgerlichen Frauenkultur wesentlich bei’,¹¹³ and although it did not aim to achieve full equality or a revised division of social roles, the demand for work which was central to the Verein’s activity marks the beginnings of the women’s movement.¹¹⁴

Marie von Ebner-Eschenbach is the best known female friend from the latter part of Grillparzer’s life. In 1847, Ebner’s stepmother, Xaverine Dubsky, sent some of her poetry to Grillparzer, whose reaction was favourable: he praised the young woman’s ‘höchst glückliches Ohr für den Vers, Gewalt des Ausdrucks, eine, vielleicht [*sic*] nur zu tiefe, Empfindung, Einsicht, und scharfe Beurtheilungsgabe in manchen der satyrischen Gedichte.’¹¹⁵ What was missing was the maturity ‘die den Dichter erst zum Künstler macht’. While Grillparzer claims that young women are generally ahead of their male peers as far as reason and intelligence are concerned, they lack ‘Ordnung in den Gedanken’, a result of men’s ‘mitunter abgeschmackten methodischen Studien’. Here, Grillparzer cites a typical prejudice against women, but locates the cause in a lack of education rather than in women’s physiology. Dubsky had hoped for a negative reaction, which would dissuade Ebner from continuing with her literary pursuits: writing was not considered appropriate for young

¹¹⁰*Ibid.*, p. 94.

¹¹¹Margret Friedrich. ‘Versorgungsfall Frau? Der Wiener Frauen-Erwerb-Verein—Gründungszeit und erste Jahre des Aufbaus’. *Studien zur Wiener Geschichte. Jahrbuch des Vereins für Geschichte der Stadt Wien* 47/48 (1991/92). 263–308, p. 263.

¹¹²*Ibid.*, p. 268.

¹¹³*Ibid.*, p. 271.

¹¹⁴*Ibid.*, pp. 282, 300.

¹¹⁵Grillparzer to Gräfin Xaverine Dubsky, 1847. Nr. 665. *HKA* III/iii, p. 25.

aristocratic women, and her family was not supportive.¹¹⁶ It was feared that the exclusivity of the aristocracy would be compromised if one of its members subjected herself to the scrutiny of the general public, and if a female aristocrat were to publish literary works, then the private sphere would be exposed to an intolerable extent.¹¹⁷ Ebner-Eschenbach's family hoped that repeated bans would stifle her ambitions, and this attitude made her childhood and youth unpleasant.

Although by no means a feminist in today's parlance, Ebner-Eschenbach had a deep interest in the *Frauenfrage*. According to Izabela Surynt, the basis of Ebner-Eschenbach's ideas on the nature of women was the conviction that all human beings were endowed with intellectual and artistic abilities, 'deren Herausbildung jedoch durch soziokulturelle Bedingungen nicht für beide Geschlechter im gleichen Maße möglich sei.'¹¹⁸ Surynt argues that Ebner-Eschenbach does not doubt that men and women think and see the world differently, women being more motivated by emotions and feelings, but she believes that both sexes have equal value. Her view that this difference gives women greater moral responsibility reflects the view of the conservative women's movement. Ulrike Tanzer argues that Ebner-Eschenbach's 'emanzipatorische[s] Credo' saw women as equal partners in marriage, and that her work displays 'Modelle weiblicher Selbstverwirklichung und Geschlechterbeziehungen, die bestimmt sind von Gleichberechtigung und gegenseitigem Respekt.'¹¹⁹ Surynt sees an affinity between Ebner-Eschenbach's views and those of conservative activists, with whom she shared the opinion that while suffrage was not a goal of the women's movement, social change was unstoppable and women would eventually enjoy the right to vote.¹²⁰

¹¹⁶Anikó Zsigmond. *Marie von Ebner-Eschenbach. Das Frauenbewußtsein einer österreichischen Aristokratin*. Szombathely: Maedinfo, 2001, p. 36.

¹¹⁷Agatha C. Bramkamp. *Marie von Ebner-Eschenbach. The Author, Her Time and Her Critics*. Bonn: Bouvier, 1990, p. 28.

¹¹⁸Izabela Surynt. *Erzählte Weiblichkeit bei Marie von Ebner-Eschenbach*. Opole: Wydawnictwo Uniwersytetu Opolskiego, 1998, pp. 67–70.

¹¹⁹Ulrike Tanzer. 'Konzeptionen des Glücks im Werk Marie von Ebner-Eschenbachs'. *Seminar* 47 (2011). 254–67, p. 265.

¹²⁰Surynt, p. 149.

Grillparzer also knew a number of actresses, and his works show that he held Sophie Schröder, Julie Rettich and Charlotte Wolter in high regard. Like women writers, actresses did not conform to the bourgeois ideal of femininity which prevailed in the nineteenth century.¹²¹ Because actresses had public careers outside of the areas deemed suitable for women's financial activity, they contravened the female *Geschlechtscharakter*, and were therefore in a precarious position *vis-à-vis* bourgeois society.¹²² In addition, the fact that an actress's metier is dissimulation made her suspicious in private life: bourgeois society depended on the ability to categorise individuals, including on the basis of their sex, and authenticity was a mark of female nature. The rise of the bourgeoisie meant that the social standing of actresses became ambivalent, for they were skilled at role-play, which, in the context of bourgeois society, was an esteemed skill: playing the correct social role was essential for a social existence, and what Wozonig terms 'soziale Theatralität' played a role in all areas of social interaction.

In a diary entry, Grillparzer recalls the change in his own attitude towards actresses, which, he claims, turned from admiration from afar to contempt upon making the acquaintance of some members of their class: 'ich [entfernte] mich mit Abscheu von ihnen [...], und, obschon ich nothwendig so oft in ihrer Nähe seyn mußte, nie irgend ein Verhältniß mit einer von ihnen gehabt habe. (1822. Nr. 1186. *HKA* II/viii, pp. 75–76). Katharina Fröhlich hoped to make a career as an actress, but Grillparzer would not allow it.¹²³ Indeed, Grillparzer's refusal to let Fröhlich pursue an acting career accords with Wozonig's conclusion regarding social acceptance of actresses: such a public career could not be tolerated after marriage.¹²⁴ Despite this apparent distaste for actresses in general, and for an actress-wife in particular, Grillparzer was on good terms with a number of actresses throughout his life. This indicates that Grillparzer's views on 'emancipated' women may

¹²¹Karin S. Wozonig. 'Betty Paoli und die schönen Frauen'. *Nestroyana. Blätter der Internationalen Nestroy-Gesellschaft* 29 (2009). 72–81, p. 72.

¹²²*Ibid.*, p. 73.

¹²³Ebner-Eschenbach. *Meine Erinnerungen an Grillparzer*, p. 67.

¹²⁴Wozonig. 'Betty Paoli und die schönen Frauen', p. 80.

have been more generous than those expressed in his diaries.

Sophie Schröder (1781–1868), the first actress to portray Bertha, Sappho and Medea, was bound to Grillparzer by mutual admiration. She was extremely popular, and did not completely adhere to contemporary expectations. Her correspondence shows how she forged a career for herself, actively contacting theatres and suggesting roles for herself, negotiating salaries, and defending herself in the face of theatres' contractual breaches. In 1824, she claimed to be writing at a time 'wo mich mein Volk zur Vergötterung erhebt.— Ja, mein Freund, man vergöttert mich, nicht wie ein irdisches Wesen werde ich hier behandelt.'¹²⁵ This popularity, perhaps combined with her forthright attitude, meant that while many actors earned twenty *Gulden* per week, Schröder could demand one hundred *Taler* per role.¹²⁶ In a letter of 1828, she refuses to be restricted to behaviours considered becoming for women, and also demonstrates that actresses were not necessarily required to conform to the expectations placed on other women:

Den Einwurf, ein Frauenzimmer könne nicht allein reisen, lasse ich gar nicht gelten— ein Frauenzimmer vielleicht nicht, aber bei einer Künstlerin wird es keinem Menschen einfallen, etwas Indezentes darin zu finden.¹²⁷

Schröder's love life was also unconventional. She had a relationship with Moritz Michael Daffinger, a painter nine years her junior. In an 1817 letter to Rahel von Varnhagen, whose husband was also a younger man, Schröder sets out her hopes and fears regarding the relationship, and the troubles which convinced her that there was no such thing as 'ganz vollkommenes Glück zwischen Mann und Weib.'¹²⁸

Despite Schröder's lack of conventionality, and his own avowed dislike of actors, Grillparzer held her in high esteem. In 1836, comparing English actors, who he felt had 'etwas festes, auf sich selbst beruhendes, männliches, das außerordentlich wohl thut', with their Austrian counterparts, Grillparzer wrote that 'unter den Wiener Schauspielern [ist] ein

¹²⁵To Georg Winterberg. 27.7.1824. Heinrich Stümcke (ed.). *Briefe von Sophie Schröder (1813–1868)*. Berlin: Selbstverlag der Gesellschaft für Theatergeschichte, 1910, p. 15.

¹²⁶Kord. *Ein Blick hinter die Kulissen*, p. 32.

¹²⁷To Friedrich Wilhelm Riese. 6.11.1828. *Briefe von Sophie Schröder*, p. 29.

¹²⁸To Rahel von Varnhagen. 19.1.1817. *Ibid.*, pp. 145–46.

einzigster Mann, Madame Schröder nämlich' (Nr. 3048. *HKA* II/x, p. 86). After another performance in London, he wrote in his diary: 'Ich weiß außer der Schröder keinen imposanten Schauspieler in Deutschland' (Nr. 3126. *HKA* II/x, p. 124). In his *Selbstbiographie*, he recalls rehearsals for *Sappho*: Schröder 'bemächtigte sich der Haupt-Rolle, war Feuer und Flamme, und steckte Jedermann mit ihrer Begeisterung an.' (*HKA* I/xvi, p. 129) Ernst Wurm ascribes to Schröder's performance as Sappho a central role in the establishment of Grillparzer's fame.¹²⁹ In 1854, Grillparzer immortalised Schröder and her husband in a poem which demonstrates his respect for her:

Zwei Schröder, Frau und Mann,
Umgränzen unsers Dramas Lauf;
Der Eine stand in Kraft als es begann,
Die Andre schied,—da hörts wohl, fürcht ich, auf. (Nr. 1348. *HKA* I/xii/i, p. 252)

Schröder supported Grillparzer from the beginning of his career. After an early performance of *Die Ahnfrau*, in which Schröder played Bertha, she 'erbat dem aufgeführten Trauerspiele als dem ersten Versuche eines jungen Dichters die Nachsicht des Publikums.'¹³⁰ Indeed, the performance might not have happened at all had Schröder not interceded with the censors on behalf of the author, as Grillparzer reports in his *Selbstbiographie* (*HKA* I/xvi, p. 122). The importance of her support must have been obvious to Grillparzer, although there is no correspondence which evidences his gratitude. In a letter of 1824 requesting his presence at an event she was hosting, Schröder makes clear her respect for the playwright, and reveals the efforts to which she has gone to help him. She calls herself his 'Verfechterin': 'Ja, tapfer habe ich für Sie gefochten, einer ist schon gänzlich besiegt aber der Andere ist, wie man bei uns sagt, noch etwas hartmäulich, aber es wird mir doch gelingen auch ihn noch zur Vernunft zu bringen.'¹³¹ Although the exact

¹²⁹ Ernst Wurm. 'Grillparzers erste Medea—Sophie Schröder'. *JdGG* 3/6 (1967). 121–37, p. 130.

¹³⁰ *Wiener-Moden-Zeitung*. 5.2.1817, p. 88.

¹³¹ To Grillparzer. Nr. 342. *HKA* III/ii, p. 21. Sauer dates this letter to 23.3.1828, and concludes that Schröder is probably talking about her efforts to defend Grillparzer's *Ein treuer Diener seines Herrn*, which had been received negatively (*HKA* III/ii, p. 342). The Wienbibliothek catalogue, however, dates this letter to the same date in 1824, which seems correct based on inspection of the manuscript. In this case, it is possible that Schröder was defending *König Ottokars Glück und Ende*, which at the time was being held up due to censorship issues.

context of this letter cannot be established, it is clear that Grillparzer's behaviour towards Schröder engendered a strong sense of goodwill and affection.

Julie Rettich, née Gley (1809–66), was another famous Burgtheater actress who portrayed Grillparzer's heroines. In 1866, the year of Rettich's death, Paoli published a biography of the actress. Paoli is careful to stress Rettich's feminine characteristics and traditional upbringing: she was encouraged to cultivate 'die Fertigkeiten und Geschicklichkeiten [...], die dem Weibe insbesondere zukommen.'¹³² Rettich fulfilled the expectations placed on her, and her 'angeborener Drang nach Thätigkeit fand in der Erfüllung ihrer kleinen häuslichen Pflichten ein erwünschtes Genüge.' Rettich, Paoli claims, often talked about women's social roles: she opposed the limits which were placed on women, as well as the prejudices which denied women any capabilities, and prevented them from developing any.¹³³ According to Paoli, it was Rettich's 'unerschütterliche Ueberzeugung, daß die Fehler und Schwächen, deren man die Frauen zu beschuldigen pflegt, nicht in der Natur des Weibes begründet, sondern ihm in den meisten Fällen nur anerzogen seien.' This confession leads Paoli to stress, again, Rettich's conventional character: 'Selbst das Muster einer Gattin, Mutter und Hausfrau, war sie weiter als irgend Jemand entfernt, das Weib seinem natürlichen Berufe entfremden zu wollen'. As we have seen, Paoli was an advocate of increased rights for women, and Wozonig sees Paoli's biography of Rettich as critical of a society which restricts women's opportunities.¹³⁴ Paoli's description of Rettich should be taken with caution: Paoli may have seen portraying a popular actress as an advocate of better education for women as a way of gaining support for her cause. However, there is some evidence that Rettich was engaged with women's issues. In the Wiener Frauen-Erwerb-Verein, she advocated better vocational education for women.¹³⁵ And, in an undated letter addressed to the members of Grüne Insel, a group of

¹³²Betty Paoli. *Julie Rettich. Ein Lebens- und Charakterbild*. Vienna: Leopold Sommer, 1866, p. 7.

¹³³*Ibid.*, p. 22.

¹³⁴Wozonig. 'Betty Paoli und die schönen Frauen', p. 81.

¹³⁵*Ibid.*

artists and writers, she asked that women be included in their gatherings:

Sollten wir Frauen, die selbst der Kunst nahe stehen, von den Rittern des Geistes aus ihrem fröhlichen Kreise ohne allen Ausnahmefall ausgeschlossen sein und bleiben?¹³⁶

Although Grillparzer criticised Rettich for her portrayal of Emilia Galotti, he recognised her as a ‘bedeutende Schauspielerin[]’ (1860. Nr. 4255. *HKA* II/xii, p. 35), and admired her dramatic skill. In 1834, he wrote to Theodor Hell in Dresden, asking him to persuade Rettich—‘[die] von mir hochverehrte[] Künstlerin’—to perform in *Des Meeres und der Liebe Wellen*. He hoped Rettich knew that ‘ein einfaches Nein meiner Hochachtung für sie nicht ein Iota entziehen wird.’ (Nr. 429. *HKA* III/ii, p. 123) Grillparzer states his admiration for Rettich, but this letter also shows how much he relied upon talented actresses for the success of his dramas. *Des Meeres und der Liebe Wellen* was not successful in Vienna, but Grillparzer hoped that Rettich’s talents would popularise it.

Charlotte Wolter (1834–97) was one of the actresses who signed Rettich’s letter to the Grüne Insel. Between 1862, when her tenure at the Burgtheater began, and 1887, she appeared 1764 times in 114 plays.¹³⁷ Among other roles, she portrayed Medea twenty times, Hero twelve, Libussa six, Rahel seven times, and Sappho on thirty three occasions. She thus played a major role in Laube’s revival of Grillparzer’s dramas.¹³⁸ After her death, she was remembered as ‘[e]in erhabenes Vorbild, eine Fürstin auf dem Gebiete der dramatischen Kunst, die größte Tragödin ihrer Zeit.’¹³⁹ In 1866, Grillparzer wrote a letter to Littrow-Bischoff, thanking her for a photograph of Wolter which he said was ‘mir höchst schätzbar, da ich sie nie mit Augen gesehen habe’ (Nr. 1404. *HKA* III/iv, p. 279). Two years later, now acquainted with Wolter after Littrow-Bischoff’s introduction, in the epigram ‘Dramatisch’ (1868), which Frank and Pörnbacher interpret as criticism of Friedrich Halm’s

¹³⁶Julie Rettich. ‘Diktatschreiben an die Grüne Insel’. No date. Wienbibliothek im Rathaus. H.I.N. 213829.

¹³⁷Constant von Wurzbach. *Biographisches Lexikon des Kaiserthums Oesterreich*. 58. Theil. Vienna: Hof- und Staatsdruckerei, 1889, pp. 91–92.

¹³⁸Yates. *Theatre in Vienna*, p. 76.

¹³⁹Ludwig Eisenberg. *Großes Biographisches Lexikon der Deutschen Bühne im XIX. Jahrhundert*. Leipzig: Paul List, 1903, p. 1148.

directorship of the Burgtheater,¹⁴⁰ Grillparzer shows his admiration for the actress by portraying her as a guiding force and saviour of the institution:

Der Weg ist schlecht, der Karren schwach
Es geht so ziemlich holter-polter.
Da hilft am besten Vorspann nach
Als allerbeste Fräulein Wolter. (Nr. 1811. *HKA* I/xii/I, p. 348)

In addition to these famous women, Grillparzer's diaries and notes mention other actresses, performers and writers, and demonstrate his support for women who aspired to such careers. In 1836, he wrote in Wilhelmine von Chézy's album: 'Geistreich, wie der beste Schriftsteller, und gut wie die beste Frau. Wer schmäht noch über schriftstellernde Frauen?' (Nr. 610. *HKA* I/xii/i, p. 72) Not only does this seem to be encouragement for Chézy's own writing, it also rejects the idea that female authors are ridiculous or bizarre. In 1838, he wrote a poem for Josephine von Remekházy, in which he questioned her decision to become a writer: 'Du hast was Menschen haben,/ Die höchsten Schicksalsgaben,/ Des Wirklichen Gewinn;/ Und dennoch Dichterin?' (Nr. 702. *HKA* I/xii/i, p. 95) It is unclear why he is less supportive here: perhaps he thought less of Remekházy's talents than of Chézy's, or perhaps he was all too aware of the difficulties which faced women writers. In a similar vein, he quoted lines from *Sappho* in the album of Fürstin Wittgenstein, possibly as a warning of the difficulties of a writer's life (Nr. 1553. *HKA* I/xii/i, p. 292). In 1851, he wrote to Mathilde Baronin Guretzki, who had sent him some of her poems. He replied with a warm and encouraging letter (Nr. 720. *HKA* III/iii, p. 73): 'aus vielen dieser Gedichte [leuchtet] ein wahres poetisches Talent hervor und der Hauptfehler der übrigen ist, daß der Leser fühlt, dieselbe Verfaßerin hätte dieselben Gedichte viel besser machen können.' He mentioned the flaws he saw in Guretzki's poems, and attributed these to the fact that her 'patriotische Begeisterung' had overpowered the poetic. Guretzki wanted to publish the poems, and

¹⁴⁰Franz Grillparzer. *Sämtliche Werke*. Ausgewählte Briefe, Gespräche, Berichte. 4 vols. Ed. Peter Frank and Karl Pörnbacher. Munich: Hanser, 1960–65. I, p. 1294. Further quotations from this edition will be indicated in the main body of the text using the acronym *SW* and the volume number.

Grillparzer warned her to expect some criticism. However, he considered these poems novel:

Übrigens ist die Erscheinung, ein weibliches Wesen von den Heldenthaten unserer Armee begeistert zu sehen, wieder so anziehend, ja neu, daß der Reiz dieser Empfindung, der selbst etwas heroisches hat, nur zu Gunsten der Verfaßerin wirken kann. Wozu kommt noch, daß, wie ich schon früher gesagt, Vieles mit dem Stempel des eigentlich Poetischen bezeichnet ist.

Although there is little evidence that Grillparzer engaged with the works of Pichler or Weissenthurn, these examples show that he was familiar with the works of women writers, and did not necessarily dismiss them as trivial or irrelevant.

In 1808, he lamented the death of the Burgtheater actress Betti Roose: ‘Madame Roose ist tot, und mit ihr meine schönsten Hofnungen!—Blanka von Kastilien kann nie aufgeführt werden’ (Nr 33. *HKA* II/vii, p. 18). In 1831, he composed an epitaph for the actress Sophie Müller: ‘Ihre Freunde haben sie betrauert, und wer sie kannte war ihr Freund.’ (Nr. 1897. *HKA* II/ix, p. 27) He commemorated the death of the actress Therese Löwe with a poem (1830. Nr. 74. *HKA* I/ix, p. 102). He also supported other women who chose public careers. He ended a poem for Karoline Mayer, a singer who was trained by the Fröhlichs and would begin her career at the Burgtheater (*HKA* I/xii/ii, p. 135), on an encouraging note: ‘Du kannst was immer du willst.’ (1844. *HKA* I/xii/i, p. 155) In a poem entitled ‘Jenny Lind’, Grillparzer paid tribute to the Swedish opera singer who performed in Vienna in 1846: ‘Du bist nicht Farbe, bist das Licht,/ Das Farben erst verkündet/ Das wenn sein Weiß an Fremdem bricht/ Die bunte Pracht entzündet.’ (1846. *HKA* I/x, p. 215) And, when she was attacked by critics, Grillparzer defended her:

Der Hund bellt an den Mond,
Der leuchtet wie gewohnt,
Gibt sich durch Strahlen kund
Und bleibt der Holde Mond,
So wie der Hund—ein Hund. (1846. *HKA* I/xii/i, p. 182)

While these women were not necessarily *intellectual* women, they nevertheless were outliers in nineteenth-century Austria. They chose careers which gave them financial independence as

well as a conspicuous public profile. They did not adhere to the standards of femininity which prevailed at the time, and Grillparzer's friendships with, support for, and admiration of these women should therefore be seen as an indication that, despite the misogynistic expressions in his private writings, he was not hostile towards extraordinary women.

The limits of this study make it impossible to list in detail all the prominent women and female authors with whom Grillparzer was acquainted. In addition to the women mentioned here, many others could be added to demonstrate the extent to which Grillparzer knew the prominent intellectual women of his age: the authors Therese Artner, Marianne Neumann von Meißenthal and Marie von Zay, who were friends of Caroline Pichler; Emilie von Binzer, who published under the pseudonym Ernst Ritter and whose stories Grillparzer praised; the poet Josephine von Knorr, who introduced both Littrow-Bischoff and Ebner-Eschenbach to Grillparzer; or Ida Fleischl-Marxow, friend, advisor and patron to Ebner-Eschenbach and Paoli.

The overview presented here does, however, allow us to establish that Grillparzer was not hostile to emancipated women. He was friends with many such women, some of whom were public figures who published widely, or popular actresses. These women received support and guidance from the author they revered and respected, and immortalised him in heartfelt and intimate memoirs. The lives and writings of Grillparzer's acquaintances who argued for women's emancipation allow us to place his dramas in context. When talking about Grillparzer, careful use of words such as 'feminism' or 'women's rights' is important, and the works of Paoli, Littrow-Bischoff and Pichler allow us to place Grillparzer's dramas in the context of 'feminism' as his contemporaries, and possibly he himself, saw it. The women's movement in nineteenth-century Austria was concerned first and foremost with alleviating real suffering which resulted from women's inability to participate independently in the economic life of the nation. The demands of Paoli and others therefore centred on access to education and training, and then employment. These female authors did not argue for equal rights or suffrage, nor did they repudiate the differences between men and women.

But their writing challenged the status quo, defended women's intellectual abilities, and demanded better, if not equal, rights for women. Their lives and work also show the extent to which, on an individual basis, contemporary restrictions could be rejected and individual freedom achieved.

Chapter 2

Women and the Law

In this section, I show that *Die Ahnfrau* (1817) and *König Ottokars Glück und Ende* (1823) investigate contemporary legal issues which affected the lives of women: the issue of inheritance, and in particular the status of female inheritance, is central to *Die Ahnfrau*, and the role of marriage as a defining element of women's lives is important when discussing *Ottokar*. In both cases, Grillparzer displays sympathy with heroines who are disadvantaged by their subordinate legal standing. Bertha in *Die Ahnfrau* is undervalued by her father because patrilineal inheritance prevents her from carrying on the family line, and her ancestress, the spectre Bertha, was murdered because her adultery potentially interfered with this inheritance paradigm. In *Ottokar*, Margarete, Kunigunde and Bertha are shown to be the victims of marital law and state policy which were created by and serve the interests of men.

The *Allgemeines bürgerliches Gesetzbuch* (ABGB) of 1811 laid down the law for all the lands of the Habsburg monarchy. The text deals extensively with family law, including divorce, and is therefore an important text for understanding the legal status of women in Grillparzer's Austria. The ABGB seems to be indicative of what historians have identified as a shift away from early-modern class-based social structures, which allowed women varying degrees of freedom based on their social standing, to social structures based solely on sex which emerged in the late eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. It 'statuierte einen

Familientypus als allgemeingültige Norm.’¹ The *ABGB* is in parts a contradictory text, as far as the position of women is concerned, in some cases guaranteeing relative freedoms, in others creating a legal framework unsympathetic to women. This could stem from the history of its composition. When he began work on the forerunner to the *ABGB*, Karl Anton von Martini wanted to secure women equal rights in marriage, and greater rights in some areas of the law.² However, as work progressed and the political climate changed, these aims became impossible to achieve as the state aimed to eliminate basic rights and negate the impact of the French Revolution. The fundamental goals of the state in the period until 1848 were the establishment of an absolutist monarchical system and the maintenance of law and order.

The first chapter of the *ABGB* guarantees every individual ‘angeborene, schon durch die Vernunft einleuchtende Rechte’; slavery and serfdom are expressly forbidden as inimical to these freedoms.³ Women are not excluded from these basic rights; indeed, both sexes are guaranteed the same basic freedoms. Richard J. Evans argues that the Enlightenment influenced the partially liberal character of the *ABGB*.⁴ Ernst Holthöfer notes that the *ABGB* allowed women independence, and was therefore more progressive than either the *Allgemeines Landrecht für die Preußischen Staaten* (1794) or the *Code civil* (1804).⁵ The second chapter, which deals with marriage law, shows that the positions of men and women are not so equal when it comes to specific rights. On the one hand, there are some provisions which protect women. Paragraph 55 states that an agreement to marry is invalid if it has been coerced. Furthermore, the law does not foresee the automatic transfer of a wife’s money and goods to her husband upon marriage (§1233). Husband and wife are legally

¹Gabriella Hauch. *Frau Biedermeier auf den Barrikaden. Frauenleben in der Wiener Revolution 1848*. Vienna: Verlag für Gesellschaftskritik, 1990, p. 23.

²Ursula Floßmann. ‘Die beschränkte Grundrechtssubjektivität der Frau. Ein Beitrag zum österreichischen Gleichheitsdiskurs’. *Frauen in der Geschichte des Rechts*. 293–324, pp. 298–99.

³*Allgemeines bürgerliches Gesetzbuch für die gesamten deutschen Erbländer der Oesterreichischen Monarchie*. Vienna: k.k. Hof- und Staats-Druckerey, 1811. I. Theil. §16, pp. 6–7.

⁴Evans. *The Feminists*, p. 93.

⁵Ernst Holthöfer. ‘Die Geschlechtsvormundschaft. Ein Überblick von der Antike bis ins 19. Jahrhundert’. *Frauen in der Geschichte des Rechts*. 390–451, p. 427.

entitled to maintain possession of the goods with which they entered the marriage, and may make no claims to that which their spouse acquires during the marriage. As Ursula Vogel writes, real law guaranteed wives full legal competence, which was present in Roman Law, a source of inspiration for the *ABGB*, but not in any other European private law regime of the period.⁶ However, ‘Im Zweifel wird vermuthet, daß der Erwerb von dem Manne herrühre.’⁷ The assumption that the husband, and not the wife, would be the breadwinning party reflects not just the patriarchal presumptions of those who wrote the law, but also the limited opportunities for women’s financial independence in this era. Despite these protections, the husband is responsible for controlling his wife’s fortune, unless the opposite has been stated (§1238). Husbands are empowered to put a stop to their wives’ frivolous or excessive spending, and even have them deemed ‘Verschwenderinnen’ in accordance with statutory provisions (§1241).

Paragraph 90 installs husband and wife as equals in marriage: ‘Vor Allem haben beyde Theile eine gleiche Verbindlichkeit zur ehelichen Pflicht, Treue und anständigen Begegnung.’⁸ Paragraph 91, however, declares the man the superior partner in the relationship. He is in charge of the household, and must provide his wife with ‘den anständigen Unterhalt’ and represent her ‘in allen Vorfällen’.⁹ The wife’s commensurate duties, stated in Paragraph 92, include obeying her husband and running the household.¹⁰ Despite the apparent equality created by some paragraphs of the law, the *ABGB* emphasises the subordinate role of women in marriage and the household. Gabriela Polak states that the law ‘nahm für das Binnenverhältnis der Eheleute eine weitgehend geschlechtlich fixierte Rollenzuweisung vor’, which she sees as the result of contemporary ideologies.¹¹ Polak

⁶Ursula Vogel. ‘Gleichheit und Herrschaft in der ehelichen Vertragsgesellschaft—Widersprüche der Aufklärung’. *Frauen in der Geschichte des Rechts*. 265–92, p. 281.

⁷*ABGB*. II. Theil. §1237, p. 357.

⁸*ABGB*. I, p. 32.

⁹*Ibid.*

¹⁰*Ibid.*, p. 33.

¹¹Gabriela Polak. ‘Das Familienrechtsmodell des ABGB (1811) in Konfrontation mit den Modernisierungstendenzen bürgerlich-fortschrittlicher Frauenvereine bis zur 1. Teilnovelle im Jahre 1914’. Diss., Vienna, 1991, pp. 54–55.

highlights the symbiotic nature of the relationship between theory and practice in gender matters. The rules governing marriage both originate in, and create, the self-evidence of marriage. The necessity of women's subjugation to the will of their husbands is also, argues Polak, to be found in the political situation of the time: an absolute ruler could not condone marriage as a partnership, nor could a patriarchal society promote women as leaders of men.¹² Indeed, as Hauch shows, women only appear in the *ABGB* as dependents: daughters, wives, mothers, orphans or widows. That independence in financial and legal matters was denied women indicates the importance of the public sphere and contemporary conceptions of it as a male domain.¹³ Franz von Zeiller, who helped write the *ABGB*, explicitly states the relationship between the public and the private as the reasoning behind the division into male and female areas of activity: 'Die Echtheit dieser Grundsätze läßt sich, ohne weitere Ausführung, aus dem engen Zusammenhange zwischen der häuslichen und öffentlichen Ordnung, zwischen dem Wohle der Familien und der allgemeinen Wohlfahrt leicht von selbst einsehen.'¹⁴

A husband's obligation to represent his wife resulted from contemporary ideas regarding the superiority of men and their duty to protect the 'weaker sex'.¹⁵ Again, we see that law and life exist in symbiosis: on the one hand, a husband's obligation to represent his wife resulted from the fact that, in the nineteenth century, it was not taken for granted that women would represent themselves in court;¹⁶ on the other hand, this provision further excluded women from participation in public life.¹⁷ For Ellinor Forster, the wording of Paragraph 91 nevertheless represents a decisive innovation. Husbands have the obligation, but not the

¹²*Ibid.*, pp. 56–57.

¹³Hauch, p. 23.

¹⁴Franz von Zeiller. *Abhandlung über die Principien des allgemeinen bürgerlichen Gesetzbuches für die gesammten deutschen Erbländer der österreichischen Monarchie* [1816–20]. Ed. Wilhelm Brauneder. Vienna: Manz, 1986, p. 38.

¹⁵Polak, p. 65.

¹⁶Ellinor Forster. 'Handlungsspielräume von Frauen und Männern im österreichischen Ehe recht. Geschlechterverhältnisse im 19. Jahrhundert zwischen Rechtsnorm und Rechtspraxis'. Diss., Innsbruck, 2007, p. 190.

¹⁷Polak, p. 66.

right, to represent their wives, and can only do so with their permission.¹⁸ This formulation provided for new levels of independence for women, at least in theory. However, Zeiller confirms that married women were not considered independent individuals: ‘Bey der Fortdauer der Ehe wird die Frau in Hinsicht der Personenrechte als Eine Person mit ihrem Gatten betrachtet.’¹⁹

The position of married women is not ameliorated by the law’s refusal to recognise divorce, even if both parties should be in agreement.²⁰ A couple can separate for a number of stipulated reasons, for example infidelity, abandonment or severe maltreatment (§109), but a marriage between Catholics only ends with the death of one partner (§111). Non-Catholic Christians can demand a divorce according to the precepts of their religion if there are grounds. Paragraph 58 allows men to declare their marriage to be invalid if, after the ceremony, they discover their wife to be pregnant by another man.

The regulations regarding guardianships established by the *ABGB* deny women’s intellectual abilities. Vogel argues that the influence of Roman Law is evident in this respect because it contained ‘all jene Vorstellungen weiblicher Geistes- und Charaktermängel [...] welche über Jahrhunderte hinweg unverändert als zureichende Gründe der rechtlichen Unmündigkeit der Frau gegolten hatten.’²¹ Paragraph 191 declares minors, the mentally and physically disabled, and convicted criminals as incapable of becoming guardians, while Paragraph 192 adds women. Males and patrilineality are always preferred, and mothers are neither considered to be suitable sole guardians for their children, nor the guardian of choice. Despite this, fatherless children should be entrusted to their mother’s care, regardless of whether she is the appointed guardian or not (§218). Paragraph 218 refers to children who have lost their father but whose mother survives as ‘Waisen’. This wording highlights the insignificance of women within the family unit.

¹⁸Forster. ‘Handlungsspielräume’, p. 188.

¹⁹Zeiller, p. 38.

²⁰*ABGB*. I, p. 33.

²¹Vogel, pp. 282–83.

Women were generally deemed incapable of performing such representative duties for their children, otherwise their opinions would be heard without the need for male intercessors and intermediaries. This lack of trust in women's judgment is confirmed by the fact that women who remarried while acting as guardians were compelled to report this change of circumstances (or have their co-guardian report it) to the responsible court for approval (§ 255). Although women's primary role in the nineteenth century was the care of children and the household, the law did not trust them to fulfil this duty without male supervision. The law was clearly discriminatory towards women. It limited their prospects to house and family, and even went as far as to deny them rationality. We have, however, already seen that reality did not cleanly reflect the law. Women were active in the public sphere, for example publishing literary works and earning money independently of their husbands.

Grillparzer's Infernal Feminine

Die Ahnfrau and the Problem of Female Inheritance

Despite the title of Grillparzer's debut play, *Die Ahnfrau*, the issue of inheritance, which is undoubtedly a central concern of the drama, has been overlooked by scholarship. Here, the social and historical context for Grillparzer's drama will be brought to the fore, particularly as concerns the feminist approach of this study as a whole. Many of the themes which have been identified in Grillparzer's later dramas already find expression in 1817. Emphasising social aspects, and in particular such as are related to the *Frauenfrage*, will demonstrate Grillparzer's early interest in the issue of women's position in society.

The lack of interest in the social aspects of this drama may be the result of critics' focus on moral, aesthetic and taxonomic problems, or from a dismissive attitude towards the drama.²² R. K. Angress claims that attempts 'dem Stück ein soziologisches, tiefenpsychologisches oder ideengeschichtliches Interesse abzugewinnen' demand too much from the drama and can only bring to light its inadequacies.²³ Norbert Griesmayer writes that *Die Ahnfrau* is characterised by 'deutliche Einheitlichkeit und Einfachheit'.²⁴ Reinhold Backmann also sees *Die Ahnfrau* in simplistic terms, stating that it 'ist in erster Linie ein Gespensterstück'.²⁵ For the present analysis, neither the categorisation of *Die Ahnfrau*, nor its aesthetics is of central importance.

Grillparzer's drama portrays the final days of the Borotin dynasty. Count Borotin, the last remaining male member of the family, laments the fact that his only heir is a daughter.

²²I. V. Morris. 'The "Ahnfrau" Controversy'. *The Modern Language Review* 62 (1967). 284–91, p. 284.

²³R. K. Angress. 'Das Gespenst in Grillparzers *Ahnfrau*'. *The German Quarterly* 45 (1972). 606–19, p. 606.

²⁴Norbert Griesmayer. *Das Bild des Partners in Grillparzers Dramen. Studien zum Verständnis ihrer sprachkünstlerischen Gestaltung*. Vienna; Stuttgart: Wilhelm Braumüller, 1972, p. 70.

²⁵Reinhold Backmann. 'Entwicklungsgeschichtliches zu Grillparzers "Ahnfrau"'. *JdGG* 28 (1926). 22–42, p. 24.

Years earlier, his son disappeared and was believed to be drowned. Unbeknown to the family, Bertha's suitor Jaromir is actually her brother: he did not drown, but was abducted and adopted by the band of robbers who plague the surrounding areas. Boleslav, one of the bandits, is the adoptive father of Jaromir. In a fight between the two robbers and the king's troops, Jaromir accidentally stabs Borotin, his father, who later dies. Central to the drama is the ghost of the titular ancestress, also named Bertha, who was forced into marriage with a Borotin and later caught in an act of adultery with her former lover. She was murdered by her husband, but not before she gave birth to her lover's son, and now haunts the castle, awaiting the demise of the dynasty.

Die Ahnfrau is the only drama analysed here for which a full first draft is available in print. The drama's genesis is also unusual due to the heavy involvement of Schreyvogel. Sauer identifies five versions of *Die Ahnfrau*: the first is the manuscript which Grillparzer gave Schreyvogel, and which the latter made comments on; the second incorporated Schreyvogel's suggestions; the third was an abbreviated version of the second, intended for use in performances; the fourth was used for the first print edition of the drama, reversed some of these cuts, and contained other new alterations; for the sixth print edition, Grillparzer made a few important changes, and this represents the fifth and final version (*HKA* I/i, p. xliii). In the *HKA*, Sauer reprints the first and final versions, and these are the versions used here to ascertain the extent of the changes Grillparzer made to his original manuscript.

Schreyvogel's diaries evidence the extent of the assistance he gave Grillparzer. Between mid September 1816 and the end of January 1817, Grillparzer and Schreyvogel discussed *Die Ahnfrau* on at least nine occasions. On 15 September 1816, Grillparzer delivered the final act to Schreyvogel, who called it 'zu gräßlich und überhaupt noch formlos'.²⁶ The next day, he wrote that the second half of the second act was 'sehr schwach und muß ganz

²⁶Joseph Schreyvogels *Tagebücher 1810-1823*. Ed. Karl Glossy. I. Schriften der Gesellschaft für Theatergeschichte III. Berlin: Verlag der Gesellschaft für Theatergeschichte, 1903, p. 203.

verändert werden'.²⁷ By 19 September, he had partially reworked the drama, which he wrote was 'als Composition doch noch sehr unreif'.²⁸ On 22 September, he returned the manuscript to Grillparzer with his comments, and on 29 October he reported that Grillparzer had edited the first two acts 'ganz nach meinen Ansichten'.²⁹ He and Grillparzer continued to discuss the drama, and on 30 January 1817, both were present at a rehearsal. Schreyvogel wrote that '[d]er dritte und vierte Akt müssen große Wirkung thun,—nur vielleicht zu gräßlich'.³⁰

Schreyvogel does not indicate the nature of the changes he demanded, but Grillparzer, in his *Selbstbiographie*, recalls that Schreyvogel wanted the 'Schicksalsidee' to be further developed, particularly 'der ganz unberührt gebliebene Umstand, daß das jetzt lebende Geschlecht geradezu die Frucht der Sünde der Ahnfrau sei.' (HKA I/xvi, p. 121) Grillparzer was initially reluctant to make the changes, but did eventually acquiesce in Schreyvogel's demands, although in his *Selbstbiographie* he argues that they did not improve the drama, 'zum Teil auch darum, weil ich [die Änderungen] nur äußerlich anfügte.' (HKA I/xvi, p. 122) Indeed, Grillparzer would later reject the changes made at Schreyvogel's suggestion on several occasions. In 'Widmung des Trauerspieles "Sappho" an Josef Schreyvogel' (1818) he stresses that he rejected changes suggested by Schreyvogel and that *Sappho* was all his own work, perhaps in an attempt to distance himself from Schreyvogel and repudiate the changes to *Die Ahnfrau* which his mentor suggested (HKA I/xiv, p. 25). In the *Selbstbiographie*, he writes: 'Genau genommen nun, findet sich die Schicksals-Idee gar nicht in der Ahnfrau.' (HKA I/xvi, p. 125) And in a letter of 1868, he wrote that 'eine wohlwollende, aber sachunkundige Hand' encouraged him to develop the *Schicksalsidee* more than was necessary (HKA III/v, p. 62).

A comparison of the original draft (V1) of *Die Ahnfrau*, and the final version (V5)

²⁷*Ibid.*, p. 203.

²⁸*Ibid.*, p. 204.

²⁹*Ibid.*, p. 213.

³⁰*Ibid.*, p. 236.

incorporating Schreyvogel's suggestions, shows how much these did to emphasise the *Schicksalsidee* and the theme of inheritance in the drama.³¹ These differences are clear from the beginning. V5, for example, uses stage directions to show the similarity in appearance between Bertha and the ancestress, where V1 does not (p. 20, p. 161). V5 introduces the idea of the ancestress being forced into an undesired marriage by her parents, which is absent in V1 (p. 27, p. 168). Crucially, V5 introduces the idea that the current Count Borotin is a descendant of the ancestress's bastard child, which idea is also absent from V1 (p. 29, p. 169). This means that Borotin's worries about his origins and legitimacy in V5 are missing in V1 (p. 53, p. 186). V5 also lengthens Bertha's soliloquy at the end of Act II, where she foreshadows the revelation that she is related to Jaromir. This foreshadowing is not present in V1 (p. 73, pp. 195–96).

The theme of inheritance is strengthened in V5 in a number of ways. In V1, Jaromir sees the dagger as a means of helping him and Bertha escape and be together: 'Hat die Ahnfrau er getödtet/ Soll die Enkelin er befreien.' (p. 215) In other words, in V1 Jaromir subverts the dagger's violent history and potential, instead choosing to use it to protect the ancestress's female descendant. In V5, the dagger becomes at once a sign that Jaromir is a member of the house of Borotin—he apostrophises the dagger: 'An dem Morgen meiner Tage/ Hab' ich dich schon, dich gesehn.' (p. 96)—and a symbol of Jaromir's violent male inheritance, as will be discussed later, an inheritance he readily accepts. The emphasis placed on Jaromir's male inheritance means that Bertha's 'feminine' inheritance of kindness and mercy, introduced both by her pleas of mercy for the bandits, and by Jaromir's idealising of Bertha's gentleness, plays a role in V5 (pp. 60–61) where it does not in V1. The inheritance theme is also strengthened in V5 by the inclusion of the captain's revenge motive after his own inheritance was destroyed by the robbers (pp. 59–60).

The motivation behind some smaller changes is less easy to identify. So, for example, V1

³¹V1 refers to the original version of *Die Ahnfrau*, printed in *HKA* I/i, pp. 153–256. V5 refers to the fifth version, incorporating Schreyvogel's comments, printed in *HKA* I/i, pp. 9–148.

states that the Ahnfrau had an affair with a 'Knecht' (p. 168), while V5 refers merely to a 'Buhle' (p. 27). Perhaps the idea of a female aristocrat having an affair with a member of a lower class was deemed too dangerous for the stage. Where V1 refers to '[d]ie vor Gott geschworene[] Pflicht' of marriage (p. 168), V5 merely mentions the duties of marriage and omits the reference to God. This suggests that Grillparzer was self-censoring, possibly on the advice of Schreyvogel, who was employed as a censor, in order to excise anything which could possibly be deemed immoral or damaging to the social order. In V1, the count insists that the captain search his castle for the robbers, and the captain is embarrassed that the count could think himself under suspicion (pp. 194–95). In V5, however, the captain demands to search the castle, and the count is angered by the suggestion that there could be any link between himself and the criminals (p. 68). This change posits the state as a violent force which impinges on the private property of the nobility, and is perhaps a sign of Grillparzer's criticism of authoritarianism. This may also be linked to another change. In V1, the count accompanies the captain on his reconnaissance in order to protect society at large:

Laß mich liebes Kind, wohin
 Mich der Unterthan, der Bürger
 Mich der Mensch gebiethend ruft,
 Dahin folg' ich, wärs zur Gruft! (p. 195)

In V5, this passage is removed, and Borotin expresses his duty as one to the king, rather than to the people. This change could have been removed from V1 in order to avoid potential censorship difficulties: Hägelin's *Denkschrift*, which was mentioned in the Introduction, and which influenced censorship throughout this period, forbade 'die Abwürdigung der monarchischen Regierungsform', promotion of democracy or any other form of government, and disparagement of class-based societies.³² Although the lines quoted from V1 are not particularly emphasised in the drama, their egalitarian import contrasts strongly with the amended passage in V5, and could have incurred the censors' wrath.

Although this comparative analysis indicates that a large part of the inheritance thematic

³²Karl Glossy. 'Zur Geschichte der Wiener Theaterzensur'. *JdGG* 7 (1897). 238–340, p. 310.

I see in *Die Ahnfrau* was not in the original, but added at Schreyvogel's suggestion to increase the tragic and dramatic effects of the drama, it is also clear that the original version contained more material which was politically critical and potentially dangerous. This serves to remove *Die Ahnfrau* further from the confines of mere fate or ghost tragedies, and strengthens my argument that Grillparzer incorporated criticism of political and social conditions in this drama. It also provides fresh evidence of Grillparzer's self-censorship, which, as I argued in the Introduction, might have forced him to tone down some of the criticism of women's social position which I perceive in his dramas.

The drama's title points to the importance of themes such as inheritance and legacy in its conception. The word 'ancestress' is inseparable from the related ideas of heritage, provenance, and progeny, and yet precisely these key concepts have been too seldom investigated. Given the legal status of women in nineteenth-century Austria, inheritance through the female line was problematic, and this is reflected in Count Borotin's concern with his own legacy as the father of an only daughter. While the *ABGB* of 1811 guaranteed all children, regardless of sex, an equal share in a family's inheritance,³³ marriage entailed a woman's acceptance of her husband's name.³⁴ In the case of an only daughter, the family's wealth would be passed on to the next generation, but with marriage the family name would cease to exist.

The dynastic worries of Count Borotin in Grillparzer's drama mirror those of Emperor Charles VI in the early eighteenth century. The most notable example of female inheritance in Austrian history is that of Maria Theresa, only daughter of Charles VI. The problem of the succession occupied Charles VI for a large part of his reign, and the Pragmatic Sanction was the solution which emerged. The Pragmatic Sanction was an extension of the *Pactum mutuae successionis*, which Leopold I made both his sons agree to before Charles's departure

³³*ABGB*. II. §732, p. 164.

³⁴*Ibid.* I. §92, p. 33.

for Spain in 1702.³⁵ The Pactum, which was to be kept secret, considered the Habsburg possessions in both lines as a whole, and declared that, should one of Leopold's sons die without male issue, the lands would be inherited by the survivor. Joseph I died eight years later with two female heirs. In 1711, Charles wrote a will which, in the event that he should not produce a male heir, provided for the succession of his daughters before those of Joseph I or Leopold I. Charles was reluctant to take any decisive steps in this matter as long as he could still hope for a son. However, drawn-out disputes at court between the widowed empresses Eleonore and Wilhelmine Amalia, and between the daughters of Joseph I and Leopold I, forced Charles's hand.³⁶ By 1713, Charles was the only surviving male member of the Habsburg house.³⁷ He gathered his advisors and acquainted them with the terms of Leopold's Pactum, adding an important clause which made the Habsburg lands indivisible and inseparable, and introducing the principle of primogeniture, in the male line in the first instance, then in the female.³⁸ Charles's declaration was named the Pragmatic Sanction in the tradition of similar documents from late antiquity, the Middle Ages, the Peace of Westphalia, as well as of Spanish declarations dating from 1615 and 1660.³⁹

In the years between the death of his only son in 1716, and his own death in 1740, gaining acceptance of the Pragmatic Sanction by the crown lands of the monarchy and by the major European rulers demanded much of Charles's time. Charles's attempts at gaining European leaders' recognition of the Pragmatic Sanction are perhaps indicative of the problematic nature of female inheritance: this recognition was unnecessary as his authority allowed him to enact laws without asking for permission.⁴⁰ At the same time, Charles wanted to marry off the daughters of Joseph I. Their marriage contracts were formulated so

³⁵Jean Bérenger. *Die Geschichte des Habsburgerreiches 1273 bis 1918*. Trans. Marie Therese Pitner. Vienna: Böhlau, 1995, p. 442.

³⁶Hanns Leo Mikoletzky. *Österreich. Das große 18. Jahrhundert. Von Leopold I. bis Leopold II.* Vienna: Austria-Edition, 1967, p. 110.

³⁷Karl A. Roider. 'The Pragmatic Sanction'. *Austrian History Yearbook* 8 (1972). 153–58, pp. 153, 156.

³⁸Bérenger, p. 442.

³⁹Mikoletzky, p. 111.

⁴⁰*Ibid.*

as to exclude the possibility of future claims to the inheritance. European recognition for the Pragmatic Sanction came gradually.⁴¹ In 1725, a treaty was signed with Spain, in which Philip V recognised the Pragmatic Sanction and guaranteed its execution. In the Treaty of Berlin (1728), Frederick William I guaranteed the inheritance of the Habsburg lands according to the Pragmatic Sanction, and was instrumental in securing the German Reichstag's acceptance in 1732. Great Britain recognised the Pragmatic Sanction as part of the Treaty of Vienna in 1731.

The relevance of such political concerns for the interpretation of *Die Ahnfrau* is made clear by Grillparzer's intertwining of public and private interests in the drama. The power structures and conflicts in the drama illuminate the role of the family as a microcosm of the state. For example, the captain wishes to use Borotin's castle as his headquarters in the fight against the bandits (ll. 1237–39), a request in which Borotin willingly acquiesces (ll. 1249–51). The family home is at once subordinate to the state, and an active participant in the state's power. The relationship is not, however, completely amicable, and the count takes umbrage when his castle, and therefore he himself, can no longer be seen as participants in the state's power, but become mere subjects and suspects:

HAUPTMANN

Streng gemessen ist mein Auftrag,
Jede Wohnung zu durchsuchen,

[...]

Ich erfülle meine Pflicht.

[...]

Wer bürgt euch für eure Leute?

GRAF

Und wer euch, denkt ihr, für mich!⁴²

The public sphere enters the private and the relationship between the two becomes problematic. The captain's presence deprives Borotin of his private power. Bertha appeals to her father, asking that Jaromir be allowed to rest, but the power dynamics show that Borotin is no longer the real authority figure. In dedicating his castle to a public cause, he has had to

⁴¹Bérenger, pp. 443–44; Mikoletzky, pp. 126–27.

⁴²Grillparzer. 'Die Ahnfrau'. *HKA*. I/i. 9–148. Here ll. 1454–55, 1459, 1461–62.

abdicate his previous authority (ll. 1480–84).

Faced with a problem similar to that of Charles VI, Borotin's obsession with inheritance is present from the very first and accentuates the importance of this issue for the drama as a whole. In his opening speech, he laments the decay of his family, and its legacy, using the analogy of a rotting tree: 'Fallen seh' ich Zweig' auf Zweige,/ Kaum noch hält der morsche Stamm.' (ll. 2–3) Borotin thinks of inheritance in exclusively male terms: 'Was die Väter auch getan,/ Wie gerungen, wie gestrebt' (ll. 12–13). It is something acquired by men, and passed down the generations from father to son; women, including Bertha, have no place in his concept of legacy. This mindset can perhaps be legitimated by the realities of life in nineteenth-century Austria. The material wealth, as well as the fame and renown which form an important part of inheritance in Borotin's understanding, originate in men's activity in the world outside the home, and the acquisition of an inheritance is therefore out of the reach of women, especially one who has never left the confines of her family's estate (l. 226). For Borotin, the legacy which a man passes down to his descendants is a faithful tribute to his own life, which keeps the memory of the ancestor alive in the consciousness of those who follow him (ll. 77–80). Within the drama, inheritance is seen as a bond between father and son, and Jaromir functions as a living symbol of inheritance. When Boleslav begs the count for mercy, in return he promises good news 'Die schnell euer Siechtum heilen,/ Euch mit Lust erfüllen soll.' (ll. 2428–29) The news which Boleslav has to offer is that of the survival of the count's only son. Boleslav cannot help but see this news not only as something positive, but as something endowed with healing powers. While the lack of a male heir prompts the count to compare his family with a rotten tree, the news of a male heir should cure the count's malady. The count's reaction is not what Boleslav expected, for the count cannot but see himself as disinherited by Boleslav, even if his son is returned. As Boleslav himself confirms, Jaromir forgot his real family while under the aegis of the robbers (ll. 2481–83).

Borotin, perhaps justifiably, fears that Jaromir's character will have been damaged by his association with the criminals, in which case he would rather his son had died: whether

Jaromir is dead or a criminal, Borotin no longer has an heir. While a dead son could not inherit, a criminal outsider would be unacceptable (ll. 2492–94). When Jaromir discovers the truth, his anger results from the idea that he has been deprived of his rightful Borotin inheritance:

Schlichst dich Kirchenräuberisch
In des reinen Kinderbusens
Unentweihetes Heiligtum;
Stahlst des teuren Vaters Bild
Von der Gottgeweihten Schwelle,
Setztest Deines an die Stelle!
Ungeheuer! Ungeheuer! (ll. 2793–99)

Jaromir, by means of religious references, conveys the idea of inheritance as a holy, God-given right and invokes the relationship between creator and creation. Fathers are particularly important figures for their sons, and by kidnapping Jaromir, Boleslav has sinned against a holy order and against the economic and social conventions governing inheritance. Jaromir's vilification of Boleslav and of his own former life of crime indicates his shift in allegiance following the revelation of his true origins. Now that he has been reunited with his true inheritance and has a role in established society, he scorns his former status as an outsider.

The robbers, who are in some ways more spectral than the ghost of the ancestress, are another indication of the social importance of ownership. While the ancestress appears on stage, and cannot therefore be considered as a manifestation of guilt or the obsession with legacy,⁴³ the band of robbers never appear as such, but are only represented by Jaromir and Boleslav. The robbers thereby become a symbol of society's obsession with property and inheritance. This sinister quality with which the bandits are endowed shows how deeply ingrained the importance of property is in the psyche of Borotin and others in this society. The fear of losing or being divested of one's property is all-encompassing, as also shown by Borotin's deliberations on the subject, and has resulted in the creation of these other ghosts, the robbers, as a numerous and powerful threat in the paranoid minds of the propertied elite.

⁴³ 'Ein symbolisches Gespenst stellt eine psychische Kraft dar; ein eigentliches Gespenst stellt die objektiv auftretende Macht der Toten vor.' Angress, p. 612.

The great lengths to which the state and its representatives go to counter the misappropriating energies of the bandits are a further indication of the importance of property rights in this society.

In this context, Borotin's disregard for Bertha, despite the clearly affectionate relationship between the two, is more comprehensible. While he loves Bertha, she is useless to him in terms of inheritance. In the same way that Kreusa in *Das goldene Vließ* labels Medea's children orphans because their mother does not fit the mould of Greek motherhood, a patriarchal concept, so is Bertha a non-being because she can play no meaningful part in the Borotin inheritance. Borotin laments not that he will die without a son, but that he will die with no children whatsoever (ll. 62–69), an idea which is later reinforced with the exclamation: 'Und ich sterbe kinderlos!' (l. 159) While a son would marry and bring home his bride (l. 124), thereby giving new life to the castle and propagating the name Borotin, Bertha, on being married, would probably be taken to her husband's home, where their offspring would carry his family name.⁴⁴ Only a male heir can secure the Borotin name a place in the future of the country, and this is what the duke desires. Carmen Stirnweis has identified Borotin's 'Fixierung auf einen männlichen, vollwertigen Nachfolger'.⁴⁵ However, by disregarding the social context of Borotin's anxiety, she fails to identify the reasons for this: 'Der Graf betrauert ein totes Geschlecht, ohne das Leben zu bemerken, das in Form seiner Tochter neben ihm steht.' While Bertha undoubtedly represents new life, she represents new life for the Eschens, Jaromir's fictional family, rather than for the Borotins. Borotin, unaware that Jaromir is his son, believes that the Borotins will die out regardless of whether Bertha has children. The cause of Borotin's anxiety is rooted in social realities which exclude women from playing a meaningful role in the future of their families.

Borotin is further dismayed by the fact that a female heir necessitates the destruction of

⁴⁴The ABGB 1811 sees this as the only possibility for married women: '[Die Ehefrau] ist verbunden, dem Manne in seinen Wohnsitz zu folgen'. ABGB I, §92, p. 33.

⁴⁵Carmen Stirnweis. 'Verborgene Schuld in Franz Grillparzers *Die Ahnfrau*. Ein Beitrag zur Relativierung der angeblichen Schicksalstragödie'. *JdGG* 3. Folge 22 (2007–08). 80–108, pp. 95–96.

his military legacy. Bertha, being a woman, cannot inherit this aspect of Borotin's legacy, and so the symbols must be buried (ll. 102–07). The importance of military honour for male inheritance is later reinforced by the captain. He has a score to settle with the band of robbers, who destroyed his family seat, and is determined to exact an appropriate punishment. The captain's plan for revenge is not simply to put the robbers to death, but to put them to a dishonourable death as the thieves that they are: 'Nein, dem Rad, dem Henkerbeile/ Sei ihr schuldig Haupt gebracht.' (ll. 1268–69) A death in battle would be an honourable death, the rightful inheritance of an honourable man, and therefore unfitting for criminals. The planned revenge thus goes beyond physical brutality and a death sentence. The captain proposes a punishment, namely a disinheritance, which mirrors his own disinheritance at the hands of the robbers.

Borotin chastises himself for his disregard for Bertha, which indicates that his opinion of her is at odds with society's:

Kinderlos konnt' ich mich nennen,
Und ich habe dich, du Treue!
Ach, verzeih dem reichen Manne,
Der sein Habe halb verloren
In des Unglücks hartem Sturm,
Und nun mit der reichen Hälfte,
Lang an Überfluß gewöhnet,
Sich für einen Bettler hält. (ll. 162–69)

He clearly values his daughter highly and even permits her to choose her own husband (l. 188), but society at large does not see women as valuable individuals, and so a conflict arises in Borotin's perception of Bertha. For Bertha, excluded from the conveyance of the Borotin legacy to a new generation, marriage is the only way she can contribute to this process. To this end, much of Borotin's energy has been expended in ensuring that the eventual marriage is as profitable as possible (ll. 1084–90), and even when he has decided that Bertha is capable of making her own choice of husband, Borotin seems intent that the chosen man should be selected from among the country's nobles (ll. 186–87). The society in which the Borotins live is obsessed with class and inheritance, and members of the aristocracy would not want their

children marrying social inferiors.

Given Borotin's obsession with male inheritance, questions regarding Bertha's female inheritance necessarily arise. On the one hand, and in stark contrast to the violence of the drama's male characters, Bertha's inheritance as a woman appears to be a certain humanity. The captain, who laments the destruction of his own inheritance (ll. 1258–60), wishes to exact brutal revenge on the bandits. Bertha responds to this proposed violence with a plea that the captain go about his duties with humanity: 'Nicht doch! Wollt ihr Menschen richten,/ Geht als Mensch ans blut'ge Werk!' (ll. 1270–71) Jaromir cherishes Bertha's gentle nature which he wishes to protect from male influence:

Wollt ihr dieses holde Wesen,
[...]
Mit der Rachsucht gift'gem Hauch,
Mit des Hasses Atem trüben!
Laßt sie süßes Mitleid üben [...] (ll. 1288, 1293–95)

Jaromir and Bertha are representatives of the opposed but complementary gender roles idealised in eighteenth- and nineteenth-century theoretical texts, and here Jaromir expresses his desire to uphold this status quo. Jaromir believes that Bertha's nature is susceptible to corruption when it comes into contact with male influences, an eventuality he is keen to avoid.

Grillparzer draws attention to another aspect of female inheritance, namely original sin. The ancestress in Grillparzer's drama, due to her own sexual transgressions, can be seen as a descendant of Eve. Not as lucky as Bertha in her parents, the ancestress was forced into a marriage with a man she did not care for, whom she then cuckolded (ll. 480–89). The murder weapon, a dagger, hangs in a prominent position and functions as a constant reminder of the deed and of the sexual transgression on which the house of Borotin is founded. Dagmar Lorenz argues that the ancestress's infidelity 'stellt die Legitimitätsverhältnisse und die gesellschaftlichen Strukturen in Frage'.⁴⁶ This is particularly true as far as inheritance is concerned. By committing adultery and bearing

⁴⁶Lorenz. *Dichter des sozialen Konflikts*, p. 37.

another man's child, Bertha, the ancestress, deprived her husband of his rightful legacy. She usurped his role as the founder of the Borotin dynasty, and became its originator (ll. 113–14). Indeed, the Borotins of the drama are not Borotins at all, but rather the descendants of the ancestress and her lover (ll. 544–48). Given Borotin's obsession with inheritance, this enduring act of usurpation is shown to be particularly subversive. Borotin is clearly aware of the tales surrounding the ancestress's fate. In Act I, he names her as the founder of the dynasty (ll. 113–14), but later interrupts Günther's narration when the servant mentions her illegitimate offspring. Later, he is clearly troubled by the possibility of his own illegitimacy, and tries to rid himself of the thought (ll. 1104–08). Founding a dynasty, especially when we consider that Borotin's concerns originate in his daughter's inability merely to continue his line, represents female appropriation of male creative power. Within the power structures presented in the drama, female infidelity is shown to be a particularly dangerous transgression because it can disinherit and illegitimate.

The omnipresent dagger is at once part of Bertha's material inheritance and a symbol of her inheritance as a woman, namely violence and oppression at the hands of men. Although Stirnweis does not see Bertha's maltreatment in terms of a 'female inheritance', as proposed here, she does see Bertha's situation as a repetition of the ancestress's. She interprets the ghost as a visible warning against the ancestress's fate, an 'instrumentalisierend[e] Ungerechtigkeit' which now threatens Bertha.⁴⁷ She also suggests that the crime central to the drama is not the ancestress's infidelity, as is usually claimed, but 'ihre Zwangsverheiratung und Instrumentalisierung' which precede it. As Stirnweis shows, the characters in the drama refer to the adultery as 'Sünde' while the murder is a mere 'Tat'.⁴⁸ This hierarchy of evils is almost certainly linked to the subordinate social position of women in the society represented in the drama (and in Grillparzer's own society): 'Der Mord an der Ahnfrau belegt, daß der privilegierte Mann auch dann sicher ist, wenn er Faustrecht gelten

⁴⁷Stirnweis, p. 101.

⁴⁸*Ibid.*

läßt, solange er einen sozial Geringeren tötet.’⁴⁹ We are also reminded of Grillparzer’s own views on the differences between male and female adultery, which were mentioned in the Introduction. Again, however, the issue of inheritance, and legitimate heirs, should be taken into account, as doing so helps explain the society’s condemnation of the ancestress’s deed: wives’ extramarital affairs necessarily call into question the legitimacy of their issue, a state of affairs which cannot be tolerated by a society in which patrilineal inheritance is such a sacred principle. Conversely, the infidelity of Alfonso’s ancestor in *Die Jüdin von Toledo* does not have a negative effect on Alfonso’s own legitimacy, accentuating the societal double standard against female infidelity. The concept of patrilineality, which is central to *Die Ahnfrau*, can thus be seen as doubly misogynist. First, as has been argued, it relegates women to a mere supporting role in the family. Women’s physiology makes them mere passive participants in the process. Women are absorbed by the family into which they are married and adopt their husband’s name and identity. It is a woman’s male relatives—brothers, cousins, uncles—who actively secure the future of the family name. Second, patrilineal systems of inheritance restrict women’s sexual experience in order to guarantee the purity of resultant offspring. The *ABGB* 1811 lists proven infidelity as grounds for a separation, and allows for a marriage to be declared null and void, should the husband find his wife to be impregnated by another man after the ceremony has taken place.⁵⁰ Men’s infidelities do not endanger the purity of the family line: the mothers of illegitimate children can easily be identified and their offspring sidelined. Before modern scientific advances, however, women had to be controlled by social and moral structures, such as those propagated by religions, to prevent contamination of the family line.

Bertha’s inherited victimhood would not be possible without the corresponding masculine inheritance of violence, which has already been touched upon. The dagger is a constant reminder of the violent murder of Bertha’s forebear, and so it is illuminating that

⁴⁹Lorenz. *Dichter des sozialen Konflikts*, p. 39.

⁵⁰*ABGB* I. §109, p. 40; §58, p. 21.

Jaromir insists on possessing it. Desperate for weapons of some kind, Jaromir recalls the dagger. Despite Bertha's attempts to prevent him obtaining it, and the ghost of the ancestress which appears, Jaromir not only takes possession of the dagger, but appropriates it:

BERTHA

Diesen Dolch! O leg' ihn hin!

JAROMIR

Ich, den Dolch? Nein, nimmermehr!

Er ist mein, ist mein, ist mein!

Ei fürwahr ein tüchtig Eisen!

Wie ich ihn so prüfend schwinge

Wird mit Eins mir guter Dinge

Und mein innres Treiben klar. (ll. 2146–52)

His appropriation of the dagger is shown in his assignment of new, positive, meaning to it, where previously the Borotins regarded it as a reminder of the horrors of the past. Labelling the dagger 'tüchtig', Jaromir shows his support for the deed which was committed using the weapon. Later, Jaromir shows himself to be prone to violence. Talking to the ghost, whom he mistakes for Bertha, he displays his short temper and violent tendencies (ll. 3230–40). The punishment Jaromir threatens, which is similar to that inflicted on the ancestress, disguises Jaromir's own inheritance with a specific and personal quality. Yet, when one considers that Jaromir and the ancestress's husband are not in fact related, the conception of masculine violence as the inheritance of Borotin men shows itself to be flawed. Jaromir's violence is part of a more general male inheritance which serves as a tool of those who wish to oppress women.

Stirnweis argues for Jaromir's appropriation of the dagger to be read symbolically, for she sees the dagger itself as 'das symbolische Motiv für eine fundamentale Ungerechtigkeit.'⁵¹ While Stirnweis sees this fundamental injustice in specific events in the drama, namely the ancestress's forced marriage and Jaromir's treatment of Bertha, the universal context of the drama, that is, inheritance, indicates a more general criticism of the various kinds of maltreatment suffered by Bertha and her forebear at the hands of the men around them.

⁵¹Stirnweis, p. 104.

Bringing the central, and long ignored, issue of inheritance to the fore permits a broader analysis of *Die Ahnfrau* than is possible when the drama's social and legal context is not considered. Grillparzer portrays patrilineal inheritance as a construct which reduces women's freedom and importance. The society of *Die Ahnfrau* simultaneously demeans women and demands from them the highest levels of purity. Women's position as a marginalised group is shown to be the result of these demands: the violence committed against both Berthas goes hand in hand with these demeaning social structures. Bertha is of no use for the future of the Borotin family, and her existence as the sole heir to the name guarantees its destruction. On the other hand, however, female chastity and fidelity are highly prized, as only they can guarantee the purity with which the Borotin line is continued. The severity of the punishment inflicted on the ancestress is an indication of the high value placed by men on pure female sexuality as a guarantee of their children's legitimacy. The fates of Bertha and her ancestress demonstrate the dangerously limiting nature of life for women in patriarchal societies. Grillparzer's engagement with the *Frauenfrage* is thus already evident in his first mature dramatic work.

‘Zum Schweigen und Gehorchen kam ich nicht!’

Women, Marriage and Politics in

König Ottokars Glück und Ende

The issue of inheritance which Grillparzer introduces in *Die Ahnfrau* is again visible in his historical drama *König Ottokars Glück und Ende*. In the figure of Ottokar, Grillparzer presents another dynastic leader who is deeply concerned with the future of his clan. Having married Margarete, his first wife, for her territorial possessions, he later regrets the decision when it becomes clear that the union will not produce heirs. Eager to precipitate the end of this marriage is Benesch von Rosenberg, a Bohemian nobleman and member of the Rosenberg family, who hopes to marry his daughter, Berta, to the king. Ultimately, however, Ottokar decides in favour of Kunigunde, granddaughter of the King of Hungary. The drama, in portraying these various unions and the fates of the three women linked to the king, examines the nature of marriage, particularly political marriage, and women's role in patriarchal political systems. This overarching political structure, hinted at but not explored in *Die Ahnfrau*, also allows for a comparison of Ottokar's and Rudolf's reigns, and of the role of women in both.

Previous scholarship has largely concentrated on the political and historical issues in the drama, and has tended to overlook the social issues. Much has been written on the parallels between the drama's content and events contemporaneous with Grillparzer's life. Contemporary audiences, and critics since, have seen in the drama's marital constellations reflections of the Habsburgs' political marriages. Mark Ward concludes that audiences would inevitably have made links between Grillparzer's characters and Napoleon,

Josephine, and Marie-Luise.⁵² Other critics have sought clues about Grillparzer's political beliefs. Alfred Doppler positions *Ottokar* in the context of 'Bühnenstücken, die das Herrscherhaus und den österreichischen Staat verherrlichten und die sich die Stärkung und Festigung patriotischer Empfindungen angelegen sein ließen', although Grillparzer's 'Einstellung zu dem Staat, auf den *Ottokars Glück und Ende* bezogen ist, war [...] nicht konservativ verherrlichend, sondern ambivalent und kritisch.'⁵³ Doppler interprets Grillparzer's negative portrayal of the Bohemians as evidence of his conviction that the special interests of the Habsburg empire's various nationalities could destroy its unity.⁵⁴

This is not to say that Ottokar's marriages have been ignored in scholarship. Bruce Thompson argues that the marriages' purpose is to make Ottokar a more pathetic character: 'Mothered by Margarethe, humiliated by Kunigunde, [Ottokar] is in each case the weaker partner.'⁵⁵ Harald Steinhagen writes that Ottokar does not feel any duty towards Margarete, and sees marriage merely as a means to an end.⁵⁶ On the contrary, his treatment of Margarete in particular has been examined, but the focus tends to be on the role of the divorce as a catalyst in Ottokar's downfall. Roe notes that the abrupt end to the marriage is followed by a swift decline in Ottokar's fortunes, and argues that his treatment of Margarete is symptomatic of his deep-seated inhumanity and cynicism.⁵⁷ Similarly, Konrad Schaum argues that any instance of lawlessness can threaten the stability of order and cause the loss of inner cohesion: 'Daher wird die sittliche Mißhandlung Margarethes zwar zum Wendepunkt seines Glücks, aber erst das Zusammenwirken vieler Kräfte aus dem Ganzen

⁵²Mark G. Ward. 'Some Notes on Grillparzer's *König Ottokar* and the "entfernte Ähnlichkeit"'. *German Life and Letters* 34 (1981). 214–22, p. 214.

⁵³Alfred Doppler. 'König Ottokars Glück und Ende. Das Verhältnis von dargestellter Zeit, Zeit der Darstellung und gegenwärtiger Rezeption'. *Grillparzer und die Europäische Tradition. Londoner Symposium 1986*. 21–29, p. 21.

⁵⁴*Ibid.*, p. 25.

⁵⁵Thompson, p. 52.

⁵⁶Harald Steinhagen. 'Grillparzers *König Ottokar*. Drama, Geschichte und Zeitgeschichte'. *Jahrbuch der Deutschen Schiller-Gesellschaft* 14 (1970). 456–87, p. 460.

⁵⁷Ian F. Roe. *An Introduction to the Major Works of Franz Grillparzer, 1791–1872, German Dramatist and Poet*. Lewiston, NY: The Edwin Mellen Press, 1991, p. 102.

der Geschichte schafft den tragischen Prozeß.’⁵⁸

Placing the focus on Grillparzer's female characters seems well justified when we consider that these roles are more important in his drama than in his sources. Vaclav Hajek's *Böhmische Chronik* was one source for *Ottokar*. The main outline of Grillparzer's drama can be found in this work, but the roles played by women are far smaller than those in *Ottokar*. Indeed, Kunigunde has several children, while it is hard to imagine Grillparzer's Kunigunde taking on the role of mother. Grillparzer also used the portraits of Ottokar and Rudolf in Joseph Hormayr's *Österreichischer Plutarch*. In his portrait of Rudolf, Hormayr gives much room to, and stresses the importance of, the many dynastic marriages in which the king paired his daughters, but barely mentions Margarethe or Kunigunde. Hormayr downplays the importance of Margarethe, writing that Ottokar gained the Austrian lands 'weniger aus dem Titel seiner Ehe mit Margarethen [...] dann aus freyem Willen des Landadels und der Gewalt seiner siegreichen Waffen'.⁵⁹ Hormayr calls Kunigunde 'eitler, unversöhnlicher noch als ihr Gemahl'.⁶⁰ After Ottokar's prostration before Rudolf, she goads him, and suggests that he 'möge nur sein Lebelang [*sic*] bey ihren Frauen an dem Rocken weilen,—sie wolle das Heer führen wider den Feind.' This portrayal of Kunigunde is very similar to Grillparzer's. In his biography of Ottokar, Hormayr again downplays Margarethe's importance. Margarethe's decision not to formally enter the convent and take the oath was influenced by the Pope, 'der sich ihrer als eines Werkzeugs bedienen wollte' and who tried to marry her off.⁶¹ For a while, she ruled Austria by herself, by without gaining the respect of the nobles, who 'dachten nun um so ernstlicher daran, ihr einen Gemahl und sich diesen zum Herrn zu geben, je dringender des Landes bisherige Leiden eine solche Gewißheit geboten'. Hormayr presents Margarethe's marriage to Ottokar as a

⁵⁸Konrad Schaum. 'Grillparzers "König Ottokars Glück und Ende"—historische Tragödie und Zeitkritik'. *JdGG* 3. Folge 15 (1983). 51–63, p. 55.

⁵⁹Joseph Hormayr. 'Rudolph von Habsburg'. *Oesterreichischer Plutarch, oder Leben und Bildnisse aller Regenten und der berühmtesten Feldherren, Staatsmänner, Gelehrten und Künstler des österreichischen Kaiserstaates*. 20 vols. Vienna: Doll, 1807–14. I (1807). 5–48, p. 22.

⁶⁰Hormayr. 'Rudolph von Habsburg', p. 29.

⁶¹Joseph Hormayr. 'Przemysl Ottokar der Zweyte'. *Oesterreichischer Plutarch*. XV (1808). 10–81, p. 14.

decision taken by the nobles, rather than by Margarethe herself. In Grillparzer's drama, Margarete is an altruistic foil to Kunigunde. In Hormayr's version, however, Margarethe's demands are partly to blame for the end of her marriage: 'sie [forderte], der ungleichen Verbindung von jeher abgeneigt, zu oft Dank von dem Könige, den sie so groß gemacht, und von dem Lande, dem sie sich geopfert hätte.'⁶² This behaviour, combined with Ottokar's desire for an heir, led him to seek divorce on the grounds that they were too closely related, and because Margarethe took an oath in the convent. Although there are similarities which testify to the influence of Hormayr on *Ottokar*, Grillparzer gives more prominence to the roles of Margarete and Kunigunde than do either Hormayr or Hajek. This would suggest that these female characters were of considerable interest to him, and that they therefore deserve more critical attention than they have hitherto received.

Marriage will be the central concern of this chapter on *Ottokar*. The legal issues surrounding marriage in Grillparzer's time have already been discussed in the introduction to this section on 'Women and the Law'. The *Allgemeines bürgerliches Gesetzbuch (ABGB)* of 1811, while holding both man and wife to the same degree of marital duty and fidelity (§90), establishes a clear, patriarchal hierarchy as the basis of marriage: 'Der Mann ist das Haupt der Familie.' (§91) The *ABGB* dedicates much space to family law, and dictates the procedure for ending a marriage. Or, rather, it states that a marriage cannot be nullified, even if both parties want this. As far as the state was concerned, marriage was not simply a personal arrangement between two individuals but an institution which had far-reaching effects on society as a whole. *Ottokar* demonstrates this principle.

The issues surrounding marriage which play such a central role in *Ottokar* were also of great interest to women writers at the time. Caroline Pichler, for example, wrote frequently on the subject. In 'Erinnerung an einige merkwürdige Frauen' (1810) she cites Maria Theresa's luck in having avoided the terrible fate of a political marriage: 'Nicht, wie sonst bey Fürstentöchtern, war ihre Ehe das Werk der Staatskunst, und ihr glückliches Gelingen

⁶²Hormayr. 'Przemysl Ottokar der Zweyte', p. 37.

ein Werk des Zufalls. Nein!’⁶³ In another essay, ‘Über Mißheirathen’, she laments various evils which had become prevalent in Austrian marriages. Pichler’s definition of misalliance includes any marriage which is marked by a large difference, be it in age, social background, upbringing or education, between the partners. Although she believes that love and time can bridge many gaps, such an undertaking will always remain a ‘Wagestück’. If there is any such discrepancy, writes Pichler, then it is much better that it be in the man’s favour; this is in accordance with God’s plan and nature.⁶⁴ In a letter to Marie von Zay, Pichler expressed concern about Marianne Neumann’s upcoming marriage: ‘Es ist mir vor allem nicht recht, daß sie ihm an Bildung überlegen ist—solche geistige *Mesalliancen*, besonders wenn das Übergewicht auf Seite der Frau ist—schlagen selten glücklich aus.’⁶⁵ Marriages in which the woman is superior to the man in any way are ‘traurig’ and ‘aller natürlichen Ordnung zuwider’, but Pichler is particularly disturbed by marriages in which the woman is the elder partner: ‘Welche moderne Geistesrichtung oder Verkehrung ist es, die den männlichen Sinn [...] auf verwelkte alternde Gestalten lenkt?’⁶⁶ The relevance of Pichler’s comments for *Ottokar* is clear. On the one hand, Grillparzer displays the misery of political marriages, which take no account of personal preferences. Margarete, Berta and Kunigunde are pawns in a game for political power. Their feelings and desires are irrelevant, and love cannot play a role in the marriages in which they find themselves or to which they aspire. Furthermore, as in other dramas, Grillparzer portrays in *Ottokar* the consequences of marriages which are not based on some form of mutuality. Margarete’s advanced age makes her incompatible for Ottokar as she is unable to give him the heirs he desires, while Ottokar and Kunigunde are divided by their cultures, a difference which manifests itself in their differing views of the role of women.

Ottokar’s change of heart regarding the future of his dynasty causes trouble for the three

⁶³Pichler. ‘Erinnerung an einige merkwürdige Frauen’ (1810). *Sämmtliche Werke*. xxiv. 96–137, p. 111.

⁶⁴Pichler. ‘Über Mißheirathen’. *Sämmtliche Werke*. lv. 141–45, p. 142.

⁶⁵Caroline Pichler to Marie von Zay. 28.3.1821. Wienbibliothek im Rathaus. H.I.N. 434.

⁶⁶Pichler. ‘Über Mißheirathen’, pp. 144–45.

women in the drama. While his marriage with Margarete was the result of territorial aspirations, by the beginning of the drama he is more concerned with the future of the dynasty and of his realm. Ottokar himself makes clear that his private decision, his divorce from Margarete, is necessitated by the political situation and by ‘mein Land,/ Das in mir Ehen schließt und Ehen scheidet.’⁶⁷ As in *Die Ahnfrau*, a male dynastic leader realises the need for male heirs and does what he can to ensure the future of his line.

The first victim of Ottokar’s political marriages is Margarete. In *Ottokar*, Grillparzer expands Margarete’s role not just in comparison with his sources, but also in comparison with his 1818 poem ‘Rudolf und Ottokar’, where she is a dutiful housewife who ‘schafft und spinnet emsig’ while Ottokar is in the field (*HKA* I/xi, p. 12). Grillparzer therefore gives Margarete an active political role which is not present in his sources. Much as Ottokar’s decision to divorce Margarete is motivated by politics rather than affairs of the heart, her decision to marry him was taken despite her wish to remain unmarried and was motivated by political considerations. Rather than territorial self-aggrandisement, however, Margarete sought to secure the safety of her compatriots by marrying Ottokar:

Da traten zu mir hin, auf Haimburgs Schloß,
Die Landesherrn und klagten ihre Not.
[...]
Von Weibern, Kindern, Blutenden, Verletzten
Sah ich mit Schaudern, heulend, mich umgeben,
Zu mir um Rettung flehend, die’s vermochte.
Da wollt ich alles und versprach es ihnen! (ll. 312–13, 323–26)

As Hans Gmür puts it, ‘das Elend ihrer Untertanen zwingt sie zur Heirat mit dem mächtigen Ottokar.’⁶⁸

In Act I, Zawisch von Rosenberg, a relative of Berta, gleefully announces the King’s divorce from Margarete, who later airs her suspicions that the Rosenbergs’ meddling was decisive in nudging Ottokar towards his decision (ll. 206–12). As becomes evident when Ottokar’s reasons for divorcing Margarete are discussed, her behaviour has not in any way

⁶⁷ Grillparzer. ‘König Ottokars Glück und Ende’. *HKA* I/iii. 5–177, ll. 594–95.

⁶⁸ Hans Gmür. *Dramatische und theatralische Stilelemente in Grillparzers Dramen*. Winterthur: P.G. Keller, 1956, p. 19.

forced his hand: 'Ja, ich will gehn, doch bleibt die Ehe fest,/ Nichts ward verletzt, was ihren Bruch begehrte' (ll. 341–42). Ottokar knew on marrying Margarete that she would not be able to produce heirs, but this fact did not deter him. Whereas territorial expansion was his goal before the marriage, the realisation that heirs are necessary means that Margarete is no longer a suitable wife and must be removed from the picture (ll. 508–15). More explicitly than in *Die Ahnfrau*, Grillparzer indicates the analogous relationship of family and state. Ottokar claims his decision to divorce Margarete is not motivated by his attraction to a younger woman, but by his people's expectations of royal heirs and international alliances.

Although she suffers at the hands of her husband and sees the fate that awaits Berta, Margarete does not condemn the institution of marriage, but rather holds it up as sacred (ll. 288–91). Nor does Margarete cower before her husband. In conversation with Rudolf, Margarete displays knowledge of her legal position, rejecting the grounds for divorce listed by Ottokar. She refuses to forgive Ottokar's treatment of her, and defends her marriage against his claims. Ottokar, she argues, knew that she was no longer capable of bearing children before they were married, and was not concerned by this (ll. 257–61). She rejects Ottokar's claims that they are too closely related, and so should never have been married (ll. 276–78), and disputes the claim that the marriage is invalid because of an oath she took to her deceased husband before marrying Ottokar. While she did swear to remain chaste, it was not a solemn vow, the renunciation of which would break other religious rules (ll. 348–49).

Margarete's independence is most evident in her confrontation with Ottokar in Act I. The chancellor asks who will be representing her in the matter, to which she responds, 'Ich selbst!' (l. 539). The chancellor's assumption that Margarete would have male representation, possibly in the form of Rudolf or Merenburg, who accompany her to the throne room, places the drama in the context of nineteenth-century Austrian law: the *ABGB* 1811 did not envision women representing themselves in legal matters. Margarete defends herself publicly against Ottokar's accusations, and warns him of the consequences of his actions. Even as Ottokar insults and derides Margarete, she shows herself to be a truly selfless character (ll. 616–18).

Margarete also seems to have a better understanding of the reality of Ottokar's situation than he himself does. She warns him against those around him—'Umringt seid Ihr mit Argen und Verrätern!' (l. 634)—and against furthering his plans: 'Ihr steht am Abgrund, glaubt mir, Ottokar!' (l. 637) Yet she cannot divest him of his arrogance: 'Lehrt Ihr den Ottokar die Seinen kennen?/ Ich gehe meinen Gang, was hindert, fällt.' (ll. 635–36)

Margarete is at once a pawn in Ottokar's plans for domination, and an independent player. She is not motivated by personal gain or private interest, but rather by the good of the population at large. She married Ottokar for this reason, and it is for this reason that she agrees to leave the court. Margarete seems at all times aware of the larger implications of her actions, and her discussion with Rudolf makes clear that she is familiar with the law. Berta, to whom we now turn our attention, is by no means Margarete's intellectual equal, nor does she have Margarete's strength of character, and as a result she is at the mercy of the scheming men around her.

It is Margarete's 'grenzenlose Güte'⁶⁹ which allows her to pity the fate of Berta despite her own problems. Recognising Berta's role as a pawn in her family's game, Margarete does not blame her for Ottokar's decision (ll. 198–203, 218–20). The Rosenbergs' statements in Act I and their treatment of Berta confirm Margarete's suspicions. Benesch's first reaction to his daughter's appearance is dismissive and displays the misogyny present in many of Grillparzer's male characters: 'Ha, Närrin, du?/ Was willst du hier? Geh fort, auf dein Gemach!' (ll. 61–62) Discussions between her male relatives, even when they concern her own fate, are no place for Berta. Her uncle Milota later tries to take her away, but she begs Seyfried for protection. Clearly, Berta is accustomed to ill-use at the hands of her father and uncles. Zawisch mockingly praises the way in which his brother tried to tempt Ottokar with his daughter, before announcing that Ottokar has chosen Kunigunde as his second wife. Benesch is understandably infuriated and suspects treachery, but Zawisch cannot help but point out that it was Benesch's interference which has made the marriage possible (ll.

⁶⁹Wolf-Cirian, p. 119.

133–35). Although he turns to his brothers in an attempt at shifting the responsibility for the failure of the scheme, it is Berta whom Benesch blames most: 'Bringt sie mir her, das Mädchen bringt mir her!/
Sie soll nicht leben!' (ll. 142–43)

Benesch's plans to marry Berta to Ottokar display his lack of concern for her happiness. Berta has no value in and of herself, but is merely a means by which her male relatives hope to gain increased political influence. Benesch has placed Berta in Ottokar's eye as often as possible, in the hope that she might seduce him. In conversation with Rudolf, Margarete narrates the course of the Rosenbergs' campaign for influence, and in doing so partially exonerates her husband. For some time prior to Ottokar's decision, the Rosenbergs had been sowing dissent between the monarchs (ll. 206–09), and playing on the king's desire for an heir (ll. 210–12). According to Margarete, the Rosenbergs' campaign was so successful that the disintegration of the royal marriage is to be blamed on them rather than on Ottokar (ll. 215–17). Unfortunately for Benesch, his plan is only partially successful: while his meddling does induce Ottokar to divorce Margarete, it is not Berta, but Kunigunde, who is the new queen. Again, this marriage is more of a political than a romantic alliance. The Hungarian King Bela, recently defeated in battle by Ottokar, gives his daughter in marriage to the victor as a means of sealing the peace. Kunigunde's fate confirms that, for women in this society, marriage is not motivated by concerns for individual (female) happiness.

In terms of the scope of this study as a whole, Kunigunde is the most interesting of the three female characters in *Ottokar*. For Emil Staiger she is reminiscent of 'die lüsternen und machtgierigen Frauen des Barocktheaters oder der traditionellen Oper' and could be confused with 'einem fast schlablonenhaften Teufel von Weib'.⁷⁰ Edmund Kostka labels her 'a beautiful but licentious woman devoured by carnal passions.'⁷¹ W. E. Yates mentions her desire for self-determination and 'ungemein modern wirkende Erklärungen ihrer sexuellen

⁷⁰Emil Staiger. 'Grillparzer. *König Ottokars Glück und Ende*' [1943]. *Franz Grillparzer*. Ed. Helmut Bachmaier. Frankfurt/Main: Suhrkamp, 1991. 69–87, p. 79.

⁷¹Edmund Kostka. 'Grillparzer and the East'. *Monatshefte* 47 (1955). 273–84, p. 280.

Unbefriedigtheit'.⁷² Prutti also highlights her sexuality, calling her 'eine grausame Dominatrix und die Figuration einer kastrierenden weibliche Sexualität, eine von Grillparzers kalten und abweisenden, letztlich aber doch verführbaren Frauen'.⁷³ Prutti sees this sexuality as part of what makes Kunigunde so different from Margarete, and indeed her arrival on stage corroborates this. While Grillparzer does not indicate Berta's or Margarete's attire, Kunigunde's otherness is mirrored in her clothing. Disguised as a man in Bela's entourage, she is taken for his grandson. However, with the words, 'Nehmt Ihr mich unter Eure Krieger auf?' (l. 719) she removes her male clothing and reveals her identity. Kunigunde's cross-dressing marks her out as an exception to her sex, and, as she herself admits, she took on the disguise in order to avoid the exclusion which would otherwise have been her lot as a woman:

Mein König, Ihr verzeiht die Überraschung.
 Sie wollten erst mich vor den Toren lassen,
 Doch trieb's mich, hier zu sein, und also kam ich. (ll. 724–26)

Grillparzer's dramas often rely on intercultural conflict, and *Ottokar* is no exception. There is the obvious political and military conflict between Ottokar and Rudolf, but, as Kunigunde discovers, the society into which she marries has a different opinion on the role of women than the society in which she was raised. Kunigunde rails against the inferior position of women in Bohemian society and highlights the more equal position which they are accorded in Hungary:

Wär ich zu stolz nicht, meines Gatten Zorn
 In meiner eignen Sache aufzurufen,
 Wärs hier in Böhmen wie bei uns daheim,
 Wo auch die Frau ein Recht hat, eine Stimme,
 Und Macht, um zu vollführen, was sie denkt,
 Wo eine Königin nicht bloß des Königs Gattin,
 Wo sie Gebietrin ist; es sollt Euch reün! (ll. 884–90)

Kunigunde's speech is reminiscent of Hero's optimism regarding her future in the temple ('Im Tempel hier hat auch die Frau ein Recht', l. 279) and of Phaon's challenge to Sappho's

⁷²W. E. Yates. 'König Ottokars Glück und Ende und *Der Traum ein Leben*: Realitätsbezug und Rezeptionsproblematik'. *Études Germaniques* 47 (1992). 201–14, p. 210.

⁷³Prutti, p. 329.

authority ('Ist [Sappho] Gebiet'rin hier im Land?' l. 1641). In *Ottokar*, Hungary and Bohemia are contrasted in terms of social attitudes towards women, as are Colchis and Greece (*Das goldene Vließ*), Mytilene and Greece (*Sappho*) or the temple and wider society (*Des Meeres und der Liebe Wellen*) in other dramas by Grillparzer. Kunigunde's rights in Hungary seem to be more extensive than those of Hero in the temple, not least because she has not only rights, but also a voice and power to convert desires into action. She is, however, aware that her freedoms are limited in Bohemia, and threatens Zawisch with retribution at Ottokar's hands if he should again be so impertinent (ll. 910–11).

In conversation with her maid, Kunigunde again offers insight into the widely differing fortunes which she encounters in Hungary and Bohemia. Her Hungarian youth was spent in the sort of freedom enjoyed by Medea in Colchis:

[In Ungarn] galt ich noch! Frei streift ich in die Ferne,
Dorthin, dahin, wohin der Wunsch mich rief.
Mein alter Vater war mir gern zu Dienst,
Zu Dienst die Fürsten, seine Sippen alle,
Und was nur Mann hieß in dem weiten Reich.
Und Leben war und Feuer, Glut und Mut! (ll. 967–72)

As a member of the royal family, she enjoyed liberties denied to other Hungarians, while as a woman she gained the protection of men. Her royal status calls into question her assertion that Hungarian women in general have a greater level of freedom than Bohemian women. *Sappho* and *Die Jüdin von Toledo* both show the extent to which social status affects a woman's standing within a certain society—and within Grillparzer's dramas—but due to the courtly setting this issue plays little role in *Ottokar*. Kunigunde feels deceived by those who persuaded her to marry Ottokar. Expecting to find a youthful and energetic bridegroom, she was confronted with an old man who is sullen, bossy and violent, and expects her to be silent and obedient: 'Beim reichen Gott,/ Zum Schweigen und Gehorchen kam ich nicht!' (ll. 982–83)

As in *Sappho*, age is again a catalyst for marital problems. While the Greek drama presents a constellation of young–younger–youngest (Sappho, Phaon and Melitta

respectively), in *Ottokar* the schema is older–old–young (Margarete, Ottokar and Kunigunde respectively).⁷⁴ In both cases, a man is caught between two women. Just as Ottokar scorned Margarete because of her age, in turn Ottokar is scorned by Kunigunde because she deems him too old. In Act II, she confesses that she expected to find Ottokar a king in his prime, but was disappointed to find an aged man: ‘Den spielt ihm nicht schon graulich Bart und Haar?’ (l. 979) In Act IV she reveals that she turned down a Cuman chief as she considered Ottokar’s hand a better deal, but soon repented her choice:

Ein kräftig freies Wesen kam ich her,
Gar würdig wohl des Jünglings zum Gemahl,
Und fand—ei nun, den König Ottokar! (ll. 2133–35)

She feels no need to insult Ottokar further: the juxtaposition of Ottokar and youth is enough to convey her desires and the resigned disappointment she feels. As Staiger points out, Kunigunde’s marriage to Ottokar was not motivated by concern for her compatriots, as was Margarete’s. Rather, she hoped one day to become queen, even empress.⁷⁵ The realities of married life have left her severely disappointed in these ambitions, for Ottokar has not allowed her to be involved in the decision-making processes, treating her ‘[w]ie eine Magd, vielmehr als eine Fürstin.’ (l. 2139) For Prutti, Kunigunde, with her ‘unbefriedigten Freiheitswünschen und Emanzipationsansprüchen’ is ‘eine dezidiert moderne Gestalt’.⁷⁶

It is this disappointment which leads Kunigunde into a flirtation with Zawisch and ultimately to a rejection of Ottokar. In *Sappho*, Phaon’s youth relative to the heroine leads him into an amorous relationship with the younger Melitta. Similarly, Kunigunde flirts with Zawisch, a partner nearer her age, thereby transforming one of Ottokar’s courtiers into his rival. Kunigunde is spurred on in her behaviour by her disappointment with Ottokar. The flirtation is also a rebellion against Ottokar’s dominance over her, and in consorting with Zawisch Kunigunde turns the tables on the system which made her, Margarete and Berta

⁷⁴On the issue of age in *Sappho*, see Zdenko Škreb. *Grillparzer. Eine Einführung in das dramatische Werk*. Kronberg: Scriptor, 1976, p. 119.

⁷⁵Staiger, p. 79.

⁷⁶Prutti, p. 330.

into pawns. Zawisch becomes a pawn in her quest for revenge against her husband.

In Act II, Kunigunde and Zawisch flirt in the presence of a clueless Ottokar. Zawisch has refused to receive his prize from anyone but Kunigunde, and, aware that she has received his love letter, thanks her:

O Königin, habt tausend, tausend Dank—
(Langsam.)
Im voraus für den Preis, den Ihr mir reichet. (ll. 1041–42)

The double entendre is lost on Ottokar, who chides Kunigunde for not awarding Zawisch quickly enough: 'Warum gebt Ihr den Preis nicht, Kunigunde?' (l. 1043), to which she replies: 'Ich wollte früher schon, eh' Ihr befahlt!' (l. 1044) Zawisch's audacity extends to purloining Kunigunde's ribbon, which represents a violation of her person. Ottokar is alarmed when he notices that only one of Kunigunde's arms is decorated with a bow, and offers a ring as a reward to the discoverer of the missing adornment. Queens give away diamonds, says Ottokar, but not their ribbons, which are a sign of a much more valuable treasure: chastity, or at least fidelity. In the context of Kunigunde and Zawisch's flirtation, Ottokar is right to worry about Kunigunde's dishabille, which reflects badly on her morality and his ability to keep her under control (ll. 1118–20). Kunigunde does not take well to being rebuked, and her response makes clear that her indulgence of Zawisch is both an act of self-determination and of rebellion against Ottokar. She defies Ottokar by permitting Zawisch to keep her ribbon and threatens to give herself to Zawisch as a sign of her autonomy:

Auch mög er sehen, daß ich Herrin bin,
Zu schenken was ich will; und wenn es mehr
Als Schleife wäre, mehr als Diamant! (ll. 1127–29)

At the end of the act, Kunigunde and her maid are alone on stage, but can hear Zawisch serenading the queen. When asked whether Zawisch should be removed, Kunigunde lets him stay.

Kunigunde's private and political disappointments and her ambition provide the catalyst for Ottokar's disastrous political decisions. Ottokar sees Kunigunde's missing ribbon as a

negative reflection on him, and she likewise feels shame because of his submission to Rudolf:

Ich aber will nicht heißen: Knechtes-Frau;
Nicht eines schnöden Dienstmanns Bette teilen;
Will nicht, wenn mich der Kaiser heischt nach Wien,
Die Schleppe tragen seiner Gräfin Hausfrau;
Will nicht vor Rudolf knien, wie er getan. (ll. 2183–87)

Kunigunde expresses disdain not only for her unmanly husband, but also for the traditional domestic female role. Kunigunde is no less proud than her husband, who in this scene seems to realise that he is being cuckolded. Having discovered Kunigunde and Zawisch alone together, he hangs his head and says, ‘Ist das mein Schatten?—Nun, zwei Könige!’ (l. 2201) This could refer to the political challenge he is facing from Rudolf, but it could also be an allusion to the queen’s new lover.

In Act IV, we see the effect of Kunigunde’s pride as a motivating force for Ottokar’s decisions. Ottokar blames Kunigunde for challenging his authority and putting him in a position from which only extreme actions can save him:

Sie hat den giftgen Stachel mir gesenkt
In meine Brust, sie mag zugegen sein,
Wenn ich ihn auszieh, oder im Bemühn
Ihn drücke in das Innerste des Lebens! (ll. 2385–88)

Ottokar’s motivation is no longer primarily political but private. He goes to war to appease his wife and to regain her respect. Kunigunde does not hesitate in the slightest when questioned by Ottokar, and calmly states that he must reject Rudolf’s domination even if it means renewed war and Ottokar’s death. Ottokar has already had a change of heart, and no longer seeks the territorial aggrandizement nor the prestige which formerly spurred him on. It is now Kunigunde who represents the force of cold ambition:

KUNIGUNDE
An Eurem Sarge will ich lieber stehn,
Als mit Euch liegen, zugedeckt von Schande!
OTTOKAR
So stark? Ein Tröpflein Milde täte wohl!
KUNIGUNDE

Solang Ihr Euch nicht von der Schmach gereinigt,
Betretet nicht als Gatte mein Gemach. (ll. 2401–05)

With these words she turns to leave, which prompts a panicked Ottokar to tear the letter of obedience to Rudolf—he expressly holds her jointly responsible for the consequences—and beg for her support: ‘Und gebe mir die Kraft, die Ihr bewiesen!’ (l. 2410) However, once he receives Kunigunde’s blessing, he is horrified by her and by what he has done to placate her:

Ich sehe Blut an deinen weißen Fingern,
Zukünftiges Blut! Ich sag: berühre mich nicht.
Gott hat das Weib aus weichem Ton gemacht
Und: Milde zugenannt; was bist denn du? (ll. 2412–15)

He suddenly realises how far removed Kunigunde is from his ideal of womanhood. Kunigunde’s lack of femininity makes her an easy scapegoat for Ottokar’s bad decisions and the war which will ensue. Ottokar cannot bear to be confronted with the symbol of his folly and pride, and he banishes her: ‘Geh fort! Fort, sag ich! Fort!’ (l. 2421)

In a different context, Roger Bauer has already noted that Ottokar and Rudolf ‘sind bei Grillparzer keine absolut antipodischen Figuren.’⁷⁷ This also holds true in the context of their attitudes towards women. Ottokar’s treatment of both his wives is evidence of his lack of regard for women. In contrast, Rudolf superficially appears to be a more just and enlightened ruler. He is keen to popularise this image of himself as a humane alternative to Ottokar, for example in Act III when he claims to be the representative of ‘Recht [...] und Gerechtigkeit/ Im deutschen Land’ (ll. 1751–52). Rudolf chastises Ottokar for his behaviour, and for his treatment of Margarete, which would suggest a more chivalrous attitude towards women. However, his behaviour towards women, and towards Kunigunde in particular, means that his ascendancy is at best ambivalent in nature.

Ottokar’s treatment of Margarete allows Rudolf to appear as the proverbial knight in shining armour. At the end of Act I, Margarete is overcome by weakness, and appeals for help. Merenberg attempts to help, but retreats when admonished by Ottokar. Rudolf then

⁷⁷Roger Bauer. ‘Grillparzers Aufklärung’. *Zwischen Weimar und Wien. Grillparzer—Ein Innsbrucker Symposium*. Ed. Sieglinde Klettenhammer. Innsbruck: Institut für Germanistik, 1992. 13–30, p. 17.

defies the Bohemian king with words that demonstrate what supposedly differentiates him from Ottokar: 'Hier ist mein Arm, erlauchte Königin!/ Stets war bei Habsburg der Gekränkten Schirm.' (ll. 733–34) With these words, Rudolf positions himself as the defender of the weak and powerless. In this interaction with Margarete, Rudolf is easily able to assert his masculinity and portray himself as a chivalrous knight defending a damsel in distress. It is his realisation that Kunigunde is not a woman to be so easily protected and restrained which causes him to judge her so severely. Kunigunde's appearance in disguise, and her justification for it, force Rudolf to utter a condemnation of her: 'Der rücksichtslosen, rohen Übereilung!' (l. 727) His dismissive attitude towards women is best displayed in his interaction with Kunigunde in Act V. She has fled Ottokar and seeks asylum in Rudolf's camp. Rudolf is incredulous that she should have left her husband, but she claims that Ottokar became violent and that she had to beg for her life. Rudolf is not particularly disposed to aid her, and strongly suggests that it would have been more honourable to let Ottokar kill her:

Gar viel Vertraun schenkt Ihr mir Königin!
Denn Frauen kenn ich, sonst wohl hohen Muts,
Die aber lieber tot von Gatten-Hand,
Als daß sie flöhn zu denen, die ihn töten. (ll. 2762–65)

In Rudolf's view, women cannot be separated from their husbands and should share their fate. This callous attitude towards Kunigunde's predicament demonstrates the similarities between the two men, rather than the supposed differences, and indicates that, at least for women, Rudolf's ascendancy will not institute positive changes. While Rudolf's chivalrous protection of Margarete appears to intimate that his attitude towards women is not that of surly and dominating Ottokar, his actions show that misogyny is common to both rulers.

In the drama's final speech, Rudolf anoints his sons as his successors, warning them against the pride which was Ottokar's downfall. It seems that the Habsburgs' reign of peace and humanity has arrived. However, although Rudolf is at pains throughout the drama to present himself as a more human, empathetic ruler than Ottokar, he is clearly just as proud

as Ottokar, and his ambition for Habsburg territorial aggrandizement is at least as rapacious as the Bohemian's. For women, Rudolf's new order does not promise any significant improvements, for marriage and motherhood are the only possible roles for women in a dynasty which places such importance on heirs. Neither a Margarete nor a Kunigunde can expect a different lot in life after the transition from Ottokar's patriarchy to that of Rudolf.

Chapter 3

Women and Enlightenment

In this section, I analyse *Ein treuer Diener seines Herrn* (1826) and *Des Meeres und der Liebe Wellen* (1831) in the context of Grillparzer's engagement with Enlightenment philosophy. The influence of Enlightenment ideals on these dramas has previously received little critical attention, but here I argue that Enlightenment thought is an important tool for understanding them. Specifically, I show that Bancbanus's refusal to abandon obedience and act rationally is a central cause of the ensuing tragedy in *Ein treuer Diener*, and that, far from being thoughtless and impulsive, Gertrude is actually the voice of reason at the Hungarian court. Additionally, I highlight the Enlightenment ideals which play a strong role in Hero's attempts at fashioning for herself an existence independent of the dominant androcentric society in which she was raised. Lamps play an important symbolic role and allude to the importance of rationality in both dramas. In *Ein treuer Diener*, Bancbanus is frequently in possession of a *Blendlaterne* (dark lantern), the light of which can be regulated or concealed. At various points, Hero is seen tending a lamp which at once represents her rationality and her desire. The symbolic importance of light in both these dramas links them and suggests that Enlightenment thought can aid an interpretation.

Widespread Austrian reception of Kantian philosophy began after the publication of the second edition of the *Kritik der reinen Vernunft* in 1787 (first edition 1781) made this work

more accessible.¹ By 1788, the *Kritik der reinen Vernunft* was widely known in Vienna.² Kantian philosophy played an important role in what Werner Sauer calls the 'Rückzugsgefecht[e] der Wiener Aufklärung' in the years between 1792 and 1795.³ The star polemicist in these debates was none other than Joseph Schreyvogel (1768–1832), future director of the Burgtheater (1814–32), ardent follower of Kant, and Grillparzer's theatrical mentor. Schreyvogel had begun a study of Kant around 1790, and soon proved his 'glänzendes Talent, die Kantische Philosophie in die publizistische Verteidigung der Aufklärung einzubringen'.⁴ Austrian reception of Kant grew considerably in a short period of time, and reprints of a selection of his works in Graz between 1795 and 1797 testify to a continued broad interest.⁵ When the German philosopher Lazarus Bendavid held lectures on Kant in Vienna in 1793, it was almost a fashion among the city's polite society to attend.⁶ In the 1780s, a young monk at Melk Abbey was interested in Enlightenment philosophy, and these interests influenced the texts bought for the abbey's library.⁷ The latest debates on Enlightenment philosophy were followed enthusiastically, and the abbey purchased Kant's *Kritik der reinen Vernunft* in 1788. The text was read. This purchase demonstrates the efforts taken by religious figures to keep up with the 'Diskussionen einer aufgeklärten kritischen Öffentlichkeit [...], wobei konfessionelle und territoriale Schranken keine Rolle mehr spielten.' In Klagenfurt, the family of Franz de Paula von Herbert engaged extensively with the Enlightenment. Herbert visited Weimar and Jena in the 1780s and 1790s to study Enlightenment philosophy, and knew Wieland and Schiller.⁸ After his return to Klagenfurt,

¹ Werner Sauer. *Österreichische Philosophie zwischen Aufklärung und Restauration. Beiträge zur Geschichte des Frühkantianismus in der Donaumonarchie*. Würzburg: Königshausen & Neumann; Amsterdam: Rodopi, 1982, p. 108.

² *Ibid.*, p. 110.

³ *Ibid.*, p. 139.

⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 140.

⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 143.

⁶ J. W. Nagl, Jakob Zeidler, Eduard Castle. *Deutsch-Österreichische Literaturgeschichte*. 4 vols. Vienna: Fromme, 1914–37. II/i (1914), p. 392.

⁷ Frimmel, pp. 148–49.

⁸ Barbara Schöffmann. 'Immanuel Kant und die Aufklärung in Kärnten'. *Weimar–Jena–Klagenfurt. Der Herbert-Kreis und das Geistesleben Kärntens im Zeitatler der Französischen Revolution*. Ed. Wilhelm Baum. Klagenfurt: Kärntner Druck- und Verlagsgesellschaft, 1989. 90–100, p. 94.

his home was regularly visited by German Enlightenment figures. Herbert's daughters also read Kant, and debated with visiting philosophers.⁹ Herbert's sister was a Kantian, and had a brief correspondence with the philosopher. In Carinthia, seminarians attended the lectures on Kantian philosophy given by Friedrich Karl Forberg, the German philosopher, until they were officially forbade to do so.¹⁰ The sisters Ursula and Babette von Dreer had their volumes of Kant disguised as prayer books because they did not want to do without them in church.¹¹

Grillparzer was well acquainted with Kantian philosophy. His first encounter with Kant occurred in 1805 when, at the age of 15, he entered the university. He was first required to complete two years' philosophical training. Later, during his legal studies (1807–09), he undertook a study of Kant.¹² According to Franz Strich, however, this early encounter was not sufficient to allow Kantian philosophy to really take hold of Grillparzer. It would be Schreyvogel, the 'Vorkämpfer Kants', who would ensure that Kant took root in the young poet.¹³ Schreyvogel had spent the years 1794–96 in Jena, where he met Goethe and Schiller and acquainted himself with Kant's works.¹⁴ Schreyvogel's enthusiasm for Kant comes across in this diary entry from 1818:

Kants Religionslehre entschädigt mich wieder für vieles Schlechte, was ich lesen muß.
In diesem Manne hat sich Gottes Wort für die Menschen ganz geoffenbart.¹⁵

A year earlier, he had given Grillparzer Kant's major works with the hope that his protégé might find comfort in them. Strich writes that it was only after Schreyvogel's intervention that Kantian traces are to be found in Grillparzer's notebooks. The year 1819 proved decisive

⁹*Ibid.*, p. 95.

¹⁰Wilhelm Baum. 'Einleitung'. *Weimar–Jena–Klagenfurt. Der Herbert-Kreis und das Geistesleben Kärntens im Zeitalter der Französischen Revolution*. Ed. Wilhelm Baum. Klagenfurt: Kärntner Druck- und Verlagsgesellschaft, 1989. 6–21, p. 11.

¹¹*Ibid.*

¹²Walter Seitter. *Unzeitgemäße Aufklärung. Franz Grillparzers Philosophie*. Vienna; Berlin: Turia Kant, 1991, pp. 23–24.

¹³Fritz Strich. *Franz Grillparzers Ästhetik*. Berlin: Alexander Duncker, 1905, p. 8.

¹⁴W. E. Yates. *Humanity in Weimar and Vienna: The Continuity of an Ideal. An Inaugural Lecture delivered in the University of Exeter on 30 April, 1973*. Exeter: University of Exeter, 1973, p. 7.

¹⁵Diary entry 17 April 1818. *Joseph Schreyvogels Tagebücher*, p. 294.

in the history of Grillparzer's study of Kant, and from then on Grillparzer's aesthetics were underpinned by the *Kritik der Urteilskraft*.¹⁶ A diary entry from 1832 testifies to Grillparzer's admiration for, and ongoing interest in Kant's work: 'Alles was ich philosophisches lese, vermehrt meine Achtung für Kant.' (Nr. 2012. *HKA* II/ix, pp. 78–79.)

Grillparzer, whose 'intellectual allegiance to the eighteenth century [is] so clearly manifested in his works, letters and conversations', also engaged with the ideas of Josephinism.¹⁷ His father 'war in der josephinischen Periode aufgewachsen und mochte nicht viel auf Andachtsübungen halten.'¹⁸ Although August Sauer writes that Joseph II's ideals and beliefs had too powerful a presence in Austria to be forgotten after his death, and that the emperor's influence was felt strongly in Grillparzer's household, Günter Schnitzler argues that '[d]ie ohnehin kaum ausgeprägte Programmatik des Josephinismus [...] verliert recht bald ihre Gültigkeit', and that the Josephinism of Grillparzer's age was 'eine abgemilderte katholische nachjosephinische Spät-Spätaufklärung'.¹⁹ Nevertheless, Grillparzer remained 'ein unermüdlicher Verehrer, Bewunderer, Verkündiger des Kaisers [...], auch ein Anhänger und Verkündiger der josephinischen Ideen', and the deeds of Joseph's successors were measured against his.²⁰

Grillparzer, then, was familiar with Kant's ideas and Enlightenment thought more generally. Of particular interest for us is *Beantwortung der Frage: Was ist Aufklärung?* (1784), a short essay in which Kant seeks to define enlightenment. For Kant, enlightenment is the process by which an individual leaves the state of immaturity ('Unmündigkeit') which he inhabits due to a lack of resolution and courage to use his own reason independently. This form of immaturity, which does not result from a lack of intelligence, Kant calls

¹⁶Strich, p. 8.

¹⁷Yates. *Humanity*, p. 14.

¹⁸Grillparzer. 'Selbstbiographie'. *HKA* I/xvi. 63–231, p. 71.

¹⁹August Sauer. 'Akademische Festrede zu Grillparzers hundertstem Geburtstag. Gehalten in der Aula des Karolinums zu Prag am 15. Jänner 1891'. *Gesammelte Reden und Aufsätze zur Geschichte der Literatur in Österreich und Deutschland*. Vienna; Leipzig: Carl Fromme, 1903. 102–34, p. 108; Günter Schnitzler. 'Grillparzer und die Spätaufklärung'. *Franz Grillparzer. Historie und Gegenwartigkeit*. Freiburg i. Breisgau: Rombach, 1994. 179–201, p. 181.

²⁰Sauer. 'Akademische Festrede', p. 109.

‘selbstverschuldet[e] Unmündigkeit’. Concluding the first paragraph of his essay, Kant writes: ‘Sapere aude! Habe Mut, dich deines eigenen Verstandes zu bedienen! ist also der Wahlspruch der Aufklärung.’²¹ According to Kant, many people live in a state of self-inflicted immaturity because they are lazy and fearful; sloth and fear are also the reasons why a minority can easily position itself as guardians over the immature majority. These guardians want to keep their wards in a permanent state of immaturity and prevent any attempts at emancipation. However, Kant believes that enlightenment is inevitable if people are given freedom: some will choose to throw off the yoke of ignorance, and once they have done so, proceed to encourage others. This is a slow and arduous process which can never be replaced with revolution, as revolution would not instigate ‘wahre Reform der Denkungsart’, but merely replace old prejudices with new as the ‘Leitband[] des gedankenlosen großen Haufens’.²²

Kant’s essay shows traits of the misogynist discourse regarding women’s social role which flourished in the decades around 1800. Although Kant claims that the majority of people consider enlightenment a scary prospect, this is especially the case among women:

Dass der bei weitem größte Teil der Menschen (darunter das ganze schöne Geschlecht) den Schritt zur Mündigkeit außer dem, dass er beschwerlich ist, auch für sehr gefährlich halte: dafür sorgen schon jene Vormünder, die die Oberaufsicht über sie gütigst auf sich genommen haben.²³

Kant’s implies that women would be particularly susceptible to their guardians’ scaremongering, but also criticises men who discourage them from independent thought. However, Hero’s desire for independence and determination to rely on her own intellectual powers, as well as Gertrude’s invocation of rational self-determination, mark them out as proponents of enlightenment in the sense described here by Kant. By creating Kantian heroines, Grillparzer calls into question eighteenth- and nineteenth-century theories regarding women’s mental and intellectual abilities. This further supports arguments for

²¹Immanuel Kant. ‘Beantwortung der Frage: Was ist Aufklärung?’ *Werke in sechs Bänden*. Ed. Wilhelm Weischedel. Frankfurt/Main: Insel, 1956–64. VI. 53–61, p. 53.

²²*Ibid.*, p. 55.

²³*Ibid.*, p. 53.

Grillparzer's dramas to be seen as his contribution to these debates.

‘Auch eine Blendlaterne bringe mir’

Gender and Rationality in *Ein treuer Diener seines Herrn*

As we shall see when discussing *Des Meeres und der Liebe Wellen*, Hero's lamp is a crucial symbol of the drama's Enlightenment context and content. In *Ein treuer Diener seines Herrn*, Bancbanus's dark lantern (Blendlaterne) is no less important a symbol of the Enlightenment, although it indicates that the protagonist's relationship to rationality is more fraught than Hero's. Indeed, as I show, Bancbanus's dedication to his duty is at once a symptom of his self-imposed lack of rationality and an impediment to personal development. The dark lantern features prominently in Act IV of the drama. Bancbanus demands one from his servant when he wishes to enter the royal castle in secret.²⁴ He appears in the queen's rooms in a cloak and with the dark lantern in hand (p. 281), and at the beginning of the next scene the stage directions again state that he is in possession of the lantern (p. 284). The utility of such an object is obvious given that Bancbanus must conceal himself from the rebels. His lantern also fulfils a metaphorical function within the drama's investigation of rationality. The dark lantern serves to protect the flame, but can also be manipulated to prohibit the release of light, and represents the difficult relationship which Bancbanus and Gertrude have when exercising their reason. Bancbanus, entrusted with the maintenance of political order in his monarch's absence, is forced throughout the play to subordinate the exercise of reason to the obedience promised to Andreas. Gertrude is the voice of reason in the drama, yet her rationality is compromised by her love for Otto. Otto represents the complete lack of reason, for he is capricious in the extreme and motivated only by self-interest.

Much of what has been written on *Ein treuer Diener seines Herrn* has focused on Grillparzer's examination of the theme of loyalty. W. E. Yates, for example, argues that

²⁴Grillparzer. 'Ein treuer Diener seines Herrn'. *HKA* I/iii. 183–314, l. 1448.

while Bancbanus's whole character is not defined by loyalty, this loyalty is the basis of his tragedy. His public duty seems paramount to him.²⁵ Thompson is more critical when he writes that Bancbanus 'is presented with grotesque irony, as a bumbling bureaucrat, a figure of fun for courtiers and servants alike'.²⁶ Coenen has claimed Kantian influences and writes that one of Grillparzer's motives in writing the drama was the 'dramatization of Kant's "categorical imperative", the great philosopher's epitome of all morality which was in accord with the author's devotion to the imperial house.'²⁷ Ritchie Robertson also sees Bancbanus in the context of eighteenth-century thought, writing that he is 'ein ins Mittelalter zurückversetzter Staatsbeamter josephinischer Prägung' whose behaviour is best understood 'im Rahmen des christlichen Stoizismus, der dem Ethos des josephinischen Beamtentums zugrunde lag'.²⁸ Meanwhile, Roe has shown that Bancbanus's sense of duty renders him unable, or unwilling, to approach the royal family in a critical manner.²⁹ In other words, Bancbanus's dedication to duty prevents him from exercising his reason freely; it functions in much the same way as the panels of the dark lantern. In the opening scene, for example, a servant claims to have seen Otto among the crowd outside the window. Bancbanus's answer shows the extent to which his loyalty has clouded his judgment:

Hätt ichs gesehn mit diesen meinen Augen,
 Weit eher glaubt ich, daß ich wachend träume,
 Als Übles von dem Schwager meines Herrn! (II. 41–43)

Bancbanus allows his sense of duty to inhibit his rational abilities, and would rather blindly believe in Otto's probity than trust his own observations. In the Enlightenment context in which I place this drama, Bancbanus's attitude towards reason and personal responsibility provides a stark contrast to the behaviour and personality of the queen. Indeed, his reluctance to be rationally independent, which at first glance appears to be the result of his loyalty to the

²⁵W. E. Yates. *Grillparzer. A Critical Introduction*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1972, p. 144.

²⁶Thompson, p. 56.

²⁷Frederic E. Coenen. *Franz Grillparzer's Portraiture of Men*. Chapel Hill, NC: University of North Carolina, 1951, p. 36.

²⁸Ritchie Robertson. 'Der patriotische Minister in Grillparzers *Ein treuer Diener seines Herrn* und Hebbels *Agnes Bernauer*'. *Hebbel-Jahrbuch* 2010. 95–119, p. 103.

²⁹Roe. *An Introduction*, p. 133.

crown, may simultaneously be its prerequisite.

In Act I, Grillparzer characterises his hero as a closed-minded, myopic individual. Bancbanus sternly castigates a servant who comments about the crowds on the street below, showing the extent to which he wishes others to be constrained by a devotion to duty:

Was kümmert dich die Straße? Sieh du hier!
Ein jeder treibe, was ihm selber obliegt,
Die andern mögen nur ein Gleiches tun. (ll. 6–8)

Bancbanus is clearly afflicted by a case of *Scheuklappenblick*. In the first conversation between Bancbanus and Erny, his younger wife, we see that his tunnel vision leads to problems in his marriage. The revellers outside the window mock the spouses in song, stressing the age difference between husband and wife. Erny is offended by the singers' words, but Bancbanus again shows himself unaffected by the events around him: 'Ich achte nicht drauf und rate dir ein Gleiches.' (l. 86) That he hastily departs to do the king's bidding, despite Erny's unease at being left in the besieged house, is the first indication that his devotion to his public role will force him to neglect his private role.

For Bancbanus, his public role trumps the private responsibilities with which he has been entrusted. Lorenz calls Bancbanus and Erny's relationship 'die einzige gute Liebesverbindung in Grillparzers Werk, die einzige, in der von Liebe und Vertrauen, von Kommunikation und Toleranz die Rede sein kann.'³⁰ The opening scene casts doubt upon Lorenz's positive assessment. If Erny trusts her husband, Grillparzer shows this trust to be misplaced. While they talk to each other, Bancbanus is clearly preoccupied with duties of state and does not pay his wife the attention she deserves. Lorenz's characterisation of the marriage as a father-daughter relationship, however, is particularly apt given what we learn in Act II:

Als Nemaret, dein Vater,
Im Tod zusammenfügte unsre Hände,
Der blühnden Tochter und des Jugendfreundes,
Dem Schutz dich anvertrauend eines Gatten [...] (ll. 838–41)

³⁰Lorenz. *Dichter des sozialen Konflikts*, pp. 149–50.

This description of the couple's history places their relationship firmly within the parameters of guardianship as understood in the *ABGB* 1811. Paragraph 21 of the *ABGB* took under special legal protection those 'welche wegen Mangels an Jahren, Gebrechen des Geistes, oder anderer Verhältnisse wegen, ihre Angelegenheiten selbst gehörig zu besorgen unfähig sind'.³¹ The first category included children under the age of seven and minors who had not yet reached the age of twenty-four, while those suffering from mental health problems ('Rasende', 'Wahnsinnige') or learning difficulties ('Blödsinnige') were also mentioned. The law provided for those whose fathers had died and who were unable to manage their own affairs by means of guardians (§187). Paragraph 188 defined guardians' duties as the care for those placed under their protection and the management of their wards' money. The specifics of such arrangements are discussed in intricate detail in the *ABGB* (§187–284). The salient points for our discussion are as follows: guardians were to be named by a child's father (§198); women were generally deemed unsuitable as guardians (§192), and mothers or grandmothers who took on a ward were required to have a male co-guardian assigned to them (§211); while minors owed their guardians respect and obedience, they could also complain to relatives or the authorities if these abused their power or did not adequately fulfil their duties (§217).

Bancbanus and Erny are joined not only by the bonds of matrimony, but also by Bancbanus's role as the guardian chosen by Erny's father. Even if Erny's father were still alive, Bancbanus's role as husband could, assuming similarities between the world of the drama and Grillparzer's world as governed by the *ABGB*, have entailed a certain amount of control over Erny's wellbeing and finances. However, the fact that Nemaret's main concern was for Erny's safety indicates that her relationship with Bancbanus is primarily that of guardian and ward, rather than husband and wife. Bancbanus's speech testifies to his feelings. Politzer notes that, until her death, he calls her 'Kind' and seldom refers to her as a woman: 'Treibt es ihn, ihr seine Väterlichkeit als ein Prinzip einzuschärfen, an dem nicht

³¹*ABGB*. I, p. 8.

gerüttelt werden darf?’³² From Bancbanus’s point of view, it would certainly make sense to instil in Erny a sense of his paternal role in her life if he considered himself first and foremost her guardian.

The exact nature of their relationship, whether principally a marriage or a guardianship, does not mitigate Bancbanus’s neglect of Erny. Both as a guardian and as a husband, Bancbanus has an obligation towards Erny and is partially responsible for her safety and security. Her suicide in Act III shows how severely he failed in this duty. It is his inability to critically assess the royals, and in particular Otto, which makes Bancbanus oblivious to the danger which Erny faces. In Act II he again casts doubts on claims against the prince and bemoans the lack of respect for the royals (ll. 545–49). Although earlier in the act he opposed Gertrude’s summary granting of petitions—‘Gewährt! gewährt! Lag diese Schrift nicht vor,/ So war nichts zu gewähren!’ (ll. 449–50)—and thereby royal prerogative, he here insists that the petitioner show respect for Otto because he is Gertrude’s brother.

As Bancbanus deals with supplicants in Act II, his brother and brother-in-law storm into the room, angered by Otto’s wooing of Erny (ll. 583–85). Bancbanus is resigned to the situation—‘Ich kann’s nicht ändern!/ Kann ihn nicht ändern, wollt’ ich’s noch so gern.’ (ll. 585–86)—finds it self-evident that Erny should dance with Otto, as she was invited to a dance, and is confident that she will not reciprocate Otto’s affections. Bancbanus’s attitude does not change when faced with the appeals for protection from Erny herself. When she arrives at Bancbanus’s side, she is ‘erhitzt und schwer atmend’ (p. 222), suggesting that her flight from the party was hurried. The speed with which she disappeared from the celebrations—as Otto says, ‘Mit Eins war sie verschwunden’ (l. 605)—shows how unpleasant the prince’s attentions were. Her first words on seeing Bancbanus are ‘Hier, endlich hier! Nun, Gott sei tausend Dank!’ (l. 614), and everything she says to him during this scene shows the extent to which she sees him as her protector: ‘Nun ist es gut! Weil nur bei dir! O Gut!’ (l. 619) and

³²Politzer. *Das abgründige Biedermeier*, p. 187.

Ich weiche nicht von deiner Seite!
 So drück ich mich in deine Nähe, so.
 Trotz sei geboten, wer von hier mich trennt! (ll. 622–24)

Bancbanus does not recognise the fear in Erny's words. He is more worried that, having exerted herself in dance, she might now become ill, and he chastises her: 'Du böses Kind, was machst du mir für Sorge!' (l. 618) Again, we see that Bancbanus thinks of Erny as a child rather than his wife.

Bancbanus and Erny's problems partly stem from his inability or unwillingness to reconcile his two roles: the private role of guardian and husband to Erny, and the public role of regent. It is Bancbanus, in conversation with Erny, who makes clear that his public role necessitates sacrifices from both spouses in the public sphere:

BANCBANUS
 Bancbanus' Weib steht gut in seiner Nähe,
 Des Reichsverwesers Frau gehört zum Fest.
 ERNY
 Gib sie zurück denn, dieses Amtes Bürde,
 Sei Ernys Gatte bloß, mit ihr beglückt.
 BANCBANUS
 Was fällt dir ein? Weil du nicht gern beim Fest,
 Soll ich von Hof, Unfrieden herrschen lassen [...]]
 Dem Dienst folg ich, folg dem Feste du! (ll. 630–35, 640)

Peter Lattmann argues that Bancbanus differentiates so absolutely between his public and private personae 'dass es scheint, als habe der Reichsverweser mit dem Gatten nichts gemeinsam.'³³ This attitude is clearly demonstrated in this scene, not least in Bancbanus's ascription to Erny of public and private personae analogous to his: Erny is at once 'Bancbanus' Weib' and 'des Reichsverwesers Frau', and each role requires different duties of her. This division of one individual into public and private personae is a key concern in Grillparzer's dramas and can also be seen in *Sappho*, *Des Meeres und der Liebe Wellen* and *Die Jüdin von Toledo* for example. For his part, Bancbanus is clear that he owes his primary obligation to the state, and he is determined to honour his promise to Andreas, 'trifft was

³³Peter Lattmann. *Franz Grillparzer. Untersuchungen zu seinem Drama Ein treuer Diener seines Herrn*. Zurich: Juris Druck+Verlag, 1971, p. 55.

immer zu.' (l. 639) According to Max Kommerell, Bancbanus's loyalty to Andreas is so central to his identity 'daß es am Ende scheint, als hätte das Göttliche in ihm Knechtsgestalt angenommen.'³⁴ Bancbanus's relationship with Erny, and his inability to judge Otto accurately, prove to be catalysts for Erny's death rather than safeguards against harm, not least because it is precisely this relationship which puts Erny in danger. Erny, Otto confesses, is of less interest in her own right than because of her ties to Bancbanus: 'Beachtet man so wenig unser Tun?/ [...] Ich will ihn reizen, will! und gält's das Ärgste!' (ll. 123–25) and 'Den Mann zu ärgern gilts, der meiner Werbung/ Durch seine Sicherheit zu spotten scheint.' (ll. 184–85)³⁵

Bancbanus's tenuous relationship with rationality does not prevent him from allowing Erny the exercise of free will. In part, he neglects her precisely because he believes her to be endowed with enough intelligence to fend for herself. Lorenz writes that 'Bancbans Insistieren auf dem freien Willen seiner Frau, gleich, was die Sitte diktiert, ist eine neue, fortschrittliche Haltung.'³⁶ She goes so far as to call Bancbanus a 'feministischer Mann' whose revolutionary attitude towards his wife frightens her. Coenen agrees, and writes that Bancbanus 'is the modern husband who wants a "free" wife whom he trusts rather than a husband who considers his wife a chattel'.³⁷ Robertson notes that Bancbanus, rather than succumbing to jealousy, has faith in his wife's fidelity.³⁸ Bancbanus's attitude cannot, however, be seen quite as positively as Lorenz would wish, not least because the genesis of this attitude is unclear: does Bancbanus really believe that Erny can defend herself, or does this belief arise from his realisation that his public duties preclude the protection she needs? In other words, is a self-sufficient Erny merely a fiction which assuages Bancbanus's unease regarding his inability to protect her?

³⁴Max Kommerell. 'Grillparzer. Ein Dichter der Treue' [1936]. *Franz Grillparzer*. Ed. Helmut Bachmaier. Frankfurt/Main: Suhrkamp, 1991. 88–98, p. 92.

³⁵Cf. Robertson. 'Der patriotische Minister', p. 107.

³⁶Lorenz. *Dichter des sozialen Konflikts*, p. 157.

³⁷Coenen. *Franz Grillparzer's Portraiture of Men*, p. 39.

³⁸Robertson. 'Der patriotische Minister', p. 102.

Erny's words before her encounter with Otto in Act II show that she believes the prevailing opinion of her as a helpless woman to be mistaken:

(Im Vorgrunde stehend, und die Locken an den Fingern aufwickelnd.)
 Sie glauben, weil ich selten sprech und wenig,
 Ich könne mich nicht wahren, nicht verteidigen.
 Mein Vater sprach wohl oft: sie hats im Nacken!
 Ich hab es auch. Ihr sollt noch wahrlich sehn! (ll. 663–66)

Although Grillparzer undermines this confident assertion by presenting Erny playing with her hair, she shows herself determined to resist Otto's advances. After her encounter with Otto in Act II, Erny begs Bancbanus to punish and protect her, an idea which he finds laughable (ll. 812–19). As far as Bancbanus is concerned, such practices are foreign and unchristian. He goes on to suggest that the age difference between himself and Erny is enough to exonerate any misdeeds on her part, and almost seems to take her infidelity for granted.

Bancbanus is clearly not of the same species as Ottokar or Jason, for example, yet his 'fortschrittliche Haltung', to quote Lorenz, in matters of women's rights is nevertheless damaging to Erny. The freedom, or lack of protection, which he grants Erny is the result of love for her and regard for her as an individual, but it is also the result of his inability to recognise society for what it is. During his *tête-à-tête* with Erny, Otto betrays his objectifying view of women. He calls himself a 'Menschenkenner [...], Menschenforscher' (l. 699) who is particularly interested in women. He accuses women, and Erny in particular, of hypocrisy: 'Ihr aber scheint Tauben, fromme Tauben,/ Und seids in Einem nur, in ewger Glut.' (ll. 705–06) Otto's attitude towards women shows that not all share Bancbanus's progressive opinions, and that Bancbanus might actually be endangering Erny by failing to protect her. Otto's claim that Erny, like all women, is defined by sexuality is in his mind justification for his aggressively sexual behaviour towards her. Perhaps unsurprisingly, Otto is blind to the fact that the hypocrisy of which he accuses Erny is in all likelihood little more than her attempt at suppressing any sexual desires she might have in the name of female chastity and purity as demanded by society. Even Bancbanus, liberal though he seems in such matters, values female chastity highly: '[d]ie Ehre einer Frau ist eine ehrne Mauer,/

Wer sie durchgräbt, der spaltet Quadern auch.' (ll. 820–21)

It is not surprising that, considering the drama's focus on questions of duty, Bancbanus has received more attention in scholarship than the other characters. Gertrude, for example, has received short shrift from the majority of Grillparzer scholars. Politzer writes that Gertrude's 'Wünsche haben sie verleitet, sich kühn über die Schranken ihres Geschlechts hinwegzusetzen',³⁹ while Yates remarks upon her lack of normal femininity.⁴⁰ Yates sees Bancbanus and Erny as characters defined by a high moral sense of duty, whereas Gertrude and Otto are essentially selfish. Kurt Frieberger labels the siblings 'die Maßlosen' and sees in this the rationale behind Andreas's decision to leave the reins of power in Bancbanus's hands.⁴¹ Peter Lattmann sees Gertrude's resolve as a mask which will fall as soon as her love for Otto triumphs over her. He sees in Gertrude's imperious behaviour an element of self-restraint: 'Eine prall mit Leidenschaft gefüllte Beherrschtheit ist ihr Wesen.'⁴²

While Thompson identifies Gertrude's tendency to allow emotion to cloud her judgment,⁴³ Wolf-Cirian sees her as the female character in Grillparzer's works who is most able to subordinate feeling to reason.⁴⁴ Yet for Wolf-Cirian, Gertrude's superior intellect and her knowledge thereof go hand in hand with an unfeminine hardness; in effect, Gertrude's intellect takes her out of the sphere of the feminine.⁴⁵ Wolf-Cirian sees in Gertrude's superior capabilities Grillparzer's criticism of unfeminine women. Here I argue for a revision of this opinion. In creating Gertrude, a woman who is more 'masculine', more independent and more rational than either Otto or Bancbanus, Grillparzer calls into question the validity of rigid gender dichotomies.

Gertrude's appearance in Act I provides much grist for the mills of those who would portray her as a particularly sensuous figure. As elsewhere in his dramas, Grillparzer uses

³⁹Politzer. *Das abgründige Biedermeier*, p. 196.

⁴⁰Yates. *A Critical Introduction*, p. 133.

⁴¹Kurt Frieberger. 'Bancbanus und Franz Deák'. *JdGG* 3. Folge 3 (1960). 94–105, p. 99.

⁴²Lattmann, pp. 27, 67.

⁴³Thompson, p. 58.

⁴⁴Wolf-Cirian, p. 136.

⁴⁵*Ibid.*, pp. 135, 139.

costumes for illustrative purposes. Gertrude's nightgown is contrasted with Andreas's armour: she belongs in the private sphere, the home, while he is soon to enter the battlefield; her sensual apparel alludes to Andreas's duties as husband, while his armour shows his dedication to his political duties. Thompson sees this outfit as indicative of 'a hint of sensuality in her, of slovenliness, and of a disregard for the dignity of office'.⁴⁶ Andreas makes a distinction between his private and public personae similar to that made by Bancbanus:

Schon eine Stunde gab dir der Gemahl,
Der König darf dir keine zweite geben.
Der Tag bricht an, das Heer erwartet mich. (ll. 216–18)

Bancbanus and Andreas both prioritise their public roles: neither allows himself to be distracted by the needs or desires of his wife. Andreas renounces the conjugal pleasures which Gertrude offers as an enticement to stay, which refutes August Sauer's claim that Gertrude dominates her husband,⁴⁷ as does Andreas's refusal to endow his wife with any real power during his absence, a fact which does not elude Frieberger.⁴⁸ The wording of Andreas's speech makes clear that, although Gertrude will be regent in his absence, the real power will lie with Bancbanus:

Sie wird im Rate sitzen,
Vollziehn mit Unterfertigung das Geschäft.
[...]
Was Gnade gibt, empfängt man nur durch sie.
In Sachen bloß des Rechts, und was noch sonst
Des kühlern Blicks bedarf, und dies Papier benennt,
Stell ich an ihre Seite zum Genossen,
Der auch im Rate sitzt, und ohne den
Nichts von dem übrigen auch wird verhandelt [...] (ll. 366–67, 369–74)

The relegation of legal matters to subordinate status ('in Sachen bloß des Rechts') is designed to distract Gertrude's focus onto matters which she thinks important but which are secondary, while Andreas's delegation to Bancbanus of those matters which require

⁴⁶Thompson, p. 59.

⁴⁷August Sauer. "'Ein treuer Diener seines Herrn'". *JdGG* 3 (1893). 3–40, p. 25.

⁴⁸Frieberger, p. 99.

impartial consideration shows a lack of confidence in Gertrude's ability to act as regent. As Frieberger writes, Andreas leaves the reins of government in Bancbanus's hands because he is aware of Gertrude's and Otto's lack of moderation.⁴⁹

Gertrude's significance as both a proponent of reason and a practitioner of unreason results from her gender-defying self-identification. Grillparzer's dramas often depend on the subversion of nineteenth-century gender paradigms, presenting as they often do women of fortitude and courage opposite vacillating and capricious men, but Gertrude most explicitly grapples with an identity which fails to conform to society's expectations of her. Gertrude's account of her childhood shows the extent to which she was limited by her sex. Already in childhood she and Otto were consigned to separate spheres of experience, and it was only through imagination and identification with her brother that she was able to experience something outside the domestic arena:

Ich grollte stets, daß ich ein Mädchen war,
 Ein Knabe wünscht' ich mir zu sein, wie Otto.
 Er wuchs heran, in ihm war ich ein Jüngling,
 In ihm ging ich zur Jagd, bestieg das Roß,
 In ihm lockt ich des Burgwarts blöde Töchter.—
 Ihr wißt, wie ich die Zucht als Weib gehalten,
 Doch tat mirs wohl, in seinem kecken Tun
 Traumweis zu überfliegen jene Schranken,
 In die ein enger Kreis die Weiber bannt. (II. 322–30)

Gertrude's conflicted self-image arises from the disparity between her capabilities and desires and the role she was expected to play. As a child, Gertrude resented her sex and its social limitations, and seems to have maintained the appearance of femininity despite much reluctance. This could in part explain her determination to be named regent in Andreas's absence, and it seems that Andreas reached his decision only after considerable lobbying on Gertrude's part.

Gertrude, like Eleonore in *Die Jüdin von Toledo*, displays considerable power as a manipulator of language and of men's conceptions of passive womanhood. On the one hand, Gertrude is proud of her unwomanly character, boasting to Andreas:

⁴⁹*Ibid.*

Ihr nanntet oft mich stolz,
 Ein kühnes Weib, vergleichbar einem Mann.
 Ich wars, ich bins! Und doch—seht mich hier knien. (ll. 299–301)

By kneeling she emphasises her weakness and subordinate position, but in doing so impresses on both Andreas and the audience that this subordination is exceptional. She again shows that weakness is alien to her when she tells Andreas, 'Ihr seht mich schwach; ich schäme mich' (l. 311). In employing an illusion of weakness with the aim of winning political gain, Gertrude embodies the femininity which inspires Alfonso's remark in *Die Jüdin von Toledo* that the fair sex 'ist stark erst wenn es schwach.' Gertrude subtly questions the necessity of male dominance in politics while simultaneously manipulating Andreas's belief in the legitimacy of this principle to secure Otto's nomination as co-regent:

Ihr habt erklärt,
 Ob nun mit Recht, mit Unrecht, stell ich hin,
 Daß manches sich ergibt im Kreis des Herrschers,
 Das rasch persönliches, selbsteignes Walten,
 Zutun und Fassen fordert und bedingt
 Und eines Männerarms bedarf. (ll. 233–38)

Once it becomes clear how strongly Andreas opposes Otto's nomination, Gertrude skilfully changes tack, arguing that it will be she who manages Otto, thereby negating his role as her representative in inherently masculine matters of state:

Gebt meinen Bruder mir als Reichsgehilfen!
 Gönn ihm den Namen nur! Ich will ihn hüten,
 Er soll nichts tun, um was ich nicht gewußt.
 Wie einem Vogel man die Flügel schneidet,
 Nun hüpf er frei, und dünkt sich frei, und ists nicht.
 So will ich halten ihn, mit Liebe füttern,
 Und er soll Dank mir zwitschern, und gedeihn. (ll. 302–08)

Although the siblings are now adults, the relationship has not advanced significantly, and as far as Gertrude is concerned Otto is still 'die Puppe, die ich tändelnd schmückte' (l. 319): now, however, Gertrude embellishes him with meaningless titles rather than jewellery. Gertrude lived through Otto in her childhood, and now she attempts to do the same. It is Gertrude,

however, who is in control, and Otto is the powerless male figurehead which gives Gertrude's regency its legitimacy.

Although Andreas does not give Gertrude anything more than a ceremonial role, and leaves without installing Otto in any official position, it is only because he is strong enough to resist Gertrude's rhetorical onslaught. Before Gertrude's impassioned intercession on Otto's behalf, Andreas refused to invest him with any authority on the grounds that his immoderate nature was incompatible with the Hungarians' national character. After Gertrude's speech in which she declares her deep love for Otto, however, he promises to speak with Otto. It is clear that Andreas remains unconvinced of Otto's suitability for the role of co-regent, for he says, 'Was machst du, Weib, aus mir?' (l. 335) He eventually decides against giving Otto any power, but it is evident that the otherwise rational and moderate king has been affected by his wife's words.

While announcing Gertrude's role as his representative, Andreas makes her aware how exceptional the situation is: 'Die Königinnen saßen sonst am Kunkel,/ Solang ihr Mann im Feld.' (ll. 404–05) This presumably is a sign that he recognises her unusual strength of character. However, it is only when Gertrude and Otto are contrasted, and her rationality comes to the fore, that we really see how far her character deviates from nineteenth-century ideals. By contrasting the siblings as he does, Grillparzer undermines these ideals and the social realities which they underpin.

Gertrude ignores the role she plays in creating the irrational and immoderate Otto. In her metaphors, Otto is either a doll to be dressed up or a bird whose wings can be clipped. She deprives him of both freedom and rationality. It is clear that she actively encourages his dissipated lifestyle, stating in Act II, 'Was Scherz ist, tadl' ich nicht' (l. 502), and later assisting in his plan to seduce Erny. The most interesting indication of the extent to which Otto is dependent on his sister comes at the close of Act II. Gertrude has separated Otto from Erny, ordering the latter to leave. Otto refuses to let Erny go, but Gertrude forbids him to follow her with the words, 'Du wirst [bleiben], denn ich befehl es.' (l. 902) Gertrude is

permissive to an extent, but demands absolute obedience at what, to Otto, must seem arbitrary moments. Gertrude ascribes Otto's behaviour to madness, but it seems that it is precisely this accusation which induces mental instability:

KÖNIGIN

Unsinniger! Wie weit geht deine Tollheit?

OTTO

Und bin ich toll, so wahrts euch vor dem Tollen.

Du hasts gesagt, und so berüh mich nicht!

Hin auf den Boden werf ich meinen Leib,

(Er wirft sich zur Erde.)

Und mit den Händen greif ich in den Grund.

Nicht hören und nicht reden! Rase, stirb! (Il. 904–09)

It is as if Gertrude's accusation of madness is understood by Otto as a command which he cannot but follow. But the mechanical way in which he acts his madness, with running commentary, betrays its falsehood. Otto's inability to act or think independently means he must accept Gertrude's explanation of his behaviour and conform to it.

Gertrude's role as an enlightenment figure in the play is best displayed in Act III. She has received word of Otto's illness, and discusses the matter with the doctor. She declares Otto insane and reason the only cure: '[...] gegen Tollheit/ Gibt es ein einzig Mittel nur: Vernunft./ Er mag sich selber heilen, sagt ihm das.' (Il. 953–55) She becomes even more resolute when she hears of Otto's violent outburst:

Es ist genug! Das Rasen hab ein Ende!

[...]

Ob Wahrheit, oder Wahn, ob Kraft, ob Ohnmacht,

Es sei im Klaren, und es sei geheilt. (Il. 984, 986–87)

Gertrude is here presented as the voice of reason, as opposed to Otto, who is characterised by weakness and madness. For Gertrude, sanity—or, as she puts it, truth—is indivisible from power, while weakness and insanity are bedfellows. Gertrude's attitude towards Otto's illness, i.e. that it is a self-inflicted ailment which he can cure himself, if he acts rationally, echoes Kant's essay, in which the philosopher describes *Unmündigkeit* as a self-inflicted evil.

Gertrude's role as a figure of enlightenment is more problematic than Hero's because she believes that rational behaviour can be enforced by royal command. When Gertrude enters

Otto's room in Act III, she finds the curtains closed on his orders and demands that they be opened. The doctor objects, but Gertrude is insistent: 'Ich aber will's, gehorche!' (l. 999) With this command, Gertrude wins the battle of light over darkness. In conversation with Otto, she then declares that she will not tolerate his behaviour, '[a]m mindesten, wo ich Frau und Königin.' (l. 1037) Additionally, she declares her desire, 'Wunder zu versuchen!' (l. 1038), and commands Otto: 'Steh auf und sei gesund! sprech ich zu dir./ Steh auf, und zwar zur Stelle! Jetzt! Ich will's!' (ll. 1039–40) Gertrude's attitude towards rationality, which relies on enforced rational behaviour and even on the supernatural, defies the ideal laid down by Kant, which is dependent on an individual's free exercise of her intellectual capabilities. This stands in stark contrast to Hero's conviction in her own capability and her desire for an independent life of self-determination. As we shall see, Hero recognises the tensions inherent in her role as a free-thinking individual who commands others. Gertrude does not see this contradiction.

Despite Gertrude's advocacy for rational behaviour, it is her irrationality which leads to Erny's death. Gertrude loves her brother dearly, and this love finds expression in the leniency with which she treats him. She is desperate to dissuade him from leaving Hungary, and agrees to trick Erny into a private meeting with him. Yet her words show how conflicted she is over her complicity in Otto's machinations; she knows that she has not just effaced her royal dignity, but also acted irrationally:

Nun aber hör! Ich weiß, was ich verletze,
Wie sehr zu tadeln, daß ich mich gefügt,
Verdammlich ist die Liebe, meine Liebe,
Die du mißbrauchst, und doch so teuer mir. (ll. 1128–31)

Like Hero, Gertrude knows that her emotions are causing her to act irrationally. By allowing her love for Otto to override her better judgment, Gertrude fails Otto, who so clearly needs her guidance, and Erny, who commits suicide rather than be abducted by Otto. Bancbanus, on the other hand, is not aware of the negative repercussions for others of his own devotion to duty.

Gertrude and Bancbanus both fail those who depend on them when they act in an irrational

manner. The difference between the two characters, however, lies in their awareness of their failings. Bancbanus allows his loyalty to the crown to blind him to his private responsibilities to Erny, and to the danger she faces. Such is the strength of his dedication to Andreas that he is barely aware that his role as regent prevents him from protecting Erny as he should. Gertrude, on the other hand, is aware that emotions affect her ability to act rationally, and decries the power they exert on her. Bancbanus's dark lantern, the light of which can be obscured at will, is an apt prop for this drama in which selective rationality plays such a central role. It is Bancbanus and Gertrude who prevent their own rational behaviour, thereby placing others in danger. In *Des Meeres und der Liebe Wellen*, Grillparzer investigates the nature of reason and the limits placed on its use by authority figures.

‘Ich denke künftig selbst mir zu gebieten’

Hero, Enlightenment Ideals and Female Emancipation

The aim of this section is to offer a new reading of *Des Meeres und der Liebe Wellen*. I highlight the Enlightenment ideals which play a strong role in Hero's attempts at fashioning for herself an existence independent of the dominant androcentric society in which she was raised. In addition to the issues discussed earlier, Kant's focus on enlightenment in matters of religion is also important for a study of this drama, insofar as Grillparzer's Priest heads an organisation which seeks to inhibit the use of individual reason among the people of Sestos, and is therefore an opponent of Hero's enlightenment. For Kant, the freedom to use one's reason independently is a cornerstone of human progress; any attempts by individuals or groups to prevent others from exercising this freedom must be seen as an offence against humanity:

Ein Zeitalter kann sich nicht verbünden und darauf verschwören, das folgende in einen Zustand zu setzen, darin es ihm unmöglich werden muss, seine (vornehmlich so sehr angelegentliche) Erkenntnisse zu erweitern, von Irrtümern zu reinigen und überhaupt in der Aufklärung weiterzuschreiten. Das wäre ein Verbrechen gegen die menschliche Natur, deren ursprüngliche Bestimmung gerade in diesem Fortschreiten besteht [...].⁵⁰

Although both are adherents of the same religion, Hero's aims stand in opposition to those of the Priest. For Hero, the ability to exercise her reason independently is, in part, the motivation behind her entrance into the temple. However, the temple is no less patriarchal and misogynistic than the lay society, the cruelty and oppression of which Hero hopes to escape by becoming a priestess. As the leader of this religious order, the Priest needs to maintain his authority—both as a religious figure, and as a man—and doing so necessitates the suppression of Hero's intellectual and rational insurrection.

⁵⁰Kant. 'Was ist Aufklärung?', pp. 57–58.

Hero may seem a strange choice as a proponent of Enlightenment. Indeed, it is not clear that this was Grillparzer's intention when he began the drama. In 1820, he wrote: 'Wie kein Mann [Hero] rühren kann, und sie Priesterin der Venus wird' (1820. Nr. 322. *HKA* II/vii, p. 141), which is hardly the rational explanation which Hero herself gives. In the same note, Grillparzer stresses her sensuality, which although not absent from the final drama, does play second fiddle to her rationality: 'Vierter Akt. Hero mit dem Gefühle als Weib.' However, it would be another eleven years before the drama was finished, and Grillparzer's avowed central focus on Hero (*HKA* I/xvi, p. 231) means that he could have introduced more complex narratives. For many scholars, Hero represents an antithesis to Sappho. While Sappho is the remarkable poet who has been singled out by the gods' multifarious gifts, Hero is nothing more than average. For Politzer, her existence and decisions seem to be defined by negation: she enters the temple to escape her family. He describes her as spoilt and arrogant, arguing that she sees life as a priestess as a privilege rather than as an obligation.⁵¹ For Kurt Adel, she is little more than a 'frohes und stolzes Mädchen' at the beginning of the drama.⁵² Coenen writes that Hero's 'self-sufficiency is not egotistical presumption, but the logical outgrowth of her immaturity and the melancholy outlook on life which her childhood experiences had given her.'⁵³ In Ernst Fischer's view, Hero feels she is destined for better things, even though she does not have Sappho's talent, and would be better suited for ordinary life than for the temple.⁵⁴ Lorenz paints a negative portrait of Hero: the young priestess has no intellectual or spiritual capacities which make her exceptional; she is a 'Durchschnittsmädchen'; her difficulties do not result from her brilliance.⁵⁵ Indeed, Hero herself corroborates Lorenz's arguments: in the opening act, she acknowledges that she has not been given the gift of clairvoyance with the pragmatic

⁵¹ Politzer. *Das abgründige Biedermeier*, pp. 211–14.

⁵² Kurt Adel. 'Grillparzers Hero-Drama (und Kleists "Penthesilea")'. *JdGG* 3. Folge 7 (1969). 143–201, p. 153.

⁵³ Coenen. *Franz Grillparzer's Portraiture of Men*, p. 49.

⁵⁴ Fischer, p. 37.

⁵⁵ Lorenz. *Dichter des sozialen Konflikts*, pp. 51–57.

utterance, ‘Verschiednes geben Götter an Verschiedne;/ Mich haben sie zur Seh’rin nicht bestimmt.’ (ll. 184–85). Instead of a heavenly experience, she turns her hand to weaving wreaths of flowers. This episode highlights her affinity for action rather than contemplation. Later, Hero bemoans her lack of musical ability, not least, apparently, because music-making would provide a distraction from the thoughts that throng in her mind (ll. 1049–53). Yet Hero is far from the average woman, and even the Priest mentions her ‘heller Sinn’ (l. 1756). Contrasting Hero with her mother cannot but lead to the conclusion that Hero is indeed an ‘Ausnahmegestalt’, to borrow a term from Lorenz, and that the quality which makes her so is her determination to forge for herself an independent, analytical existence far removed from that which her mother has endured.

In making his Hero an Enlightenment figure, Grillparzer strays significantly from his source material. Frank and Pörnbacher discern considerable similarities between Grillparzer’s drama and Christopher Marlowe’s *Hero and Leander* (1598), and cite this as Grillparzer’s main source (*SW* I, p. 1244). Grillparzer himself mentions Marlowe’s poem in his diary (1822. Nr. 1239. *HKA* II/viii, p. 96), although he does not indicate whether he read or was influenced by it. Grillparzer was also familiar with Schiller’s ballad ‘Hero und Leander’ (1801), and the lovers’ letters in Ovid’s *Heroides* (*HKA* I/iv, p. ix). It is Ovid’s Hero who comes closest to Grillparzer’s. In Epistle XIX, from her to Leander, she mentions the unequal positions of men and women in society, although she does not question the status quo. Leander can distract himself in any number of ways, whether in the courts of justice or the palæstra, but for Hero, ‘removed from these *pursuits*, nothing is left to do, even if I were inflamed less intensely, but to love.’⁵⁶ Marlowe emphasises Hero’s beauty—‘HERO the fair,/ Whom young Apollo courted for her hair’⁵⁷—and devotes many lines to the pair’s amorous adventures: ‘O who can tell the greeting/ These greedy lovers had at their first

⁵⁶Epistle XIX. Hero to Leander. Ovid. *The Heroides or Epistles of the Heroines, The Amours, Art of Love, Remedy of Love, and Minor Works*. Trans. Henry T. Riley. London: Bohn, 1852, p. 209.

⁵⁷Christopher Marlowe and George Chapman. *Hero and Leander*. Chiswick: C. Whittingham, 1821, p. 3.

meeting!/' He ask'd—she gave—and nothing was denied.'⁵⁸ In Marlowe's poem there is no sense of Hero as an intellectual and questioning being. The same can be said of Schiller's ballad, which focuses on the lovers' relationship, rather than Hero's intellect.

In the course of the conversation between Hero and her mother in Act I, a grim picture emerges of the life endured by the two women in their family home. Hero enjoyed a materially privileged upbringing: she refers to her father's house as 'reich'⁵⁹ and mentions servants (l. 292). Indeed, if we wish to put this upbringing in a nineteenth-century context, the material conditions of the household seem to be equivalent to those which prevailed in the homes of the Viennese bourgeoisie. That Hero's subjective appraisal of this household is so negative illustrates the extent to which she and her mother suffered at the hands of male relatives. Hero, talking to her mother, refers to the family home as 'deiner dunkeln Sorgen niedre Hütte' (l. 288). She has difficulty uttering the word 'father', preferring the formulation 'dein Gatte' when speaking with her mother. Additionally, on first seeing her parents, Hero talks almost exclusively to her mother, even though it is her father who is more dominant.

Earlier in the first act, Hero recounts the cruel conditions of her childhood. Her father 'drängte mich, und zürnte ohne Grund./ Die Mutter duldet und schwieg.' (ll. 203–04) Her brother used her as a 'Spielwerk seiner Launen.' (l. 208) Hero's father gives ample examples of his misogyny and disrespect for his wife. He displays his frustration and mocks her intellectual abilities (ll. 253–57). He is suspicious of Hero's private conversation with her mother, observing the women so closely that his wife becomes anxious. His behaviour also indicates the inherited quality of social misogyny which reigns in Hero's surroundings. Hero's father calls for her uncle's support for his misogynistic views (ll. 256–57), which both brothers presumably inherited from their father, and which the Priest later displays; and, as demonstrated by Hero's description of her upbringing, her brother imbibed and practised the misogyny he witnessed in his father. Konrad Schaum decries the conditions in

⁵⁸*Ibid.*, p. 28.

⁵⁹Grillparzer. 'Des Meeres und der Liebe Wellen'. *HKA* I/iv, 81–211. Here: l. 291.

which Hero and her mother live as ‘die Tradition eines unmenschlichen Willensbarbarismus, der im Grunde nichts anderes als Gefangenschaft im Ich bedeutet.’⁶⁰

It is in the differing reactions of Hero and her mother to this patriarchal society that Hero’s exceptional nature is best seen. As Lorenz points out, Hero’s mother has internalised the demands of patriarchal society and can see no alternative way of life.⁶¹ Hero’s mother’s statement, ‘Das Weib ist glücklich nur an Gattenhand’ (l. 320), demonstrates this. Despite her own unhappy marriage, she cannot imagine any existence for a woman other than life at the side of a husband. Hero is infuriated by her mother’s stance and rebukes her. In doing so, she makes the case for women’s equality with men:

Das darfst du sagen, ohne zu erröten?
Wie? und mußst hüten jenes Mannes Blick,
Des Herren, deines Gatten? Darfst nicht reden,
Mußt schweigen, flüstern, ob du gleich im Recht,
Ob du die Weisre gleich, stillwaltend Beßre?
Und wagst zu sprechen mir ein solches Wort? (ll. 321–26)

The force of such statements has not been missed by previous critics, even if they have been described in negative terms: Politzer, for example, writes that Hero’s ‘ungestüme[s] Emanzipationsbedürfnis’ makes her sound like a suffragette.⁶² For Ulrike Tanzer they remain positive, and she argues that Hero’s statement is ‘zweifelloso bemerkenswert und konterkariert die zeitgenössischen Vorstellungen von den Geschlechtercharakteren’.⁶³

Hero’s entrance into the temple is her attempt at finding a positive resolution to the question of women’s position in society. Rather than following her mother’s path, she renounces love and marriage in return for a life of independence. For Politzer, Hero’s choice is inherently negative, as it is based on flight. He argues that she adheres to a family tradition in order to get away from her family, and that she demands the priestess’s rights because she

⁶⁰Konrad Schaum. ‘Grillparzers “Des Meeres und der Liebe Wellen”: Seelendrama und Kulturkritik’. *JdGG* 3. Folge 11 (1974). 95–114, p. 101.

⁶¹Lorenz. *Dichter des sozialen Konflikts*, p. 53.

⁶²Politzer. *Das abgründige Biedermeier*, p. 214.

⁶³Ulrike Tanzer. ‘Grenzgänge in Franz Grillparzers Trauerspiel “Des Meeres und der Liebe Wellen”’. *Grenzgänge und Grenzgänger in der österreichischen Literatur. Beiträge des 15. Österreichisch-Polnischen Germanistentreffens Kraków 2002*. Ed. Maria Kłańska et al.. Kraków: Wydawnictwo Uniwersytetu Jagiellońskiego, 2004. 77–86, p. 81.

no longer wants to be daughter and sister.⁶⁴ Lorenz also sees the decision in negative terms, asserting that the freedom afforded by the temple is a mere illusion and that Hero makes the decision as she wants to remain unmarried.⁶⁵ Gerhard Scheit sees things in a more positive light, writing that Hero's flight to the temple 'ist ja nichts anderes als der geglückte Ausbruch aus der Kleinfamilie', the patriarchal nature of which Grillparzer demonstrates.⁶⁶

There is certainly factual truth in these statements, even if the conclusions reached are unnecessarily unsympathetic. There can be little doubt that Hero enters the temple to avoid the misogynistic atmosphere which dominates in the family home and an unhappy marriage of her own. But Schaum is more accurate in the positive value he gives to Hero's decision as an attraction to the promise of the temple's freedoms, rather than flight from the family home.⁶⁷ While she displays an aversion to marriage, she has not fled just anywhere, but to a place which, she hopes, will allow her a greater degree of autonomy. Furthermore, the fact that the independence offered by the temple is ultimately an illusion is a stronger indictment of a society itself than of a young oppressed woman who seizes a chance of freedom. Indeed, in a different context Hero later states: 'Was täuschte nie?/ Bleibt mir die Wahl, wähl' ich die süßre Täuschung.' (ll. 1717–18) Not yet aware of the true nature of temple life, but all too well acquainted with the cruelty of life outside its walls, Hero's decision seems consistent with this principle.

In Hero's reaction to her father, Politzer identifies 'ein tief verborgenes, in Kindertagen und -träumen gesätes Mißtrauen'.⁶⁸ Dorothy Lasher-Schlitt argues that Hero's inhibition 'wurzelt [...] im Groll gegen Vater und Bruder, deren Übelwollen und böse Launen sie nur mit einem Übermaß an Selbstbeherrschung ertrug'.⁶⁹ Hero's own statement in conversation

⁶⁴Politzer. *Das abgründige Biedermeier*, p. 70.

⁶⁵Lorenz. *Dichter des sozialen Konflikts*, pp. 53–54.

⁶⁶Gerhard Scheit. 'Grillparzer und die deutschen Männer'. *Stichwort Grillparzer*. Ed. Hilde Haider-Pregler and Evelyn Deutsch-Schreiner. Vienna: Böhlau, 1994. 51–58, p. 53.

⁶⁷Schaum. 'Seelendrama und Kulturkritik', p. 99.

⁶⁸Politzer. *Das abgründige Biedermeier*, p. 214.

⁶⁹Dorothy Lasher-Schlitt. 'Grillparzers "Hero und Leander". Eine psychologische Untersuchung'. *JdGG* 3. Folge 3 (1960). 106–14, p. 106.

with her mother provides ample evidence for her fear and mistrust of men, which is grounded in the childhood experiences of abuse at her brother's hands. On hearing of her brother's absence she affirms that she would now be twice as likely to return home; however, she believes that the remaining male population—'Von gleichem Sinn und störrisch wildem Wesen./ Das ehrne Band der Roheit um die Stirn' (ll. 308–09)—who are '[g]ewohnt zu greifen mit der starren Hand/ Ins stille Reich geordneter Gedanken,/ Wo die Entschlüsse keimen, wachsen, reifen' (ll. 311–13) would deprive her of freedom and rationality. Hero sees herself faced with the choice between a life of almost certain servitude in marriage, or the potential of personal freedom within the walls of the temple. The fact that she acknowledges the alternative to her mother's fate, and seizes the opportunity with both hands, is another indication of what singles her out. The subjugation which characterises her mother was no doubt the result of an upbringing which degraded and devalued her in her own eyes, and inculcated her with the idea, which she attempts to pass on to Hero, that a woman can only survive at a man's side. We can assume that Hero's upbringing resembled her mother's, and yet she has come away with a sense of her own worth which prohibits her from subjecting herself to further maltreatment. Seen in this light, her decision to enter the temple is not so much the result of flight, but of the knowledge, won thanks to a mind willing to exert itself, that the temple offers her the best chance of self-realisation.

The influence of Kant's concept of enlightenment can be seen in Grillparzer's portrayal of Hero as an independent and free-thinking individual. In the opening monologue she says:

Hier, Hymenäus, der die Menschen bindet,
Nimm diesen Kranz von Einer, die gern frei.
Die Seelen tauschest du? Ei, gute Götter,
Ich will die meine nur für mich behalten,
Wer weiß, ob eine andre mir so nütz? (ll. 33–37)

This is a statement not only of a desire for independence, but also of great self-confidence. Her desire to remain unmarried derives from her early experiences and from the realisation that any relationship would be unsatisfactory due to the qualities which define the men in her surroundings. This desire is also the result of her belief that she is capable of surviving as

a single woman. Later, she more forcefully expresses the desire for independent intellectual existence as the motivation for her choice:

Ich aber will mit heiterm Sinne wandeln
 Hier an der Göttin Altar, meiner Frau.
 Das Rechte tun, nicht weil man mirs befahl,
 Nein, weil es recht, weil ich es so erkannt. (ll. 331–35)

The final two lines of this quotation have a particularly strong Kantian echo. Indeed, Grillparzer has here put in Hero's mouth what Kant defined as the motto of the Enlightenment: 'Sapere aude! Habe Mut, dich deines eigenen Verstandes zu bedienen!' The temple is not just a refuge from the physical abuse suffered by women, but the only place where a woman can find intellectual peace.

Grillparzer does not present Hero's search for enlightenment as an untroubled endeavour. The first challenge to her desire to live a rational, self-determined existence arrives in the form of Leander. The final scene of Act III finds Hero alone in her tower. She acknowledges that she is attracted to Leander, and that the Priest was right to worry about the effects of her meeting with the strangers, but that her vocation precludes any romantic feelings (ll. 1006–09). She vows to avoid any attraction ('Neigung'). As a sign of this intention, she turns to her lamp and says:

Und wie ich lösche deinen sanften Strahl,
 So möge löschen auch was hier noch flimmert,
 Und nie mehr zünd' es neu ein neuer Abend an. (ll. 1038–40)

The lamp serves a double function—it is at once a symbol of rationality and of passion—and underscores the difficulties Hero has in negotiating the competing demands of enlightenment and romance.⁷⁰ Leander promptly arrives after this vow has been made, and the dangerous situation in which he finds himself alerts Hero to the depth of her feelings for him (ll. 1183–86). Hero, however, does not immediately fall victim to her emotions, but engages critically with what she feels: 'Was ist es, das den Menschen so umnachtet,/ Und ihn entfremdet sich,

⁷⁰On the lamp as a symbol of passion see Heinz Politzer. 'Der Schein von Heros Lampe'. *Modern Language Notes* 72 (1957). 432–37, p. 433.

dem eignen Selbst' (ll. 1181–82). Her conscious reaction to Leander's presence is annoyance rather than excitement, although she recognises that her anxiety for his safety indicates desire, and she views her own emotional response as a negation of reason, and hence negative. She underscores her aversion to emotion by avoiding physical contact with Leander ('Laß das! Berühr mich nicht!') and again decrying love as unnatural:

Das ist nicht gut,
Was so verkehrt die innerste Natur,
Auslöscht das Licht, das uns die Götter gaben,
Daß es uns leite, wie der Stern des Pols
Den Schiffer führt. (ll. 1187–91)

This demonstrates the importance of light as a metaphor in this drama. Rationality, which in this scene is under threat from emotion, is for Hero the god-given guiding light of human life. By having his heroine talk of rationality as a light which can be extinguished, Grillparzer creates parallels between the Priest and Leander, as both are male forces who are opposed to Hero's rationality. Leander, through the emotional response he elicits in Hero, affects her ability to act rationally, while the Priest, as we shall see, has a more actively hostile attitude towards Hero's intellectual independence. Despite the conscious resistance to emotions which Hero displays in this scene, she allows herself to be kissed, although she does not want the lamp to witness her submission to Leander's charms, and they spend the night together.

It is the Priest whom Grillparzer presents as the most obvious antithesis to Hero. He represents both the dominant patriarchal culture and the culture of religious obedience which prevails inside the temple walls, and is no less than Hero's brother an example of a self-appointed guardian.

Act I demonstrates the Priest's capacity to act in a caring manner towards Hero. He knows that loneliness accompanies religious vocation, and tries to make Hero aware of the importance of female friendships. Hero's own declarations are evidence enough for the Priest that she has not fully comprehended the realities of temple life, and he tries to bring her to the realisation of what is in store. Hero remains resolute in her decision, so the Priest tries to show her that her attitude towards religious service is too restricted and abstract; he

wants to be sure, for Hero's sake and the sake of the temple, that she knows what she is committing to.

At the beginning of Act III, on the evening of Hero's initiation, the Priest worries because he finds Hero less happy than he expected. He presents himself as a caring mentor for the young girl, however his choice of words—he calls himself Hero's 'zweite[r] Vater' (l. 997)—unwittingly positions him as an oppressive figure. This is reinforced by the emphasis he places on discipline, and the strict attitude he promises against misbehaviour (ll. 998–1002). From the outset, the Priest is portrayed as a strict lawgiver and judge within the temple walls. In Act I, he chastises the servant girls with the words, 'Und ihr! und meidet zu begegnen/ Dem Zorne, der sein Recht und seine Mittel kennt.' (ll. 109–10) The personification of his anger endows it with severe force and power.

The Priest's authoritarian mindset results from his inability or disinclination to take the same critical attitude towards his religious duties that Hero develops. For him, religious practices are to be observed by the book, without the interference of human emotions or reason. The scene with the bird's nest in Act I allows Grillparzer to demonstrate the diverging methods and priorities of Hero and the Priest. The Priest orders that the nest be removed from the temple; Hero, noticing the effect this has on her mother, puts a stop to the eviction. She thereby arouses the anger of the Priest, who pointedly asks: 'Bist du so neu im Dienst,/ Daß du nicht weiß was Brauches hier und Sitte?' (ll. 347–48) This echoes his earlier justification for the removal of the nest with the words: 'So wills des Tempels Übung.' (l. 269). The Priest, who imposes his will on his inferiors and thereby impedes the steps that Hero wishes to make towards a more enlightened existence, is himself 'unmündig', being as he is an uncritical servant of the tenets of his religion. Kant writes of 'Unmündigkeit' as a state which becomes comfortable for those confined in it, and from which they are genuinely incapable of escaping.⁷¹ This is the case for the Priest. Although he is an unthinking slave of his religion, he benefits from the social position which he acquires as a

⁷¹Kant. 'Was ist Aufklärung?', p. 54.

result of his status as a religious leader. His 'Satzungen und Formeln' guide his life and actions, and by imposing them on his underlings, he secures the survival of the religion and of his own social dominance. This social dominance also finds expression in the Priest's attitude towards Aphrodite. In conversation with Hero's mother in Act I, the Priest emphasises the abstract spiritual nature of the temple's adoration of Aphrodite. They do not worship a goddess of love '[d]ie Mensch an Menschen knüpft wie Tier an Tier' (l. 364), but a goddess who inspires thought and reflection:

Der Eintracht alles Wesens hohe Mutter,
Geschlechtlos, weil sie selber das Geschlecht,
Und himmlisch, weil sie stammt vom Himmel oben. (ll. 367–69.)

Aphrodite here is divested of any links to sex or sexuality: she neither possesses a sex of her own, nor does she inspire humans to love or sexual relationships. Sex is seen as dirty and animalistic, a form of interaction unworthy of an intellectual individual. This abstraction of the feminine emphasises not only the contemplative nature of the temple, but also its patriarchal structure. Consequently, it does not bode well for Hero's chances of finding freedom within its walls.

In combination with this authoritarian framework and patriarchal outlook, the Priest's anger becomes a dangerous force when he begins to blur the boundaries between earthly and heavenly power. In Act IV, the guard's account of strange nocturnal happenings arouses the Priest's suspicion and he realises the possibility that Leander returned and seduced Hero. He is angered, but it is no longer human anger which he feels; rather, he recognises the indignation of higher powers working through him: 'In meinem Innern reget sich ein Gott,/ Und warnt mich, zu verhüten, ehs zu spät.' (ll. 1365–66) Act IV provides more examples of such blurred boundaries, and it becomes clear that, for the Priest, the gods are little more than a justification for his own actions. His willingness to abdicate personal responsibility provides a stark contrast to Hero's adherence to her own moral code; while the Priest remains willingly 'unmündig', Hero's justification comes from herself. As he sends Hero off with a list of chores, the Priest is already clear about his course of action: Leander must die if he

tries to see Hero again. It is clear that he will be acting as judge and executioner; the gods barely get a mention in this soliloquy, and when they do, the word 'Götter' is expendable:

Denn weil sie fern, leg' ich die Schlingen aus,
Die ihn verderben, kehrt der Kühne wieder.
Unseliger, was strecktest du die Hand
Nach meinem Kind, nach meiner Götter Eigen? (ll. 1515–18)

On the evening of the fateful night, the Priest deliberately confuses divine and human power again. The Priest even considers a hypothetical situation in which he postpones his murderous plan, but rejects it on the grounds that Hero would continue to see Leander and would thereby fall ever closer to perdition:

Gönn' ich ihr Zeit, und taucht ihr heller Sinn
Auf aus den Fluten, die ihn jetzt umnachten,
Denkt sie auf Mittel nur ihn zu erretten,
Entzieht den Strafbarn unsrer Schlingen Haft,
Und ist so mehr und sichrer denn verloren. (ll. 1756–60)

The Priest sees himself united in purpose with the gods to a collective 'wir'. That this is the only possible explanation is confirmed by his description in l. 1518 of Hero as his child and the gods' property. The Priest and the gods are the joint owners of Hero, and are united in the Priest's efforts to prevent the expropriation of this human property. This collaborative work reaches its conclusion at the end of Act IV. Looking at the light emanating from Hero's tower, the Priest utters the words: 'Der Götter Sturm verlösche deine Flamme.' (l. 1817) With this, he enters the tower, and the guard narrates as the Priest positions the lamp on the ledge, where it is exposed to the storm. The scene closes with a second appeal to the gods that they might finish off what he has started:

Nun, Himmlische, nun waltet eures Amts!
Die Schuldigen hält Meer und Schlaf gebunden,
Und so ist eures Priesters Werk vollbracht:
Das Holz geschichtet und das Beil gezückt,
Wend' ich mich ab. Trefft Götter selbst das Opfer. (ll. 1830–34)

The storm extinguishes the light of Hero's flame, Leander cannot navigate across the Hellespont, and is discovered, dead, the next day.

Despite the concern which he shows for Hero in the early parts of the drama, the Priest's unscrupulous abuse of religious authority and justification to provide himself with motivation for his actions shows him to be a monomaniacal tyrant. It is not as a result of his religious vocation per se that he values Hero's life. Rather, his role as a priest secures him a respected position within the patriarchal orders of both the temple and wider society on Sestos. Hero, at least in part, is a possession which he jealously guards and does not wish to cede to another man. The lack of compunction he displays and the callous manner in which he departs the scene show that his attitudes are stamped with the mark of a misogyny which would rather see a related female dead than in the hands of an 'unsuitable' man. Grillparzer, by giving the Priest this complex motivation, and by framing him in an Enlightenment context, made the final version of the drama more nuanced than his notes suggest. A note from 1820 indicates that the Priest's motivation and actions would be simpler: having realised the nature of Hero and Leander's relationship, he 'beschließt, streng und ernst will er das Unerlaubte im Keime ersticken. [...] Der Priester löscht die Lampe aus.' (1820. Nr. 322. *HKA* II/vii, p. 141.)

The Priest's appeals to the justification of heavenly powers are antithetical to Hero's philosophy of responsibility and autonomy. In conversation with the temple guard in Act IV, Hero disobeys the Priest's command with the words: 'Ich denke künftig selbst mir zu gebieten.' (l. 1687) This attitude is wholly compatible with the desire she expresses in Act I to act according to the judgments of her reason alone. While the Priest seeks to abdicate responsibility for his actions and their consequences, and elsewhere shows himself to be an unthinking follower of religious practice, Hero emerges as an Enlightenment figure insofar as she displays the will to defy those who would dictate her thoughts and actions and begin the difficult journey to rational self-determination.

Janthe is also an antithesis to Hero. While Hero represents Enlightenment values, Janthe is defined by the negative characteristics which the Priest associates with all women. The exchange between Hero and Janthe in the opening scene displays the antagonism between their opposing characteristics. While Hero makes sensible use of her time and puts her

duties before pleasure, Janthe abandons her work to chase amusement: 'Wir waren früh am Werk und sprengten, fegten./ Da kam die Lust, im Grünen uns zu jagen.' (ll. 59–60.) This sort of frivolous behaviour and the attitude which would allow it are clearly anathema to Hero, and she chastises Janthe for neglecting her responsibilities (ll. 61–65). If Medea in *Der Gastfreund* defends her actions on the grounds that she acted according to her will at any given point, Hero here represents the subjugation of desire to duty.

Hero's behaviour allows Janthe many possibilities for jokes at her expense. She mocks Hero's arrogance which is a result of Hero's belief that she deserves to be priestess: 'Verzeih, wir sind gemeines, niedres Volk./ Du freilich, aus der Priester Stamm entsprossen—' (ll. 73–74), and 'Ganz andre Freuden,/ Erhabnere Genüsse sind für dich.' (ll. 76–77) The antagonism between Hero and Janthe can also be seen in terms of the Kant's essay on enlightenment. It has already been argued that Hero represents the Enlightenment ideals of reason and independent thought. Janthe is not just a representative of a less reflective and introspective way of life, but also a threat to the ability of others to progress out of the state of ignorance. She is seen as the origin of frivolity not just by Hero, but also later by the Priest. Hero finds Janthe's behaviour disturbing, but even more worrying is the way in which she is able to involve the remaining servant girls in her schemes, distracting them from their duties and preventing them from acting rationally.

In the master-servant aspect of Hero's relationship with Janthe Grillparzer portrays another conflict between Hero's ideals of self-determination and the realities of life. Hero has just responded to her uncle's order with a profession of her intention to be her own master, when Janthe asks if Hero has any tasks for her. Hero replies,

Ich nicht. Und doch! wenns selber dir gefällt.
Geh nur hinauf, bereite mir die Lampe,
Gieß Öl noch zu, genug für viele Zeit. (ll. 1689–91)

Hero seems to realise that her desire to be self-determining is incompatible with a role in which she commands others. Her choice of words extends to Janthe the option of determining her own actions.

patriarchal society, it should be viewed more in terms of what Hero is looking for, rather than what she aims to avoid. In her naiveté, the temple appears to be a place where even she, a woman, can have rights, and where she will be free to nurture her development as a person, led by reason and conscience and not by the demands and desires of the men surrounding her. This intellectual independence is thwarted by the Priest, a representative of the patriarchal religion of the temple. The Priest cannot, or will not develop the critical attitude towards religion which Hero possesses. Inclusion in this discussion of Kant's essay on enlightenment allows for a better understanding of his role: religion is the tool he uses to extract obedience from, and subdue, those in the temple. By propagating this religion, he can justify the pressure for conformity and subservience which he exerts on his inferiors, suppressing independent thought and becoming what Kant calls a 'Vormund'. As in *Libussa* and *Sappho, Des Meeres und der Liebe Wellen* depicts the subjugation and, ultimately, death of a woman necessitated by the actions of a lesser man.

Chapter 4

Female Rulers

Grillparzer's historical dramas, by their very nature, feature queens—Margarete, Kunigunde, Eleonore and Gertrude—but two of his dramas in particular are the subject of this chapter on women rulers: *Sappho* (1818) and *Libussa* (1848). The inclusion of *Sappho* in this section may surprise, given that the focus is generally on her role as a poet, but I show that her role as a ruler is crucial to the drama. Central to my interpretation of these dramas is Grillparzer's interweaving of social, political and philosophical issues, and I show that the dramatist was influenced by the thought of Rousseau, Hobbes and Locke.

Both *Sappho* and *Libussa* are examinations of the predicament of the exceptional woman in a male-dominated society. The female ruler is an obvious trope for such an examination and was a popular motif in the nineteenth century, as Schiller's *Maria Stuart* (1801), Zacharias Werner's *Wanda* (1810), Kleist's *Penthesilea* (1808), as well as works such as Artner's *Rogneda und Wladimir* (1828) and Ebner-Eschenbach's *Maria Stuart in Schottland* (1860) and *Marie Roland* (1867) testify. Empress Maria Theresa, whom Grillparzer called 'diese wirklich gescheidte Frau' (1866. Nr. 4361. *HKA* II/xii, p. 74), loomed large in the Austrian psyche and serves as an obvious historical example of the powerful female ruler.

Grillparzer's private writings betray a keen interest in women who held positions of power. In notes on David Hume's *History of England* (1754–61), Grillparzer mentions

Mathilde of England's attempts to secure political support for her claim to the throne (1812. *HKA* II/vi, p. 121). He notes that the wife of the regent of Forlì defended the town of Cesena against papal forces in the fourteenth century: 'Endlich muß sie sich ergeben und büßt im Kerker für ihren Muth.' (1812/13. *HKA* II/vi, p. 262) While reading Douville's *Voyage au Congo*, he noted: 'In Dumbo regiert jederzeit ein Weib, zur Belohnung der Dienste, die das Geschlecht einmal in Feindesgefahr geleistet.' (1833. Nr. 2069. *HKA* II/ix, p. 121) Elizabeth I and Mary Stuart, the subjects of Schiller's drama, also feature in Grillparzer's notes. He identifies parallels in the lives and political failures of Mary and Marie Antoinette, and their 'gemeinschaftliche[s] Schicksal verleumdet zu werden.' (1836. Nr. 3224. *HKA* II/x, p. 159) Despite the misogynistic statements elsewhere in his notebooks, here Grillparzer identifies a fate common among female rulers: the contempt of posterity for them and their reputations. In the same entry, Grillparzer wonders at Elizabeth's putative plans to give her favourite, Leicester, to Mary in marriage.

Grillparzer mentions several female rulers who took on distinctly 'unfeminine' public roles. So, for example, he quotes the story of a queen who freed her people from foreign dominion, led her troops into battle, and was only defeated 'nachdem sie selbst tapfer in der Schlacht gefochten.' (1822. Nr. 1167. *HKA* II/viii, p. 69) Nevertheless, he held to the idea that women, even as rulers, are inherently more emotional than men. When he heard about plans to emancipate Russian serfs, he assumed 'daß da gewiß ein Weib im Hintergrund stecke, und da die Kaiserin eine deutsche Prinzessin und daher gewiß höchst sentimental war, schloß ich, daß die Sache von ihr ausgehe' (1861. Nr. 4297. *HKA* II/xii, p. 52).

In 1822, he was reading widely in Bohemian history, and remarked on the prevalence of remarkable female figures: 'Merkwürdig ist, welche große Rolle in der alten böhmischen Geschichte die Weiber spielen. Ziemlich allgemein gilt jede ausgezeichnetere für eine Seherin.' (1822. Nr. 986. *HKA* II/viii, p. 8) He was intrigued by the story of Princess Elizabeth, daughter of King Wenceslaus III, who refused to be forced into marriage with a man of humble origins. She fled, and chose Johann von Luxemburg as her husband, who

freed her and became king of Bohemia (1822. Nr. 974. *HKA* II/viii, p. 6) This historical anecdote may have been the inspiration for Grillparzer's heroines who refuse to accept the life others have planned for them, and in the case of Sappho and Libussa raise men to positions of greatness.

One figure in particular from Bohemian history seems to have piqued Grillparzer's interest: Drahomira. She is the subject of several diary entries, as well as of a number of dramatic drafts. In a dramatic fragment, Grillparzer summarises the material: after her husband's death, Drahomira became ruler. She 'übernimmt [...] die Regierung zerstört Kirchen, ermordet Priester, läßt die Ludmilla die sich widersetzt auf dem Lustschloße Tetin ermorden.' She was deposed by German forces and fled to Brandenburg (1814/15. *HKA* II/iv, p. 309). In this draft version, Drahomira declares, 'Der Sinn nur macht den Herrscher, macht den Knecht' (*HKA* II/iv, p. 320), a statement which calls to mind Hero's insistence on intellectual freedom. In a subsequent draft, 'Drahomira III' (1815/16), the heroine's character is more fully developed and her subversively unfeminine nature becomes clear:

Erneute Frist ward mir gegeben
 Die nur sich endet mit dem Leben
 Wenn ich zerbreche dieses Landes Joch,
 Der eingedrungne Christenglaube
 Morsch und zertrümmert liegt im Staube
 Aus dem er Schlangenähnlich kroch
 Und auf der Kirche hingestürzten Trümmern
 Die Tempel uns'rer alten Götter schimmern. (*HKA* II/iv, 363–72. Here: ll. 179–86)

It is not clear why the several draft versions of 'Drahomira' did not become a full drama, but they show Grillparzer's interest in the types of heroine and theme which would become more developed in later works.

In both dramas under consideration in this section, a woman holds a position of preeminence in her society. This situation leads to, and perhaps even necessitates, gender conflict. As we will see, both Phaon and Primislaus find it difficult to tolerate their public subordination. The issue of gender conflict is one that interested Grillparzer from his youth onwards, and often features in his dramas. Like *Wer ist schuldig?*, *Der Zauberwald*. *Eine*

komische Oper in 3 Aufzügen, a short unfinished work from 1808, presents a more explicit engagement with the theme than is visible in Grillparzer's mature dramas.

Der Zauberwald is a take on Shakespeare's *A Midsummer Night's Dream* and concentrates on the conflict between Oberon and Titania. Oberon is a boorish husband who demands his wife's respect because of his status as husband rather than because his deeds are deserving. Titania, on the other hand, is wilfully defiant. Near the beginning of the drama, when the fairy monarchs' strife has already started, the chorus reminds Oberon of his position of power and tells him to consider 'daß in dieser Fehde/ ein schwaches Weib dein Gegener ist'.¹ Oberon, however, is not willing to stand down, and refuses to compromise his dignity and standing, even if it would achieve peace: 'ich selber liebe Ruhe, doch/ soll euer Herr den Naken beugen/ unter des Weibes niedres Joch' (*HKA II/iii*, p. 88). He considers obedience a wifely duty, and interprets Titania's disobedience as ingratitude:

Lohnst du so meine Liebe!—Ich habe dich auf die Stufe gehoben auf der du nun zu meiner Qual steh[s]t; ich habe dir die Macht gegeben, die du itzt zu meinem Schaden gebrauchst!—Ist das deine Dankbarkeit Schlange? (*HKA II/iii*, p. 90.)

Two themes are introduced here which later reappear in *Sappho*: Oberon's conception of female dominance as a threat to masculinity, which is shared by Phaon; and criticism of ingratitude, which *Sappho* also considers particularly galling.

Titania is equally eager to carry her point. She refuses to be subservient to her husband, but shows herself willing to partake in a marriage of equals:

Soll den[n] Titania immer weichen
soll ich des Mannes Sklavinn sein
Er mag die Hand zum Bund mir reichen
und gern und willig schlag ich ein (*HKA II/iii*, p. 88.)

Later, she mocks his anger by highlighting the absurdity of its cause:

Ei seht doch boshaft wäre ich
Mein theurer Herr und König
gewiß wohl darum weil ich mich
nicht zahm und unterthänig
in eure Launen füge
und meinen Hals nicht biege. (*HKA II/iii*, p. 91.)

¹Grillparzer. 'Der Zauberwald. Eine komische Oper in 3 Aufzügen'. *HKA II/iii*. 87–91, p. 87.

Although *Der Zauberwald* was not developed further, it is an important indication that the teenage Grillparzer was already interested in the idea of gender conflict. While in the case of Titania and Oberon it is the man who has given the woman a position of importance, a situation which is exactly reversed in *Sappho* and *Libussa*, the text contains the genesis of later works which examine the topic in more sophisticated ways.

Grillparzer's later reflections on the female ruler are more complex partly because he depicts Sappho's and Libussa's sovereignty in the context of social contract theory. The imagery of social contract which Grillparzer introduces in both these dramas designates the heroines' domains as polities, governed not by an autocrat, but by an aristocratic leader who rules with the explicit approval of her subjects. It is not far-fetched to imagine that Grillparzer might have been influenced by contract theory. Grillparzer mentions Thomas Hobbes, and specifically *De cive* (1642), in a diary entry from 1824 (Nr. 1325. *HKA* II/viii, p. 137), and in 1836 he writes: 'Englische Lektüre. Durch Lockes gesunden Menschenverstand erheitert.' (Nr. 3017. *HKA*, II/x, p. 67) His engagement with contract theory, however, preceded his work on *Sappho*, for he had translated excerpts of Jean-Jacques Rousseau's *Du contrat social* as early as 1808 (*SW* III, pp. 1188–97, p. 1369).

For Hobbes, the social contract allowed men to lift themselves above their mere natural condition, which he conceived as a state of war. In short, man in this state will and can do everything to preserve his life against the machinations of others. Hobbes's conception of the social contract, as laid out in *Leviathan* (1651), is of an arrangement whereby each individual lays down as many of his rights as do others, thereby guaranteeing each peace and security. Such an arrangement can only be fruitful if it is mutually agreed, for the individual who lays down his rights while others retain theirs exposes himself to attacks. The reciprocal nature of the social contract is very important, and Hobbes reiterates that, in accordance with the contract, an individual transfers some part of his rights to the rest of his community, but receives in return equivalent rights from each other member of the community. The aim of this transfer of rights is the preservation of each individual's life.

A society governed by this contract, however, cannot always rely on the individuals which compose it to abide by their word. There must, therefore, be a power which is set above all members of the society 'with right and force sufficient enough to compel performance' of contractual agreements made between its subjects.² The presence of this common power ensures that no individual, in being the first to offer up a part of her rights, becomes the prey of those who withhold theirs. This would be contrary to the right, which no person can ever sacrifice, of self-preservation. The presence of a power 'set up to constrain those that would otherwise violate their faith'³ eliminates the fear that other contracting parties might not uphold their end of the bargain, and makes it possible for one individual to give up her rights as the first without endangering her life.

The only way Hobbes sees for such a common power to be created is for the subjects as a group to confer their power on one man or group of men. This individual or group is acknowledged as the representative of those who choose him, and each individual must accept as his own those acts sanctioned by the common power. Each individual subjects his will and judgment to this common power on the condition that every other individual does the same.⁴ The individual upon whom this power rests is known as the 'sovereign', while all others are 'subjects'. Hobbes identifies two modes whereby an individual may become sovereign: he either benefits from the use of natural force; or, the mass of subjects agree to submit to his authority.

Locke put forward his ideas on the social contract in *Two Treatises of Government* (1689). Locke had read Hobbes, but scholars cannot say exactly when or to what extent. When writing his *Treatises*, however, *Leviathan* did have a positive impact on Locke.⁵ Locke's point of departure, the state of nature, is a less menacing concept than Hobbes's, and Locke conceives of this state as merely a '*State of Perfect Freedom*' where men are free 'to order their Actions,

²Thomas Hobbes. *Leviathan*. Ed. J. C. A. Gaskin. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2008, p. 89.

³*Ibid.*, p. 91.

⁴*Ibid.*, p. 114.

⁵John Locke. *Two Treatises of Government*. Ed. Peter Laslett. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1988, p. 74.

and dispose of their Possessions, and Persons, as they think fit, within the bounds of the Law of Nature, without asking leave, or depending upon the Will of any other Man.’⁶

In accord with his intention of repudiating defences of the divine right of kings, Locke argues for a society governed by social contract. No legislative power shall be established other than by the agreement of the members of society, nor shall any law exist other than those created by the legislature in accordance with the trust placed in it by the commonwealth.⁷ There are strong echoes of *Leviathan* in Locke’s description of the process by which men leave the state of nature and form society. Men choose to relinquish their natural freedom, and enter into ‘*the bonds of Civil Society*’ by agreeing amongst themselves to constitute a community which provides for their comfortable, safe and peaceful coexistence, and secures their property rights both against other members of the society and against any that are not.⁸ This state of communal living, however, necessitates that each promise to abide by majority rule, otherwise the contract which binds all members in society would be meaningless.

For Rousseau, writing in the 1760s, the social contract also represented a means of elevating man from, and securing him against, his own nature. It is a form of association that can protect each of its members, along with his property, while also allowing him to be free as he was before he joined the association. The terms in which he expresses the task of the social pact are similar to those employed by Hobbes. Rousseau states that the essential core of the social pact is the submission of each individual to the ‘general will’ and the reception by society of each of its members as an indispensable element of the whole.

Rousseau uses several distinct terms to express the various relationships which exist in a state governed by the social contract. The associates of such a polity ‘collectively take the name of *people*, and are individually called *citizens* as being participants in the sovereign authority, and *subjects* as being bound by the laws of the state.’⁹ What was formerly known

⁶*Ibid.*, p. 269.

⁷*Ibid.*, p. 283.

⁸*Ibid.*, p. 331.

⁹Jean-Jacques Rousseau. ‘The Social Contract’. *Discourse on Political Economy and The Social Contract*. Trans. Christopher Betts. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1994. 43–168, p. 56.

as a 'city', in Rousseau's terminology is named 'republic' or 'body politic'. The members of such an association call it 'state' when it is passive, 'sovereign' when it is active, and 'power' when comparing it with its like. Being a member of the sovereign, each individual is bound to the other individuals who constitute this entity; furthermore, the individual's membership of the state means that he is bound to the sovereign. As a result, from the time the contract is agreed, no member can be injured without the state being affected, nor can the state be attacked and the subjects remain unharmed.

On the subject of leadership in such a society, Rousseau diverges from Hobbes's view in not seeing leadership as the result of natural force or election. Rather, he traces the history of government to the earliest societies, which he claims were governed by the aristocracy. He subdivides aristocracy rule into three categories: natural, elective and hereditary, marking out elective aristocracy as the best of the three, for 'it is aristocracy in the true sense of the word.'¹⁰ Government by aristocracy, elected on the basis of integrity, intelligence, experience and other qualities which inspire respect and admiration, is the best form of government according to Rousseau. If government is undertaken by a small group of the most intelligent citizens, the common good, rather than the benefit of the ruling power, will be served.

The female ruler, then, is a trope which interested Grillparzer deeply for all of his creative life. The numerous diary entries dealing with historical and mythical queens, and the lengthy engagement with figures such as Drahomira, show that female rulers, who were anathema to the prevailing gender constructs of the nineteenth century, presented themselves as prime dramatic material for the playwright at all stages of his career. In the following two chapters, I analyse Grillparzer's presentation of *Sappho* and *Libussa* in the context of contemporary gender debates and the social contract. *Sappho* and *Libussa* are more than dramas on the nature of female rule. The eponymous heroines function as examples of extraordinary women as a type, and therefore permit meditation on the role and position of such women in Grillparzer's Austria.

¹⁰*Ibid.*, p. 103.

‘Sie ehren Sapphon wie ein fürstlich Haupt’

Sappho and the Social Contract

Scholarship has investigated *Sappho* primarily as a tragedy of the female poet or of the disappointed lover, and as an example of the apparent irreconcilability of art and love, particularly for women.¹¹ Alfred von Berger calls *Sappho* an ‘einfache[s] und durchsichtige[s] Seelendrama’.¹² Norbert Griesmayer frames *Sappho* in terms of interhuman conflict when he contrasts the drama with *Ottokar*, where the characters act ‘nicht nur im Raum des Zwischenmenschlichen, sondern auch in einem Raum des Staatlichen’.¹³ Superficially, the text itself supports such emphases. Sappho’s suicide, which is partly the result of Phaon’s rejection, favours her role as a scorned woman, while Rhamnes highlights her literary success:

Wenn längst verfallen diese morschen Hüllen
 Und selber unsre Gräber nicht mehr sind
 Wird Sapphos Lied noch von den Lippen tönen,
 Wird leben noch ihr Name [...].¹⁴

As outlined in the introduction to this section, however, in this chapter I look at Sappho’s role as ruler of Mytilene and the part that social contract theory played in the creation of this drama.

Grillparzer’s writings on *Sappho* do not indicate that he focused on Sappho as a ruler, but they are contradictory. In a letter of 1818, he stresses that his heroine is primarily a poet and a lover:

¹¹E.g.: Marianne Burkhard. “‘Die letzte Schuld des Lebens’: Grillparzers “Sappho” als Tragödie der dichtenden Frau’. *Monatshefte* 74 (1982). 122–38, p. 125; Kokyo Morikawa. ‘Grillparzers “Sappho”—Entstehung und Erläuterung’. *JdGG* 3. Folge 6 (1967). 101–19, p. 108;

¹²Alfred Freiherr von Berger. ‘Das Szenische bei Grillparzer’. *JdGG* 19 (1910). 29–38, p. 33.

¹³Griesmayer, p. 263.

¹⁴Grillparzer. ‘Sappho’. *HKA* I/i. 263–373, ll. 1839–42.

Sappho ist Dichterin! Daß Das hervorgehoben werde ist durchaus nöthig, die Wahrscheinlichkeit der Katastrophe hängt, wie ich glaube wesentlich davon ab. [...] Sappho ist in der Katastrophe ein verliebtes, eifersüchtiges, in der Leidenschaft sich vergessendes Weib; ein Weib das einen jüngeren Mann liebt. In der gewöhnlichen Welt ist ein solches Weib ein eckelhafter Gegenstand. (Nr. 104. *HKA* III/i, p. 99)

In his *Selbstbiographie*, however, which was written several years later, he recalls his reaction to criticism of the drama. Some critics thought that Grillparzer focused too much on Sappho as a woman, rather than as a poet. Grillparzer writes that he welcomed this criticism: 'Ich war nämlich immer ein Feind der Künstlerdramen.' (*HKA* I/xvi, p. 130) He also writes that he wanted his Sappho to fall victim to 'eine[] wahre[] Leidenschaft und nicht eine[] Verirrung der Phantasie' which would not have been possible had he developed Sappho the Poet more thoroughly (*HKA* I/xvi, p. 131). A survey of eighteenth- and nineteenth-century reception of Sappho, however, supports my argument for a political Sappho. Although Frank and Pörnbacher conclude that Grillparzer did not conduct any research for *Sappho*, and do not identify any similarities with earlier adaptations of the material (*SW* I, p. 1308), Grillparzer's *Sappho* fits into two contemporary literary traditions. On the one hand, several other German-language adaptations of the Sappho material exist. On the other, wider European engagement with the material is another important context for Grillparzer's drama. An examination of these texts will show that, in creating a Sappho who was a political leader in the tradition of social contract theory, Grillparzer radically broke with tradition.

In 1793, Franz von Kleist published *Sappho. Ein dramatisches Gedicht*. He prefaces his work with a biographical sketch of his subject, as well as vignettes of other characters and an overview of Mytilenian society. Sappho's poems were familiar to all educated people, 'ihr Ruhm verbreitete sich mit unglaublicher Geschwindigkeit'.¹⁵ Her poems kindled a love of poetry in the young people of Lesbos, and soon a group of female students had gathered around her.¹⁶ When Phaon arrived in Mytilene, he was admired by all the women, but he

¹⁵Franz von Kleist. *Sappho. Ein dramatisches Gedicht*. Berlin: Vossische Buchhandlung, 1793, p. xi.

¹⁶*Ibid.*, p. xii.

‘sah über sie alle hin, und wählte Sappho’. Kleist writes that Sappho’s misfortune was to be chosen as Phaon’s ‘Opfer der Verführung’, and that she was weak enough to reciprocate.¹⁷ The poet-admirers whom Sappho had spurned in Phaon’s favour were angered, and wrote bitter satires against her.¹⁸ These found a ready audience ‘da Neid und Mißgunst ihre Hände im Spiel hatten [...] und die arme Sappho ward allgemein verlacht und verspottet’. She found refuge in Phaon’s love, but did not notice that this was diminishing. Phaon abandoned Sappho for one of her friends, but later returned ‘aus Eigenliebe, um seinen Namen durch ganz Griechenland verbreitet zu sehen’.¹⁹ Sappho welcomed his return, but he later left her a second time and went to Sicily. She followed him there and threw herself at his feet, but again he rejected her. She then committed suicide. Kleist’s drama closely follows the story as laid out in his sources, and is a simple tale of love, betrayal and revenge in which Sappho’s death is more directly related to Phaon’s changing emotional attachment than in Grillparzer’s *Sappho*.

Friedrich Wilhelm Gubitz’s *Sappho. Monodrama* (1816) is a second example in the German tradition. This short work presents Sappho lamenting her desertion by Phaon, and therefore represents an even more restricted adaptation of the material than Kleist’s. Gubitz’s Sappho is a woman who has let her identity be entirely subsumed by that of her lover—‘Mein Dasein war in Deinem aufgelöst’²⁰—and who cannot therefore continue living once he has abandoned her. Sappho’s poetry is linked to her love, and when Phaon has rejected her, she rejects her poetry, which she does by destroying her lyre and laurel wreath. It is significant that Sappho sees her submission to Phaon as a source of shame not only for herself as a poet, but for the female sex in general: ‘Durch dieses Fleh’n hab’ ich mein ganz Geschlecht/ Und meinen Ruhm auf immerdar geschändet.’²¹ Although she hopes that death will absolve her from the shame of submitting to Phaon, she says that she does not die

¹⁷*Ibid.*, p. xvii.

¹⁸*Ibid.*, p. xviii.

¹⁹*Ibid.*, pp. xix–xxii.

²⁰Friedrich Wilhelm Gubitz. *Sappho. Monodrama*. Berlin: Maurersche Buchhandlung, 1816, p. 6.

²¹*Ibid.*, p. 8.

because of his betrayal, but because she is no longer capable of love or trust. She jumps from a rock, and is carried aloft by an iris.

The contemporary German tradition also brought forth Friedrich Gottlieb Welcker's *Sappho, von einem herrschenden Vorurtheil befreit* (1816). The 'herrschender Vorurtheil' to which Welcker's title alludes was that of Sappho's non-heterosexuality, an 'unsägliche Gemeinheit, welche sich oft, vordem und neuerlich, über die Sappho ausgesprochen hat'.²² However, as Joan DeJean writes, Welcker never informs readers where and when this supposed prejudice was dominant, and she argues that at no point before Welcker did the image of a homosexual Sappho prevail. The majority of Welcker's book is dedicated to rejecting claims of sexual deviance aimed at Sappho, although at all times refraining from any mention of Sappho's homosexuality, or of female sexuality in general,²³ and as such is not particularly relevant to this thesis. Indeed, DeJean remarks that Welcker, despite being credited with the foundation of modern Sappho scholarship, shows a consistent lack of interest in the poet, and provides no new information about her, even as he formulates 'what seems to be the first modern defence, even eulogy, of male homosexuality'.²⁴ If Grillparzer was aware of the charges against his subject, it is hardly surprising that the bi- or homosexual theme does not surface in his own treatment of the material,²⁵ given that the strict censorship forbade plays to depict 'eine unsittliche Lehre oder eine wirkliche sittenlose That oder Verbrechen', which at the time would surely have included same-sex relationships.²⁶ Welcker does, however, note that the citizens of Mytilene 'haben [Sappho] die höchste Auszeichnung erwiesen, welche der Stolz auf einen berühmten Mitbürger in

²²Friedrich Gottlieb Welcker. *Sappho, von einem herrschenden Vorurtheil befreit*. Göttingen: Vandenhoeck und Ruprecht, 1816, p. 6.

²³Joan DeJean. 'Sex and Philology: Sappho and the Rise of German Nationalism'. *Re-Reading Sappho. Reception and Transmission*. Ed. Ellen Greene. Berkeley, CA: University of California Press, 1996. 122–45, p. 127.

²⁴*Ibid.*, p. 127–29.

²⁵Although I do not see a non-heterosexual theme in *Sappho*, Angela Steidele has argued that Sappho is attracted to Melitta. 'Als wenn du mein Geliebter wärest': *Liebe und Begehren zwischen Frauen in der deutschsprachigen Literatur 1750–1850*. Stuttgart; Weimar: Metzler, 2003, pp. 142–43.

²⁶Hägelin. *Denkschrift*. Quoted in Glossy. 'Zur Geschichte der Wiener Theaterzensur', p. 317.

jenen Zeiten eingeben konnte, indem sie sie auf ihre Münze prägen ließen.²⁷ There are no mentions of Welcker's work in Grillparzer's diaries or notebooks, but he may have been aware of the high social status which Sappho's poetic successes accorded her, and may have built upon this when he included a political element in his own drama.

The second literary tradition in which Grillparzer's Sappho must be placed is a larger European one. DeJean traces nineteenth-century engagement with Sappho to Germaine de Staël's salon, where the founders of philology, and notably the Schlegels, came into contact with two fictions of Sappho thanks to de Staël's lifelong interest in the poet.²⁸ The first of these fictions emerged in France in the decade prior to the French Revolution and portrayed a politically subversive Sappho who was forced into exile after a failed revolt against a dictator. De Staël herself tirelessly promoted this version. The invention of a political Sappho 'revitalize[d] the Sapphic plot by shifting its energy from sexual promiscuity to political sedition.'²⁹ The link between Sappho and political revolt originated in D'Auigny's *L'Histoire et les amours de Sapho de Mytilène* (1724). Here, it is not Sappho, but her suitor Alcée, who is involved in a revolt against the senate.³⁰ In 1788, Jean-Jacques Barthélemy published *Voyage du jeune Anacharsis en Grèce*, which 'enshrined [Sappho] as a political exile, a revolutionary who had fought alongside Alceus to overthrow tyranny'.³¹ Although he had no evidence to support his conception of her, Barthélemy's portrait of a political Sappho captured the imaginations of numerous Sappho commentators, and was soon assimilated as historical fact, even by serious scholars.

An opposing vision of Sappho accompanied Napoleon's rise to power, notably in Italy.³² This tradition, which began with Alessandro Verri's novel *Le Avventure di Saffo* (1782), shifted the focus from Sappho to Phaon: 'In this new fiction, there is no mention of Sappho's

²⁷Welcker, p. 8.

²⁸DeJean. 'Sex and Philology', p. 123.

²⁹Joan DeJean. *Fictions of Sappho, 1546–1937*. Chicago, London: The University of Chicago Press, 1989, p. 157.

³⁰*Ibid.*, p. 158.

³¹*Ibid.*, p. 160.

³²DeJean. 'Sex and Philology', p. 123.

political activities; narrative energy is concentrated instead on a hypermasculinized Phaon.' Other works in this tradition include Etienne Lantier's *Voyages d'Anténor* (1797) and Pierre-Jean-Baptiste Chaussard's *Fêtes et courtisanes de la Grèce* (1801).³³ The authors of Napoleonic adaptations of the Sappho material remove her from the political sphere and assign her passive and demeaning roles, 'as if to guarantee against the threat of all female political activity, either conservative or revolutionary'.³⁴ These works were the precursors of the nineteenth-century German Sapphic tradition.

According to DeJean, it was de Staël more than any other writer who exploited the theme of Sappho's exile.³⁵ She sees the plots which de Staël creates for Sappho in *Delphine*, *Corinne*, and *Sappho*, 'as the fulfilment, but more properly as the disclosure of the eighteenth-century French Sappho tradition'.³⁶ In *Corinne*, in DeJean's opinion the most developed Sapphic fiction of the turn of the century, 'the battle lines between literary women and the forces of the (Napoleonic) patriarchal order are drawn as nowhere else'.³⁷ De Staël's works show the influence of Barthélemy's political innovation, and reject the Napoleonic vision of an apolitical Sappho.³⁸ They also reanimate Sappho the writer, and reverse the model in Napoleonic fiction 'in which the obscure young woman is irresistibly attracted to the handsome, strong man'.³⁹

DeJean sees not de Staël's version of Sappho, but that of the Napoleonic tradition as the foundation of the German tradition, a tradition which is often still dominant today and in which 'Sappho would never again be political, never again narratively or sexually active'.⁴⁰ A dispassionate Sappho was created to 'silence the speculation about female sexuality so

³³Joan DeJean. 'Portrait of the Artist as Sappho'. *Germaine de Staël. Crossing the Borders*. Ed. Madelyn Gutwirth, Avriel Goldberger and Karyna Szmurlo. New Brunswick, NJ: Rutgers University Press, 1991. 122–37, p. 125.

³⁴DeJean. *Fictions of Sappho*, p. 167.

³⁵*Ibid.*, p. 160.

³⁶*Ibid.*, p. 161.

³⁷*Ibid.*, p. 176.

³⁸DeJean. 'Portrait of the Artist as Sappho', p. 124.

³⁹*Ibid.*, p. 128.

⁴⁰*Ibid.*, p. 136–37.

threatening to the builders of empires'. Yet DeJean also identifies Grillparzer's *Sappho* as the beginning of the next phase of the Sapphic tradition, one in which German scholarship began to create fictions of the original writer.⁴¹ One of the most discussed elements of Grillparzer's drama, Sappho's suicide as renunciation of sexuality and a sign of penance necessary to gain poetic immortality, is an important innovation in the tradition.⁴² DeJean speculates that Grillparzer's decision to reformulate Sappho's suicide as a ritual which frees her from the flesh and allows her to achieve immortality could indicate that Grillparzer was indeed familiar with the French versions mentioned here, or with Welcker's work.⁴³ Here, I argue that quite the opposite is the case: although Grillparzer's Sappho is most definitely a poet, she is also an important political figure in Mytilene. Grillparzer's drama would therefore seem to be part of the French tradition of a political Sappho, rather than the Napoleonic tradition of a passive Sappho which DeJean argues was so influential in the German-speaking world. Yet Grillparzer's drama is also innovative, for his Sappho is not a revolutionary who fights tyranny, but, as I show, the leader of a polity the foundations of which are located in social contract theory.

De Staël exerted an extraordinary influence on the German imagination around 1800, and was read by Grillparzer, and so deserves greater attention here. Both she and her novel *Corinne, ou l'Italie* (1807) had a large and positive impact on German women writers of the time. The novel, which narrates the eponymous heroine's struggle to unite her literary career with her romantic life, was very popular upon publication, and between 1807 and 1810 fourteen editions or pirated versions appeared in France, England, Switzerland and Germany.⁴⁴ Judith Martin notes that many German women in both Biedermeier and Vormärz periods created their own *Künstlerromane* under the influence of de Staël and *Corinne*. Martin lists Johanna Schopenhauer's *Gabriele* (1819–20), Ida Gräfin von Hahn-Hahn's

⁴¹DeJean. *Fictions of Sappho*, p. 193.

⁴²*Ibid.*, p. 194.

⁴³*Ibid.*, p. 204.

⁴⁴Angelica Goodden. *Madame de Staël. Delphine and Corinne*. London: Grant and Cutler, 2000, p. 64.

Gräfin Faustine (1840) and Luise Mühlbach's *Der Zögling der Natur* (1842) as examples.⁴⁵ For both Mühlbach and Hahn-Hahn, reading *Corinne* was a formative experience which inspired their artistic dreams.⁴⁶ De Staël and her writings helped German women challenge the teachings that deemed them incapable of genius, and 'her exemplary status encouraged them to defy women's exclusion from public artistic activity and political commentary.'⁴⁷

Grillparzer was among de Staël's readers. He had read *Corinne* by 1816, that is, one year before the composition of *Sappho*. His dislike of both the work and its author comes across in his diary entries. In 1816 he wrote:

Ich habe dies Buch noch nicht ausgelesen, aber bis jetzt scheint mir der Plan einer der unglücklichsten die je entworfen worden sind. (Nr. 169. *HKA* II/vii, p. 78.)

Similarities between *Sappho* and *Corinne* are quite pronounced, and include Corinne's triumphal arrival in Rome, which is similar to Sappho's return to Mytilene; the juxtaposition in both works of an independent public woman with one who more obviously fits contemporary ideals; and the death, in both cases, of the heroine. Josef Nadler writes that Grillparzer found '[d]as eigentliche Thema des Dramas, die Liebestragödie der Dichterin' in *Corinne* and that the features shared by the two works confirm de Staël's influence on Grillparzer.⁴⁸ Marianne Burkhard argues that the structural similarities between *Sappho* and *Corinne* imply the direct influence of the latter on the former. Burkhard even cites Grillparzer's admission in 1829 that there are similarities between the two works.⁴⁹ Pichler, who had met de Staël, wrote to Grillparzer after a performance of the drama that she saw de Staël herself in *Sappho*:

in Schröder Sappho sah ich *Madame Stael* nach allen *Individualitäten* die ich von dieser Frau weiß. Gut, menschlich großmüthig, hingegeben, leidenschaftlich—unbedacht in der Wahl ihrer Liebe—eifersüchtig, und durch die Kunst dem Leben und der Wirklichkeit entfremdet [...] (1818. Nr 112. *HKA* III/i, p. 114.)

⁴⁵Judith E. Martin. 'Nineteenth-Century German Literary Women's Reception of Madame de Staël'. *Women in German Yearbook* 18 (2002), 133–57.

⁴⁶*Ibid.*, p. 146.

⁴⁷*Ibid.*, p. 151.

⁴⁸Josef Nadler. *Franz Grillparzer*. Vienna: Bergland, 1952, p. 142.

⁴⁹Marianne Burkhard. 'Love, Creativity and Female Role: Grillparzer's "Sappho" and Staël's "Corinne" Between Art and Cultural Norm'. *Jahrbuch für Internationale Germanistik* 16 (1984). 128–46, p. 130.

Later in his life, however, Grillparzer would expressly deny even a similarity between the works.⁵⁰ Whether or not any similarities exist between de Staël's and Grillparzer's heroines, and whether or not Grillparzer was influenced by her, de Staël and her work are important for several reasons: first, as we have seen, *Corinne* left myriad works by female writers in its wake; second, while *Sappho* scholarship focuses on the heroine's death, interpretations of *Corinne* seem more willing to accept as emancipatory the mere existence of a woman who lives from her literary works. Lori Marso, for example, writes that Corinne was de Staël's alternative 'vision of what politics could be, would be, if only we could value the feminine re-infused into the public sphere as a woman citizen.'⁵¹ In the following interpretation of Grillparzer's *Künstlerdrama*, I take a similar approach. By putting *Sappho* in the context of contemporary gender debates and women writers, I argue against claims that Sappho's difficulties in uniting a literary career with a private life reflect the realities of Biedermeier Austria. Further, in examining the social and hierarchical structures of Sappho's polity, I argue that Grillparzer's portrayal of the woman poet as a ruler gives the drama an additional emancipatory facet.

Grillparzer's *Sappho* strongly reflects contemporary cultural ideas regarding gender and space. That the mores of Sappho's Greece markedly resemble those of Grillparzer's Austria has been remarked upon by more than one critic. Burkhard writes that it is the values of Grillparzer's own culture which determine Sappho's social role in the drama.⁵² Politzer, meanwhile, comments on the distinctly *bürgerlich* quality of the contractual terms in which Sappho conceives her relationship to Phaon. Sappho's language, argues Politzer, is littered with phrases taken from the Vormärz idiom of trade.⁵³ Steidele writes that the social order which Sappho's death restores has nothing to do with classical Greece, and everything to do with Grillparzer's reality, for it is the nineteenth-century social order which limits women's

⁵⁰Littrow-Bischoff. *Aus dem persönlichen Verkehre*, p. 80.

⁵¹Lori J. Marso. 'Defying Fraternity: Woman as Citizen in Germaine de Staël's *Corinne, or Italy*'. *Women's Studies* 28 (1999). 645–74, p. 656.

⁵²Burkhard. "'Die letzte Schuld des Lebens'", p. 125.

⁵³Politzer. *Das abgründige Biedermeier*, p. 88.

freedom in professional, social and sexual terms.⁵⁴

The topography of *Sappho* is linked to the gendered framework of Sappho's society, which in turn is a reflection of Grillparzer's own. In I/i, Rhamnes places Sappho's society within the context of nineteenth-century mores when he says, 'Der Mann mag das Geliebte laut begrüßen,/ Geschäftig für sein Wohl liebt still das Weib.' (ll. 38–39) This society is rooted in the binary oppositions of male-female, active-passive, public-private, and Rhamnes reformulates Schiller's famous lines in the 'Lied von der Glocke' (1798): 'Der Mann muß hinaus/ In's feindliche Leben/ [...] Und drinnen waltet/ Die züchtige Hausfrau'.⁵⁵ There are also echoes of the opening monologue of Goethe's *Iphigenie auf Tauris* (1787): 'Der Frauen Zustand ist beklagenswert./ Zu Haus' und in dem Kriege herrscht der Mann/ Und in der Fremde weiß er sich zu helfen. [...] Wie eng-gebunden ist des Weibes Glück!'⁵⁶ In her monologue in III/i, Sappho reiterates the binary nature of gender relations. Men, unwilling to be constrained by the limitations of inner life—'Zu eng dünkt ihm des Innern stille Welt' (l. 819)—throw themselves at life, hoping to find glory. Or, as the proverb goes, 'Dem Mutigen gehört die Welt.'

Although Rhamnes first indicates that Mytilene is governed by a patriarchal code, Phaon is the main proponent of patriarchal society in the drama. In II/i he reveals the misogynistic atmosphere of his family's household. His father was a traditional paterfamilias who disapproved of women's active participation in public life. Writing on Staël's *Corinne*, Angelica Goodden argues that the deceased father of Oswald, Corinne's lover, is present in spirit and is 'an image of prohibition'.⁵⁷ Phaon's father, through the influence he has had on his son, is present in *Sappho* in much the same way. Phaon assures himself that even his father would abandon his prejudices regarding female poets, should he see Sappho (ll.

⁵⁴Steidele, p. 145.

⁵⁵Friedrich Schiller. 'Das Lied von der Glocke'. *Werke und Briefe*. 12 vols. Ed. Otto Dann et al. Frankfurt/Main: Deutscher Klassiker Verlag, 1992–2005. I (1992). 56–68, p. 59, ll. 106–07, 116–17.

⁵⁶Johann Wolfgang Goethe. 'Iphigenie auf Tauris'. *Sämtliche Werke, Briefe, Tagebücher und Gespräche*. 40 vols. Ed. Hendrik Birus et al. Frankfurt/Main: Deutscher Klassiker Verlag, 1986–2000. I/v (1988). 553–619, p. 556, ll. 24–26, 29.

⁵⁷Goodden, p. 65.

508–11). This upbringing has left its mark on Phaon. When insulting Sappho, he is unable to free himself from misogynistic metaphors. So, in III/vi, he compares her to Medusa—‘blinkt nicht ein Dolch in ihrer Hand/ Und noch zwei andre liegen tiefversteckt/ Dort unter den gesenkten Augenlidern?’ (ll. 1154–56)—and to Circe, claiming she laid her magic on him from afar (ll. 1164–74). Importantly, in this metaphor, Sappho’s songs acquire negative connotations due to the comparison with Circe’s spells. Phaon’s background also helps explain why he is attracted to Melitta, who William C. Reeve argues is a caricature of nineteenth-century feminine ideals.⁵⁸

Sappho appears on the stage in I/ii at the head of a triumphal procession. She is sumptuously dressed, rides in a carriage drawn by horses and carries a lyre: this is Sappho the poet, the public figure, returning victorious to her homeland. Welcomed by adoring crowds, she is at this point very much in the public sphere.⁵⁹ At the end of this scene, the townspeople leave and Sappho and Phaon are alone. She is still on stage when the curtain falls, and only reappears in II/v, where she is dressed in simple attire and without her lyre or wreath, the symbols of her public role. At some point in the intervening scenes, the setting of the play has moved from the external and public to the internal and private. Moreover, in the elapsed time Phaon has transferred his affections from Sappho towards Melitta, her servant. Sappho, entering the scene at this point, encounters Melitta and Phaon after their kiss.

It is while the public is becoming private that Phaon first catches sight of Melitta. When Phaon stumbles upon Melitta in the grounds of the palace, he does not at first recognise her. What draws him to her is their common longing for a distant homeland which, according to Phaon, unites those whom it afflicts. On seeing her face, however, he recognises the servant

⁵⁸William C. Reeve. ‘Orchestrated Death Scenes as a Means of Revenge: Schiller’s *Maria Stuart* and Grillparzer’s *Sappho*’. *Seminar* 40 (2004). 122–34, p. 130.

⁵⁹Gretchen Rous Besser has written that ‘[n]owhere in literature can we find anything like the triumphal procession celebrating female achievement that Staël offers in *Corinne*.’ Besser is clearly unaware of *Sappho*. It is possible that Sappho’s triumphal entrance was inspired by Corinne’s. Gretchen Rous Besser. *Germaine de Staël Revisited*. New York: Twayne, 1994, p. 85.

who spilled wine during the feast. In his monologue in II/i, Phaon expresses his discomfort in Sappho's public world of glamour, and in Melitta recognises another who is out of place in the public eye. Phaon, whom Sappho has elevated above his born station in life, is looking for someone of his own kind, someone who belongs to the private sphere. Both Phaon and Melitta use the phrase 'niedere[r] Herd' at different points in the play, a phrase which unites them in a common, lowly background. Phaon mentions the hearth of his parents' house where he first heard Sappho's songs sung by his sister (ll. 166–69). In II/iii, Melitta says, 'Der Sklavin Platz ist an dem niedern Herde' (l. 578). That for both the humble hearth is a point of orientation cannot be a coincidence. Rather, it is an indication of their shared private, domestic preferences. In this sense, they both stand in opposition to Sappho.

The association of Melitta and Phaon with the lowly hearth, in contrast to the more dignified imagery of mountain peaks associated with Sappho, shows the richness of Grillparzer's social detail. Grillparzer has imbued the topography with social as well as gendered significance, and the image of the hearth marks both Melitta and Phaon as members of the lower social orders. As Yates writes, Sappho and Phaon are divided less by an age gap than by 'a still wider disparity in character and calling.'⁶⁰ That Mytilenian society is defined by a class hierarchy also goes some way to explaining how Sappho has been able to achieve such an esteemed position despite Rhamnes' formulation of prevailing gender roles. As Kerstin Aidenhoff and her colleagues write, Sappho is autonomous not because she rejects society, but because she is its ruler.⁶¹

In IV/viii Sappho's grounds become a public space. The stage has gradually filled with slaves and country people attracted by the furore over Phaon and Melitta's escape. In need of their assistance in apprehending the fugitives, Sappho is forced to give a speech in her capacity as a local ruler.

Ha diese hier! Habt Dank, ihr Treuen, Dank!

⁶⁰Yates. *A Critical Introduction*, p. 62.

⁶¹Kerstin Aidenhoff et al. 'Vom Leid des Herrschers und vom Glück des Beherrschten: *Sappho*'. *Gerettete Ordnung: Grillparzers Dramen*. Ed. Bernhard Budde and Ulrich Schmidt. Frankfurt/Main; Bern: Peter Lang, 1987. 34–57, p. 41.

Gebt, Menschen! was die Götter mir verweigern!
 Auf meine Freunde, rächet eure Sappho!
 Wenn ich euch jemals wert, jetzt zeigt es, jetzt! (ll. 1516–19)

When she has finished speaking, they leave the stage and she is clearly fatigued by the effort she now needs, after dedicating herself to private life, to enter the public arena once again. Not only this, but the presence of crowds in her private space has weakened her, and their departure is a welcome relief: ‘Sie gehn! Nun ist mir wohl!—Nun will ich ruhn!’ (l. 1539) Her physical state is destroyed by this exposure to public life and she falls into Eucharis’ arms. After a brief period as chatelaine, public life has become unbearable to her where once it invigorated her.

It is important to note briefly the toponymy which governs the drama’s larger topographical scope. Both ‘Lesbos’ and ‘Mytilene’ are used, although not synonymously as some critics have subsequently done. In the drama, ‘Lesbos’ refers to the island as a geographical entity. So, in II/iv, Melitta says that the ship in which she was held captive approached the shore of Lesbos. ‘Mytilene’, conversely, refers specifically to the urban political entity which is governed by Sappho and located on Lesbos. In II/vi, Sappho tells Phaon that many of the girls she once educated are to be found ‘in dem Kreise/ Von Mytilenes besten Bürgerinnen’ (ll. 748–49). And, in V/iv, Rhamnes talks of the good that Sappho has done *Mytilene*’s citizens.

Grillparzer’s use of the word ‘Bürger’ is also important, as it is an indication of the nature of Sappho’s rule in Mytilene. The use of this word, and Sappho’s description of her relationship to her subjects as ‘Wechseltausch’, indicate that Sappho’s polity is defined by the pervading concept of a social contract between each citizen and his fellow citizens, and between each citizen and his ruler. Sappho’s role as a ruler has not been ignored, but nor has it received substantial critical attention. Peter von Matt’s matter-of-fact statement that Sappho is only fully portrayed as a ruler and as a priestess disguises the lack of critical attention which Sappho’s role as ruler has received.⁶² Aidenhoff and her colleagues are

⁶²Peter von Matt. *Der Grundriss von Grillparzers Bühnenkunst*. Zurich: Atlantis, 1965, p. 17.

among the few scholars who have written in detail about Sappho as a ruler. They argue that Grillparzer's depiction of Sappho and Melitta's relationship, which they call 'ein[e] idealisiert[e] Sklavenhalterordnung', shows that it is a personal relationship which unites Sappho and her subjects, and that these subjects choose to be subordinate.⁶³ However, Aidenhoff et al. do not position these observations in the context of Grillparzer's readings in philosophy. Similarly, Caroline Anders notes that Sappho 'erscheint [...] obgleich nicht dynastisch legitimiert, als Adelige. Sie herrscht faktisch über die mytilenischen Bürger wie eine Fürstin und gebietet über alle ihrem Haushalt angehörenden Figuren.'⁶⁴ Pia Janke acknowledges Sappho's status as ruler, and that she is politically active. She also notes that her rule is based on mutual understanding rather than violence, but does not put this in a philosophical context.⁶⁵ Leitich also recognises the consensual aspect of Sappho's rule when she writes that Sappho rules not because she commands, but because the people serve and admire her.⁶⁶

The formulations of social contract theory discussed earlier inform my interpretation of the drama. Sappho is an elected leader insofar as the population of Mytilene has decided to invest her with the power, in the Hobbesian taxonomy, over those who have bound themselves together in the social contract. Sappho's speech at the beginning of I/iii is one of the many indications of the benevolent and consensual relationship between sovereign (in the Hobbesian definition) and her subjects:

Siehst du, mein Freund, so lebt nun deine Sappho!
Für Wohltat Dank, für Liebe—Freundlichkeit,
So ward mir's stets im Wechseltausch des Lebens [...] (ll. 107–09)

The 'Wechseltausch des Lebens', the reciprocal give-and-take philosophy which dominates in Mytilene, demonstrates the influence of the social contract in the lives of the citizens who

⁶³Aidenhoff et al., p. 35.

⁶⁴Caroline Anders. "...der Zündstoff liegt, der diese Mine donnernd sprengt gen Himmel." *Strategien der Ordnungsdestruktion in Franz Grillparzers dramatischem Werk*. Würzburg: Königshausen & Neumann, 2008, p. 49.

⁶⁵Janke, p. 62.

⁶⁶Leitich. *Zwölffmal Liebe*, p. 65.

live under the watchful eye of their ‘common power’.

Sappho’s first speech in I/ii is full of love and affection for her people, and their reactions show that the feelings she expresses are mutual, a further indication of the influence of the social contract which binds ruler and ruled in a consensual relationship. For Sappho, the inhabitants of Mytilene are ‘Freunde, Landsgenossen’ (l. 44), and it is only in their midst that she is able to develop as a person and an artist. The wreath she has won at Olympus ceases to become a burden when she has rejoined her fellow citizens, and is again the citizen (‘Bürger’) rather than the poet. The citizens of Mytilene express great pride in their ruler’s talents, and one of the crowd cries out, ‘Wohl uns, daß wir dich, Hohe, unser nennen!’ (l. 59) This reverence strongly suggests that it is Sappho’s intelligence which marked her out as their leader in accordance with Hobbes’s and Rousseau’s formulations of the social contract.

This discussion of the political framework of Sappho’s polity is important for my interpretation of the drama because I argue for a link between her position in Mytilene and her eventual suicide. I do not aim to dismiss interpretations which attribute her suicide to the irreconcilability of art and life, but rather to show that there are additional facets to Sappho’s personality, and therefore also to her tragedy.

Werner M. Bauer identifies Sappho as the focal point of Mytilenian society: she is rich, powerful, and laden with prizes. She is the very opposite of a social outcast.⁶⁷ For Bauer, Sappho, ‘[d]ie “poetissa laureata” verfügt also über Besitz, Gesinde und auch politisch über ihre Insel, gemäß ihres kulturellen Ansehens.’⁶⁸ Similarly, Aidenhoff et al. argue that Sappho is by no means outside Mytilenian society; rather, ‘die persönliche Würde dieser Frau [garantiert] die Legitimität des sozialen Systems.’⁶⁹ Despite his recognition of this element of Sappho’s being, however, Bauer still attributes her death to the loss of her identity as an artist in tune with her society. As soon as she uses her public power—which

⁶⁷Werner M. Bauer. ‘Kunst des Dramas. Drama der Kunst. Zu Grillparzers *Sappho*’. *Études Germaniques* 47 (1992), 159–90, p. 182–83.

⁶⁸*Ibid.*, p. 183.

⁶⁹Aidenhoff et al., p. 41.

she has gained from her poetic talents—to further her private aims, she is guilty of misuse of power. This misuse of political power, for Bauer, results in the loss of her artistic character. Although Bauer is right in asserting, as has been shown, that Sappho's power derives from her status as an artist, I disagree with Bauer's implicit assertion that art and politics are to be found in so symbiotic a relationship that the misuse of political power results in the loss of Sappho's identity as an artist. His interpretation may result from a common tendency to identify Sappho as a poet first and foremost, while relegating other aspects of her public persona to the sidelines. I would suggest that Sappho's misuse of political power—and breach of the social contract—leads to her further political role, which is based on an understanding between her and her subjects, becoming untenable. Aware of her transgressions against the order she is supposed to protect, and sentenced by Phaon, her political miscalculations contribute to her death.

Sappho's crimes amount to tyranny, which Locke defines as '*the exercise of Power beyond Right*, which no body can have a right to.'⁷⁰ Tyranny is '[w]hen the Governour, however intituled, makes not the Law, but his Will, the Rule; and his Commands and Actions are not directed to the preservation of the Properties of his People, but the satisfaction of his own Ambition, Revenge, Covetousness, or any other irregular Passion.'⁷¹ Sappho's first violation against her society is the installation of Phaon, her lover, as a citizen. Sappho informs the Mytilenians of Phaon's investiture as a citizen with the words: 'Umsonst sollt ihr die Bürgerin nicht grüßen,/ Sie führt zum Dank euch einen Bürger zu.' (ll. 70–71) Although Sappho has bound Phaon to her, he makes no such promises to the other citizens. Nor do the Mytilenians have a say in whether or not he should be welcomed into the polity. Furthermore, Sappho even sees the introduction of Phaon into Mytilenian society as something her citizens should be grateful for. She abuses her power in order to place the man she loves at her side.

Although Sappho does not install Phaon as leader of Mytilene, as Robert Pichl has

⁷⁰Locke, p. 398.

⁷¹*Ibid.*, p. 399.

claimed, their relationship is furthered complicated when Sappho gives Phaon the preeminent role in her private household, elevating him to a position above even hers:⁷²

Sieh um dich her, du stehst in deinem Hause.
Den Dienern zeig' ich dich als ihren Herrn,
Der Herrin Beispiel wird sie dienen lehren. (ll. 295–97)

Yet what we know about Phaon's upbringing would suggest that he is not at all suitable for such a role. Rhamnes certainly does not think Phaon fit to be in charge, and angers Sappho with his astonishment at her decision. Phaon's origins are anything but aristocratic, and he describes his parents' home as a cottage. It is Phaon who most frequently stresses the gulf which separates him from Sappho in terms of education, class and experience. He names Sappho 'Hellas' erste Frau' (l. 255) and himself 'Hellas' letzte[r] Jüngling' (l. 256). Although Phaon's ennoblement pertains only to the private sphere, this distinction emboldens him and encourages his later rebellion.

As the drama progresses, it becomes clear just how serious a mistake it was to introduce Phaon into Mytilenian society. Having been raised to such a high status without any contractual obligations to the other citizens, he scorns the conventions which have heretofore governed Mytilene. In Act V we see the true extent of Phaon's disregard for Sappho's polity. He has been apprehended by the people of Mytilene, and rails against his capture with the words, 'Bin ich nicht ein freier Mann?/ Wer gab das Recht ihr [Sappho] meinen Schritt zu hemmen?' (ll. 1621–22) For Phaon, being a free man does not mean abiding by Mytilene's laws and customs; it means being above the law, and above even Sappho. His denunciation touches not just Sappho, but every citizen.

This self-importance is aggravated by misogynistic views inculcated in him as a child. His refusal to adhere to the terms of the social contract is compounded by his specific repudiation of Sappho as a woman and as a ruler. He alone among the male inhabitants of Mytilene cannot tolerate a woman's rule:

⁷²Robert Pichl. 'Grillparzers dramaturgische Emanzipation von der Weimarer Klassik'. *JdGG* 3. Folge 22 (2007–08). 51–62, p. 55.

Seid ihr so zahm, daß eines Weibes Rache
 Geduldig ihr die Männerhände leiht,
 Und dienstbar seid der Liebe Wechsellaunen? (ll. 1633–35)

Phaon's prejudices against women and female poets, inherited from his father, mean that he cannot impute Sappho's actions to anything but her emotions. He even goes so far as to ask whether Sappho is the ruler in that country, to which the countryman answers, 'Sie ist es,/ Doch nicht weil sie gebeut, weil wir ihr dienen!' (ll. 1641–42) This is another indication of Sappho's consensual mode of government, which might be seen as a prototype for Libussa's polity in Grillparzer's later drama.

Sappho's second crime against Mytilene is the violence she inflicts upon Melitta. Although, as is clear from the designation of Melitta and others as slaves, there is a hierarchy of social classes in Mytilene, this does not excuse Sappho's behaviour towards Melitta. Indeed, the fact that Sappho refers to Melitta as '[d]ie Liebste [...] [v]on meinen Kindern' (ll. 740–41) makes her treatment of the latter seem all the more despicable. It is this behaviour that Bauer sees as the crime for which Sappho's death is atonement. By attacking Melitta in the hope of securing her own personal happiness, Sappho demands for herself a position above the law. As a result of this infraction, Phaon accuses Sappho of breaking the law, and in his condemnation of her, he destroys her 'eigentliche Existenz', that is, her existence as an artist, and in doing so he sentences her to death.⁷³

I take issue with Bauer's interpretation of Sappho's suicide for several reasons. First, the former of the crimes mentioned here is surely the more severe: by imposing Phaon upon the whole of Mytilenian society, Sappho rejects that society's very governing principles. In contrast to this, Sappho's attack against Melitta is a minor felony. Second, Bauer uses Phaon's tirade against Sappho (ll. 1685–94) to support his claim that, in essence, Sappho goes to her death guilty of crimes against art. Yet the two lines which precede this denunciation of Sappho the poet seem far more important. Phaon claims that she has become dehumanised, and is no longer capable of compassion: _____

⁷³Bauer. 'Kunst des Dramas', p. 185.

So ist dein Busen denn so ganz entmenscht,
 Daß er sich nicht mehr regt bei Menschenleiden! (ll. 1683–84)

Because it is clear from the very beginning that compassion and human kindness form the basic principles of Sappho's mode of governance, this accusation of heartlessness does more than destroy Sappho's artistic persona: it also invalidates her as a compassionate ruler who can claim to be invested with the authority of those she governs. I therefore suggest that Phaon's denunciation, which can, as Bauer does, be interpreted as a death sentence,⁷⁴ is a punishment for her own renunciation of Mytilene's guiding principles. The scene in which Sappho commits suicide certainly corroborates such an interpretation: she goes to her death with the insignia of the poet and of the ruler: 'Sappho reich gekleidet wie im ersten Aufzuge; den Purpurmantel um die Schultern, den Lorbeer auf dem Haupte, die goldne Leier in der Hand' (p. 368). The death of this compassionate ruler was enforced by the least worthy of all her subjects as a punishment for crimes she would never have committed, had she not elevated him to so lofty a position. And herein lies both Sappho's tragedy, and Grillparzer's sympathy with her. Although Phaon's actions single him out as a base individual, he usurps Sappho's power and authority, destroying in the process a woman far superior to him.

Grillparzer's *Sappho* fits into a larger European context. The Sappho theme was very popular around 1800, when her life and works aroused some serious, as well as some not so serious, scholarly interest. Two other German-language versions of the material emphasise Sappho's romantic relationships, while French versions in the eighteenth century created a political Sappho. De Staël served as a contemporary Sappho figure whose life and writings encouraged a generation of German women writers, and of whose *Corinne* there are echoes in Grillparzer's drama. De Staël, in writing *Corinne*, was herself writing against a trend of Napoleonic Sappho fictions which championed an unpolitical Sappho whose artistic powers were dependent on Phaon. Grillparzer develops existing traditions of a political Sappho, but creates a political leader rather than a revolutionary, and does so in the context of earlier

⁷⁴*Ibid.*, p. 186.

European writings on the social contract. Grillparzer's Sappho is portrayed as a successful and beloved ruler whose power is based on the consent of her citizens. This allows *Sappho* to be seen in the context of *Libussa*, which also shows a consensual female ruler divested of her power by a man.

‘So nennt mich eure Fürstin und ich bin’s’

***Libussa* and the Tragedy of the Extraordinary Woman**

Libussa, for August Sauer Grillparzer’s ‘tiefsinnigstes Werk’, is one of the author’s most studied dramas, and has been approached by a large number of critics from various angles.⁷⁵

Gisela Stein sketches the plurality of themes which, over fifty years ago, had already been linked to the drama when she writes that *Libussa*

has variously been taken to exemplify the contrast of culture and barbarism, the police and the legal state, the “vita activa” and the “vita contemplativa”, the synthesis of Hegelian antitheses, the transcription of Kantian ideas on the development of mankind, the struggle of individualism and collectivism and the path into a great nihilism.⁷⁶

Franz Forster notes that Grillparzer often portrays opposition between a powerful woman and a weak man and argues that *Libussa* is his most interesting examination of the position of women in male-dominated societies.⁷⁷ Developing this argument, *Libussa* and *Primislaus* have often been interpreted as representatives of opposing ideologies or worldviews. Ruth Florack sees this as a facet which is absent from earlier versions of the *Libussa* myth. She argues that the central figures are ‘Repräsentanten gegensätzlicher Normenhorizonte; sie verweisen auf eine gesellschaftliche Grundopposition der Restaurationszeit: Adel und liberales Bürgertum.’⁷⁸ Masato Ikuta writes that, in the relationship between the sexes, Grillparzer sees ‘die Möglichkeit eines weitgehenden Einverständnisses, konstatiert jedoch einen Rest von Unüberbrückbarkeit’.⁷⁹ Despite the ending of the drama, Ritchie Robertson

⁷⁵August Sauer. ‘Über das Zauberische bei Grillparzer. (Drahomira, Medea, Libussa.) Vortrag, gehalten in der Grillparzer-Gesellschaft, am 17. Januar 1899’. *Gesammelte Reden und Aufsätze*. 205–30, p. 222.

⁷⁶Gisela Stein. *The Inspiration Motif in the Works of Franz Grillparzer: With Special Consideration of ‘Libussa’*. The Hague: Martinus Nijhoff, 1955, p. 155.

⁷⁷Forster. ‘Grillparzer’, p. 44.

⁷⁸Ruth Florack. ‘Nachruf auf die Landesmutter oder Vom unaufhaltsamen Aufstieg des Bürgerkönigs: *Libussa*’. *Gerettete Ordnung. Grillparzers Dramen*. Ed. Bernhard Budde and Ulrich Schmidt. Frankfurt/Main: Peter Lang, 1987. 238–54, p. 238.

⁷⁹Ikuta, p. 167.

argues that *Libussa* 'is revolutionary in realising the goals of women's emancipation: some women are educated, and all are equal with men.'⁸⁰

Forster sees *Libussa* as a historical drama because it is a drama about the state.⁸¹ Lorenz suggests several potential historical contexts for the drama: the victory of patriarchal over matriarchal societies; a revision of Prague's founding myth; or as a reference to Napoleon and Marie Luise's politically motivated marriage.⁸² For Ulrich Fülleborn it is not a historical drama, but 'ein Drama der Geschichte überhaupt.'⁸³ Yixu Lü rejects this interpretation and argues that rather than a metaphor for historical change and progress, *Libussa* documents the changes occurring in the nineteenth century and has a specific historical context: bourgeois society's progression towards modernity.⁸⁴

Grillparzer himself was aware of the complexity of the drama and the ideas which surface in it. In 1822, he had already conceived of *Libussa* and *Primislaus* as representatives of opposing world views. He sees *Libussa*'s 'begeisterte Weisheit' as the opposite of *Primislaus*'s 'Verstand', and writes: 'Primislaus ordnet und schlichtet. Libussens Zeit ist vorbei.' (Nr. 981. *HKA* II/viii, p. 7.) He had also decided to include a gendered aspect to the drama. *Libussa*'s 'Frauenherrschaft [*sic*] des Gefühls und der Begeisterung' represents a 'goldenes Zeitalter' which is destroyed by the Bohemians' demands for rights and property law. *Libussa* is forced to take a husband: 'Spottend fragt sie schon: was denn die Herrschaft des Mannes über die Frau rechtfertige?' (1822. Nr. 1035. *HKA* II/viii, p. 20.) This shows that Grillparzer intended for readers and audiences to engage with these topics, and indeed this formulation in his diary is more direct than in the drama itself, possibly suggesting another incident of self-censorship. In winter 1825/26, he wrote: 'Das Ganze läuft Gefahr

⁸⁰Ritchie Robertson. 'On the Threshold of Patriarchy: Brentano, Grillparzer, and the Bohemian Amazons'. *German Life and Letters* 46 (1993). 203–19, p. 218.

⁸¹Forster. 'Grillparzer', p. 47.

⁸²Lorenz. 'Ambivalenz und Erkenntnis', pp. 52–53.

⁸³Ulrich Fülleborn. "'Der Gang der Zeit von Anfang'". *Frauenherrschaft als literarischer Mythos bei Kleist, Brentano und Grillparzer*. *Kleist-Jahrbuch 1986*. Ed. Hans Joachim Kreutzer. Berlin: Erich Schmidt, 1986. 63–80, p. 68.

⁸⁴Yixu Lü. *Frauenherrschaft im Drama des frühen 19. Jahrhunderts*. Munich: iudicium, 1993, p. 104.

aus dem Kreise der menschlichen Gefühle hinaus in das Reich der bloßen Ideen zu spielen.’ (Nr. 1412. *HKA* II/viii, p. 184) He also worried that his attempts to portray the idea of Primislaus’s superior endurance was unsuccessful, especially since, as he wrote,

Das weibliche Geschlecht thut es dem männlichen in allem gleich, wenigstens in einzelnen Fällen. Wissen und Verstand, Muth und Entschlossenheit, alle diese Gaben besitzt, in seinen Erlesenen, auch das sogenannte schwächere Geschlecht, alle diese Gaben besitzt auch Libussa, Primislaus steht ihr sogar in mancher davon nach.

As well as offering insight into the creation of *Libussa*, this statement offers perhaps the clearest expression in Grillparzer’s writing of the potential equality of the sexes. In 1831, he was still frustrated with the plethora of ideas in the drama. He found the plan bad, and the drama as a whole uninteresting: ‘Bloßes Gedankenzeug, nicht einmal streng abgegränzt, beinahe ohne Gefühls-, wenigstens ohne Leidenschafts-Motive.’ (Nr. 1930. *HKA* II/ix, p. 45.) Grillparzer ordered the destruction of *Libussa* in his will of 1848 because it had been written ‘in Zeiten des härtesten Geistesdruckes, in langen Zwischenräumen, mehr um mich zu beschäftigen, als mit eigentlicher Hingebung und Begeisterung’. It was supposed to establish ‘den Gedankengang im allgemeinen’ for him. (Nr. 684. *HKA* III/iii, p. 42). This means that Grillparzer not only did not want *Libussa* to be performed after his death, but that he did not write it with performance in mind.

Heinrich Laube was one of the few people to read the entire manuscript of *Libussa* before Grillparzer’s death. In 1853, he wrote to Grillparzer and praised the drama’s ‘innere Reife’ (Nr. 768. *HKA* III/iii, p. 112). He also saw that it was a drama about the social roles of the sexes, and how these play out on a national level:

Die Didaktik derselben [...] wächst so natürlich aus dem Stoffe und verschlingt Mannes- und Weibesbestimmung mit Volks- und Staatsleben so eigenthümlich, daß das Ganze wie ein völlig Neues anmuthet.

This shows that at least some contemporaries were aware that Grillparzer’s dramas discussed issues of women’s social position. Laube also comprehended the drama’s complexity: ‘Es hat zuviel Gehalt, als daß es leichthin einstudirt und abgespielt werden

könnte'; the actors 'müssen den Inhalt verdaut und nicht bloß hinabgeschlungen haben.' This would mean giving the actors a long time to prepare, and Laube, writing in April, suggested a performance in the autumn at the earliest. Laube also agreed with Grillparzer's assessment of the drama, namely that it would be an 'Ehrenerfolg' rather than a 'rauschender Erfolg'. Grillparzer must have expressed concerns regarding the political nature of the drama, perhaps because it features a Czech national foundation myth at a time when ethnic concerns were prominent in multinational Austria,⁸⁵ but Laube brushes these aside, writing that 'politisch kein Schatten von Bedenken darin ist', because Grillparzer's conception was 'so hoch und weit, daß es ganz unverfänglich bleibt.' (Nr. 768. *HKA* III/iii, p. 113)

Libussa, like *Sappho* before it, was written as part of an existing literary tradition. Grillparzer was familiar with a number of German-language versions of the *Libussa* material, as well as with Vaclav Hajek's *Böhmische Chronik*, which was his most important source. Frank and Pörnbacher identify works by J. K. A. Musäus, Clemens Brentano, Karl Egon Ebert, and J. C. Bernard as sources for Grillparzer's *Libussa* (*SW* II, p. 1254). A brief overview of these sources will show that Grillparzer's introduction of *Libussa* as a regent in accordance with social contract theory was his addition to the tradition.

The *Böhmische Chronik* became increasingly influential for German and Czech writers from the end of the eighteenth century onwards: Czechs, wanting to construct a national identity, found in Hajek a history of their people, while German literature in Bohemia used the *Chronik* to oppose both conflict between the constituent nationalities and centralisation concentrated in Vienna.⁸⁶ This was part of a larger trend in which German writers actively received Slavic literature.⁸⁷ Herder first recognised the value of the *Libussa* myth, and

⁸⁵For more on Grillparzer and the Austrian Empire's national groups, see for example: Wilhelm Bücher. *Grillparzers Verhältnis zur Politik seiner Zeit. Ein Beitrag zur Würdigung seines Schaffens und seiner Persönlichkeit*. Marburg: N. G. Elwert'sche Verlagsbuchhandlung, 1913; Kostka. 'Grillparzer and the East'; Peter Kuranda. 'Grillparzer und die Politik des Vormärzes'. *JdGG* 28 (1926). 1–21; Gerhart Reckzeh. *Grillparzer und die Slaven*. Weimar: Alexander Duncker, 1929.

⁸⁶Florack, p. 238.

⁸⁷Emanuel Grigorovitz. *Libussa in der deutschen Litteratur*. Berlin: Alexander Duncker, 1901, p. 9.

Musäus popularised it in Germany.⁸⁸ Not only Grillparzer, but also Clemens Brentano and Carl Egon Ebert, whose works are discussed below, found their source material in Hajek.⁸⁹ Hajek explains how Libussa became the Czechs' leader and judge in simple terms. On the death of their father, Libussa and her two sisters asked the people whom they wanted as ruler. The people replied that the sisters should draw lots, which they did, and Libussa was accepted as ruler. Some Czechs, disbelieving that a woman could defend her people, demanded a male ruler, but they were convinced by others that Libussa was indeed the best possible ruler, and so they reaffirmed their allegiance to her. These same fears resurfaced later, and Libussa agreed that a man would rule in a stricter fashion; she promised to marry the man the people chose. The people chose Primislaus, and Libussa kept her word. Primislaus 'lehrete alles Volck seine Rechte [...] und machte diese halb wilde Leute seiner Herrschung unterthan.'⁹⁰ When Libussa knew that she was close to death, she '[t]hät ihrem Volcke also große Danksagung daß sie ihr Treu und Gehorsam geleistet, bittende, sie wolten ihrem Herrn und Fürsten dergleichen thun'.⁹¹ Hajek also deals with the period after Libussa's death, which was marked by conflict between the sexes. The women, led by Wlasta, one of Libussa's servants, feared that Libussa's death meant that their lot would be much harder, and they revolted. A seven-year war ensued, which the women lost despite some victories in battle.

Johann Karl Augustus Musäus, in his *Volksmärchen der Deutschen* (1782–86), similarly pays little attention to the way in which Libussa becomes ruler of the Bohemians. He writes that Libussa 'nahm mit dem bescheidenen Erröten, welches den weiblichen Reizen den höchsten Ausdruck von Grazie mittheilt, die Herrschaft über das Volk an', and that 'der

⁸⁸*Ibid.*, p. 10.

⁸⁹Udo Köster. 'Über das Verhältnis von Mythos und Geschichte am Beispiel der Bearbeitungen des Libussa-Stoffes bei Brentano, Ebert, Mundt und Grillparzer'. *Romantik. Mythos und Moderne*. Ed. Ulrich Wergin and Timo Ogrzal. Würzburg: Königshausen & Neumann, 2013. 163–80, p. 163.

⁹⁰Vaclav Hajek. *Böhmische Chronik*. Trans. Joannem Sandel. Leipzig: Fritschen, 1718, p. 17.

⁹¹*Ibid.*, p. 23.

Zauber ihres wonniglichen Anblicks machte jedes Herz ihr untertan.'⁹² Libussa 'saß auf dem Throne wie die Göttin Themis mit Schwert und Waage, und sprach das Recht ohne Ansehen der Person mit untrüglichem Urteil.'⁹³ Primislaus also features in Musäus's version, although in a less important role than in Hajek or Grillparzer, and was 'ein rechtes Muster eines folgsamen unterwürfigen Ehegemahls, der seiner Herzogin weder das Hausregiment noch das Landesregiment streitig machte.'⁹⁴

In 1792, *Die Töchter Kroks. Böhmens Fürstinnen* was published anonymously. The author's approach seems somewhat confused, and it is unclear whether he is approaching the subject matter as historical fact or myth. His declared aim is adding to the work of the 'Geschichtsschreiber', who, he claims, do not pay enough attention to the private lives of Libussa and her sisters. According to *Die Töchter Kroks*, Libussa was tasked with governing Bohemia because the gods wanted it so. But this is not exactly a sign of the gods' approval, for as Libussa says, they did not want her sisters to be burdened with ruling, but free to do 'was mehr als herrschen ist'.⁹⁵ The author presents a more developed and complex relationship between Libussa and her subjects than in the texts already discussed. Libussa rules because she has been chosen by the gods, but with the people's best interests at heart:

[Die Götter] haben mir das Versprechen gethan, so ich nach ihren Willen keusch und recht lebe, so wollen sie mich stets lehren, was des Volks Wohl ist. Des Volks Wohl aber ist mein Wunsch und mein Wille.⁹⁶

Libussa links the gods and the people, for in obeying her, she says they obey the gods. In what could be seen as a precursor to Grillparzer's later intertwining of the myth with social contract theory, Libussa also asks the people, 'Wollt ihr dem euch unterwerfen, was ich in ihren Namen für Recht spreche?' The people agree to the conditions which Libussa suggests, and so she becomes ruler through a combination of divine revelation and popular support.

⁹²Johann Karl August Musäus. 'Libussa'. *Volksmärchen der Deutschen*. Munich: Winkler, 1961. 331–90, p. 360.

⁹³*Ibid.*, p. 365.

⁹⁴*Ibid.*, p. 389.

⁹⁵Anonymous. *Die Töchter Kroks Böheims Fürstinnen. Eine Geschichte des achten Jahrhunderts*. Erster Theil. Hamburg: Benjamin Gottlob Hoffmann, 1792, p. 158.

⁹⁶*Ibid.*, p. 164.

In Joseph Carl Bernard's *Libussa* (1823), the eponymous protagonist is already ruler at the beginning of the opera, and no real information is given regarding the relationship between ruler and subjects. As in *Die Töchter Kroks*, here Libussa also rules because she has been chosen by the gods.⁹⁷ However, her nobles are not happy with the situation, and Domaslav in particular 'nützt' [] jede Gelegenheit, des Weibes Herrschaft dem Volke verhaßt zu machen, bis dieses endlich einen Herrn mit Ungestüm verlangt.⁹⁸ The animosity of the nobles towards female rule has been amplified compared with its appearance in Hajek, and appears to stem from a much more virulent misogyny:

Ihren Thron will ich erwerben,
Sollt' ich drüber selbst verderben,
Und zu meinen Füßen
Soll die Stolze büßen
Ihren Übermüth!⁹⁹

Clemens Brentano's *Die Gründung Prags* (1815) was another adaptation prior to Grillparzer's. Emanuel Grigorovitz argues that Brentano's creativity in adapting the myth means that Grillparzer, despite the freedoms he took in relation to the myth, cannot deny his dependence on this forebear.¹⁰⁰ As in *Die Töchter Kroks* and Bernard's *Libussa*, Brentano's Libussa is also a ruler by divine intervention. Although Libussa's subjects welcome her as their ruler, Brentano does not detail the relationship as closely as Grillparzer does. However, his Libussa, like Bernard's, sees links between divine will and the will of the people, and claims to stand 'in des Volks, der Götter Schutz'.¹⁰¹ These versions of the myth, in which divine intervention dictates that Libussa take up the reins of government, represent an alteration to the myth as it is related by Hajek, and provide an interesting contrast to Grillparzer's later innovation, in which Libussa rules thanks to chance, but explicitly formulates a methodology of government in which her people acquiesce.

⁹⁷Joseph Carl Bernard. *Libussa. Romantische Oper in drey Aufzügen*. Vienna: Wallishausser, 1823, p. 55.

⁹⁸*Ibid.*, pp. 8–9.

⁹⁹*Ibid.*, p. 50.

¹⁰⁰Grigorovitz, p. 10.

¹⁰¹Clemens Brentano. *Die Gründung Prags. Ein historisch-romantisches Drama*. Pest: Hartleben, 1815, p. 140.

Hajek's *Chronik* mentions the wars between the sexes which followed Libussa's death. These wars also feature in *Die Töchter Kroks*, where Wlasta, one of Libussa's servants, tries to make herself queen. But it is Karl Egon Ebert's *Wlasta. Böhmischnationales Heldengedicht* (1829) which most fully utilises this aspect of the myth. His epic poem takes place in a post-Libussa age, where women are dominated by men and long for the return of the matriarchy:

Und wahrlich, Nacht ist's jetzo, und Tag ist's einst gewesen,
Da noch Libussa herrschte, vom Himmel auserlesen,
Von einem Gott erwählet, der gleich vertheilt die Rechte,
Und der nicht fragt beim Geben: von welcherlei Geschlechte?¹⁰²

Here again we see the idea of Libussa as a ruler by divine right, rather than by the people's will. Libussa had taught the Bohemian women the arts of fighting and riding, and let them hunt game 'wenn wir vor Kampflust schäumten.' The Bohemian men were sidelined under Libussa's reign, and were cowed by the women's power. But the situation was reversed after Libussa's death, and their new state of subjugation leads the women to a revolt against their male rulers. Ebert portrays a number of battles between the men and women of Bohemia in which both sides show bravery and endurance as well as brutality and violence. Despite some successes, Wlasta and her army of maidens are defeated, and patriarchal order is restored.

These adaptations of the Libussa myth which pre-date Grillparzer's version demonstrate two important points. First, that prior to Grillparzer, there had been no detailed examination of the link between Libussa and her subjects. Writers justify her rule by invoking divine intervention, or luck, or a combination of the two. In the case of *Die Töchter Kroks*, we even have a ruler whose position is explicitly welcomed by the people. However, in none of these works are an explicit contract or a declaration of intention formulated, as in Grillparzer's drama. This then is Grillparzer's important addition to the myth, which will be examined shortly. Second, by comparing Grillparzer's works with those which preceded it, it is clear that, although he mentioned 'Jungferkrieg' in an 1822 note on *Libussa* (Nr. 1035. *HKA* II/viii,

¹⁰²Karl Egon Ebert. *Wlasta. Böhmischnationales Heldengedicht in drei Büchern*. Prague: Calve, 1829, p. 15.

p. 20), to a large extent he excised the Amazon material from his version, as Udo Köster has previously noted. Köster sees this as a positive step, for the Amazon material brings with it negative connotations:

Eine Geschichte der Amazonen ist immer auch die Geschichte ihrer Vernichtung, und die grundsätzliche Delegitimierung der Amazonen [...] macht es unmöglich, das alternative Prinzip einer weiblichen Herrschaft mit positiven Konnotationen darzustellen.¹⁰³

Grillparzer's decision to end his drama with Libussa's death could, however, also have been motivated by the fear that portrayals of graphic violence meted out by women would anger the censors.

Although Grillparzer's *Libussa* deals with a number of complex issues, as noted above, its content can be summarised simply enough. On the death of King Krokus, one of his three daughters, Libussa, Kascha and Tetka, must assume his crown. All three are engaged in supernatural practices and live isolated from the world. When her sisters refuse, Libussa accepts and institutes a new political regime. Her subjects are dissatisfied with her rule and demand she take a husband. She chooses Primislaus, a peasant who saved her from drowning and who brings with him ideas for the creation of a modern and industrialised state. Estranged from everything which was familiar to her, Libussa dies when making a prophecy during the foundation of Primislaus's new town, Prague.

I argue here that Libussa's reign should be seen as a manifestation of the ideas propounded by social contract theory. My interpretation is therefore partly in agreement and partly at odds with those of other scholars who have already written about the new era which Libussa seeks to initiate. Walter Weiss notes that Libussa represents a different world order than the patriarchal one in which she lives.¹⁰⁴ Lü argues that Libussa justifies her social reorganisation 'lediglich mit ihrer Zugehörigkeit zum weiblichen Geschlecht und mit dem Wesen der Frau: Milde und Sanftmut, die jede Art von Zwang und Gewalt verabscheut.'¹⁰⁵ This interpretation ignores the content of Libussa's two speeches in Act I, which show

¹⁰³Köster, p. 180.

¹⁰⁴Weiss, p. 240.

¹⁰⁵Lü, *Frauenherrschaft*, p. 112.

Libussa's reign to be founded primarily on her people's acquiescence. Fülleborn notes that Libussa detests violence, but his claim that her government should be seen 'offensichtlich als die volle Verwirklichung von Freiheit, Gleichheit und Brüderlichkeit [...], d. h. der Ideen der Französischen Revolution' fails to take into account Libussa's preeminent position.¹⁰⁶ Lorenz also sees Libussa's polity in the context of the French Revolution, and argues that Libussa takes an interest in her subjects' lives and sees herself more as *prima inter pares* than as a ruler.¹⁰⁷ Frederic Coenen misunderstands the nature of Libussa's polity when he calls it 'rather hazy communism'.¹⁰⁸ Anna Kuhn warns against labelling Libussa's state a matriarchy and suggests 'Frauenherrschaft' as a more suitable alternative.¹⁰⁹ Julia Neissl agrees, as matriarchy would mean 'eine Umkehrung des Patriarchats [...]: also ein System mit Hierarchien und Unterdrückung der Männlichkeit. Dies passiert auf keinen Fall'.¹¹⁰ Neissl's take is surely accurate, for while Libussa is a woman ruler, and while she seeks to change the society she inherits from her father, there is no indication whatsoever that men *are* oppressed, even if the male nobles *feel* that they are suffering at her hands.

From the beginning of the drama on, it is clear that the three sisters live in elected separation from the world. In the second scene, in the sisters' castle, the stage directions indicate an 'aufgeschlagenes großes Buch' lying on the table.¹¹¹ Dobra and Swartka, the sisters' maids, display their familiarity with their mistresses' interests as they discuss astrology and interpret the movements of the stars as prophecies of Krokus's death. This stands in contrast to the simplicity of Primislaus's environment, as portrayed in the opening scene, and as such is an early indication of his and Libussa's differing origins. The arrival of the peers of the realm with news of Krokus's death gives the maids an opportunity to

¹⁰⁶Fülleborn, p. 70.

¹⁰⁷Dagmar C. G. Lorenz. 'Grillparzers Libussa: Eine Neubewertung'. *JdGG* 3. Folge 14 (1980). 33–47, p. 39.

¹⁰⁸Coenen. *Franz Grillparzer's Portraiture of Men*, p. 79.

¹⁰⁹Anna K. Kuhn. 'Myth, Matriarchy, *Männerphantasie*: Rereading Grillparzer's *Libussa*'. *Playing for Stakes: German-Language Drama in Social Context. Essays in Honor of Herbert Lederer*. Oxford; Providence, RI: Berg, 1994. 139–60, p. 158.

¹¹⁰Julia Neissl. 'Frauen, die das Geschick des Staates lenken. Geschlechterpositionen bei "Libussa" und "Penthesilea"'. *JdGG* 3. Folge 20 (1997–2002). 240–77, p. 263.

¹¹¹Grillparzer. 'Libussa'. *HKA* I/vi. 5–154, p. 12.

emphasise the gulf that separates the sisters from the rest of the Bohemian populace. Biwoy, one of the peers, demands that the sisters be roused, and Dobra responds by setting up the wladiken as savages: 'Am Tor der Einsicht tobt und lärmt der Wilde,/ Hört er am liebsten doch der eignen Worte Klang.' (ll. 133–34) The sisters, then, not only live separated from the world, but see themselves as distinct from, and superior to other Bohemians.

The sisters' world before Libussa's ascension to the throne is a metaphor for the domestic sphere in which Grillparzer's female contemporaries were supposed to find their life's meaning. The sisters find fulfilment in the narrow confines of their castle and in their engagement with potions and prophecies; nothing could be further from their minds than the assumption of temporal rule in their father's footsteps. Both Kascha and Tetka are exclusively concerned with their metaphysical practices, and both refuse to accept the Bohemian crown because they are wedded to the preternatural. Kascha, refusing, highlights her interest in magic and nature, and repudiates the value of earthly goods (ll. 209–14). Tetka rejects the importance and validity of an earthly reign and criticises the practicalities of *Realpolitik*. No less than Kascha, she sees the trappings of human society as inferior to the knowledge and insight available to her in the natural world (ll. 220–23). They are equally confident that Libussa will have no interest in succeeding their father, and attempt to warn the peers who have come to find Krokus's heir.

When Libussa finds her way back to the castle, she reveals the guilt she feels for leaving her dying father and declares her intention to mourn him. Kascha is quick to point out that one of their number will be excluded from their mourning, and when Libussa asks whom, Kascha replies: 'Die, welcher obliegt mehr als [Krokus] beklagen:/ Zu folgen ihm in seiner harten Pflicht.' (ll. 326–27) Libussa quickly voices her unwillingness to become ruler, but Kascha points out that she and Tetka have already declined, and suggests they draw lots to decide. Each sister will put her belt into a bowl, and the sister whose belt is the last to be blindly drawn will take the crown. They soon discover, however, that Libussa's trinket has been taken from her belt, which she realises is Primislaus's doing. Kascha therefore ostracises

and criticises Libussa, and wonders at her behaviour: 'Die Nacht im Wald, in Bauerntracht gehüllt,/ Verloren deines Vaters Angedenken.' (ll. 373–74) Libussa defends herself, saying, 'Mein Vater lebt, ein Lebender, in mir,/ So lang ich atme lebt auch sein Gedächtnis.' (ll. 375–76) Kascha paints Libussa as a frivolous, careless young girl who does not properly love her father: 'Die Liebe knüpft sich gern an feste Zeichen,/ Der Leichtsinn liebt was schwankend so wie er.' (ll. 377–78) Kascha decides that Libussa's loss disqualifies her from their circle and that she cannot partake in their draw. Libussa, who did not relish the idea of ruling, accepts Kascha's decision defiantly:

Ich soll nicht losen? Und ich will es nicht.
 Wo sind die Männer aus der Czechen Rat?
 Den Vater will ich ehren durch die Tat,
 Mögt ihr das Los mit dumpfen Brüten fragen:
 Ich will sein Amt und seine Krone tragen. (ll. 387–91)

Although Libussa is very impassioned, it is hard to see her decision in an entirely positive light. Much as Hero's decision to enter the temple was less a positive affirmation of the joys of monasticism, and more a thorough rejection of the secular world outside, so Libussa's decision, well justified though it is, seems motivated more by anger at Kascha's words than by genuine desire to rule. Indeed, considering Libussa's initial rejection of the role, and her only grudging later acceptance, it is difficult to agree with Ulrich Fülleborn who writes that Libussa accepts the role 'spontan, in einem bewußten Akt selbständiger Entscheidung' and becomes '[d]as moderne, in Freiheit verantwortlich handelnde Individuum'.¹¹² Hans Gmür is closer to the truth when he writes that Libussa's sense of duty makes her assume the role of monarch, even though she knows that her powers will atrophy in contact with the world.¹¹³

Libussa's decision was made possible by her experiences outside the castle and with Primislaus, which act as a catalyst and make her more willing to separate herself from her sisters. In a second speech, she reiterates the importance which her recent experience of the external world has for her:

¹¹²Fülleborn, p. 69.

¹¹³Gmür, p. 15.

Denk' ich von heut
 Mich wieder hier in eurer stillen Wohnung
 Beschäftigt mit—weiß ich doch kaum womit—
 Mit Mitteln zu den Mitteln eines Zwecks,
 Mit Mond und Sternen, Kräutern, Lettern, Zahlen,
 Dünkt's allermeist einförmig mir und kahl.
 [...]

 Mit Menschen Mensch sein dünkt von heut mir Lust,
 Des Mitgefühles Pulse fühl' ich schlagen,
 Drum will ich dieser Menschen Krone tragen. (ll. 396–401, 404–06)

Libussa not only takes on the crown, but delivers a harsh criticism of her sisters' world. Kascha and Tetka are so removed from the world that their spells and prophecies are but 'Mitteln zu den Mitteln eines Zwecks'. She also rejects the validity of their mourning, which is nothing but 'dumpfe[s] Brüten', and decides to honour her father 'durch die Tat'.

Before agreeing to succeed her father, Libussa makes it clear that she sees herself as a ruler within the terms of the social contract. At the end of Act I, Libussa explains the kind of relationship she wishes to have with her subjects. She tells the kneeling representatives to stand, which is clearly a rejection of their submission. She intends to move away from her father's method of government towards one in which she is not so much ruler as advisor:

Es hielt euch fest des Vaters strenge Rechte
 Und beugt' euch in heilsam weises Joch.
 Ich bin ein Weib und, ob ich es vermöchte,
 So widert mir die starre Härte doch.
 Wollt ihr nun mein als einer Frau gedenken,
 Lenksam dem Zaum, so daß kein Stachel not,
 Will freudig ich die Ruhmesbahn euch lenken,
 Ein überhört's wär' mein letzt' Gebot. (ll. 427–34)

Domaslav happily accepts Libussa's offer, on his behalf and in the name of those he commands: 'Nimm unsern Schwur darauf und unsrer Untertanen' (l. 442). Libussa's reaction is to ban the word 'Untertan' (l. 443) and in doing so further develop her concept of ruling:

In Zukunft herrscht nur Eines hier im Land:
 Das kindliche Vertraun. Und nennt ihrs Macht,
 Nennt ihr ein Opfer das sich selbst gebracht,
 Die Willkür, die sich allzu frei geschienen

Und, eigner Herrschaft bang, beschloß zu dienen.
 Wollt ihr als Brüder leben, eines Sinns,
 So nennt mich eure Fürstin und ich bins;
 Doch sollt' ich Zwei'n ein zweifach Recht erdenken,
 Wollt' eher ich an euch euch selbst als Sklaven schenken.
 Seid ihrs zufrieden so? (ll. 444–53)

These two speeches are a more explicit indication of the influence of social contract theory than is offered in *Sappho*. As Robertson has already argued, Libussa determines to rule only with the approval of the Bohemian people: 'So nennt mich eure Fürstin und ich bins'.¹¹⁴ Libussa sees her role as a guide and expects the people to live peacefully side by side. She does not want to use violence, so insists that the Bohemians must be 'lenksam dem Zaum', i.e. willing to accept her decisions. The second speech in particular makes clear that any power Libussa enjoys is only possible because it is willingly given to her by her subjects. The people choose Libussa—they are 'ein Opfer das sich selbst gebracht'—and they do so because they would not have been able to cope with absolute freedom. Libussa makes her reign contingent on her ability to rule fairly and promises to step down if she should fail to do so. At the end of the second speech Libussa asks if the people are satisfied, and all present reply in unison: 'Wir wollen!' (l. 453)

As far as I am aware, only one critic, Ruth Florack, has recognised the influence of Rousseau's *Du contrat social* on *Libussa*, although Florack sees Primislaus as its voice in the drama. This approach ignores these speeches by Libussa, which evidence the influence of Rousseau, Locke and Hobbes, and which form the theoretical basis for her reign. It is perhaps this failure to grasp the influence of social contract in the foundation of Libussa's reign which leads Florack to criticise Libussa so harshly. Florack criticises Libussa for propagating a class-based society, even though this is a solution which has the explicit approval of the populace.¹¹⁵ Indeed, Rousseau supported aristocratic government in his work. Florack writes that Act II stresses 'die Demonstration der ums Schicksal eines jeden

¹¹⁴Robertson. 'Threshold of Patriarchy', p. 215.

¹¹⁵Florack, p. 240.

wissenden und besorgten Landesmutter', and that the people are not individualised with names but interchangeable figures who represent different aspects of communal life.¹¹⁶ As to the first objection, Florack seems to be implying that this pastoral part of Libussa's role is a mere charade, which does not seem to be the case. This is confirmed by the fact that Libussa addresses at least two of her subjects directly and by name: she asks Brom how he is getting on with his wife and if they are reconciled with each other (ll. 616–17), and asks Risbak whether he has accepted his daughter's suitor (ll. 640–41).

Libussa's entrance in Act II is reminiscent of Sappho's arrival in Mytilene. Libussa uses a horticultural metaphor to explain her perception of her role:

Was euch die Gärtnerin mit nächster Sorge,
Verteilend hilfreich Naß und Wärm' und Schatten,
Kann nützlich sein, das ist euch ja gewiß. (ll. 600–02)

Libussa gives thanks for her people's respect and fondness. Sappho also thanks her subjects on her arrival in Mytilene, so perhaps it is a recognition of their mutually agreed reigns. Part of Libussa's role, as she sees it, involves ensuring that the work is not being forgotten. The discussion among her people indicates that there is a more communal approach to life and that wealth is shared rather than concentrated in the hands of the elite. So, for example, one of the returned workers tells an old man, 'Wir pflügten heut dein Feld' (l. 514), and is thanked for his efforts. Another man, who protests his daughter's romantic relationship on the grounds that she is rich but her suitor 'hat kaum zu nagen' (l. 530), is rebuked by others and told to forget the old ways, for money is no longer the driving force of Bohemian society:

Was kaufst du um dein Geld da wo nichts käuflich ist,
Das Land ein breiter Tisch, an dem, wer hungert, ißt.
Deshalb der Burschen Not, der Tochter dich erbarme,
Er hat was ewig reich: ein Herz und rüst'ge Arme. (ll. 535–38)

The scenes at the beginning of Act II, however, show that there is by no means universal delight at Libussa's innovations. An old man and a younger one discuss Libussa's reign, the elder fondly remembering Krokus who was a 'Held' and respected men's social position:

¹¹⁶*Ibid.*, pp. 244, 246.

'[Er] ließ den Mann am Herde nicht vertöfeln' (l. 485). He clearly resents the 'unmasculine' emphasis of Libussa's reign which stresses peace and harmony rather than war. The younger man, however, praises Libussa and is thankful that peace has brought stability: 'der Löffel hat noch keinen Mund zerrissen/ [. . .]/ Ich lobe mir den Frieden.' (ll. 488, 492)

In addition, over the whole of Libussa's reign hovers the spectre of state-imposed surveillance, which Neissl has already written about: 'Das Gesetz des kindlichen Vertrauens (V. 445) entpuppt sich als Grundlage für ein rigides Überwachungssystem, dessen Kontrolle die Aufgabe von Wlasta ist.'¹¹⁷ Early in Act II, the stage directions give an idea of the threatening and pedantic nature of this surveillance: 'Ein Gewaffneter und Wlasta mit Brustharnisch und Helm an seiner Seite haben, wie beaufsichtigend, die Menge durchschritten' (p. 39). The armed man tells a group of people to keep their noise down, and later Wlasta makes sure that the workers leave punctually for their shift. The presence of Wlasta encourages the barkeeper to refuse alcohol to those who are already intoxicated because he fears trouble and remarks, 'Die Fürstin liebt das nicht.' (l. 510) Wlasta also questions those playing a board game. A player answers that no money is lost or won, and Wlasta replies, 'Ihr tut ganz recht, wollt ihr die Fürstin euch gewogen' (l. 521). The presence of this surveillance team does not negate the values expounded by Libussa in Act I, for the people agreed to be led by her. However, the nature of her reign belies her self-proclaimed aversion to violence. While Wlasta is not violent, she is part of Libussa's coercive apparatus which represents a constant *threat* of violence. Hagl-Catling sees Wlasta as 'das nach außen projizierte Bild von Libussas Fähigkeit, auch hart zu sein.'¹¹⁸ Libussa's rule is different from her father's not because it is bereft of strict rules, but because those strict rules are dictated by Libussa with the consent of the people.

If the common people benefit from the equality ushered in by Libussa, the nobles are dissatisfied by their former serfs' gains. Lapak, observing the masses, remarks, 'Man ist

¹¹⁷Neissl, p. 259.

¹¹⁸Hagl-Catling, p. 206.

recht glücklich hier' (l. 544), and Domaslav replies, 'Und Jedermann ist satt'. Yet they are annoyed that the common people are no worse off than themselves, a situation which they feel undermines their standing. Although they praise Libussa—'Ah, sie ist der Frauen Zierde!' (l. 549)—they do not approve of the new order. Lapak phrases his displeasure in terms of the new prominence of women: 'Die Weiber, dächt' ich, stellt sie allzuhoch.' (l. 560) Lapak and Domaslav hesitantly agree that Libussa, in her wisdom, knows what she is doing, but Biwoy gives voice to the fears we can reasonably assume they all share:

Hör' ich die Klugen sprechen als im Fieber.
 Verkehrt ist all dies Wesen, eitler Tand,
 Und los aus seinen Fügen unser Land.
 Weiber führen Waffen und raten und richten,
 Der Bauer ein Herr, der Herr mit nichten. (ll. 570–74)

Biwoy calls Libussa's *Frauenherrschaft* a thing of fantasy, and fears for the country's safety should it come under attack. Although Lapak and Domaslav agree that Biwoy is exaggerating, they see a kernel of truth in his assessment, and Domaslav concludes: 'Daß ichs denn grad heraus nach meiner Einsicht deute,/ Dem Ganzen fehlt ein Mann, ein Mann an ihrer Seite' (ll. 583–84). Each suggests the others as possible candidates for Libussa's hand, but Biwoy is sceptical and asks: 'Doch fragt darnach das zarte Frauenbild?' (l. 590) Domaslav ignores his concern and says they should all present themselves as potential husbands and let Libussa choose one of them.

Libussa rejects the three noblemen because they fail to solve the riddle she sets them. At the same time, however, a man who was unsatisfied by Libussa's judgment in a boundary dispute, and who had already demanded the right to a male adjudicator, again raises his voice and demands a male ruler: 'Ich will mein Recht. O wäre hier ein Mann,/ Der ernst entschiede wo es geht um Ernstes.' (ll. 958–59) Libussa agrees and says that a male ruler is necessary because she cannot be tough: 'Den Zügel führ' ich wohl mit weicher Hand,/ Doch hier bedarfs des Sporns, der scharfen Gerte' (ll. 963–64). Rather than the mild guidance offered by Libussa's metaphorical bridle, a man would lead with the whip. However, her decision to send for Primislaus is motivated not only by matters of state, but also by matters

of the heart. Earlier in Act II, it becomes clear that Libussa's role, and her estrangement from her sisters, has caused her to feel a deep loneliness:

Wer einsam wirkt spricht in ein leeres All,
Was Antwort schien ist eigner Widerhall.
Ha Wlasta komm! Ist irgend ein Geschäft,
Ein Mühen, eine Sorge, eine Qual,
Daß ich bevölkre meines Innern Wüste? (ll. 687–91)

Unlike Sappho, Libussa decides to raise Primislaus to a high position not only because of her private feelings; she does so for the good of the state, and with the explicit support of her subjects. However, because she acknowledges her loneliness and her admiration for Primislaus, it is obvious that her decision serves both political and private ends.

Although Libussa acquiesces in calls for a male leader, she clearly states her opposition to any change in the way the state is run. She accuses the people of being deaf to the reason she attempted to preach, and predicts that Primislaus will institute 'Recht, das Recht zugleich und Unrecht/ Und statt Vernunft gibt er euch ein Gesetz' (ll. 100–01), and turn the state into a capitalist enterprise in which the individual is no longer valued: 'Bis ihr für euch nicht mehr, für Andre seid.' (l. 1003) Libussa words are bitter, and she warns the people that, once they have decided to elect Primislaus, there will be no return to the way things were, nor will there be recourse to her. In Act III, Libussa again shows how opposed she is to the idea of a husband. She voices her desire to return to her sisters, and declares it degrading that she should be forced to marry and spend her life among the common people. She believes that Primislaus should feel honoured because she remembered him kindly. So eager is Libussa to avoid marriage that she even suggests that Wlasta should marry and that Wlasta's children could rule. Nevertheless, Libussa shows herself willing to accept Primislaus as a husband, but rails against the people's demands for a male ruler:

Ein Mann, ein Mann! Ich seh' es endlich kommen.
Die Schwestern mein sie lesen in den Sternen,
Und Wlasta führt die Waffen wie ein Krieger,
Ich selber ordne schlichtend dieses Land;
Doch sind wir Weiber nur, armsel' ge Weiber;

Indes sie streiten, zanken, weinerhitzt,
 Das Wahre übersehn in hast'ger Torheit
 Und nur nach fernen Nebeln geizt ihr Blick,
 Sind aber Männer, Männer, Herrn des All! (ll. 1311–19)

Libussa here again questions the patriarchal order, as she did at the beginning of Act II: 'Fühlt sich dein Knecht als Mensch dem Herren ähnlich,/ Warum soll sich dein Weib denn minder fühlen?' (ll. 629–30) This is a powerful statement of female self-determination, capability and independence which echoes Hero's words.

Primislaus's views on women show Libussa's concerns to be justified. He is a staunch representative of the patriarchal order and 'an unreconstructed male chauvinist' who makes no secret of his belief in male social dominance.¹¹⁹ When Primislaus and Libussa meet for the first time, Libussa refuses to reveal her identity to him. As she leaves, he takes the ornament from her belt as he wants to know who she is. By doing so, he appropriates an important sign of Libussa's identity. Without it, she is rejected by her sisters and forced to accede to the throne. In his monologue at the beginning of Act III, Primislaus uses the analogy of an apiary to illustrate the degrading nature that female rule has on men. He rejects the idea of asking for Libussa's hand because receiving such an honour from a woman would damage his dignity and be contrary to natural male dominance: 'Denn es sei nicht der Mann des Weibes Mann,/ Das Weib des Mannes Weib, so stehts zu Recht.' (ll. 1028–29) Primislaus sees male-female relationships exemplified in marriage, and female rule as an inversion of the natural order. It is for men to be dominant, to choose, and for women to accept their subordinate role. At the beginning of Act IV, he sees Wlasta examining weapons, and questions a woman's involvement in such matters. Wlasta challenges him to a duel, which he evades. He then approvingly remarks to Slawa, who rushes on stage saying 'O schützet mich!' (l. 1465):

Du bist das erste Weib
 An diesem Wunderort, das Schutz begehrt,
 Die andern sind vielmehr geneigt zu meistern. (ll. 1465–67)

In the final scene of Act IV, Libussa finally decides to accept Primislaus as her husband.

¹¹⁹Robertson. 'Threshold of Patriarchy', p. 216.

The people, believing Primislaus to be in danger in Libussa's castle, demand his release. Primislaus shows himself to be a brave leader and wants to quell the uprising, and this proves to Libussa that he is the man who can help her rule. Primislaus challenges and ultimately destroys Libussa's society. In this respect, he plays a role similar to that of Phaon in *Sappho*. At the end of Act V, Libussa prophesies the demise of the society she has tried to establish. Libussa foresees that under Primislaus, the individual will cease to be of any importance, and will be subsumed in the mass of the state. Individuals will no longer be bound by the social contract, nor under the aegis of a solicitous ruler:

Nicht Ganze mehr, nur Teile wollt ihr sein
 Von einem Ganzen, das sich nennt die Stadt,
 Der Staat, der jedes Einzelne in sich verschlingt,
 Statt Gut und Böse, Nutzen wägt und Vorteil
 Und euern Wert abschätzt nach seinem Preis. (ll. 2332–36)

Libussa paints a terrifying picture of life in this anonymous state, where the interpersonal relationships of the social contract no longer carry any weight, and even the gods coalesce into one impersonal deity. As personal relationships are devalued and feelings become mere words, words will spark wars and blood will be spilt. Rather than the communal approach which flourished under Libussa, self-interest will motivate the new society: 'Der eigne Nutzen wird dir zum Altar/ Und Eigenliebe deines Wesens Ausdruck.' (ll. 2373–74) Where once society had been harmonious, all human interaction will resemble war as the base elements of human nature dominate:

Der Trug, die Hinterlist ersetzt das Schwert.
 Das Edle schwindet von der weiten Erde,
 Das Hohe sieht vom Niedern sich verdrängt.
 Und Freiheit wird sich nennen die Gemeinheit,
 Als Gleichheit brüsten sich der dunkle Neid. (ll. 2383–87)

Contrary to the expectations of Biwoy, Lapak and Domaslav, Primislaus' new order does not represent a return to the feudal hierarchy which they support. They had hoped that Libussa's marriage would return them to their positions of preeminence, but the changes they helped make possible actually facilitate a significant deterioration in their standing.

Domaslav recognises that the city, where the masses are concentrated, can only lead to a dilution of their power as society is depersonalised:

Was ist auch diese schlauentwurfne Stadt
Als Schwächung unsers Ansehns, unsrer Macht?
Wenn erst das Volk in großer Zahl vereint,
Ist von uns jeder minder als er war,
Der Mächt'ge kaum gewachsen so viel kleinen. (ll. 2289–93)

Primislaus' plans for Prague satisfy no-one but himself. Crucially, they represent a drastic rejection of everything for which Libussa stands. The effort she needs to pronounce her prophecy drains what strength she has left, and at the end of the drama she collapses, despite the positive tone of her final monologue, in which she predicts a distant future which is the 'Zeit der Seher wieder und Begabten' (l. 2483). Libussa is taken off stage by her sisters, who to the very end are critical of her decision to engage with mankind. Kascha speaks the final lines of the drama, and blames the people's rejection of Libussa's society for her death. Specifically, it was their refusal to trust Libussa, to be 'lenksam dem Zaum', which necessitated her death. As Kascha says, 'Vertraun gehorcht, der Eigenwille denkt' (l. 2509). Trust was the foundation of Libussa's rule, and when that principle was rejected, Libussa's sacrifice—that is, the renunciation of communion with her sisters—became meaningless and the continuation of her reign, impossible. Libussa's very being is defined by her relationships with mankind—'Ich liebe [Menschen], und all mein Sein und Wesen/ Ist nur in ihrer Nähe was es ist' (ll. 2456)—and so their rejection must destroy her.

Chapter 5

Grillparzer and Kyriarchy

In previous sections, I demonstrate the breadth of Grillparzer's intellectual context, and the ways in which this plays out in his depictions of women in patriarchal societies. In *Sappho* and *Des Meeres und der Liebe Wellen*, we see that it is not just sex/gender, but also social class, which determines women's options in life. Sappho and Hero, for different reasons, are socially privileged, and this privilege elevates them above the realities of life encountered by Melitta and Janthe. In the chapters in this section, I will show that Grillparzer's portrayals of social disadvantage in *Das goldene Vließ* (1819) and *Die Jüdin von Toledo* (1855) are marked by a depiction of the numerous forces which converge to create patriarchal societies. The two dramas under consideration in this section incorporate ideas of 'otherness' into the discussion of intertwined social forces. Medea, a princess in her own right in Colchis, becomes the despised and disenfranchised outsider when dislocated in Corinth; Rahel, meanwhile, suffers because she is both a woman and Jewish.

The interpretations in this section have been influenced by the ideas of kyriarchy and intersectionality which have emerged from feminist theory in recent decades. Kyriarchy is a term coined by Elisabeth Schüssler Fiorenza, who states the purpose of her study *But she said: feminist practices of biblical interpretation* in the following terms:

I seek to articulate a critical feminist interpretation on feminist political terms. Such an

articulation requires a different understanding of patriarchy, one which does not limit it to the sex/gender system but conceptualizes it in terms of interlocking structures of domination [i.e. *kyriarchal*, elite male, relations of ruling (*Herr-schaft*)].¹

Fiorenza's work is influenced by Third World and socialist-marxist feminists, who had previously argued for better understanding of complex systems of oppression. These feminists, writes Fiorenza, argued that women are oppressed by racism, classism and colonialism as well as sexism, and that women from racial minorities or less privileged classes were often more oppressed by elite white women than by men of their own class, race, religion etc. In Fiorenza's view, however, this 'adding on' approach is limited, for it

ignores the fact that systems of oppression criss-cross and feed upon each other in women's lives. Such an "adding on" method conceptualizes the patriarchal oppression of women not as an interlocking, multiplicative, and overarching system, but as parallel oppressions that divide women against each other.²

Fiorenza seeks to reconceptualise patriarchy as a 'key heuristic category of feminist theology and biblical interpretation' so that it can 'make visible the complex interstructuring of the conflict-producing oppressions of different groups of women that are obscured by the ideology of patriarchy as binary sex-gender system.'³ She coined the term *kyriarchy* to describe such a system in which power

operates not only along the axis of gender but also along those of race, class, culture, and religion. These axes of power structure the more general system of domination in a matrix- (or better, *patrix*-) like fashion [...].⁴

Scholars working in intersectionality theory have common aims with Fiorenza. Intersectionality, a concept similar to *kyriarchy*, emerged from black feminist legal studies in the late 1980s, and 'in just two decades [...] has widely transformed notions of both theory and research [in women's and gender studies]'.⁵ Intersectionality has also influenced

¹ Elisabeth Schüssler Fiorenza. *But she said: feminist practices of biblical interpretation*. Boston: Beacon Press, 1992, p. 7–8.

² *Ibid.*, p. 114.

³ *Ibid.*, p. 115.

⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 123.

⁵ Michelle Tracy Berger and Kathleen Guidroz. 'Introduction'. *The Intersectional Approach. Transforming the Academy through Race, Class, and Gender*. Chapel Hill, NC: The University of North Carolina Press, 2009. 1–22, p. 3.

research in history, sociology, literature, philosophy, and anthropology, feminist studies, ethnic studies, queer studies, and legal studies.⁶ Anna Carasthatis argues that '[i]t has become commonplace within feminist theory to claim that women's lives are constructed by multiple, intersecting systems of oppression', and notes that intersectionality has extended beyond academic circles and influenced international human rights discourses.⁷ Leslie McCall writes that intersectionality is perhaps 'the most important theoretical contribution that women's studies, in conjunction with related fields, has made so far.'⁸ In 2008, Jennifer C. Nash referred to intersectionality as 'an institutionalized intellectual project' and 'the dominant tool for excavating the voices of the marginalized'.⁹

The metaphor of intersecting categories of discrimination was introduced by Kimberlé Williams Crenshaw, but the concept has a long history in black feminist thinking, and '[a]s early as the 19th century in the United States, Black feminists confronted the simultaneity of a 'woman question' and a 'race problem''.¹⁰ By the time Crenshaw introduced the term, the idea of intersecting axes of discrimination was already part of antiracist feminist discourse.

In her 1989 article, 'Demarginalizing the Intersection of Race and Sex: A Black Feminist Critique of Antidiscrimination Doctrine, Feminist Theory and Antiracist Politics', Crenshaw argued that black women were sometimes excluded from antiracist policy and feminist theory because these did not adequately comprehend the ways in which an individual could simultaneously suffer discrimination on the basis of both sex and race:

Because the intersectional experience is greater than the sum of racism and sexism, any analysis that does not take intersectionality into account cannot sufficiently address the particular manner in which Black women are subordinated.¹¹

⁶Sumi Cho, Kimberlé Williams Crenshaw, and Leslie McCall. 'Toward a Field of Intersectionality Studies: Theory, Applications, and Praxis'. *Signs* 38/4 (2013). 785–810, p. 787.

⁷Anna Carasthatis. 'The Concept of Intersectionality in Feminist Theory'. *Philosophy Compass* 9/5 (2014). 304–14, p. 304.

⁸Leslie McCall. 'The Complexity of Intersectionality'. *Signs* 30/3 (2005). 1771–1800, p. 1771.

⁹Jennifer C. Nash. 'Re-thinking Intersectionality'. *Feminist Review* 89 (2008). 1–15, p. 13.

¹⁰Carasthatis, p. 305.

¹¹Kimberlé Crenshaw. 'Demarginalizing the Intersection of Race and Sex: A Black Feminist Critique of Antidiscrimination Doctrine, Feminist Theory and Antiracist Politics'. *The University of Chicago Legal Forum* (1989). 139–67, p. 140.

Crenshaw claims that a lack of awareness of intersectionality has meant that courts as well as feminist and civil rights activists have failed to understand the unique situation in which black women find themselves. Crenshaw points out that feminist theory often evolves in a white racial context, which, though seldom acknowledged, limits the applicability of mainstream feminism for non-white women, whom it marginalises:

Not only are women of color in fact overlooked, but their exclusion is reinforced when white women speak for and as women. The authoritative universal voice—usually white male subjectivity masquerading as non-racial, non-gendered objectivity—is merely transferred to those who, but for gender, share many of the same cultural, economic and social characteristics. When feminist theory attempts to describe women's experiences [...] it often overlooks the role of race. Feminists thus ignore how their own race functions to mitigate some aspects of sexism and, moreover, how it often privileges them over and contributes to the domination of other women.¹²

Because feminist and antiracist discourses do not recognise the intersection of racism and sexism in real life, they cannot comprehend an individual whose lived experience is affected by identifying as both a woman and a person of colour, and so 'they relegate the identity of women of color to a location that resists telling'.¹³

That intersectionality is still a matter of debate in the twenty-first century is shown by the proceedings of a 2009 conference on the subject. Kathy Davis and Gail Lewis write that conference participants expressed 'repeated concern [...] about the need to move beyond metaphors that reproduce a framework of addition'.¹⁴ This also shows that, despite making inroads in feminist thought, the concept of intersectionality is by no means universally accepted. Yvette Taylor confirms this, writing that the importance of intersectionality continues to be questioned, and that its 'buzzword status' could lead to further analysis of social inequalities being neglected.¹⁵ Others note that intersectionality has been thoroughly

¹²*Ibid.*, p. 154.

¹³Kimberlé Crenshaw. 'Mapping the Margins: Intersectionality, Identity Politics, and Violence Against Women of Color'. *Stanford Law Review* 43/6 (1991). 1241-99, p. 1242.

¹⁴Kathy Davis and Gail Lewis. 'Celebrating Intersectionality? Debates on a Multi-faceted Concept in Gender Studies: Themes from a Conference'. *European Journal of Women's Studies* 16/3 (August 2009). 203-10, p. 205.

¹⁵Yvette Taylor. 'Complexities and Complications: Intersections of Class and Sexuality'. *Theorizing Intersectionality and Sexuality*. Ed. Yvette Taylor et al.. Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2011. 37-55, p. 37.

critiqued within feminist studies, and is now even dismissed as outmoded.¹⁶

The suitability of *Die Jüdin von Toledo* and *Das goldene Vließ* for this type of analysis is apparent. In these dramas more than any other by Grillparzer, real or perceived differences become a central cause of conflict between characters. Although Grillparzer shows conflict between Germans and Hungarians in *Ein treuer Diener*, and between Germans and Bohemians in *Ottokar*, in neither of these dramas is one group's supposed superiority as keenly expressed, nor does it ignite conflict. Kunigunde's Hungarian background does not have an instrumental (negative) impact on her life at Ottokar's court, nor can it be argued that Erny's demise is necessitated by differences between German and Hungarian political factions. For Medea and Rahel, however, otherness exacerbates the difficulties they experience as female others in male-dominated societies. Most importantly, this otherness allows both women to become the victims of female aggression: Kreusa oppresses Medea, and Eleonore instigates Rahel's murder. While antagonism between male and female, and the subversion of the categories, is central to many of Grillparzer's dramas, particularly in the cases of Medea and Rahel we should heed Fiorenza's words and not allow this difference to obscure

the complex interstructuring of patriarchal dominations inscribed *within* women and in the relationships of dominance and subordination *between* women, [and] the participation of white elite women and of Christian religion in patriarchal oppression, insofar as both have served as the civilizing conduits of patriarchal knowledge, values, religion, and culture.¹⁷

¹⁶Yvette Taylor, Sally Hines and Mark Casey. 'Introduction'. *Theorizing Intersectionality and Sexuality*. 1–12, p. 3.

¹⁷Fiorenza, p. 123.

‘Sei eine Griechin du in Griechenland’

Gender and Imperialism in *Das goldene Vließ*

Grillparzer's Medea trilogy most obviously suits a kyriarchy-influenced reading. Grillparzer's version of the myth, which presents not only Medea's life as a refugee with Jason in Corinth, but breaks with an established literary tradition to trace her story back to Colchis, her homeland, invites criticism of power structures predicated on supposed sex- and race-based superiority or inferiority. Indeed, this seems to have been his intention: Grillparzer, looking back to the composition of *Das goldene Vließ* in his *Selbstbiographie*, writes that he was primarily interested in ‘der Charakter der Medea und die Art und Weise [...] wie sie zu der für eine neuere Anschauungsweise abscheulichen Katastrophe geführt wird’, and that this influenced his choice of a trilogy (*HKA* I/xvi, pp. 134–35). Christian Rogowski notes that the first two parts of the trilogy show the causes of Medea's later violent acts, and he argues that Grillparzer's decision to analyse ‘ein weibliches, koloniales Subjekt’ from a psychological point of view indicates a ‘kritische Perspektive auf sexistische und kolonialistische Zuschreibungen [...], welche Medea innerhalb einer männlich dominierten, aufgeklärten, westlichen Zivilisation als das fundamental “Andere” dämonisieren.’¹⁸ The conflict not just of male and female, but of Greek and Colchian, ‘primitive’ and ‘advanced’ societies, shows, to quote Fiorenza, the ‘interlocking structures of domination’ which dictate interpersonal relations in the drama. While the opening scenes of the trilogy seem to conform to a simple schema of male domination and female submission, this dichotomy is confused by the arrival of the Greeks, who would dominate because of perceived cultural superiority, not sex, and by Medea's life in Corinth, where she

¹⁸Christian Rogowski. ‘Erstickte Schreie. Geschlechtliche Differenz und koloniales Denken in Grillparzers Medea-Trilogie *Das goldene Vließ*’. *JdGG* 3. Folge 21 (2003–06). 32–50, p. 33.

is marginalised not just by men because of her sex, but also by women because of her origins. My analysis of Grillparzer's attitude towards misogyny and imperialism has also been influenced by theories of stadial history which were popular in the Enlightenment era, and by Schiller's essay on universal history. Stadial history describes change in human societies as following a trajectory through successive stages—hunter-gatherer, pastoral, agricultural, commercial—each of which is defined by the means of subsistence on which the society was dependent. This theory is portrayed in the change in Medea's social standing between 'developing' Colchis and 'consumerist' Greece, as well as in the Greeks' imperialistic attitude towards Colchis and its inhabitants. Schiller's essay, *Was heißt und zu welchem Ende studiert man Universalgeschichte?*, describes the different levels of cultural, social and technological development among various groups of 'Wilden' that European travellers had come across. It was such comparisons of different societies which revealed the underlying laws and principles which affected history.¹⁹

Aietes' Colchis is not only a primitive, but also a patriarchal society. However, Medea and her women, at the beginning of *Der Gastfreund*, live in an Amazonian subculture insofar as they are an armed troop of women engaged in hunting and warfare—Dagmar Lorenz aptly terms it 'eine Art separatistischer Staat im Staat.'²⁰ Hagl-Catling describes Medea as 'eine kühne, selbstbewußte und schöne Frau, für die Wollen und Handeln identisch sind und die die Liebesbindung an einen Mann als Schwäche verachtet.'²¹ As we see from the opening lines of Gora's prayer, Medea and her women worship Darimba, a virgin female deity, as well as Peronto, who is the focus of the play's male protagonists. The opening scenes of *Der Gastfreund* show Medea hunting, while later she chastises a former companion for her romantic entanglement with a man.²² Medea's possessiveness shows that

¹⁹Karen O'Brien. *Narratives of Enlightenment: Cosmopolitan History from Voltaire to Gibbon*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1997, p. 133.

²⁰Lorenz. *Dichter des sozialen Konflikts*, p. 69.

²¹Hagl-Catling, p. 177.

²²Grillparzer. 'Das goldene Vließ: Der Gastfreund. Die Argonauten. Medea'. *HKA* I/ii, 5–301. Quotations from 'Der Gastfreund' will be indicated with *DG*, from 'Die Argonauten' with *DA*, and from 'Medea' with *M* before line numbers. Here, *DG*, ll. 50–54.

she considers liaisons with men to be acts of treason against this female society in general, and, more specifically, against her. She views men with suspicion, an attitude which is also seen in her reaction to the Greeks' arrival: 'Und nahet ein Kühner, zahl' er's mit Blut!' (*DG*, l. 85.) The importance of female chastity in this society is also seen in the invocation to Darimba which hails the goddess as 'reine, magdliche' (*DG*, l. 9). Medea shows the high regard in which she holds physical strength and other 'masculine' traits: 'Hinaus! hinaus!/ Und die am schnellsten rennt und die am leichtesten springt,/ Sei Königin des Tags' (*DG*, ll. 40–42), while she despises tameness: 'In deine Seele schäm' ich mich./ So feig, so zahm!' (*DG*, ll. 46–47). Medea here berates a woman for traits which elsewhere in Grillparzer's dramas are used to chastise men.

Medea's society within a society immediately falls prey to the more powerful patriarchy governed by her father. Although Medea espouses ideals of individual freedom—'Ei hört!/ Sie wollte nicht und tat's! Geh du sprichst Unsinn./ Wie konnt' es denn geschehen,/ Wenn du nicht wolltest.' (*DG*, ll. 63–66)—upon confrontation with her father he almost immediately imposes his will upon her. He uses a mixture of imperatives—'Bleib jetzt!', 'Ich wills, du sollst!' (*DG*, l. 95); 'Bleib, sag ich, bleib!' (*DG*, l. 110)—and blandishments—'Du bist klug, du bist stark.' (*DG*, l. 112); 'mein gutes Kind' (*DG*, l. 120); 'mein gutes Mädchen' (*DG*, l. 131)—to persuade her to do his bidding. As Yixu Lü writes, *Der Gastfreund* charts Medea's change from 'die amazonenhafte, vermeintlich eine unbegrenzte Freiheit genießende Fürstin von Kolchis in die dem König recht mürrisch gehorchende Tochter des Aietes'.²³

Medea eventually acquiesces in her father's requests, and it is as a result of the failure of Aietes' plan—the Colchian king denies Phryxus hospitality, seizing the fleece and murdering him—that, at the opening of *Die Argonauten*, Medea is again living in isolation, this time in a 'halbverfallener Turm' (p. 43). This removal from the heart of Colchian society represents, more than anything, Medea's removal from the patriarchal society which subjugated her.

²³Yixu Lü. *Medea unter den Deutschen. Wandlungen einer literarischen Figur*. Freiburg i. Br.; Berlin; Vienna: Rombach, 2009, p. 138.

Indeed, Medea eventually agrees to help her father again, but on condition that she be allowed to retreat forever into the solitude of the wilderness. Yet even in this physical isolation she is not safe from the machinations of her father who comes seeking her help against a new band of Greeks who have arrived. Absyrtus, her brother, and Aietes force Medea to descend from her tower, and Aietes scolds her for fleeing Colchis (*DA*, ll. 87–91). Aietes interprets Medea's retreat from society as an act of rebellion against his rule and against patriarchy. Medea has scorned the 'väterliche[s] Haus', which in nineteenth-century Austria was both refuge and prison for women, and for Aietes represents a civilising force, in favour of the freedom of the wild. For the Greeks, Colchis is a barren wilderness, but for Aietes, Colchian settlements, which the Greeks consider primitive, provide the structures necessary for patriarchal rule and the submission of female wildness to male authority.

There exists a strong mutual enmity between the Greeks and the Colchians, in part a result of an antithesis as pronounced as that between their foremost female representatives, Kreusa and Medea. Grillparzer's notes on the trilogy in his *Selbstbiographie* show that he very deliberately exaggerated the 'barbarisch und romantisch' elements of Colchis in order to emphasise 'den Unterschied zwischen Kolchis und Griechenland [...], auf den alles ankam.'²⁴ Medea's unsocialised femininity is only one of the differences between these two cultures, which I shall further investigate in relation to the imperialistic theme in the trilogy.

In his 1993 study *Culture and Imperialism*, Edward Said writes that '[a]lmost all colonial schemes begin with an assumption of native backwardness and general inadequacy to be independent, "equal", and fit.'²⁵ Exactly this attitude towards Colchis and its inhabitants can be seen in Grillparzer's Greek characters. As will be shown, a similar attitude pervades in Greece with regard to women: Kreusa and Medea are expected to be subservient, submissive and decorative, as the assumption on the male side is that they are inferior. In *Der Gastfreund*, Phryxus' objectification of Medea is the first indication of the

²⁴Grillparzer. 'Selbstbiographie'. *HKA* I/xvi, p. 136.

²⁵Edward W. Said. *Culture and Imperialism*. London: Chatto and Windus, 1993, p. 96.

Greeks' *Weltanschauung* (DG, ll. 241, 244–48). Phryxus emphasises the lightness of Medea's features ('der Wange Licht'), which is contrasted with the darkness of her hair. Rather than indicating a physical difference between Greek and Colchian, the text shows the physical similarities between the two peoples.

The events in the first part of the trilogy are set in motion by Aietes' overwhelming desire to possess the golden fleece. The arrival of Phryxus and his men in Colchis is significant for Aietes primarily because they come bearing '[r]eiche Beute' (DG, l. 100). Aietes' reaction shows that the Colchians are not merely the victims of Greek aggression, but equally scheming and eager to exploit. He abuses his role as host to the Greeks by murdering their leader and seizing the fleece. There are echoes of Schiller's inaugural lecture in this scene. The 'accuracy' of the words, '*Feind* heißt ihm [dem Wilden] alles was neu ist, und wehe dem Fremdling den das Ungewitter an seine Küste schleudert! [...] kein süßes Gastrecht [wird] ihn erfreuen',²⁶ can be seen in Aietes' cynical assessment of Phryxus' situation: 'Ich hab' ihm nicht Gastrecht geboten,/ Er nahm sich's, büß' er's der Tor!' (DG, ll. 384–385) Medea's ominous prophecy at the end of the play—'Sie kommen, sie nahen/ Sie umschlingen mich,/ Mich, dich, uns alle!/ Weh über dich!' (DG, ll. 515–518)—is fulfilled by the Argonauts' arrival. Jason's declared aim is to regain the fleece. This desire is reflected in the language he uses towards Aietes in particular. Jason and his companions consistently refer to the Colchians as barbarians. Thus Jason's first words to Aietes—'Hochmütiger Barbar, du wagst—?' (DA, l. 808)—are insulting, while his 'du wagst—?' shows that, even in this foreign territory, he considers himself the lawgiver and Aietes, by virtue of his non-Hellenism, an insurgent subaltern.

In the same way that Kreusa is turned into a tool of patriarchal Greek oppression, so is Medea a tool in the Colchians' struggle against the foreigners. The conflict between natives and invaders comes to a head in *Die Argonauten* IV. Here, both Medea and the newly

²⁶Friedrich Schiller. 'Was heißt und zu welchem Ende studiert man Universalgeschichte? Eine akademische Antrittsrede.' *Werke und Briefe*. VI (2000). 411–31, p. 418.

captured fleece become symbolic of the struggle between the two sides. Both are hotly contested objects, but Aietes' and Absyrtus' desire to possess the fleece, which leads them to renounce any patriarchal claims to Medea—'Behalt sie, doch das Vließ gib mir heraus!' (DA, 1. 1713)—also leads to their deaths. Greek interference in Colchis, then, has led directly to the destruction of Medea's matriarchal subculture, as well to the capitulation of Colchian political power.

The fleece, which is the motif uniting the three parts of the trilogy, is important within the colonial framework of the trilogy as it represents the riches which stand to be gained from the exploitation of Colchis. The tripartite nature of Grillparzer's work, which has as its backdrop both Colchis and Greece, allows the playwright to position his depiction of colonisation within the broader context of stadial history. Within this schema, it is possible to see the fleece as symbolic of 'wealth and world domination',²⁷ a luxury product procured from the underdeveloped (hunter-gatherer, pastoral) realms of Colchis for the highly-evolved consumer market in Corinth. In illustrating the development of social structures according to the world view of stadial historians, the influence of Schiller's historical thought might also be seen:

Die Entdeckungen, welche unsre europäischen Seefahrer in fernen Meeren und auf entlegenen Küsten gemacht haben [...] zeigen uns Völkerschaften, die auf den mannichfaltigsten Stufen der Bildung um uns herum gelagert sind, wie Kinder verschiedenen Alters um einen Erwachsenen herum stehen [...]. Wie beschämend und traurig aber ist das Bild, das uns diese Völker von unserer Kindheit geben! und doch ist es nicht einmal die erste Stufe mehr, auf der wir sie erblicken.²⁸

The Greeks, as we have seen, clearly share Schiller's patronising attitude towards other cultures.

Although her father and brother force her out of seclusion, it is Jason in *Die Argonauten* who most severely impinges on Medea's reclusive existence. Jason abuses Medea's love for him and enlists her treachery in his plans. She betrays her father and helps Jason capture the

²⁷Francis Lamport. 'Three "Schopenhauerian" Trilogies: Grillparzer, Wagner, Hebbel'. *Oxford German Studies* 39 (2010). 54–69, p. 60.

²⁸Schiller. 'Universalgeschichte', pp. 416–17.

fleece. Their flight results in the death of both Aietes and Absyrtus and the removal of Medea from her native Colchis to Greece, where she suffers for her identity.

The themes of imperialism and misogyny most strongly coalesce in Jason and Medea's interaction, for their relationship strongly resembles that of a conqueror and the conquered. In *Die Argonauten* I, for example, Jason forces his way into Medea's tower 'mit bloßem Schwerte' (p. 63). His naked blade is at once a sign of military power, and a phallic metaphor of his power as a man over Medea. Indeed, his reaction on seeing Medea for the first time is to strike out with his sword, injuring her (p. 65). His language is imperious and derisive, making clear his contempt for Medea both as a Colchian and as a woman: '[v]erfluchte Zauberin' (DA, l. 421); 'Verruchte!' (DA, l. 425)

Later, when he and Medea are alone again, he takes physical possession of her—'Sie rasch anfassend und auf seinem Arm in die Höhe haltend' (p. 117)—and refuses to release her until she complies with his wishes (DA, ll. 1160–62). Matthias Luserke-Jaqui writes that 'Jason gibt bereits hier die Sprach- und Handlungsmuster für Medea vor', and in doing so allows no 'Raum für den Aufbau oder gar die Präsentation einer eigenen weiblichen Identität oder menschlichen Individualität'.²⁹ Kreusa's socialisation happened over the course of her upbringing, but here Jason attempts to expedite the process with force. In the same scene, he proceeds to treat her merely as his reflection and imposes on her feelings of love for himself (DA, ll. 1256–61). As Ingrid Spörk shows, Medea's silence in this scene provokes Jason to further assumptions about her, and this selective acknowledgment of her existence is part of the discourse of power in the scene. Based solely on his own perceptions, he places her in his own frame of reference.³⁰ This emotional assault is accompanied by repeated violent attacks against Medea's physical integrity. As in many of Grillparzer's plays, the stage directions are crucial to understanding the characters, and it is they that, in *Die Argonauten* III, show the true extent of Jason's aggressive mentality: 'Ihre Hand fassend und den Dolch entwindend'; 'sie

²⁹Matthias Luserke-Jaqui. *Medea. Studien zur Kulturgeschichte der Literatur*. Tübingen: A. Francke, 2002, p. 194.

³⁰Spörk, p. 218.

zurückhaltend'; 'Er faßt ihre Arme mit beiden Händen'; 'Er ringt mit der Widerstrebenden' (p. 119); 'Er faßt ihre beiden Hände und wendet die sich Sträubende gegen sich' (p. 121).

Jason's apparent love for Medea brings into sharp contrast the hypocrisy of his colonial attitude. For, while he claims to love her, he mercilessly abuses her love for him to ensure that he comes into possession of the fleece. The lure of the fleece is so strong that he ignores Medea's calls for him to stay, haughtily proclaiming, 'Nichts hält mich ab!' (DA, I. 1457), until she eventually accedes to his will with the realisation that he does not, in fact, love her: 'Die Liebkosung laß/ Ich habe sie erkannt!' (DA, 1466–67)

Medea's cultural and geographical journey in *Das goldene Vließ* sees her transported from a quasi Amazonian society in Colchis to the severely restrictive confines of Greece, which Rogowski calls 'eine aufgeklärtere—aber nicht weniger grausame—patriarchale Welt' and 'unterdrückerisch[] patriarchal[]'.³¹ This transposition reflects the changes in women's place in society which took place in the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries. As Dagmar Lorenz writes, 'Grillparzer setzt einen historischen Prozess an, während dessen sich die Situation der Frau vis-à-vis den Männern progressiv verschlechtert.'³² As such, *Das goldene Vließ* criticises the disempowerment of women, and demonstrates the extent to which femininity, rather than being an innate quality, is the result of social constructs.³³ This aspect is particularly visible in the enlargement of Kreusa's role. In showing this, Grillparzer goes against the grain of contemporary theory which posited biological differences as necessarily determining the psychological characteristics of the sexes.

It is in the final part of the trilogy, *Medea*, that Grillparzer most harshly condemns repressive patriarchy. In *Die Argonauten*, Jason imposes his will on Medea. In taking her from her native Colchis to Greece, he forces her to comply with the demands that Greek society makes on women. Stacial history is portrayed in the change in Medea's social

³¹Rogowski, p. 46.

³²Lorenz. 'Frau und Weiblichkeit bei Grillparzer', p. 208.

³³*Ibid.*

standing between Colchis and Greece. The initiatory hunt scene in *Der Gastfreund*, and the sociological information offered by the invocation to Darimba—‘Segne das Feld und den beutereichen Wald’ (*DG*, l. 17)—indicate that Colchis is one of the less developed societies as defined by stadial history in general, and by Schiller in particular. Of particular interest for us is the surprise with which Schiller asserts, ‘Hier war nicht einmal das so einfache Band der Ehe, dort noch keine Kenntniß des Eigenthums’ (p. 364). According to the precepts of both *Universalgeschichte* and stadial history, then, Greece is a more highly developed society than Colchis for it knows both marriage—of which there is no indication in Colchis—and, in its consumer culture, property. Schiller’s assertion is also interesting because of its association of marriage with property. It seems, then, that it is the social development in Greece which means that Medea is considered to be (Jason’s) property, whereas in Colchis she was, to an extent, independent. In any case, Medea’s ability to hunt and fight elevates her above the merely decorative, as represented by Kreusa.

Gender conflict reaches its climax in *Medea*. The same is true of imperialism, and the closely related theme of cultural difference which also plays a role in the trilogy. Indeed, as Ortrud Gutjahr argues, the true power of the three parts as a cultural critique is only appreciable when they are seen as a single entity, for Grillparzer ‘hat [...] die Liebestragödie zwischen Jason und Medea in eine Tragödie der Interkulturalität eingeschrieben.’³⁴ The opening stage directions of *Medea* I show that, since they fled from Colchis, Medea and Jason have been living in peripatetic alienation: they are residing in a tent ‘[v]or den Mauern von Korinth.’ (p. 168) From the very beginning of the play they are outcasts in Corinth, dependent on the goodwill of Kreon. Medea’s first act involves the burial of ‘eine schwarze, seltsam mit Gold verzierte Kiste, in welche sie mancherlei Gerät [...] hineinlegt’ (p. 168). This is clearly an attempt at renouncing those elements of her Colchian identity which she fears will arouse Greek suspicion or hatred. She seems already

³⁴Ortrud Gutjahr. ‘Iphigenie—Penthesilea—Medea: Zur Klassizität weiblicher Mythen bei Goethe, Kleist und Grillparzer’. *Frauen: MitSprechen, MitSchreiben. Beiträge zur literatur- und sprachwissenschaftlichen Frauenforschung*. Ed. Marianne Henn and Britta Hufeisen. Stuttgart: Hans-Dieter Heinz, 1997. 223–43, p. 231.

to have internalised Jason's Hellenocentric attitude, for she too equates Greece with light, and her homeland with the darkness of ignorance:

Zuerst den Schleier und den Stab der Göttin;
Ich werd' euch nicht mehr brauchen, ruhet hier.
Die Zeit der Nacht, der Zauber ist vorbei
Und was geschieht, ob Schlimmes oder Gutes,
Es muß geschehn am offenen Strahl des Lichts. (*M*, ll. 2–6)

Although Grillparzer makes it clear that, physically, there is little if any difference between Medea and the Greeks—after attacking Medea in *Die Argonauten*, Jason exclaims, 'Der *weiße* Arm, er blutet' (*DA*, l. 432. My emphasis.)—Medea's 'otherness' nevertheless renders her an alarming figure for the Greeks. Medea's reputation has preceded her to Corinth, for Kreusa repeats gossip she has heard: 'Zuletzt verbanden sie als Gattin dir/ Ein gräßlich Weib, giftmischend, vatermörd'risch./ Wie hieß sie?—Ein Barbarenname war's—' (*M*, ll. 329–331). Aietes' malevolent prophecy in *Die Argonauten* III—'Leb' im fremden Land, eine Fremde./ Verspottet, verachtet, verhöhnt, verlacht' (*DA*, ll. 1370–1371)—has been fulfilled, for, as her nurse Gora reports, Greek society at large shies away from the sight of Medea: 'Ein Greuel ist die Kolcherin dem Volke' (*M*, l. 72).

Jason's reaction to his new surroundings allows his imperialistic hypocrisy and opportunism to come to the fore. While Medea was useful to him in Colchis, he feigned love for her, and even made her love him. Upon arrival in Corinth she is discarded. He is acutely aware of the effect Medea's presence has on the Corinthians, and, in a bitter tirade against both Medea and her barbaric people, warns her severely against the use of her magic:

Man haßt das hier und ich—ich haß' es auch!
In Kolchis sind wir nicht, in Griechenland,
Nicht unter Ungeheuern, unter Menschen! (*M*, ll. 181–83)

This is closely followed by his wholesale renunciation of Medea while in conversation with Kreon: 'nur mit Schaudern nenn' ich sie mein Weib.' (*M*, ll. 468–475) This conversation in *Medea* I with Kreon reveals much about Jason's character. As well as his oblique but open admission that he used Medea, his denial of his involvement in Aietes' death with the words,

'Er fiel der Götter Hand' (*M*, l. 477), evidences the Greek rejection of cultural relativity so strongly expressed by Kreon: 'Nie recht ist Unrecht, Schlimmes nirgends gut.' (*M*, l. 458) Jason expresses faith in the gods' approbation of his every action, which stands in stark contrast to Medea's reliance on self-approbation. Jason's use of Medea as a means rather than an end places both of them firmly within the imperialistic metaphor of the trilogy, Jason as conqueror and Medea as exploited native.

Medea's words to Kreusa in *Medea II* show just how big the difference between women's roles in Colchis and Greece is:

Wie eine Magd will ich dir dienend folgen,
Will weben an dem Webstuhl, früh zur Hand,
Und alles Werk, das man bei uns verachtet,
Den Sklaven überläßt und dem Gesind',
Hier aber übt die Frau und Herrin selbst [...] (*M*, ll. 691–95)

In Greece, Medea's sphere of influence is strictly limited to the household, and the work she is expected to do appears menial. Despite these differences, Medea attempts to adapt to her new surroundings. While as a Colchian princess she was well versed in the art of war—'Sieh, ich weiß, nicht den Pfeil nur vom Bogen,/ Schleuderst den Speer auch, die mächtige Lanze,/ Schwingest das Schwert in kräftiger Hand' says Aietes to his daughter (*DA*, ll. 981–83)—in Greece she takes up the lyre, the symbol of Greek cultural achievement, as well as a decorative accomplishment expected of Greek women. The opening scene of *Medea II* sees Kreusa acting in what Konrad Kenkel has called her 'Vermittlerinrolle' between the spouses, which he argues is an innovation in Grillparzer's version of the myth.³⁵ She teaches Medea to play a song that Jason once sang. The two women have conflicting reactions to the song's lyrics, indicating the qualities that each society values in women. Medea thinks about the words and remarks ironically that Jason's prayers were answered. Kreusa's reaction to Medea's textual analysis reveals that independent thought is not encouraged among Greek women: 'Daran hatt' ich nun eben nie

³⁵Konrad Kenkel. *Medea-Dramen. Entmythisierung und Remythisierung. Euripides, Klinger, Grillparzer, Jahn, Anouilh*. Bonn: Bouvier, 1979, p. 75.

gedacht./ Ich sang's nur nach, wie ich's ihn singen hörte.' (*M*, ll. 613–14) That mimetic existence is demanded of Greek women is also evident in Jason's attempts to elicit Medea's confession of love in *Die Argonauten* III: 'Sprich's aus Medea, sprich es aus: ich liebe!./ Fällt dir's so schwer ich will dich's lehren, Kind./ Sprich's nach: ich liebe dich!' (*DA*, ll. 1268–70) It is this quality in Kreusa which contradicts Yvonne Parry's assertion that she 'is untouched by life and has not yet undergone a process of individuation.'³⁶ Precisely the opposite is true: she lacks individuation *because* she has been constructed to such an extent by the society of which she is part: she is 'eins mit den Herrschenden, mit dem herrschenden System'.³⁷

Kreusa is held up by Greek society as the model of womanhood. Her behaviour establishes her as Medea's antithesis, for she is dedicated to the service of her male relatives, and by extension the patriarchy. Medea's description captures her inherent tenderness and purity which are valued by Greek society, and which the Colchian herself lacks (*M*, ll. 674–76). Medea emphasises Kreusa's light complexion, while descriptions of Medea focus on the dark otherness of her appearance despite indications that she is also white. The dark–light dichotomy serves to accentuate the antithetical nature of the relationship between Medea and Kreusa, and by extrapolation of the relationship between Colchis and Greece. It is also interesting that Medea praises these qualities, especially in the light of her castigation of Peritta ('So feig, so zahm!'). Medea, perhaps, realises just how out of place she is.

Medea's criticisms of Jason elicit from Kreusa an expression of shock, for she cannot comprehend that a wife might not whole-heartedly endorse her husband's every action: 'Thr Götter! Spricht die Gattin so vom Gatten?' (*M*, l. 642) Grillparzer seems to treat this unadulterated subservience sardonically, for he has Kreusa claim:

[...] hätt' ich einen Gatten,
So arg, so schlimm, als Deiner nimmer ist,

³⁶Yvonne M. Parry. 'Das goldene Vließ: The Tragedy of the Adventurer'. *Studies in Nineteenth Century Austrian Literature*. Ed. Brian O. Murdoch and Mark G. Ward. Glasgow: Scottish Papers in Germanic Studies, 1983. 1–27, p. 16.

³⁷Weiss, p. 239.

Und Kinder, sein Geschenk und Ebenbild,
Ich wollte sie lieben, töteten sie mich. (*M*, ll. 644–47)

Medea represents a threat to the Greek patriarchy, in which ‘die Frau, wie Kreusa, bis zur Karikatur entstellt, domestiziert, zivilisiert und “weiblich” gemacht worden ist’ because she diverges markedly from Greek expectations.³⁸ This is clearly a parody of the socialisation of women in nineteenth-century Austria. In his negative portrayal of Kreusa, who is the epitome of this process of socialisation in Kreon’s Greece, Grillparzer distances himself not only from her, but also from the process as it was being carried out in contemporary Austria. Kreusa’s supercilious treatment of Medea is amplified by her perfidy. She welcomes news of Jason’s arrival with malicious gossip about Medea, and cries ‘Entsetzen’ (*M*, l. 332) at the first sight of the Colchian. She immediately pities Medea and Jason’s ‘heimatlosen Waisen’ (*M*, l. 345) and tells them ‘ich will euch Mutter, Schwester sein!’ (*M*, l. 349) Lorenz stresses the fact that Kreusa denies Medea any worth as a mother.³⁹ More crucially, Kreusa’s use of the word ‘Waisen’ denies Medea worth as a *woman*, for within Greek society womanhood is strongly defined by motherhood. The children have rushed to her side, and when Medea calls them back, Kreusa, ‘zu ihrem Vater emporblickend’ (p. 190), asks ‘Lass’ ich sie hin?’ (*M*, l. 354) With this attempted appropriation of Medea’s children, Kreusa throws down the gauntlet, despite her later show of friendship. It is this betrayal by all members of Greek society—Jason and Kreon, who are openly hostile, but also two-faced Kreusa—which helps Grillparzer maintain sympathy with Medea despite her actions.

Kreusa’s treatment of Medea is the best example in Grillparzer’s dramas of kyriarchy. While Kreusa is disadvantaged within Corinthian society because of her sex, her status as a Greek allows her power over those who are not Greek, such as Medea. As Heike Bartel has previously argued, Kreusa ‘appears mild and benevolent’ but ‘nevertheless perpetuates a

³⁸Lorenz. ‘Frau und Weiblichkeit’, p. 208.

³⁹*Ibid.*, p. 213.

male order that demands complete submission of the (female, ethnic, national) “Other”.”⁴⁰ Medea, therefore, is doubly oppressed, not just by men, but by women of the dominant national group. Fiorenza criticises Western feminists who posit ‘gender difference as the primary and originary difference’ because this approach covers up the role which women from dominant groups play in the subjugation of female others. While sex does play a role in Medea’s oppression, her cultural inferiority in the eyes of the Corinthians plays a key role for her in exile. Kreusa, as a Corinthian woman, is a conduit of Greek culture and values, and plays her part in the oppression of Medea when she mistreats the Colchian because of the latter’s failure to adhere to Corinthian norms.

The children become the focal point of their parents’ argument as Medea demands that they accompany her away from Greece, but Jason refuses, saying he plans to raise them ‘[h]ier in der Sitte Kreis’ (*M*, l. 1583). Jason decides that one child will go with Medea while the other stays in Corinth, and he leaves the decision to the children. Kreusa brings the children, and emphasises the strong bond she has developed with them (*M*, ll. 1622–25). Despite the sympathy that seemed to have developed between the two women, here it is clear that Kreusa cannot consider Medea a fit mother. Kreusa sees herself as emotional and caring where Medea is hard and savage, and for Kreusa the children’s former life with Medea is an ‘Unglück’. When Kreon tells Kreusa that one child will leave Corinth, she replies: ‘Verlassen uns?’ (*M*, l. 1627) She stakes her claim to the children and their affections, again invalidating Medea as a mother.

Medea sees Kreusa as her enemy, and considers her children’s loyalty to her to be treacherous:

Was steht ihr dort
Geschmiegt an meiner Feindin falsche Brust?
O wüßtet ihr was sie mir angetan,
Bewaffnen würdet ihr die kleinen Hände,

⁴⁰Heike Bartel. ‘Dressing the “Other”, Dressing the “Self”. Clothing in the Medea Dramas of Euripides and Franz Grillparzer’. *Unbinding Medea. Interdisciplinary Approaches to a Classical Myth from Antiquity to the 21st Century*. Ed. Heike Bartel and Anne Simon. London: Modern Humanities Research Association and Maney Publishing, 2010. 161–75, p. 169.

Zu Krallen krümmen eure schwachen Finger,
 Den Leib zerfleischen, den ihr jetzt berührt.
 Verlockst du meine Kinder? Laß sie los! (*M*, ll. 1635–41)

The children are scared of Medea and flee from her to Kreusa, despite their mother's attempts to lure them with blandishments. Medea blames Kreusa and is angry with the children, but Jason blames Medea, saying 'Dir selber dank' es, daß dein wildes Wesen/ Die Kleinen abgewandt, zur Milde hin.' (*M*, ll. 1699–1700) Kreon orders Kreusa to take the children inside, and the realisation that she has been abandoned by her children increases Medea's desperation: 'Ich bin besiegt, vernichtet, zertreten' (*M*, l. 1710). This turns Medea against Jason and Kreusa, and against her children. She does not want Jason to keep her sons, nor does she want them. In Act IV, partly because of Kreon's actions, opportunities for revenge present themselves. Kreon comes to speak to Medea, and finding her more reasonable than he expected, agrees to send the children to her one last time, and lets Medea send a gift to Kreusa. Alone with the children, Medea questions them and gets irrefutable proof that they fear her. This gives resolution to Medea's bloody plan—alluded to earlier by her reference to Althea '[d]ie den Sohn erschlug' (*M*, l. 1830)—to kill the children. When the elder son wants to sleep, Medea's sinister response is 'Ihr werdet schlafen noch euch zu Genügen.' (*M*, l. 2055) Gora hurries from the palace, which is in flames, and reports Kreusa's death. Aware that Kreon's guards are approaching, Medea hurries off stage to her children, leaving Gora to despair at the horror of Medea's revenge: 'Rache riet ich selbst; doch solche Rache!' (*M*, l. 2164) She is suddenly aware that the children are not present, and rushes after Medea. Gora returns to the stage, falls down and cries: 'Was hab' ich gesehen?—Entsetzen!' (*M*, l. 2168) Act IV closes with Medea's reappearance, dagger in hand.

Act V is full of recrimination. Kreon blames Gora for Kreusa's death, a charge she accepts she unwillingly perpetrated. Gora, however, says that Kreusa got her *commeuppance*, and asks: 'Was griff sie nach des Unglücks letzter Habe?' (*M*, l. 2185) Gora blames Jason, whom

she calls ‘heuchelnder Verräter’ (*M*, l. 2242), and Kreon for their role in the children’s murder:

Habt ihr es nicht umstellt mit Jägernetzen
Des schändlichen Verrats, das edle Wild,
Bis ohne Ausweg, in Verzweiflungswut
Es, überspringend euer Garn, die Krone,
Des hohen Hauptes königlichen Schmuck
Mißbraucht zum Werkzeug ungewohnten Mords.
Ringt nur die Hände, ringt sie ob euch selbst! (*M*, ll. 2245–51)

Gora expresses verbally what the structure of the trilogy as a whole illustrates: the origin of Medea’s act in her experiences and in her suffering at the hands of Jason, Kreon and Kreusa. Gora cannot sympathise with the Greeks; she feels that they have merely got what they deserve. For Gora, Medea’s actions mean that she will no longer be an object of scorn for the Greeks: ‘Ich spottet nun nicht mehr der Kolcherin.—’ (*M*, l. 2257) In the end, Medea earned the notice and respect of Kreon and Jason not through assimilation and mimesis, but by channelling herself and those elements of her person which most horrified the Greeks. In Act IV, Medea lamented the loss of her identity, and the power inherited from her mother, which she had buried at the beginning of the drama out of love for Jason, and by which act she had become ‘Den Feinden, statt ein Schrecken, ein Gespött!’ (*M*, l. 1876) When Kreon demands the return of the fleece, Medea unearths the chest and is reunited with her Colchian paraphernalia. This reunion restores to Medea not just the instruments of Kreusa’s demise, but her confidence in the otherness of her identity: ‘Sei sicher, du erhältst, was dir gebührt,/ Medea bin ich wieder, Dank euch Götter!’ (*M*, ll. 1952–53)

The return of Medea’s identity also gives her the resolve to punish those who have persecuted her. Kreon’s words give her the idea of sending Kreusa a gift, and Medea convinces Kreon to allow this despite the animosity between them (*M*, ll. 1960–63). Medea feigns acceptance of Kreusa’s role as a replacement mother, but elsewhere makes clear that this is not the case. She worries that her sons will become slaves when she is no longer there, and that their step-siblings, the children of Jason and Kreusa, will ‘[h]öhen sie, spotten ihrer/ Und ihrer Mutter,/ Der Wilden aus Kolchis.’ (*M*, ll. 1790–92) At the end of

Act IV, Gora arrives with news of Kreusa's death, caused by the gifts which Medea sent, and Medea is jubilant:

Bist du dahin, weiße Braut?
 Verlockst du mir noch meine Kinder?
 Lockst du sie? lockst du sie?
 Willst du sie haben auch dort?
 Nicht dir, den Göttern send' ich sie! (*M*, ll. 2155–59)

The jealousy which motivates the murder of Kreusa and the children is obvious. Medea did not want Kreusa to raise her children, and resented the way in which the Greek had undermined her relationship with them. Murdering Kreusa is also the most effective way Medea has of punishing Kreon, and the king's reaction shows that Medea chooses the best form of revenge. His anger and sorrow are obvious in Act V, and, as a result of Kreusa's death, he turns on and banishes Jason, whom he blames for his daughter's death: 'Du hast die Tochter mir genommen!' (*M*, l. 2271) Murdering Kreusa also creates symmetry, Medea taking Kreon's child as Kreusa took Medea's sons.

In *Das goldene Vließ*, Grillparzer presents a complex portrayal of the intersections between ethnicity and sex, and of the potential which perceived superiority has as a motivation for aggression, dehumanisation and persecution. In Colchis, Medea's social status allows her certain freedoms, although her matriarchal subculture is ultimately subordinate to her father's society. The Greeks' arrival complicates the situation, and Medea finds herself disadvantaged both as a woman, and as a Colchian. In Greece, her standing is substantially worse, for the subordinate position she must accept as a woman is worsened by Greek fears of her otherness. In Colchis, Medea and her women were united by cultural practices and norms, but in Greece, she receives little support from Kreusa, who personifies the traits which Medea is supposed to display. Kreusa, due to her social standing as a Greek, is Medea's antagonist rather than her companion, and connives to deprive the foreigner of her children. The dynamics of Medea and Kreusa's relationship highlight the role which women play in supporting and enforcing the norms of patriarchal societies, even when these norms ultimately harm them too. In *Die Jüdin von Toledo*, Eleonore plays a similar role

within Spanish society. In his trilogy, Grillparzer goes beyond the depiction of women's struggles in patriarchal societies, and shows that, in Fiorenza's words, 'systems of oppression criss-cross and feed upon each other in women's lives'.

‘Vielmehr ich kann, beim Himmel, denn ich muß’

Gender, Politics and Violence in *Die Jüdin von Toledo*

Criticism of Grillparzer's *Die Jüdin von Toledo* has largely sidelined the figure of Queen Eleonore. Perhaps because she is accorded so small a share of the action on stage, critics have failed to appreciate not only her importance for the drama, but also the subversive nature of her character in the context of the binary gender matrix which prevailed in the nineteenth century.⁴¹ Almost without exception, scholars have focused their attention on the beguiling physicality of Rahel, on the relationship between her and Alfonso, and on the latter's subsequent failures, both political and personal. Eleonore, however, is clearly an exceptional female character, as displayed by her contribution to affairs of state in Act IV. A thorough investigation of Eleonore's actions will shed light upon Grillparzer's subversive portrayal of gender stereotypes, and upon the complex social structures which allow Rahel's murder to take place.

Grillparzer's drama shares with Shakespeare's *Macbeth* a murder as the central event. Grillparzer's thoughts on Shakespeare's drama are an important tool in analysing the subversive nature of Eleonore's involvement in the *Gräueltat* which is central to *Die Jüdin von Toledo*. In an 1817 assessment of the gender dynamics in the murder of King Duncan, Grillparzer writes:

Einer der vortrefflichsten und, so viel ich weiß am wenigsten bemerkten Züge in Shakespeares Macbeth liegt in dem gerade umgekehrten Verhältniß des Antheils den Macbeth und seine Gattin am Entschlusse zur That und dann an der That selbst nehmen. Shakespeare hat hier nicht bloß Macbeth und seine Gattin, er hat Mann und Weib überhaupt geschildert. In Lady Macbeths Seele ist im ersten Augenblicke der Entschluß reif. Sie ist das Weib, das nach Empfindungen, im guten und schlimmen, handelt. Macbeth sträubt sich lange gegen die Idee, [...] Lady Macbeth bestimmt ihn zur That. Aber jetzt da gehandelt werden soll, kehrt sich auf einmal das Verhältniß um. Macbeth

⁴¹Prutti counts a mere 74 lines. P. 350.

schaudert aber handelt; Sein Weib, die Entmenschte, die Verlockerin, war vor ihm in Dunkans Zimmer, sie hatte die Dolche in der Hand, aber—had he not resembled my father as he had slept, i had done't— (Nr. 218. *HKA* II/vii, pp. 99–100.)

For Grillparzer, the dichotomy of intent and action is a gendered dichotomy, which he sees enacted in Shakespeare's drama. While Lady Macbeth provides the impetus for the action, she is incapable of committing the deed. This inability, as presented by Shakespeare, results from her sex: intent can be, and in *Macbeth* is, connoted female as well as male, while action is connoted male. This extract is highly pertinent for my interpretation of *Die Jüdin von Toledo* because I investigate the gender dynamics which Grillparzer portrays, and which do not conform to the clear delineations which Grillparzer observes in *Macbeth*.

At first, Lady Macbeth's role is restricted to encouraging her husband to murder Duncan. She fears that his nature is too benevolent to be capable of murder, and determines to influence him in his task. Once she has been informed that Duncan will arrive that same evening, her perception of the role she has to play appears to change, and she lays claim to more active participation. In a second soliloquy directly before Macbeth's entrance, she pleads for the spirits' assistance in committing the deed she now sees as her own task, and not her husband's. She asks the spirits to 'unsex' her and endow her with 'direst cruelty'.⁴² The notion that she will influence Macbeth's actions has disappeared, and she clearly sees herself as Duncan's murderer. This change of heart is confirmed by her words to Macbeth later in the scene: 'you shall put/ This night's great business into my dispatch' (I/v, ll. 66–67). What is more startling, and more relevant for a discussion of *Die Jüdin von Toledo*, is the gendered concept of action and cruelty which Lady Macbeth expounds. Womanhood is incompatible with so heinous a crime as murder, and the 'unsexing' entails the removal of her female physicality and feminine behaviour. It is only after the removal of feminine traits that she will be able to commit the murderous deed. Lady Macbeth, then, does more than just drive Macbeth to murder; she takes the role of murderer upon herself.

⁴²William Shakespeare. *Macbeth*. Ed. Kenneth Muir. London: Methuen, 1951. I/v, ll. 40–43, 47–48. Further quotations from this text will be indicated in parentheses in the body of the text.

Lady Macbeth's concept of action as a male preserve is reinforced in I/vii, as she attempts to counter her husband's new qualms against their plan. She accuses him of cowardice, questioning his ambition when he shows himself unwilling to commit the murder. Macbeth responds with a defence of his own masculinity: 'I dare do all that may become a man;/ Who dares do more, is none.' (I/vii, ll. 46–47) This answer is unsatisfactory as far as his wife is concerned, and she retorts by questioning his masculinity. The analogy she uses in this scene—that of brutally murdering her child—displays the cruelty which she would gladly possess, but also the fact of her 'traditional' femininity: although she would kill her child if she had sworn to do so, her femininity and maternal instinct would make the deed as horrible to her as the thought of murdering Duncan is to Macbeth. Her passion and energy are relentless, and she unfolds the details of her plan: she will encourage Duncan's guards in their revelry, and bring them to a state of inebriation. Then, she says, '*What cannot you and I perform upon/ Th'unguarded Duncan?*' (I/vii, ll. 70–71. My italics.) At this point, right at the end of Act I, Lady Macbeth still sees the murder as an event in which she herself will be actively involved. Her role is not that of a mere 'Verlockerin', as Grillparzer calls her; rather, she intends to help effect Duncan's demise in an immediate, active capacity. It is partly this determination which leads to Macbeth's awed praise of his wife for defying the limits of her sex:

Bring forth men-children only!
For thy undaunted mettle should compose
Nothing but males. (I/vii, ll. 73–75)

Despite her sex-defying determination, however, Lady Macbeth finds the execution of their plan beyond her capabilities. In II/ii, she has managed to bring Duncan's guards to a state of unconscious drunkenness, and boasts that '[t]hat which hath made them drunk hath made me bold' (II/ii, l. 1). Yet she is unable to commit the deed itself:

I laid their daggers ready,
[Macbeth] could not miss 'em.—Had [Duncan] not resembled
My father as he slept, I had done't. (II/ii, ll. 11–13)

It is left to Macbeth to commit the murder, which he does. Grillparzer's analysis of the drama ends with the deed, and he neglects to address the effect which Macbeth's actions have on his state of mind. It is clear from the exchange between the protagonists in II/ii, directly after the deed has been done, that Macbeth has been psychologically disturbed. He ruminates on his actions, an activity which his wife knows is disadvantageous, and she warns him against such thoughts. Lady Macbeth may have been unable to commit the act, but in its wake it is she, and not Macbeth, who is in charge of herself and the situation. She directs the subsequent action, and indicates the faulty manner in which Macbeth committed the deed: clearly, Macbeth was not fully capable of the deed, as he has brought the guards' daggers, which incriminate him and his wife, from the scene of the crime. 'Why did you bring these daggers from the place?' (II/ii, l. 47), Lady Macbeth asks him, and then commands him to return them. Now it is Macbeth's turn to act in a sex-defying manner, another aspect of the drama that Grillparzer overlooks, claiming that he cannot return to Duncan's room and set eyes on the bloody scene. Lady Macbeth must take control, and in doing so scorns her husband. Macbeth's inability to act turns him into a child in her eyes, while her own 'undaunted mettle', within the gender matrix of Shakespeare's drama, is unexpected and unusual. When the murder has been discovered, Lady Macbeth appears on the scene and enquires as to the reason for the disturbance. For Macduff, news of the murder itself would be enough to kill a woman, and one can only infer from this that, for him, female participation in such a deed would be unthinkable:

O gentle lady,
'Tis not for you to hear what I can speak:
The repetition, in a woman's ear,
Would murder as it fell. (II/iii, ll. 81–84)

In the light of Shakespeare's portrayal of his protagonists as individuals who subvert the behaviour and characteristics expected of their sex, Grillparzer's sketch of the drama seems superficial and overly simplified. The dichotomies of male and female, action and resolution, are not as clear-cut as Grillparzer would have them. And yet, for Grillparzer, Macbeth and his

wife function not only as individuals, but as archetypes of their respective sexes, as 'Mann und Weib überhaupt'. What can Grillparzer's view of these dichotomies tell us about his attitude towards women? What is the significance of his own portrayal of Alfonso and Eleonore as gender-defying individuals in *Die Jüdin von Toledo* for his views on the differences between the sexes? And what can an examination of Eleonore, and in particular her complicity in Rahel's murder, reveal about Grillparzer's attitudes to female involvement in government and politics, as well as in society more generally?

The statements of various characters indicate that the Spain of the drama is defined by much the same gender stereotypes as those which prevailed in nineteenth-century Austria and to which Grillparzer alludes in his analysis of *Macbeth*. In Act I, Alfonso links bravery with masculinity and weakness with femininity:

Im Grunde wunderlich,
Ein feiger Mann er wird mit Recht verachtet
Und dies Geschlecht ist stark erst wenn es schwach.⁴³

Women's weakness, then, is their strength insofar as it encourages the protection of brave men. In Act III, Alfonso acknowledges fear as 'Weiberrecht', while simultaneously accusing Rahel of abusing her fear to gain his attention (l. 888). Garceran clearly values Doña Clara's reticence—'Und meine Leidenschaft für Doña Clara?/ Die Schweigsamste von Allen die je schwiegen' (ll. 408–09)—particularly when contrasted with the brash Rahel. Esther recounts the events directly preceding Rahel's death, and attributes her lack of consciousness to feminine cowardice—'Das ist die rechte Feigheit, Weiberart.' (l. 1611)—even though it might have resulted from the physical impact of being thrown to the floor (ll. 1603–04). It is within this context that the characters and behaviour of Alfonso and Eleonore must be analysed.

As in other dramas by Grillparzer, the subversion of accepted gender roles is an important element in the action of *Die Jüdin von Toledo*. The presentation of Alfonso and Eleonore as opposing individuals is clear from the first act. Rahel enters, pursued by guards,

⁴³Grillparzer. 'Die Jüdin von Toledo'. *HKA* I/vii. 5–105, ll. 388–90.

and throws herself on the queen's mercy. Eleonore turns away from Rahel, who then appeals to Alfonso. After only a short verbal exchange, Alfonso is already under Rahel's spell. The queen, eager to remove herself from the presence of the Jewish family, asks the king if he will not go with her. His answer, 'Ihr seht, ich bin gefangen!' indicates not only that Rahel has rested her cheek on his leg, impeding movement, but also that he has been ensnared by her beauty. Eleonore leaves with the words, 'Seid Ihr gefangen, bin ich frei. Ich gehe.' (l. 334) It is his sensuality and the resultant subjugation of reason and duty to emotions and desire which led to Alfonso's abandonment of his public role and the endangerment of the Spanish state. Alfonso's public and private failures do, however, create a space in which Eleonore can exercise more power, control and authority, and display her ability as a ruler. As Yates writes, it falls to Eleonore to maintain the rational order within the drama.⁴⁴ Despite the contemporary social context in which Grillparzer places the drama, and his expressed views regarding male action, his portrayal of Alfonso and Eleonore subverts gender-based expectations. Alfonso is invested with characteristics which were generally associated with women, such as irrationality and excessive sexuality, while Eleonore is a 'masculine' character insofar as she prioritises rational behaviour, politics, and action. Indeed, in many ways Alfonso resembles Rahel, a character defined by her sensuality and impulsiveness.

The troubled gender matrix which Grillparzer portrays in Alfonso and Eleonore is not a simple reversal of contemporary gender binaries. Alfonso is not reduced to the role of a sensual man, ruled alone by his passions and devoid of learning or reason. Indeed, quite the opposite is true. Despite his own aversion to Jews, he has sufficient insight to realise that it is social prejudice and systemic discrimination which have forced the Jews to behave in the manner which the Spaniards find distasteful:

Ich selber lieb' es nicht dies Volk, doch weiß ich,
Was sie verunziert, es ist unser Werk;
Wir lähmen sie und grollen, wenn sie hinken. (ll. 485–87)

⁴⁴W. E. Yates. 'Grillparzer, *Die Jüdin von Toledo*'. *Landmarks in German Drama*. Ed. Peter Hutchinson. Oxford: Peter Lang, 2002. 111–25, p. 123.

For Florian Krobb, this insight makes Alfonso a 'wohlwollend-absolutistischen Herrscher Josephinischer Prägung'.⁴⁵ It is largely due to his upbringing that he allows himself to become involved in a sexual relationship with Rahel. Garceran laments the joyless youth of his king which he perceives as the cause of Alfonso's indiscretions:

Oh, daß doch dieser König seine Jugend,
Der Knabenjahre hast'gen Ungestüm
In Spiel und Tand, wie mancher sonst, verlebt!
[...]
Selbst seine Ehe treibend als Geschäft,
Kommt ihm zum erstenmal das Weib entgegen,
Das Weib als solches, nichts als ihr Geschlecht
Und rächt die Torheit an der Weisheit Zögling. (ll. 851–83, 857–60)

His difficult upbringing denied him the sexual experiences which otherwise would have been the right of a man of his standing. As Alfonso recounts, his first experience of woman was on his wedding day: 'Daß Weiber es auch gibt, erfuhr ich erst,/ Als man mein Weib mir in der Kirche traute' (ll. 182–83). Eleonore, however, is not well matched for Alfonso, especially as he is sexually inexperienced. Eleonore is 'wirklich ohne Fehl' (l. 184), a description which alludes to her lack of sexual interest rather than a truly faultless character.

In Act II, Alfonso's infatuation leads him to damage the dignity of his office. He and Rahel are in the summerhouse when the queen and courtiers arrive. Alfonso hides in order, as he puts it, to spare the queen any pain and to preserve the dignity of the monarchy. Eleonore sees Rahel and realises what is going on, for she thanks Garceran for doing his duty, even if that duty is unworthy of a knight. Alfonso realises that he has acted in an undignified manner, and that his sense of shame results from his relationship with Rahel: 'Muß ich, noch gestern Vorbild aller Zucht,/ Mich heute scheun vor jedes Dieners Blicken?' (ll. 697–98) Towards the end of the act, Alfonso is determined to go to Alarcos and join his troops in war, but Rahel's picture distracts him, and he recalls Retiro, the palace where his forefather and a Moorish

⁴⁵Florian Krobb. "'Bleib zurück, geh nicht in' Garten!'" Grillparzers *Jüdin von Toledo* als Traktat über die "Judenfrage". *Judenrollen. Darstellungsformen im europäischen Theater von der Restauration bis zur Zwischenkriegszeit*. Ed. Hans-Peter Bayerdörfer and Jens Malte Fischer. Tübingen: Niemeyer, 2008. 125–42, p. 137.

mistress had amused themselves in seclusion. His intention to carry out his military duties is severely tested, and although he determines to imitate his ancestors ‘in der Tapferkeit, dem Wert/ Und nicht in ihrer Schwäche niederm Sträucheln’ (ll. 775–76), Act III finds Alfonso and Rahel at the royal *Lustschloss*. Garceran arrives, and when Alfonso asks him how the army is faring, he replies reproachfully, ‘Wie Ihr seit länger wißt./ Die Feinde rüsten sich.’ (ll. 908–09) Still Alfonso will not leave Rahel, and he says that he will join his soldiers in a few days’ time. Garceran tries to impress upon him the urgency of the situation, but Alfonso refuses to leave Retiro until Esther arrives with the news that Eleonore and Manrique have summoned the estates ‘[u]m zu beraten das gemeine Beste./ Als wäre herrenlos das Königreich/ Und Ihr gestorben, der Ihr Herr und König.’ (ll. 1050–52) It is this direct threat to his authority which motivates Alfonso’s action, and he leaves almost immediately despite Esther and Rahel’s pleas that he stay. In doing so, however, Alfonso abandons the duty of care he owes his mistress, much as Bancbanus neglects to care properly for Erny. Alfonso recognises Rahel’s need for safety, and leaves her in the care of the castellan (ll. 1075–77). In Act II, Alfonso is aware that an affair with Rahel would compromise his authority: ‘Was andern Laune ist beim Fürsten Schuld.’ (l. 711) Here, at the end of Act III, however, he places part of the blame for his actions on Rahel. This is further proof of his inability to control himself and take full responsibility for his behaviour and its consequences.

Given Grillparzer’s composition of Rahel as a care-free and sensual foil to Eleonore, it is easy enough to comprehend her attraction for Alfonso. Rahel represents ‘die Erlösung aus kalter Pflicht, die Entdeckung der Vollnatur, der irrationalen Lieblichkeit und Seligkeit des Lebens.’⁴⁶ Esther’s words in Act II capture her personality: ‘Es kam ihr ein, und also tat sie’s eben.’ (l. 636) The first scene of the drama presents a capricious and confident woman who is well aware of her own sexual allure. Rahel is deaf to her father’s warnings, and declares a desire to see the king, ‘[j]ung und schön’ (l. 20), and court, ‘und all ihr Wesen,/ All ihr Gold und ihr Geschmeide’ (ll. 17–18). Her profligacy annoys Issak, her father, who is characterised

⁴⁶Johannes Volkelt. ‘Die Psychologie der Liebe in Grillparzers Dramen’. *JdGG* 19 (1910). 1–28, p. 6.

by a stereotypical obsession with money, and complains about her mother, his second wife, while Rahel sings, 'Bin ich nicht schön,/ Bin ich nicht reich?/ Und sie ärgern sich,/ Und mich kümmert's nicht. La la la la.' (ll. 41–44) Despite Eleonore's rejection of Rahel's pleas for protection, Alfonso entrusts the Jewish family to Garceran's care at the end of Act I. He is obviously taken with her beauty, and says to Garceran, 'Ich selbst hab' nie nach Weibern viel gesehen,/ Doch diese scheint mir schön.' (ll. 354–55), but it is also her fear and emotionality which he finds alluring: 'Sie wankt noch immer. All ihr ganzes Wesen/ Ein Meer von Angst in stets erneuten Wellen.' (ll. 385–96)

Act II develops the traits which Alfonso finds attractive. Rahel's status as Eleonore's playful rival is highlighted when she dresses up as a queen. She takes a picture of the king and leaves her own portrait in its place: 'Das mag er ansehen, so wie seines ich/ Und mein gedenken, hätt' er mich vergessen.' (ll. 582–83) She proceeds to mockingly imitate Eleonore, imagining the jealous queen's words to her husband:

Die Jüdin, sie gefiel Euch, leugnet's nur!
 Und sie ist schön, bei meinem hohen Wort,
 Nur mit mir selber etwa zu vergleichen.
 [...]
 Ich, Eure Königin, nun duld es nicht,
 Denn eifersüchtig bin ich wie ein Wiesel. (ll. 598–602)

Alfonso interrupts her jesting, startling her, and her fearful reaction endears her to him. Yet she also shows herself to be defiant and strong-willed, refusing to return Alfonso's picture, and risking his anger by playing at sorcery. This only serves to ignite Alfonso's passions, and he again comments on her beauty (l. 640). Eleonore and Manrique do not share Alfonso's enthusiasm, and when the queen encounters Rahel in Act II, she says disparagingly, 'Und hier die Jüdin.' (l. 661) Manrique's assessment is damning, and he orders Rahel to remove her assumed outfit:

Geschmückt, dem losgelaßnen Wahnsinn gleich,
 Mit all dem Flitterstatt des Puppenspiels.
 Leg ab die Krone, die dir nicht geziemt,
 Selbst nicht im Scherz; den Mantel von der Schulter! (ll. 662–65)

In the end, however, Rahel's impetuous and irreverent behaviour ensnares Alfonso. He orders Rahel to return the picture, and Rahel feigns obedience, but resolves to have her way no matter what. She swaps her picture for Alfonso's before leaving. Rahel refuses to thank Alfonso, flirtatiously reserving her thanks for another time which, despite Alfonso's determination never to see her again, she is confident will arise. Only after they have left does Alfonso notice Rahel's trickery, and the renewed sight of her portrait forces him to abandon his plan of joining his troops, and at the end of Act II he follows Rahel rather than his duty.

Alfonso's resulting neglect of politics creates a situation in which Eleonore's decisiveness triumphs. Eleonore is able to thrive because she can subordinate desire to duty: 'Ich möchte, doch ich kann nicht./ Vielmehr ich kann, beim Himmel, denn ich muß.' (ll. 677–78) In the contrast between Alfonso's sensuousness and resultant negligence, and Eleonore's firm grip on matters of state, Grillparzer questions contemporary ideas regarding the nature of masculinity and femininity.

Previous scholarship has viewed Eleonore in one-dimensional, and almost entirely negative, terms. Roy Cowen, for example, writes that she is totally lacking in human understanding, and labels her 'selfrighteous, narrow-minded, intolerant and jealous'.⁴⁷ For Martha Helfer, Eleonore is a 'cold fish of a queen', jealous, and 'sexually unresponsive'.⁴⁸ Elie Lambert writes of 'die steife, streng tugendhafte Leonor'.⁴⁹ Dagmar Lorenz and Heinz Lippuner are slightly less critical of Eleonore, yet a negative image still emerges. Lorenz reduces Eleonore to the sum of her moral framework, portraying her as a 'Königin mit den höchsten Tugendidealen',⁵⁰ while Lippuner presents Eleonore and her rival, Rahel, as representatives of boredom and amusement respectively.⁵¹ For Alfonso, this boredom is

⁴⁷Roy C. Cowen. 'The Tragedy of *Die Jüdin von Toledo*'. *The German Quarterly* 37 (1964). 39–53, pp. 40, 44.

⁴⁸Martha B. Helfer. 'Framing the Jew: Grillparzer's *Die Jüdin von Toledo*'. *The German Quarterly* 75 (2002). 160–80, pp. 164, 165, 168.

⁴⁹Elie Lambert. 'Eine Untersuchung der Quellen der "Jüdin von Toledo"'. *JdGG* 19 (1910). 61–84, p. 71.

⁵⁰Lorenz. *Dichter des sozialen Konflikts*, p. 103.

⁵¹Heinz Lippuner. 'Grillparzers "Jüdin von Toledo". Untersuchung eines Paradigmas'. *Orbis Litterarum* 27 (1972). 202–23, p. 204.

certainly a result of Eleonore's robust morals. On closer inspection, however, Eleonore proves a much more interesting character if she is seen as a representative of the subversive gender constellations in the drama.

The gender dynamics in Grillparzer's drama mark Eleonore out as an unwomanly woman. Talking about Rahel, Garceran says: 'Das edle Weib ist halb ein Mann, ja ganz,/ Erst ihre Fehler machen sie zu Weibern.' (ll. 861–62) Combined with Alfonso's reproach of his spouse, whom, he says, he would love more, '[w]är' manchmal, statt des Lobs, auch etwas zu verzeihn' (l. 186), this statement serves to define the oppositional forces of Eleonore and Rahel in the drama. The concept of 'woman' as the sum of her faults, a concept which defines Rahel, calls to mind the Fall of Man, and particularly Eve's role as the temptress who caused man to sin. The parallels with the role of Rahel and her relationship with Alfonso in Grillparzer's drama are obvious.⁵²

In the context of Rahel's sexuality, Eleonore acquires the role of sexual lawmaker. Her high moral standing and sexual frigidity have been noted already, and scholars have drawn attention to these facets of her personality. However, it is a mistake to underestimate Eleonore's importance for the gender dynamics of the drama and for Grillparzer's portrayal of misogynistic social conventions. In his portrayal of Eleonore, he illuminates the active role of women in the cultural, sexual and social subjugation of women. Eleonore is a more extreme example of the role played by Hero's mother in *Des Meeres und der Liebe Wellen* or Kreusa in *Medea*. She is, to use Fiorenza's terminology, a 'civilizing conduit[] of patriarchal knowledge, values, religion, and culture'. Eleonore and her counterparts have internalised the oppressive message of patriarchal societies, and in turn oppress other women who do not conform, or do not wish to conform, to the standards of female existence and comportment enforced by androcentric social orders.

In Act I, Eleonore displays her power when she dismisses Doña Clara with a gesture, despite Alfonso's request that she stay. However, the extent of her political influence only

⁵²Cf. Yates. 'Grillparzer, *Die Jüdin von Toledo*', p. 113.

becomes evident in the council scene in Act IV. The king's neglect of his state duties forces the councillors to meet in his absence in an attempt to find a resolution to the pressing political and military issues. The queen has been invited to the assembly in the king's stead to give the assembly a veneer of legitimacy (ll. 1148–54). Manrique, who chairs the meeting, explains the dangers of the situation: the Moors threaten Spain's safety, and it is the king's duty to raise an army and defend the land. Alfonso, however, is absent from court, '[v]erlockt von eines Weibes üpp'gem Sinn' (l. 1166). It is clear to them what must be done: 'Da muß vor allem denn die Dirne fort.' (l. 1182), and permanently, to ensure the present and future security of the Spanish state. Several options are open to the council, including bribing Rahel or abducting her and taking her abroad. These options, however, are flawed, as Alfonso would be able to counter both. Manrique dares not voice the third possibility, particularly in the queen's presence as he believes women unequal even to a mere allusion to violence:

Edle Frau, mit Gunst.
Ihr seid zu mild für unser hart Geschäft
[...]
Zwar, wenn Ihr reden wollt, wohlan so sprecht.
Welch Blumenschicksal, welche Schmeichelstrafe
Glaubt Ihr dem Fehl der Buhlerin gemäß? (ll. 1189–90, 1196–98)

Manrique assumes that Eleonore's verdict, because that of a woman, must be mild and forgiving, and the patronising coinages 'Blumenschicksal' and 'Schmeichelstrafe' illustrate his own misogyny. Eleonore, however, defies his expectations of her as a woman, and, although quietly, she sentences Rahel to death, repeating 'Den Tod' (ll. 1199) twice. Manrique's concept of both men and women is challenged by Eleonore's firm resolution and capability for brutality:

Ihr hört's, Ihr Herren.
Das war der dritte Antrag, den ich früher,
Obgleich ein Mann, nicht auszusprechen wagte. (ll. 1199–1201)

Eleonore's words belie Roe's assertion that '[w]ith the backing of the Queen, the council of state decides to have Rahel killed'.⁵³ The queen is the catalyst for the murder and it is unclear

⁵³Roe. *An Introduction*, p. 252.

what would happen without her resolve.

Eleonore justifies the necessity of Rahel's death with the latter's transgression against marriage and religion. Marriage, in Eleonore's understanding of the institution, is sanctioned by God and removes from sex the stain of sin, but Rahel threatens the royal family, 'und damit das christliche Familiensystem und die allgemeine Repression.'⁵⁴ Eleonore's manipulative use of language in this speech almost reaches demagoguery, and allows her to showcase her own skills as a politician. Although there is much historical precedent for male monarchs conducting extramarital affairs without endangering their legitimate heirs' rights of accession, and although the infidelity of Don Sancho, Alfonso's ancestor, is mentioned at the end of Act II, and has not prevented Alfonso from acceding, Eleonore argues successfully that Rahel's affair with Alfonso threatens to invalidate her own marriage with the king, making herself a sinner and their son a bastard. The affair, she argues, necessarily makes either herself or Rahel a sinner, thereby forcing the councillors to condemn Rahel.⁵⁵ Eleonore's language makes it difficult to support Thompson's claim that '[t]he state's representatives are depicted with sympathy' and that 'both Manrique and the queen argue reasonably and from a position of principle, seeking not bloody revenge, but justice.'⁵⁶ Eleonore again condemns Rahel to death, while adeptly maintaining the veneer of traditional femininity:

Doch ist dies Weib der Schandfleck dieser Erde,
So reinigt euren König und sein Land.
Ich schäme mich, daß ich vor Männern spreche,
Und was kaum schicklich auch, doch zwingt die Not. (II. 1221–24)

As Roe points out, Eleonore could have reasoned, as the nobles do, that Rahel endangered the security of Spain, and justified her death on these terms.⁵⁷ That her argument rests

⁵⁴Lorenz. *Dichter des sozialen Konflikts*, p. 99.

⁵⁵Lorenz argues that the roles of Eleonore and Rahel are wholly compatible: 'Entscheidungen und Bewertungen werden gefordert, wo mit einem Sowohl-als-auch operiert werden könnte. Das Doktrinäre der westlichen Konventionen macht logisch Vereinbares unvereinbar. Ohne Doktrin könnten die Königin und Rahel koexistieren, denn ihre Interessen konfliktieren kaum. Irrationale Faktoren—Konvention, Religion, Tradition und Sitte—stehen der rationalen Lösung entgegen.' This is probably true, but such a situation would degrade both women. *Ibid.*, p. 104.

⁵⁶Thompson, p. 125.

⁵⁷Roe. *An Introduction*, p. 257.

wholly on Rahel's infringement of sexual morality demonstrates both the importance of this morality as an inhibiting and proscriptive force on women's behaviour, and the extent to which Eleonore has internalised this morality. Eleonore condemns Rahel for offences against a code of behaviour which, given its patriarchal conception and configuration, has little, if anything, to offer either woman. In condemning Rahel for crimes against morality, Eleonore, whether she realises or not, condones and utilizes the appendages of a system which also restricts her own actions and limits her possibilities.

In the final two lines of Eleonore's speech, Yates sees her admission, which is 'in keeping with the propriety basic in her character', that she finds it difficult to discuss private matters with the councillors.⁵⁸ Yet the king, in Act I, makes it clear that Eleonore shares in the business of state and takes part in council discussions; she is 'gewohnt an Rat und Krieg' (l. 229). Although she may not be used to discussing her marriage with councillors, this is not where she sees the impropriety of their subject matter. Rather, Eleonore's self-representation as a conventional woman is necessitated by the death sentence she utters directly before, and which distances her from the councillors' perceptions of what is suitable for women. This avowal of feminine weakness serves to shroud her actions and pronouncements and prevent the censure of society. References to traditional femininity while performing actions which are distinctly unfeminine call to mind the techniques of female authors in the nineteenth century, who often published numerous literary works while simultaneously accentuating their own strict adherence to gender roles and even attacking other women writers.

Eleonore's speech is crucial for the nuanced portrayal of the subjugation of women, and, more generally, of the repression of sexual desire. Grillparzer represents marriage, and particularly marriages arranged for political or other reasons, rather than entered into by individuals who are capable of satisfying each other as lovers and companions, as a restrictive and oppressive social force. In touching on this matter, Grillparzer shows himself

⁵⁸Yates. 'Grillparzer, *Die Jüdin von Toledo*', p. 121.

to be attuned to the concerns of some of the women in his circle. Caroline Pichler, for example, was a staunch opponent of marriages of convenience or of reason, and believed that only couples who loved and respected each other should be joined in matrimony. Pichler more than once writes of Maria Theresa's luck in being allowed to escape the political marriage that was the fate of most women of her rank and to choose 'den Gemahl [...], den schönen, liebenswürdigen [Franz Stephan].'⁵⁹ Grillparzer also shows that, much as women can become the representatives and enforcers of misogynistic social constructs, men can also be the victims of patriarchal structures which supposedly operate merely for the benefit of males. Garceran laments Alfonso's lost youth, a youth from which women and sex were exiled by the men who raised him. Although these men may have had good intentions, their actions, including the marriage arranged for Alfonso, are shown to have had overwhelmingly negative effects on the course of Alfonso's life.

Eleonore's condemnation of Rahel must also be seen in the context of the drama's antisemitic setting. Rahel, despite her personal wealth, is shown to belong to a marginalised social group. In Act I, Isaak warns Rahel against entering the garden because Jews are not permitted in the king's presence. Manrique repeats this interdiction when Rahel approaches Alfonso, although he ignores it. As Zdenko Škreb writes, '[f]ür den gesetzestreuen Juden ist vieles verboten, aber geradezu ein Reich des Verbotenen ist der Hof, und Herold und Vorkämpfer des Verbotenen ist die Königin.'⁶⁰ Eleonore's reaction to Rahel displays her own personal antipathy towards Jews, while Alfonso acknowledges widespread anti-Jewish discrimination. When Alfonso asks Garceran for advice about seduction, the latter indicates the social standing of Jews by admitting that soldiers often have liaisons with Moorish women, but that an affair with a Jew would be unthinkable: 'Auf Maurinnen sind Streiter wir der Grenze/ Zu Recht verwiesen, doch die Jüdin, Herr—' (ll. 480–81). As a Jewish woman,

⁵⁹Pichler. *Denkwürdigkeiten*. I, p. 12.

⁶⁰Zdenko Škreb. 'Rahel'. *Die andere Welt. Aspekte der österreichischen Literatur des 19. und 20. Jahrhunderts. Festschrift für Hellmuth Himmel zum 60. Geburtstag*. Ed. Kurt Bartsch et al.. Bern; Munich: Francke, 1977. 97–105, p. 100.

Rahel is more suspect than the enemy besieging the kingdom. By portraying the antisemitic society in which both Eleonore and Rahel live, Grillparzer adds to his nuanced portrayal of gender relations. Anders has noted that Eleonore and Rahel are marginalised figures, the former because she is a woman, the latter because she is Jewish.⁶¹ Eleonore's tirade against Rahel is successful partly because of the antisemitism of Spanish society, which means that Rahel is doubly disadvantaged: as a woman, and as a Jew. As Eda Sagarra notes, 'the mutilation of Rahel's body [has been seen] as paradigmatic of a society which marginalised and exercised violence on Jews and women.'⁶² Eleonore, who is also subjected to social conceptions of femininity, asserts her dominance as a Christian and as a member of the ruling class over a woman who is less privileged. As Lippuner writes, 'Eleonore nimmt ihren angestammten Platz auf dem Thronessel ein, sie spricht das Bluturteil—als wirkliche Herrscherin.'⁶³

Harshness is only one facet of Eleonore's character. Yates sees in Eleonore's pleas for mercy an emotional intensity which scholarship has generally denied her.⁶⁴ Her potential for genuine feeling is more apparent, however, in her conversation with Alfonso in Act IV. Although her cool reception of her husband offends him, her affection for him soon becomes apparent. She welcomes Alfonso's signs of repentance and hopes for a better future, giving him the sign of affection that she refused on his entrance. Once Alfonso has admitted his transgressions, Eleonore is quick to forgive him which Yates sees as proof that 'Eleonore's coldness *is* only apparent: it is at least in part a reserve which hides both determination and real feeling.'⁶⁵ Her role in the drama must be seen within the larger conflict between public and private. It is precisely this conflict which necessitates the opposing characteristics which Eleonore displays: harshness and brutality in her public role, and submission in her private

⁶¹ Anders, p. 179.

⁶² Eda Sagarra. 'Grillparzer, the Catholics and the Jews: A Reading of *Die Jüdin von Toledo* (1851)'. *Leo Baeck Institute Yearbook* 46 (2001). 67–80, p. 78.

⁶³ Lippuner, p. 210.

⁶⁴ Yates. 'Grillparzer, *Die Jüdin von Toledo*', p. 123.

⁶⁵ Yates. *A Critical Introduction*, p. 188.

role.

Eleonore's pleas of mercy for her rival help obfuscate the events which transpire between Acts IV and V. Most importantly, they shroud the identity of Rahel's executioner(s), as do the various statements in Act V. The final version of the drama therefore deviates from the certainty of Grillparzer's sources. In 1824, he noted that agency was clear in these: Rahel '[wurde] von den Großen des Reichs im Einverständniße mit der Königin ermordet' (Nr. 1330. *HKA* II/viii, p. 139). This obfuscation, therefore, was Grillparzer's deliberate addition. He does not explain this decision, but it is possible that he wanted to create uncertainty regarding the identity of the murderer/s. Manrique's repudiation of Eleonore's guilt echoes Grillparzer's analysis of *Macbeth*. Eleonore wishes to make herself visible to Alfonso as the guiltiest of the plotters—'Mich laßt voran, ich bin die Schuldigste.' (l. 1768)—but Manrique stresses her innocence in deed, if not in intent:

Nicht also, edle Frau! Ihr sprach das Wort,
Doch als es kam zur Tat, habt Ihr gezittert,
Euch widersetzt und Schonung anbefohlen [. . .] (ll. 1169–71)

This statement could be seen as confirming Helfer's conclusion that grandees, encouraged by Eleonore, kill Rahel.⁶⁶ Lorenz sees similar agency in the drama: Rahel is murdered by the 'empörten Hofschranzen unter der Leitung der Königin in einer pogromartigen Szene'.⁶⁷ For Politzer, who likens Eleonore to Lady Macbeth, the queen's hesitation is not necessarily a sign of a change of heart.⁶⁸ If we take Manrique's statement at face value, Eleonore's role mirrors that of Lady Macbeth in Grillparzer's reading of *Macbeth*: she is the only courtier who can utter the death sentence, yet was too feminine to carry out the deed. And yet no one is ready to accept the principal blame in the affair. Manrique admits to a role in the events—'Ich selber tat's. Zwar nicht mir meiner Hand,/ Allein mit Rat, mit furchtbar ernstem Mitleid.' (ll. 1776–77)—but not to the deed itself, and encourages Garceran 'zu

⁶⁶Helfer, p. 165.

⁶⁷Dagmar C. G. Lorenz. 'Die schöne Jüdin in Stifters *Abdias* und Grillparzers *Die Jüdin von Toledo*'. *JdGG* 3. Folge 19 (1996). 125–39, p. 128.

⁶⁸Politzer. *Das abgründige Biedermeier*, p. 346.

vertreten/ Was du gehindert nicht, wenn nicht gefördert' (ll. 1779–80). With both Garceran and Manrique acknowledging participation in Rahel's death but not execution of the deed, the perpetrator can only be Eleonore or one of the other grandees. Manrique clearly deems it necessary to protect Eleonore from Alfonso's wrath, which suggests that her hands may not be as clean as his earlier statement indicates (ll. 1773–75).

Given her support for the execution of Rahel and the extent to which her own interests, as well as those of the state, are served by this deed, it is not impossible that Eleonore herself carries out the death sentence which she demands in Act IV. Grillparzer colludes with his characters to conceal the ultimate agency in the drama, perhaps intending to avoid enraging or offending his audience with the portrayal of a murderous queen. While Manrique and Garceran deny murdering Rahel, Eleonore, by her own admission, is the guiltiest of all. And, when we examine Manrique's version of events more carefully, he does not exculpate Eleonore, but indicates that she was aware of the magnitude and gruesomeness of the deed: she shuddered, resisted and begged for mercy on Rahel's behalf. These actions are not necessarily incompatible with murder: Macbeth experiences great unease before the murder of Duncan, and afterwards cannot bear to confront his actions: 'I am afraid to think what I have done;/ Look on't again I dare not.' (II/i, ll. 50–51) As Grillparzer writes, Macbeth 'schaudert aber handelt'. Could Eleonore have overcome her own misgivings in order to murder Rahel?

While it is interesting to investigate Eleonore's exact role in the murder of Rahel, *Die Jüdin von Toledo* offers a robust challenge to the gendered dichotomy of intent and action which Grillparzer sees portrayed in *Macbeth*, even if Eleonore is innocent. At the close of the drama, Alfonso departs for war, leaving his son as king and Eleonore as regent. Yet Eleonore's decisiveness and action, especially when contrasted with Alfonso's abandonment of matters of state, already marked her out as ruler of orphaned Spain. If she did not commit the murder herself, she can nevertheless consider herself the guiltiest of plotters, since she was the only member of the council meeting who was able to condemn Rahel to death. In a society where

no one, not even the king, is capable of intent, let alone of action, Eleonore's strength of intent and purpose is connoted differently. In the absence of intent and action, intent is as good as action, and Eleonore's impassioned condemnation of Rahel and her exhortation of those around her to enforce her decision position her as the catalyst for Rahel's murder.

Die Jüdin von Toledo presents a world in which the links between masculinity and femininity, action and intent, are much more complex than the situation Grillparzer perceives in *Macbeth*. According to his notes on Shakespeare's play, there exists a simple dichotomy in which masculinity is paired with action, and femininity with intent. Like Lady Macbeth, Grillparzer writes, all women are incapable of action, although they may be capable of intent. Yet the action of *Die Jüdin von Toledo* does not corroborate this supposedly universal truth; nor does it present a simple reversal of the dichotomy. Alfonso is the beguiled king, unable to focus on affairs of state and unwilling to determine on any course of action. Eleonore is forced to make decisions in his stead, which she does with a strength foreign to Alfonso and the other men of state. The murder, between acts and off stage, conceals the identity of the agent, although Eleonore considers herself to be the guiltiest party. With Alfonso indecisive and prevaricating, Eleonore's fierce intent is enough to call into question both the conclusions Grillparzer draws from *Macbeth*, and the dominant cultural stereotypes which deemed women unworthy of public office. For Grillparzer, Lady Macbeth is 'das Weib, das nach Empfindungen, im guten und schlimmen, handelt'. While Eleonore's decision may be partially motivated by jealousy, there can be no doubt that, in the figure of Alfonso, whose sensuality renders him incapable of intent and action, Grillparzer has portrayed a character who deviates from the rationality and decisiveness expected of him.

Conclusion

In the Introduction, I touched upon some of the contradictions and complexities regarding women which are present in Grillparzer's writing. This study has not reconciled these contradictory *Frauenbilder*, but that was not the aim. Indeed, given the length of Grillparzer's literary career, and the variety of genres in which these statements appear, these inconsistencies are perhaps inevitable and irreconcilable. What has been achieved, I hope, is a reimagining of our portrait of Grillparzer which, while acknowledging his misogynistic statements, also takes into account the realities of his life and the positive female characters he created in his dramas.

Several important conclusions can be drawn from this study. First, by investigating the lives and writings of the women who were closest to Grillparzer during his lifetime, we can put paid to the idea that he was hostile to women who were active in the public sphere. Pichler, Weissenthurn, Paoli, Littrow-Bischoff, Ebner-Eschenbach, Schröder, Rettich and Wolter enjoyed Grillparzer's interest, respect and friendship. He encouraged their careers and welcomed their successes. Paoli and Littrow-Bischoff in particular argued for an improvement in women's social roles. While Grillparzer may not have made any direct statements regarding women's rights, the Frauen-Erwerb-Verein or other moves towards greater equality, the fact that he was friends with women who engaged with these issues indicates that he was not hostile to such ideas, and may have silently supported them.

Second, the writings of these authors on the *Frauenfrage* illustrate the aims and desires held by women of the age. Philosophical reflections on the relationship between the sexes

are largely abandoned in favour of practical prescriptions for a changing society where women are increasingly left to fend for themselves. Pichler, Paoli, Littrow-Bischoff and other women whom Grillparzer knew advocated women's greater participation in the nation's economic life, as a way of providing for themselves and as a way of utilising their skills and knowledge. They demanded improvements in women's education, and Littrow-Bischoff was instrumental in founding the Wiener Frauen-Erwerb-Verein, which realised some of the aims of the women's movement. By gaining a better understanding of the contemporary discourse, Grillparzer's dramas and their heroines can be put into a historical and social context. Grillparzer's dramas do not represent the kind of direct criticism of and challenge to specific issues facing contemporary women, as in Bauernfeld's *Bürgerlich und Romantisch*, or, indeed, Grillparzer's *Wer ist schuldig?*. Grillparzer, through his heroines, is nevertheless a harsh critic of prevailing social misogyny and restrictions placed on women, and a publicist for women's capabilities. The political and artistic talents, the devotion and steadfastness, the bravery, intelligence and determination of Hero, Kunigunde, Sappho, Libussa, and of the other figures who feature in this study, call into question contemporary assumptions and 'scientific facts' regarding women's capabilities. Grillparzer was therefore in tune with those women in nineteenth-century Austria who challenged the status quo and championed women's abilities.

As has been shown, Grillparzer's heroines should also be seen in the context of the author's wider intellectual context. I have argued for the influence of contemporary Austrian laws, European thinking on the social contract, Shakespeare, and the Enlightenment on the creation of these figures, and in doing so have shown the breadth of Grillparzer's intellectual interests. Where Grillparzer's dramas fit into existing literary traditions, he emphasises the importance of female characters, demonstrating that they were of primary interest for him, and adds philosophical and political complexity as a framework for discussion of the *Frauenfrage*. Elaborating these various contexts, and the way Grillparzer manipulated existing traditions, demonstrates the emancipatory message of Grillparzer's dramas. I have

also shown that Grillparzer's juvenilia, which address social issues more directly than his mature works, suggest that he censored these later works, and that they therefore might present only a weakened version of his opinions. It is possible that the portrayal of Kunigunde, the ambitious young woman whose aspirations are crushed by marriage, or of Berta, whose affections are the plaything of scheming male relatives, were criticisms of contemporary marriage. When he places Hero's desire for a life of self-determination in the context of Kant's philosophy, Grillparzer could be communicating a positive message regarding women's intellectual capabilities. When Grillparzer portrays the influence of social contract theory on Sappho's and Libussa's politics, he creates politically astute heroines who are victims of androcentric political coups rather than of their own physiology. Grillparzer's decision to create a backstory for the millennia-old Medea in which he sheds light on the misogynistic and xenophobic attitudes which drive her to extremes suggests an understanding of oppression. Arguing for *Die Jüdin von Toledo* to be seen in the context of Grillparzer's own pronouncements on *Macbeth*, particularly as regards the relationship between the sexes, means that Eleonore becomes a clever, if demagogic, politician capable of doing what is necessary when the men around her flounder, and that Grillparzer's misogynistic statements are contradicted by his own dramatic works. Taken together, Grillparzer's dramatic heroines represent a significant repudiation of Grillparzer's misogynistic statements, and of contemporary opinions regarding women's social role.

As stated in the Introduction, this is a thesis about Grillparzer's *ideas*. But what of his contemporary audiences and readers? Did they see his dramas as an intellectual response to the Austrian women's movement, or to discussions of the *Frauenfrage*? Although there was widespread discussion of women's emancipation and the *Frauenfrage*, including related developments abroad, in Austrian media during Grillparzer's life, his contemporaries do not seem to have linked his dramas to these discussions. In the Introduction, we saw that his heroines were praised, but primarily because contemporaries saw them as paragons of the female form, rather than as proponents of women's emancipation. Grillparzer's heroines

attracted considerable critical attention, and contemporaries recognised the sympathy he showed for his female characters, but did not perceive this as social criticism or activism. One critic remarked that Grillparzer's Sappho was 'erhaben schön [...] gefühlvoll und wahr', and his Medea was not 'die blutgetünchte Zauberin der Alten', but a 'tiefgekränkte Gattin und Mutter',¹ while another noted the contrast Grillparzer created between Margarete's 'ideale[] Reinheit' and Kunigunde's 'moralische Blöße'.² After a performance of the first act of *Libussa* in 1840, the *Wiener Zeitschrift* wrote that the sisters 'scheinen mit jedem Worte über das gewöhnliche Maß der Frauengestalten hinauszuwachsen'.³

This lack of contemporary critical recognition of the feminist issues which I see in these dramas is particularly surprising when we consider that at least some contemporaries noticed the 'Luft der wienerischen Verhältnisse' in his dramas and argued that 'die Wahl der Stoffe oder die Formen, womit er seine Ideen umhüllt, verrathen uns, daß der Dichter in Wien lebt'.⁴ In the case of *Die Ahnfrau* criticism was concerned almost exclusively with the 'Schicksalsidee', and with discussions regarding the drama's moral framework, which explains the lack of attention given to the female characters. But political issues were seen in other dramas. A critic in the *Neue Freie Presse* wrote that *Libussa* 'berührt in starkem Maße die Nationalitäten-Frage',⁵ while *Die Neuzeit* saw *Die Jüdin von Toledo* as a drama about the place of Jews in society.⁶ And feminist issues were seen in works by other writers: a review of Roderich Benedix's *Doctor Wespe*, for example, stated that Elisabeth 'hat sich der modernen Frauenemancipation in die Arme geworfen'.⁷ What can explain the lack of attention given to the feminist aspect of Grillparzer's dramas for which I argue here? It is possible that Grillparzer's historical and mythological settings, chosen to fool the censors, also fooled audiences. Although the Viennese flavour of Grillparzer's dramas was noted by

¹*Der Ungar*. Nr. 20. 25.1.1842, p. 116.

²*Abend-Zeitung*. 14.3.1825, p. 246.

³*Wiener Zeitschrift für Kunst, Literatur, Theater und Mode*. 5.12.40, p. 1551.

⁴*Blätter für literarische Unterhaltung*. Nr. 210. 28.7.1840, p. 845.

⁵*Neue Freie Presse*. Morgenblatt. Nr. 2810. 21.6.1872, p. 2.

⁶*Die Neuzeit*. Nr. 45 8.11.72, p. 496.

⁷*Wiener Zeitschrift für Kunst, Literatur, Theater und Mode*. 16.2.1843, p. 261.

some, others found his portrayals of foreign settings convincing and realistic: perhaps this prevented them from perceiving contemporary Austrian concerns in these dramas. Censorship, which affected Grillparzer's dramatic work, could also have played a role in critical reception: if the implications of Grillparzer's dramas were too controversial to be placed in a Viennese setting, perhaps their discussion was too sensitive for print. Another possibility is that contemporaries could not, or would not see Grillparzer's dramas, a source of national pride and often regarded as aspiring to the classicism of Goethe and Schiller, as ruminations on the *Frauenfrage* or women's emancipation, the latter in particular being treated with derision in much of the media coverage.

His contemporaries' lack of openness to the issues of women's social position which I see in these dramas cannot detract from the positive portrayal of Grillparzer's heroines. His sympathy with his heroines, women who defy the expectations their societies place on them, and the expectations Grillparzer's society placed on its female inhabitants, and the social criticism which he built into his dramas, however, suggest a much more generous attitude towards the *Frauenfrage* than do his diaries. In a letter to Caroline Pichler, Therese von Artner wrote: 'Allerdings hast du Recht, daß ich das schöne Bild, in dem mir Grillparzer früher erschien, nicht gern aufgebe, und völlig dagegen kämpfen möchte.'⁸ The present study represents a small contribution in the tradition of Artner and others who have defended the poet in the face of undue criticism or misunderstanding.

⁸Therese von Artner to Caroline Pichler. 10.7.1828. Wienbibliothek im Rathaus. H.I.N. 362.

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