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The structure of Hauptmann's dramas

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THE STRUCTURE OF HAUPTMANN'S DRAMAS

A Thesis
submitted to
the Faculty of the Graduate College
of the State University of Iowa
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for the Degree of Master of Arts,

-by-
Fannie A. Koch.

State University of Iowa.
1912.
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INTRODUCTION.

If we make a survey of the drama from the earliest times, down to the present day, we see the many changes it has undergone in the course of development. In technic and structure, in the handling of subject matter, the drama has gone through a process of evolution and revolution which has been a gradual growth and development. And we must bear in mind that the works of Sophocles, Shakespeare, Goethe, and Ibsen are stepping stones in the development of the drama; their works were made possible by countless and unknown experimenters who have never attained to the ranks of fame. Many and varied reasons account for the change in the theatre. Were Aristotle to live again today, he would undoubtedly have entirely different ideas on the drama and its underlying principles from those embodied in his works on dramatic art. Modern stage conveniences have probably had as much to do as anything in bringing about this change. While it is the demands of the audience that determine for the dramatist the themes that he shall portray, the theatre, the stage, and the environ-
ment, affect to a great extent the form and structure of his dramatic productions. A play must be suited to the theatre. The Greeks had their outdoor theatre; the Londers under Elizabeth a small, half-roofed cockpit; the Parisians under Louis XIV a long narrow tennis court. Today we have the modern standard play house in all countries and this uniformity of theatrical conditions has brought with it certain identity of dramaturgic method in all countries. The subject matter is also an important factor in determining what form this material shall assume. Logical reasoning will tell us that naturalistic treatment of a subject must necessarily follow a different process of structural development than an idealistic would follow.

Brander Matthews¹ says: "The real literary merit of a play does not reside so much in its mere wording as in its solid structure, in the logic of the plot, and in the sincerity of its character drawing." The story should be clearly presented so that whether it be well or poorly written it can stand by itself. The literary merit of a play depends just as much on its

¹ Brander Matthews "A Study of the Drama".
wording and perhaps more. And this is true of every drama whether it be the historical play or the modern social drama, which came into existence during the last decade of the nineteenth century and which is now being written to the exclusion of almost every other type.

In the winter of 1889 at the Lessing Theatre in Berlin, the dramatic society "Freie Buhne" presented the initial work of a new and unknown author. The new play caused a tremendous amount of comment and discussion, furnished material for newspaper and magazine articles, was the chief topic of conversation in club and drawing room. The play which caused so much commotion and agitation was Gerhart Hauptmann's "Vor Sonnenaufgang." With this play the modern naturalistic drama, which was to play such a prominent role in the modern theatre, was introduced to the German stage by a German. Along with the introduction of a new theme, the social question, a new dramatic style and form appeared. Though for a time the discussion of subject matter crowded out that of the new dramatic style, it was not for long. Even if these dramas should not live and remain popular because of substance,
the structure will live forever and go down in literary history as marking the beginning of a new epoch in the development of the drama.
SOURCE OF MATERIAL.

Before a dramatist can write a play he must have something to write about. The method pursued and used in developing a subject, and the material which serves as a skeleton for the play in question, is largely determined by the source of this material on which the play is based. A variety of sources served Hauptmann as material for his plays. At first glance it will seem as though he modeled considerably on works of previous and contemporary writers; but if we examine these works in a careful and critical way, we shall soon see that he is far from being a mere imitator or reproducer. He had practically as many models as plays, but did not follow any of his models very closely. Hale\(^1\) made a very apt comparison when he called Hauptmann's temperament that of a "chameleon". In his first play he is like Tolstoi: "Vor Sonnenaufgang" may be likened to Tolstoi's "Power of Darkness"; in his second like Zola and Ibsen: In some ways "Das Friedensfest" reminds us of Zola's "L'Assommoir" and "La Terre", while some critics claim a marked

\(^{1}\) Edward Everett Hale, Jr. "Dramatists of Today".
resemblance to Ibsen's "Ghosts". But the differences in the two plays are more pronounced and numerous than the similarities. If any imitation, it is a weak one. Both dramas end with a question mark. Like Ibsen's drama, "Das Friedensfest" is merely a catastrophe which is based on the previous happenings in the life of the characters, for a period which extends back thirty years. "Einsame Menschen", the next play, comes perhaps nearer to being based directly on another production than any other of Hauptmann's works. The model here is Ibsen's "Rosmersholm". But in the construction of the plot Hauptmann has not followed his model closely. Indeed, the facts as presented to us in "Einsame Menschen" might well lead up to the situation which is presented in the opening scenes of "Rosmersholm". But here, too, we are introduced into the midst of a situation upon which the events of the drama are all logically built. "Die Weber" brings to light the fourth source, Dr. Zimmermann's "Blüte und Verfall des Leinengewerbes in Schlesien." The historical uprising of the weaver population in Peterswaldau, 1844 serves as a source of dramatical material. Next in order of composition is "College Crampton", 
a comedy, whose prototype we find in Moliere's "The Miser". The plot is simple, while the character study is the important thing which bears resemblance to the work of the great French genius. Kleist's "Der Zerbrochene Krug" bears a striking resemblance to the two plays: "Der Biberpelz" and "Der Rote Hahn". While Kleist's play rises to a climax and conclusion, "Der Biberpelz" has really no end. As Woerner¹ says: "The former is a complete whole, while the latter is scarcely three-quarters". "Der Rote Hahn" is merely a continuation of "Der Biberpelz". In the latter work we have two parallel incidents; in the former we find a third that may be considered the last of a happy trio. The dream idea as presented in Grillparzer's "Der Traum ein Leben" repeats itself in Hauptmann's "Hannele's Himmelfahrt" and his "Das Kloster bei Sendomir" served as a guiding post for the dramatic fragment "Elga", in which for the first time Hauptmann tried his hand at dramatizing a story, and his "Die Jüdin von Toledo" may have been the basis for "Kaiser Karl's Geisel".

¹ U. C. Woerner "Gerhart Hauptmann"
The latter originally comes from an old legend in Boccaccio's "Decamerone", which was next used by Erizzo in an Italian novel, then by Grillparzer, and then by Hauptmann. "Griselda" which appeared shortly after "Kaiser Karl's Geisel" is likewise based on an old legend from Boccaccio's "Decamerone". "Florian Geyer" seems to be based purely on historical fact. There are similar and parallel passages in Goethe's "Götz von Berlichingen", but we have no proof to show that Hauptmann used this source as a model, and as far as structure is concerned, there is very little that points to "Götz" as a source. Next we may refer to two of Shakespeare's plays: "Midsummer nights' Dream" and "The Taming of the Shrew". "Die Versunkene Glocke," which reverts to the former, is a fairy play on the order of Anderson's "Fairy Tales" in some parts. It also shows the influence of Goethe's "Faust" and de la Motte-Fouqué's "Undine". The "Brek-ke-ke-keks" of Aristophanes become real for the moment. The scene at the witches hut up on the mountain, Rautendelein, the Nickelmann, the Waldschrat, and the woodsprites, and the dance of the elves, are all typical of Shakespeare in delineation and structure of presentation. When
"Schluck und Jau" appeared on the stage for the first performance, Julius Hart, a critic of the age, said, "Hauptman ist tot, es lebe Shakespeare."¹

The play has been compared to the Prologue of "The Taming of the Shrew"; the ideas of the two are very similar. Browning's "Pippa Passes" has at least given the name to "Und Pippa Tanzt", if nothing more. The theme of "Rose Bernd" is closely related to Hebbel's "Maria Magdalena", but the construction of the two dramas is decidedly different. It has also been called a dramatic version of Goethe's well-known lines in "Wilhelm Meister"²:

"- - - - - - - - - Ihr himmlischen Mächte. 
Ihr führt ins leben uns hinein, 
Ihr läßt den Armen schuldig werden, 
Dann überläßt ihr ihm der Pein; 
Denn alle Schuld rächt sich auf Erden".

1. Hauptmann is dead; Shakespeare lives.
2. Goethe "Wilhelm Meister" Book II Chapt. 13,

O heavenly powers,
You bring us into life,
Impose guilt upon the poor man,
Then you abandon him to misery;
For all guilt avenges itself on earth.
"Fuhrmann Henschel" is at bottom but a dramatization of the idea of Hauptmann's short story "Bahmvärter Thiele". The hotel in the drama is modeled after "Zur Preussischen Krone" at Ober-salzbrunn, of which his father was proprietor. "Michael Kramer" seems to be founded on personal experience during his resident days at Breslau. "Die Jungfern vom Bischofsberg# seems to have no particular source that has been discovered up to the present time. However, we know that the home of his wife serves as the setting and environment of the plot. "Der Arme Heinrich", which has been called five episodes out of a drama, rather than a drama in five acts, takes up once more the old story told by Hartmann von der Aue as early as the twelfth century.

Hauptmann has drawn his material from a variety of sources. In patterning after his various predecessors he has chosen any form that he saw fit, for self-expression. Perhaps in comparing his plays, we can find two that seem very similar, but rarely, if ever, are there three of a kind.
DIVISIONS OF THE PLAYS.

"A play is a story devised to be presented by actors on a stage before an audience."

Clayton Hamilton.

"A play is a complete and unified story of human life acted out on the stage in a series of motivated incidents so arranged as to excite the greatest amount of interest and pleasure in the spectator by means of novelty, variety, contrast, suspense, surprise, climax, humor, and pathos."

Elizabeth Woodbridge.

"A play is a representation, by actors, on a stage, before an audience, of a struggle between individual human wills, motivated by emotion, rather than by intellect, and expressed in terms of objective action."

Clayton Hamilton second definition.

Most plays are divided into from two to five main divisions called acts. These in turn are further subdivided into scenes, tableaux, and situations. The idea was formerly held, that a drama must have five acts -- no more, no less. But this idea has long since been dispelled.
Whether it is for the sake of variety, for the reason that he wants to try his hand at as many possible phases of act division as he can, or for other reasons, Hauptmann has produced everything from the two-scene dream poem "Hannele" to the regulation five-act drama. However, the five act drama seems to be the most numerous; for of the twenty-one plays written by Hauptmann, nine are built on the five act plan, while a tenth, "Florian Geyer", has a prologue in addition to the five acts. Hauptmann began his career as a dramatist with the five-act play "Vor Sonnenaufgang". The next, "Das Friedensfest", has but three acts. The next three plays are like the first, all with five acts. Then we find the abovementioned two-scene dream poem "Hannele's Himmelfahrt", then "Florian Geyer", and before we have gone down the list and come to the twenty first which once more is built on the five story plan, we find "Michael Kramer", "Der Rote Hahn", "Und Pippa Tanzt", and "Kaiser Karl's Geisel", each consisting of but four acts; then "Der Arme Heinrich", which is really not a drama, but five episodes out, and "Elga" and "Griselda", which consist respectively of six and ten scenes each. "Die Weber", which play took on an entirely new form, must be noted.
in particular. Here we really have a series of five tableaux, held together, not by a single thread or plot running through the whole, but merely through the atmosphere and purpose which dominates throughout. The great majority of the plays are not divided into scenes. As we have already noted, several of the plays are divided into scenes rather than acts. Of those that are divided into acts, "Der Arme Heinrich" is the only one that is further subdivided into scenes. Here, whenever, a new character enters or leaves the stage, we find a new scene. Thus we see that Hauptmann tried his hand at the old scheme of playconstruction and made innovations with new ones of his own planning. How successful he was, and which suited his style of writing best, may be considered more in detail. At any rate, "he is continually surprising the critics and astonishing the world with some new proof of his versatility, some new illustration of his artistic virtuosity, some new demand for a reconsideration as to his place in contemporary literature."¹

¹. Schlenker. "Gerhart Hauptmann".
STAGE TIME.

With modern stage appliances, making a rapid and varied shift of scenery possible, with the abolition of the chorus, the playwrights do not have to confine themselves to a time-limit as the Greeks and Romans did. The actual time covered in Hauptmann's plays varies from one evening to about a year and a half. The events of "Das Friedensfest" could easily take place in one evening, while the events of "Der Arne Heinrich" extend over a period of about eighteen months. The lapse of time depicted in the majority of the plays seems to be between two and three weeks, for seven plays fall within this class. "Hannele's Himmelfahrt" represents but one day, "Und Pippa Tanzt", and "Die Weber" a day and a half each, "Elga", a night and a day, "Schluck and Jau", "Michael Kramer" and "Die Jungfern vom Bischofsberg" each play two days, "Die Ratten" nine days, and "Rose Bernd", "Griselda", and "Fuhrmann Henschel" five, eight and twelve respectively. So we see that our modern German dramatist has not felt himself bound by the Unity of Time, but has suited the matter of time to the necessity of the subject and action involved; though
in several of his plays he has proven conclusively, that he could confine himself to the conventional twenty four hours observed by Greek dramatical laws.
Another factor of the drama, in which Hauptmann did, and did not adhere to Greek dramatic law is in the matter of Unity of Place. In the first three dramas and in one subsequent one, "Hannele's Himmelfahrt", the scene remains the same throughout all the acts. The changes in the other plays vary. In "Michael Kramer" we see different rooms in the same house. In "Der Biberpelz" and "Der Rote Hahn", the scene changes back and forth between the Wolff home and the council chamber at the town hall. In "Die Versunkene Glocke" the scene of the first and last acts is the same, and acts three and four are the same. In "Fuhrmann Henschel" we find but one shift of scenery, which occurs in the fourth act. The first three and the fifth all take place in the same room. Acts II and IV of "Rose Bernd" are the same while in the other three acts the scene changes. So we see there is practically every variance in scenery. In some, the scene is the same throughout, while in others we have a new place presented to us in each of the five acts, as in "Die Weber". But whatever
the scenery and the variances, they are necessitated by, and shown to be in general keeping with the general trend of the play concerned.
THE STAGE SITUATION AT RISE AND FALL OF CURTAIN.

Another question to be considered in connection with the division of the play into acts and scenes is the presentation of the beginning and the end of the various divisions. Does the curtain rise on an empty room, is there one person present on the stage, two, three, or a group of people? And what are they doing? The same questions may also be asked of the scene when the curtain is let down. In general, Hauptmann uses three methods. These apply both to beginning and end. These are, (1) the stage picture, presenting a group of people, (2) the stage occupied by but a single person, (3) the empty stage. When no one is on the stage as the curtain rises, an entry follows directly as in Acts IV and V of "Vor Sonnenaufgang". If a single person is discovered on the stage at the rise of the curtain, that person is usually busy about the room, at the desk writing, looking out of the window, before the fireplace absorbed in thought, or in some similar attitude; he is soon joined by one or more
characters, and conversation and action ensues. Or, if two people are on the stage to begin with, they may be engaged in conversation, and before long be joined by a third, fourth, or more characters. A good illustration of this is the opening scene of "Der Rote Hahn". This same method reversed is employed in the act ending. A group of people may appear on the stage, and one by one leave until there is but a single person left; and this one may be preparing to leave, as in Act III of "Einsame Menschen". The remaining character usually says or does something which is a result of the action which has occurred previously in the act. In the second act of "Fuhrmann Henschel" we find a good example of this. Hanne is alone; her husband has just been the last of several people to leave. She is aroused and angry. As the curtain falls we have before us a woman in the heat of passion.

And just as we have the empty stage at the beginning of an act, so at the end too, in various instances the people all leave just before the curtain falls. The other method of first entrance and final exit employed by Hauptmann is the so-called stage picture. A group of characters
is presented to us in the midst of action, and if it be conclusion, the group is in some dramatic situation and leaves the general impression of the whole on us. Almost any play of Hauptmann which you might happen to pick up would illustrate the majority of these cases, but I should like to site Act I of "Fuhrmann Henschel" as a splendid example of the stage picture in the naturalistic play, and for a most beautiful and realistic stage picture you have only to go to "Die Versunkene Glocke". We cannot say that Hauptmann especially favored anyone of these devices, but we can say that almost without exception he uses one of the above three general schemes of beginning and conclusion.
Among other dramatic devices abandoned by Hauptmann and other contemporary playwrights is the monologue. In past centuries it was a common thing to have the curtain rise, reveal to us a single person, or, if in the middle or near the close of an act, have all but one person leave the stage, and then let this sole occupant confide in the audience, tell them his thoughts, declare his intentions, and defend his acts. Perhaps the longest monologue known in literature is the speech of Don Carlos in Victor Hugo's "Hermani". Brander Matthews says: "So sharp is the reaction against this practice that the French writer of a eulogistic study of later German naturalistic dramatists, asserts positively that the soliloquy and the aside are hereafter banished from the stage." We must take exception to this statement, for scene 5 of Act I, and scenes 2 and 5 of Act III of "Der Arme Heinrich" each consist of a monologue. But this is not in a strictly naturalistic play. With these
exceptions, Hauptmann is exceedingly careful in avoiding the aside as well as the monologue. In "Das Friedensfest", the only way round it was to insert a sixteen line stage direction, which is really a silent substitute for the monologue.

And this very fact of abolishing the soliloquy was instrumental in bringing about another dramatic innovation on the part of Hauptmann and contemporary writers. This is the pantomime. "Vor Sonnenaufgang" contains a typical instance. At the beginning of Act II, Loth goes by, deep in thought,-- sighing. Wilhelm Kahl goes through the room in stocking feet, carrying his shoes, his coat over his arm. When Helene rushes downstairs with the news, "Still born", she seeks Loth; not finding him in the room, she seeks him in the garden, returns, looks out of the window, then starts for the other door. She sees Loth's letter on the table, grabs and reads it, seems to be searching for something which she does not find, goes out one door, rushes back in by another, meets a servant and inquires about Loth. While all this is going on, we hear from behind the scenes, the gruff voice of the drunken father. According to the modern idea of playwriting, actions speak louder than words.
STAGE DIRECTIONS

When we pick up a Hauptmann drama and open, it up to the first page to begin reading it, the first thing that meets our eye and draws our attention is the unusually long and detailed description of the place and surroundings. Long and detailed stage directions are a characteristic of the Hauptmann drama. And if there are any characters on the stage at the rise of the curtain, we are advised of this fact and made to notice points about their personal appearance and surroundings. We are thus made familiar with these items and are better prepared for an understanding of further developments. At the beginning of each act and each scene we have a vivid description of surroundings. The length of these descriptions depends upon the nature of the place. Every little point and detail are brought to our attention and carefully described. Scattered throughout the drama are lengthy and numerous stage directions, which give us further pictures in announcing to us arrivals and departures. In many cases they describe the emotions and feelings of characters on the stage, motivate coming events,
and advise us of, and acquaint us with past happenings. The time of action and often the time which has elapsed since the opening of the previous act is made known in the stage notes. Immediately after a new character appears on the scene, his physical features, his dress and characteristics are described minutely. In some cases these stage directions are superfluous and in other instances they become tedious and tiresome; much that is contained in them is for the reader rather than for the actual representation of the play. But on the whole this stage device serves a good and useful purpose.
BEGINNING OF THE PLAY CONFLICT.

Every work of literary art must have a beginning, a middle, and an end. Art deals with life; and inasmuch as the drama is one of the highest form of art, the drama portrays life. But there is a sharp line of separation between art and life, for life is all middle, with an end which no man may see, and with numberless beginnings which revert back to the bygone ages. The playwright takes a small piece out of this middle of life and shapes it so that as a drama it will have a beginning and end, as well as a middle. He must select what is significant and present it in the most comprehensive way, and in such a way that the most salient features shall stand out prominently and project into the background those facts and features which contribute in a minor manner to the central purpose of his plan.

Brander Matthews¹ says: "If we examine a collection of typical plays of every kind, tragedies and melodramas, comedies and farces, we shall find that the starting point of all is the same. Some one central character wants something, and this exercise of volition is the mainspring of

¹ Brander Matthews. "A Study of the Drama".
the action." In practically every successful play, whether it be modern or ancient, German, or French, or English, we shall find strife and contest, a clash of contending desires, the assertion of human will against marked and insistent opposition. In Corneille's "Le Cid" Chimène wishes to avenge her father; she is opposed by a stronger will than her own and is thus thwarted in the attaining of her desire. In Goethe's "Götz von Berlichingen" it was a struggle for the recognition of individual worth, of Rights against Privileges, of Liberty against Tradition.

And the same is true of Hauptmann's plays. In "Die Weber" we have the revolt of the peasant weavers against oppression and their demand for better wages. "Der Rote Hahn" shows us the determination of Frau Fielitz to have a modern and up-to-date house in the place of the little shack in which she lives. She evades the law and human retribution, but is finally punished for her crime, by superhuman power. In "Die Versunkene Glocke" we see the main character, Heinrich, striving for his ideal which is representative of the ideal of mankind. And there is also a secondary problem in the contest between nature and religion,
and the longing to become human, which arises in Rautendelein. In "Vor Sonnenaufgang", his first play, the story weaves itself about the Darwinian theory of the curse of alcohol, and the love affair of Loth, who is an expounder of this theory; and it is in this that the contest develops. His second play, "Das Friedensfest" represents the struggle between determinism and realism. The bride hopes to remove the hereditary curse from her bridegroom. Robert believes that nature is unalterable; that the will is able to do nothing. "Einsame Menschen" shows us the conflict between an old, narrow, and bigoted view of the world, and a new, broader, and more sympathetic one. But nevertheless, Johannes Vockerat perishes in the end, because of indecision and lack of power of his own convictions. In "Der Biberpelz" we see Frau Wolff-Fielitz with a zealous desire for a good reputation and respect for appearances, coupled with an intense striving to get on, and an inspiration for higher things. "Florian Geyer", built something like the weavers, has for its foundation the uprising of the people in the Peasant War, against the aristocracy and nobility.
"Michael Kramer" presents a calamitous family situation, where the conflict is between the moral wretchedness and degradation of the son, Arnold, and the pitiful striving of the father to uplift the boy and make a man of him. In "Der Arme Heinrich", Ottegebe and Heinrich are the two characters between whom there arises a tragic conflict. It is a conflict of compassion and despair; a woman's desire for self-sacrifice and a man's determination to struggle alone. In "Griselda" the will of a weak and helpless girl is pitted against that of a bold and hardened tyrant. The modern social drama portrays the individual in conflict with his environment. The struggle is usually between personal character and social conditions. The modern hero struggles with the world.
EXPOSITION.

"Ein Anfang ist kein Meisterstück,
Doch guter Anfang halbes Glück."

Deutsches Sprüchwort.¹

It is in the great beginning of his dramas
that Hauptmann has made, so to speak, his master­piece; for it is in the construction of the first
act or acts,—to be more specific, the exposition, that Hauptmann has really introduced a change
into the drama. The knowledge necessary to enable
an understanding of the plot is not imparted to
us by means of prologue, spoken before the play
begins, nor by a long soliloquy, which is prac­
tically a prologue just inside the play, nor is
it inserted in a swift dialogue in the opening
scenes of the play; but it is ingeniously scattered
throughout the whole of the first act and in many

¹ "A beginning is not a masterpiece,
But a good beginning is half of success."
plays it is scattered throughout practically the whole of the play. It is made a part of the story. The way in which incidents follow one another is also new in the drama. In Hauptmann we really have a continual succession of momentary pictures. And with the aid of his contemporary writers in the naturalistic field, this new style will go down in the annals of literature as one more step in the development of the drama.

"Vor Sonnenaufgang" is the first of the new plays which Hauptmann introduced into the German theatre and the first of a series of plays which have helped to make a new epoch in the German drama -- in fact the drama of all nations. Other plays followed in rapid succession, and of these plays, those that distinctly represent the naturalistic school are the ones that are epoch-making as regards structure. It is in the exposition that the real difference occurs and to determine wherein this difference lies, let us take a specific instance which shall be illustrative of the type in general.

"Fuhrmann Henschel" is a prototype of the Hauptmann naturalistic drama. In this play we
have sort of a new fate tragedy. The curtain rises revealing to us a room in the hotel "Zum grauen Schwan". First we have the usual detailed stage directions which give us a minute picture of the room. We see Frau Henschel, wife of the teamster, sick in bed. At the side of the bed stands a cradle in which lies the six months old daughter of the household. The room contains another bed, a large tile stove, where the dinner is cooking, and other articles of furniture. The place is so described and the atmosphere of congestion brought out that we can easily imagine ourselves in a stuffy, crowded room. The action of the play begins almost immediately and continues uninterruptedly. Hauptmann has given us the background by quite natural chance hints. The exposition though somewhat lengthy, is clear, lively, vivid, and without really knowing how we got it, we have all that we care to know about the previous history of the family. There are no long narratives, no inappropriate or contradictory relations from the point of view of the characters on the stage, no mechanical devices for giving us a clue. The characters do not use a specially prepared stage language,
do not express themselves in monologues or asides, but talk just as they would in everyday life; they use provincial expression, characteristic dialect, and broken sentences just as ordinary people do in the walks of everyday life.

But it is in the way that Hauptmann presents all this to us that he differs from Schiller, Goethe, Shakespeare, and all the previous writers. We may call Hauptmann's method of procedure the cross-section plan. While the previous dramatists might have two, three or half a dozen different threads which lead to the opening of the play all these threads meet in a point, and this point is the starting point of the drama. Hauptmann also has various threads to begin on; but in place of having them meet to form one starting point, he takes, so to speak, a cross-section out of some incident, story or situation, and takes the various points of it and develops them. In the course of events of the play, these threads meet and become entwined and entangled and at the end of the play we have another cross-section similar to the one at the beginning, which is the result of the influence which the action of the play has had on the
conditions which existed at the beginning. In "Fuhrmann Henschel" then, the author begins with a cross-section in the life of Teamster Henschel and his wife. We find the wife ill at her home in the Hotel. The cause and circumstances of her illness are brought out incidentally. The healthy and robust servant girl Hanne Schäl forms quite a contrast to Frau Henschel. Since the wife's illness, she has been the one to keep things in running order. She has won her way to Henschel's trust and he feels more and more how dependent he is on her. His wife looks on with distrust; she feels that she is going to die and fears that after her death, her place in the household will be taken by Hanne. As a consequence she exacts from her husband the promise that he will not marry Hanne.

In the meantime, minor characters are brought in. These help out the main action and also serve to acquaint us with past incidents and intertwine the various minor threads. For instance, the visit of the veterinary informs us of the misfortune that Henschel has had with his horses. Siebenhaar, who is later to be the adviser of Henschel is incidentally introduced in the first act and serves to bring out several minor points.
The exposition is not confined to Act I. In the second act we find that Frau Henschel has died and that Hanne Schäl is making rapid progress in ensnaring Henschel, will soon marry him, and thus become the second Frau Henschel. In this act we learn particulars of her previous history and reputation. However, by the end of the first act we are pretty well informed as to what has occurred before the opening of the play. How was it revealed to us? Not by any prologue, or monologue, or expository dialogue at the beginning, but unconsciously step by step, little by little, were the necessary facts revealed to us.

Now by way of comparison let us examine one of the plays of the old style of writers. Let us use for a specific example of comparison between the Hauptmannian type and the older type of expository construction, Kleist's "Der Prinz von Homburg". The play opens on the eve of a decisive battle. All previous incidents have led up to this and are centred in the one starting point, namely, the struggle which is to ensue and plans for attack and defense on the morrow. The entire first scene is given over to exposition. We have no beginning action; the play does not advance. We learn only
of past events. The characters who enter into the scene tell us what has happened just previous to the opening of the play and then in the following scenes we learn the condition of affairs of state and what the plan of attack of the Kurfurst is. The country is in pressing danger; the Swedes have swept over the greater part of Brandenburg and are threatening Berlin. It is the eve of a decisive battle. The Prince of Homburg, lost in thought and idle dreams, does not realize the graveness of the situation. Distracted and absent-minded, he attends the meeting of the generals at which the orders for the next day are issued. His own orders make little impression on him, as further action shows. Thus after the first few scenes have given to us the necessary information concerning past events, the immediate action of the play begins and continues uninterruptedly; and without any further information concerning what had happened before the play opened. The last two scenes of the first act begin the development, and the rest of the play continues and concludes it.

All the realistic and naturalistic plays of Hauptmann are built upon this same foundation of
expository structure. The action of the play begins almost immediately, and along with the action, as it proceeds and develops, past events are revealed to us. The plays that appeared after "Fuhrmann Henschel", just as those that appeared before, show the same line of development. The various plays, though they vary considerably in themselves, show something entirely new in the way of construction of the first scene, scenes and acts; they introduce an innovation in the matter of exposition. This has served as much as anything else to bring Hauptmann before the eyes of the literary world, and will serve to keep him at the front for all future ages.
B O D Y  O F  P L A Y.

Though the foundation, be it of a building or a work of art, is the important thing for the stability of the whole, the first act does not constitute a drama. After the foundation is laid, the artist must use his ingenuity in combining, arranging, eliminating, and building, the structure proper. In the beginning some character strives to accomplish some purpose in which he is thwarted by another. A conflict, or clash of interests ensues, and as the play proceeds complications set in and become wound up in a more or less intricate tangle. This tying of the knot as it is called continues until the principal characters are so intricately wound up that escape seems impossible. All preceding action should lead up to this point of highest interest and suspense which is the climax or height. After the climax has been reached there is nothing left for the dramatist to do but to untangle the thread as

skillfully as possible. The story must be concluded and if it is a tragedy should end in the catastrophe,-- the death of one or more characters, which is the direct outcome of the whole play, and which is seen to be necessary and inevitable. Or if it is a comedy or Schauspiel, we have a general summing up,-- ordinarily the announcement of a prospective wedding or the reconciliation of lovers. "The conclusion must be the sum total, the working out of all the other scenes."

The total number of Hauptmann's dramas may be classified in four main divisions. The largest, and most important from a structural point of view is the social drama. Here we may place the social drama proper, and also, as a sub-class, the problem play. The first of the new plays produced by Hauptmann falls into this first main division. In "Vor Sonnenaufgang" Hauptmann has given us the background by quite natural chance hints. The exposition, though somewhat lengthy, is clear and lively, and the action of the play starts almost immediately. The plot has been

carried out with consistency and accuracy. There is good dramatic action, dramatic antithesis, and effective climax. The emphasis given to minor characters should be noted, but this only serves to help out the main plot more effectively.---

Another play which rightly falls in this class is "Der Biberpelz"; and along with it we may consider its sequel "Der Rote Hahn". According to the old idea of play construction, a play consisted of five acts; the first two and a half acts served for rising action, that is, the dramatic height or climax of the whole was reached in the middle or soon after the middle of the third act, and then the remaining half of the play was left for the falling action. But nowadays dramatists have gotten away from the old five act structure, and in Hauptmann's works as well as in the work of others, we find four act plays, of which the above mentioned two are good examples. Though the second is inferior to the first, from point of structure, it is cleverly worked out. Acts III and IV of "Der Biberpelz" are really nothing more than a repetition of I and II and the plot suffers somewhat from this repetition; but in spite of this, the dramatic development is good. The
climax is very realistic. But it cannot be denied that the repetition of the theft and the second scene before the court grow tiresome, and that the ending is weak; in fact the play just stops without any ending or conclusion. And in the sequel "Der Rote Hahn" the same characters appear; Frau Wolff-Fielitz has the same characteristics, and merely carries her misdemeanors one step farther. Structurally considered, as well as regards content, the play is really no improvement over the first one. --- "Die Jungfern vom Bischofsberg", light comedy, though having no deep underlying social problem, might be noted here and passed over without further comment, inasmuch as there is nothing particular to be noted as regards its structure. --- The best of the social dramas and one of the best of all Hauptmann's dramas is "Rose Bernd". The plot, though quite complex, has been carried out with great consistency. The author shows how step by step a happy virtuous woman becomes an infanticide. The tragedy really has occurred before the beginning of the drama, and the drama itself is the catastrophe, as in "Maria Stuart", "Maria Magdalena", and "Rosmersholm". From a dramatic standpoint, one of the
Page 41
was not present
in the original.
principal characters is very weak; but this weakness is necessary to the construction of the plot and could not very well have been avoided. The motivation is good and not superfluous nor are the unimportant details given excessive attention. Structurally considered, the purely social dramas are very well-built.

The next class is that of the problem play which is also a social drama. Of the less important plays "Michael Kramer", "College Krampton" and "Griselda" might be mentioned, while the more important ones which I shall discuss further are "Das Friedensfest", "Einsame Menschen", and "Fuhrmann Henschel". "Das Friedensfest" is perfect as regards dramatic unity. The rising action is gradual, up to the climax at the end of act II and dramatically the third act falls. Both antithesis and contrast are good. ——— The five-act drama "Einsame Menschen", as we noted before is based on Ibsen's "Rosmersholm". But though the incident is similar, in the construction of the plot Hauptmann has not followed his model very closely. We are introduced into the midst of a previous story upon which the events of the drama are logically built. The scene throughout
takes place at the home of a young philosopher, and literary man. We are plunged right into the problem and struggle of the play. Each of the first three acts rises to a climax and falls, that of the third act being the climax of the whole play. But in act IV we have no climax; the break between this and the following act merely occurs to give the audience time to think. Then as the curtain rises the very man we have been waiting for enters. The suspense of the action is held until the son can contain himself no more; he submits to the inevitable and asks his parents: “Nun sagt, was ich tun soll?" The catastrophe is at hand. The action from here to the end is rapid. The darkness in the man’s soul is intensified by the falling dusk and evening shadows. And to complete the tragedy, the man who has not had the courage of his own convictions ends his life in the Muggelsee. The intenseness of the dramatic structure is admirable throughout and particularly impressive in the closing scene. ---- "Fuhrmann Menschel" is one of the typical social problem plays. The exposition is characteristic of the

naturalistic drama. But not only as regards exposition, but in other ways is this play typical. It is a good illustration of Hauptmann's method of development. A man breaks his promise, made to his wife on her deathbed, that he will not marry the servant girl. But after the servant becomes his second wife she is not all she seemed to be and matters go from bad to worse. There is almost no action in the scene in which the climax occurs. In a series of successive situations Henschel finds out where he stands in the eyes of his fellow men and the sad realization comes over him. The tragedy lies in the fact that existing social conditions have resolved so that he was considered as a criminal in the eyes of the people. And these existing conditions drive him to take his own life. The work is objective, and this together with the fact that this drama is the first one which has character development, marks "Fuhrmann Henschel" particularly as one of the peaks in Hauptmann's development as a dramatic artist. This play together with "Rose Bernd" are considered Hauptmann's best, as far as dramatic merits are concerned.
Perhaps the most interesting and one of the most important of Hauptmann's plays from a structural point of view is "Die Weber". It is a social drama, a problem play, and a play which considers the mass as hero. Throughout, we have a gradual unfolding and rising of the dissatisfaction and the discontented spirit of the weaver population. As I have said before, this drama consists of nothing more nor less than five subsequent tableaux. In a succession of scenes we are brought first to the factory, then to the home of one of the weavers, where the picture and general atmosphere of poverty increase our pity, next to the inn where the men assemble and imbue one another with the mob spirit, then to the home of the manager of the factory, and in conclusion to the home of another weaver in a neighboring city. Critics have called the last act superfluous, but it is a necessary conclusion for the drama. It brings about the unmerciful suppression of the uprising mass by means of the stronger officials of the law. A second point to be noted is that there is no hero. We may consider the mass of people as our hero if we wish; the weaver population; taken collectively as a whole. The play does not take the weavers' strike as a
background, but takes the strike itself as a subject. A third point to be considered is that the same people do not play throughout. We find a cast of characters at the beginning of each act; new men and women appear and we hardly hear of the old ones again. To be sure there are some of the characters that appear in more than one act, but these are by no means so drawn as to stand for anything in themselves as persons; they merely embody the leading motives. There seems to be no single thread or plot running through the play, but there is an atmosphere which holds the whole together. If we were to diagram the play as to rise and fall of action, we should find the very interest result thus:

or else

Around these five parallel acts, each one rising just a little above the other is a general halo which binds them together. One ingenious device used by Hauptmann in this play is the introduction of the weavers' song. At first we hear reports of the song; then a few snatches of the song; and finally the whole is read to the assembled crowd:
"Hier im Ort ist ein Gericht
Noch schlimmer als die Vehman,
Wo man nicht erst ein Urteil spricht,
Das Leben schnell zu nehmen.

Hier hilft kein bitten und kein Flehn,
Umsonst ist alles Klagen:
'Gefällt's euch nicht, so könnt ihr gehen
An Hungertuche nagen'.

Erbarmen, ha! ein schöö Gefühl,
Euch Kannibalen fremde,
Ein jedes kennt schon quér Ziel,
'Sist der Armen Haut und Hemde."

Objections have been raised that Hauptmann does not solve the problem, inasmuch as the weavers have accomplished nothing and will necessarily return to their looms and continue to hunger. Dramatically the poet might have concluded his play otherwise; but the problem in this case does not admit of an immediate, reasonable solution. But

throughout the whole, the atmosphere of the poor oppressed weavers, struggling for betterment is the prevailing element, and it is this atmosphere rather than a central character or plot which holds the whole together. Compare "Die Weber" to one of Corneille's plays, if you will: or to Racine, Molière, Shakespeare, Schiller, or Goethe; any of the great dramatists of past ages, and one can see at a glance that Hauptmann's play differs as much or even more so from any one of these as the works of the Romanticists differed from those of the old idealistic, classical plays. A parallel has been drawn between "Die Weber" and Schiller's "Wilhelm Tell". Perhaps this is not entirely out of place, insofar as both plays deal with the masses, but as for the structure and style of the two plays, they are far from being similar. Not only has Hauptmann treated a historical subject in a new light, but he has presented a realistic play in a form that had never before appeared in dramatic act.

And now we come to the psychic drama which makes an interesting study. In this class we will put "Schluck und Jau", "Der Arme Heinrich" and "Kaiser Karl's Geisel", and the dream plays "Elga", 
"Hannelore's Himmelfahrt" and "Und Pippa Tanzt". "Schuck und Jau" designated as ein "Spiel zu Scherz und Schimpf" is the reflex action of the preceding great piece of art "Versunkene Glocke". There is nothing great or wonderful about this play. "Der Arme Heinrich" is noticeable for several reasons. As I said before, it is really five episodes out of a drama, rather than a drama in five acts. Each of the so-called acts are divided into scenes, at the entrance or exit of a character. As a whole, the piece is characterized by the long speeches. There is a gradual rise in action up to the end of the fourth act, when the climax occurs. And now is the time for a dramatic crisis and solution, and in this Hauptmann has failed. In the pause between acts Heinrich gains self-victory and victory over the disease. But in the rounding out of the main theme a new conflict arises, after which the drama is brought to an abrupt close. The concluding act should rightly be termed only an epilogue. Several scenes, such as Heinrich's departure from the Meierhof and his flight to the woods, "Ottegebe's sacrifice in following him, and the scene with the
Salerno physicians, all of which afforded splendid material for dramatization, are merely narrated. And it is because Hauptmann failed to dramatize these, that the work is a dramatic failure. A special type of play at which Hauptmann tried his hand is the dream play. Only the first and last scenes of "Hannelö's Himmelfahrt" are reality; the rest is a dream. One hallucination follows another; one vision another, in a naturalistic manner. Though these various scenes occur only within the child's feverish brain, Hauptmann has presented them with the skill of a genius and made them seem real. A soul life can be and here has been made dramatic. And likewise, "Elga" and "Und Pippa Tanzt" are dream realities. A very vivid first act introduces us to the characters of "Und Pippa Tanzt". As the play progresses we get into the realm of the phantastic and mystic. In Act II the leading characters are no longer individuals, but "dream reflexes" of the individuals which they represented in the beginning. The dramatic situations in the individual scenes are well handled but on the whole the play is obscure from beginning to end. These are unique plays and worthy of consideration. "Die Versunkene Glocke"
perhaps the most famous and widest read of all Hauptmann's plays, is rather different from the social and family catastrophes. We might call it a Märchen drama, a fairy play. The great interest lies not so much in the succession of events as in the characterization, and principally in the symbolical meaning as revealed by the individual characters, and in their relations to one another. But the manner of presentation of these facts must not be lost sight of. The first act is well planned and constructed. In the very first speech the opposition to the church and the conflict between nature and religion is brought out. Then we hear the news of the fall of the bell. At first thought this story seems somewhat long, but it runs right along and does not drag. The principal character, at least from point of strength, is introduced to us at the very beginning. Before long the other leading character is brought in, and when these two meet, the complication for both of them begins. They both meet with a tragic end. The play abounds in dramatic scenes and situations. The incantations of Rautendelein and the old witch, the scene where Heinrich is busily working on the mountain side, with the elves all about him, lending their assistance, the dance of the elves enjoying their midnight revel, all add
to the mysticism and arouse the imagination to the vividness and picturesqueness of the scene. It is these that remind us of Shakespeare and of the witches scene in Goethe's "Faust". The play gradually rises until in Act III it reaches a most powerful climax. And right here we find the most eloquent speech in the whole play, in lines 1535 - 1590. The act ends with a prophecy, which prophecy is brought on Heinrich by himself. And in the fourth act, in the fulfillment of this prophecy, the ringing of the fallen bell, Hauptmann has exercised his great skill by producing a most powerfully effective dramatic situation.

"Die Glocke---------- Glocke---------
Die alte, die begrabne klingt ---- sie klingt!
Wer tat' mir das? Ich will nicht-- will nicht hören.
Hilf! hilf mir doch! ¹

Many critics of "Die Versunkene Glocke" deem the last act unnecessary and call it an anti-climax. Judged by strict dramatic standards this is very true. The play might have ended here. We might

imagine that Heinrich's conscience has been awakened and he return to the village in search of peace and repentance. But this is not so. It is in the fifth act that the tragedy is really enacted. The supernatural element, the elves, the woodsprites and other appear in the mountainside once more and among these surroundings we see the end of the lofty dream of the bell-founder and his disillusionment. From the standpoint of the truthfulness of human action and the end which Hauptmann wanted to portray the final fifth act is necessary. But however this maybe, the symbolism, is really the all-important thing in "Die Versunkene Glocke" and the chief point of discussion for critics.

The historical drama has always had an important place in the world's great literature. In "Florian Geyer" Hauptmann attempted to treat a historical subject according to the naturalistic method. The drama takes its name from the leader of the peasants, but as for calling him the hero of the play, as some people do, he is not worthy of the name. This is one of the two plays which has a Prologue, to introduce to us the necessary preliminary information. The faults of the play
are numerous. Perhaps the one thing which tended more than anything else to interfere with the success of the whole is the extensive cast of characters. The genius is yet to be born that can successfully handle a cast of seventy-seven characters. The great mass of material, coupled with long conversations and messages and reports of happenings leads to a slowness of movement which is far from being advantageous for a dramatic production. In place of the presentation of dramatic incidents, we find them shown to us only insofar as they influence other things. As a last demerit we have the similarity in entire structure of the six pictures, which repetition is tiring and detracting from the general interest. However Hauptmann deserves great credit for this play, for herein we have a first attempt to cloth a historical subject in a modern form. It is the initial, realistic historical drama, if we may apply to it such a term. ----

In these four main types of dramas with their various sub-classes Hauptmann has, in a variety of ways, all more or less successful, developed similar and entirely dissimilar themes. He has made innovations, brought about slight changes in old methods. On the whole his dramatic structure is that of a great artist.
ENDING.

A play is not complete until the curtain falls for the last time, and should not be judged until it is all over; or at any rate a final judgment should be passed upon the work of art as a whole. Though Hauptmann's plays are published under the various headings of social drama, family catastrophe, tragic comedy, fairy play, dream play, and plain drama, the ending of all is very similar. They all lead to the tragic death of one or more of the principal characters. The desire aimed at by the people in the beginning of the drama, cannot seem to be attained, and after a conflict with the world, the fates, and their own will and being, life becomes unendurable, and either by means of their own hands, or the hand of fate, they meet death in a tragic catastrophe. A serious ending must be credible and must conform to the strict logic of art. One drama at least, does not conform to this principle. The last act of "Der Rote Hahn" is weak, inasmuch as the death of Frau Fielitz is unexpected and unsatisfactory. There are a few exceptions to the general tragic close. Naturally a comedy has a different ending from a tragedy,
and this holds good in Hauptmann. This type of play — Hauptmann's comedies — ends happily, and at the close we have every reason to hope for a bright and prosperous future. A few of the plays, "Der Biberpelz" for instance, really have no ending; they simply stop. The happy end of "Der Arme Heinrich" is told in a so-called fifth act, but as I have said before, this is really nothing more than an epilogue. By this variety in the closing of his dramas, Hauptmann shows his breadth of power and possibility. The ending must be suitable to the subject and material in question and must come as a logical solution of the problem and point of conflict and serve as a credible and satisfactory conclusion to the whole. In most cases Hauptmann has fulfilled the requirements of a good dramatic conclusion.
C O N C L U S I O N.

Hauptmann is the great dramatist of today in Germany. He stands at the head of a new literary movement which marks another milestone in the evolution of dramatic art. His "Vor Sonnenaufgang" was for the new movement, what Victor Hugo's "Hermani" was for the literary France of the first half of the nineteenth century. In developing and perfecting the naturalistic drama, he gave to art a new form of expression and presentation. When Hauptmann first began to write, he had seen very few dramas played on the stage; consequently when he used the language and actions of every day people and put them on the stage, and introduced a new plan of structure, he overturned the old theories, although perhaps, unconsciously. And this style which he inaugurated in his earlier plays, is the one that he assumed as his own, and followed it up in the proceeding ones. Hauptmann made several radical changes in minor details of structure, such as abolishing the monologue, the aside, and the apart, producing for the first time a play without a hero, in which play the mass of people as a whole is the principal character about
which the play revolves, in bringing the historic play on the naturalistic stage, and in the matter of stage directions, which are very minute and detailed, and give many things which might have been worked into the play itself. The most important and lasting change brought about by the naturalistic drama is the revolutionization of the exposition. The tendency today is toward the realistic, -- the naturalistic drama, and it is in this class of art that Hauptmann has let his genius take root. And even though his dramas should not hold a lasting place on the stage, Hauptmann's name will live forever in the history of the evolution of the drama as marking this period of revolution and at least as the great starting point of the new German drama which is being looked forward to.
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