

GRILLPARZER, THE ENLIGHTENER: DISPLACED PATERNITY IN  
GRILLPARZER'S WORKS

by

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## DISSERTATION ABSTRACT

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It is my intention to bring to light nuances of Grillparzer's work that reflect the ambivalent conflation of formal and stylistic elements of the Enlightenment and the Baroque, which, in turn, foreshadow the continual displacement of both paternity and the patriarchy in the decades following the French Revolution. I define "ambivalent conflation" as follows: a fluctuating, sometimes contradictory approach toward a set of concepts that are brought, simultaneously, into unity and opposition with one another. This is symptomatic—at least in part—of Grillparzer's attempts to reconcile elements of the Baroque dramas after which he fashioned much of his work with his own idealism of Enlightenment ideologies, and, particularly, with Lessing's humanism and his position regarding religious tolerance. The subtle variations on the theme of paternal displacement manifest themselves in the following ways: 1) fathers who serve as such either through namesake, mentorship, or ideological and intellectual inspiration; 2) father figures who exist as such through extended family relationships, such as the figure of the father-in-law; and 3) father figure representations that exist in dream symbolism. In many of Grillparzer's lyrical works as well as in his novella, *Der arme Spielmann*, and in his dramas, *Die Jüdin von Toledo* and *Der Traum ein Leben*, these forms of paternal displacement mirror conflicts and issues in Grillparzer's own life, including his

emotionally symbiotic relationship with his mother, his obsessional personality traits, and his prescient reflections on topics that would become central to modern psychoanalysis.

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This work is dedicated to: the gentle hearts, the peaceful spirits, the thoughtful minds, and all of those who will “fly” with me. You will *always be*, whether here or there.

“He moved on from Anatole France to the eighteenth-century philosophers, though not to Rousseau. Perhaps this was because one side of him - the side easily moved by passion - was too close to Rousseau. Instead, he approached the author of 'Candide', who was closer to another side of him - the cool and richly intellectual side.

At twenty-nine, life no longer held any brightness for him, but Voltaire supplied him with man-made wings.

Spreading these man-made wings, he soared with ease into the sky. The higher he flew, the farther below him sank the joys and sorrows of a life bathed in the light of intellect. Dropping ironies and smiles upon the shabby towns below, he climbed through the open sky, straight for the sun - as if he had forgotten about that ancient Greek who plunged to his death in the ocean when his man-made wings were singed by the sun.”

— Ryunosuke Akutagawa

“Mit den Flügeln der Zeit fliegt die Traurigkeit davon.”

—Jean de La Fontaine

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# CHAPTER I

## INTRODUCTION

This analysis examines Grillparzer's writings on four levels: the historical, the literary-historical, the biographical, and the textual. The historical dimension traces the evolution of the patriarchy in its unsettled form in the wake of the French Revolution, ultimately leading to the decapitation of the monarchy in favor of a new model of government and social organization shaped by fraternity and sorority. From a biographical standpoint, I highlight Grillparzer's relationship with his mother, which was marked by an intensely emotional and incestuous proximity, and which, in turn, influenced the development of an obsessional personality structure. The literary-historical interplay is exemplified by the tense interaction between elements of the Enlightenment and the Baroque in Grillparzer's poetry, prose, and dramatic works, with the former emphasizing a desire to transcend authoritarian and patriarchal models of governance and the latter staying true to the status quo prior to the French Revolution.

On a textual level, I touch upon the slow deterioration of the patriarchy in the age of the Restoration and connect this societal development with Grillparzer's reflections on his own obsessional personality structure via literary devices and figures that mirror his inner psychological tensions. Thus, I outline Grillparzer's ambivalent relationship with both Baroque and the Enlightenment models of social authority as well as the various

ways in which he deemed them partially satisfactory and unsatisfactory, ultimately calling for a wiser and more enlightened understanding of the manner in which we preserve, protect, revise, and pass on our values, and how we comprehend the concept of governance. Each of the aforementioned levels of interpretation highlights Grillparzer's uniqueness as a thinker who did not subscribe wholly to the Young Germany movement, instead seeking to balance reason with spirituality in a progressive and conflational manner.

The psychoanalytic complexity of Grillparzer's work adds another dimension to the interpretation of his writings—a process which can be likened to, and thereby aided by, an understanding of Ludwig Wittgenstein's concept of *Familienähnlichkeit*, which Wittgenstein applies to the classification of language groups and extrapolates upon with his “game example.” Wittgenstein writes: “wenn du sie [die Spiele] anschaust, wirst du zwar nicht etwas sehen, was *allen* gemeinsam wäre, aber du wirst Ähnlichkeiten, Verwandtschaften, sehen, und zwar eine ganze Reihe. Wie gesagt: denk nicht, sondern schau!” (48). From this, we understand that we will find overlapping similarities when comparing forms of paternal displacement and the topics they bring to light, though, in the final assessment, we may find that we lack a single key that opens all doors simultaneously. This gap—this lack, if you will—allows for a liberating openness of interpretation that makes Grillparzer an enlightener in his own right.

Perhaps the most salient example of paternal displacement exists in the figure of Jakob, the protagonist of Grillparzer's, *Der arme Spielmann*, whose identity, not unlike that of the biblical Jacob, is veiled at times by obscurity. This is owed to Jakob's insistence that he does not have a story to tell about his life, and furthermore, reveals itself to be a farce after an anonymous narrator unearths Jakob's most intimate thoughts about his personal experiences and his origins. Unlike the biblical Jacob, however, Jakob dies childless, leaving behind a *child in name only*, a young boy bearing his namesake, demonstrating that Jakob, too, left behind a legacy, despite his never having had a child of his own.<sup>1</sup> Allusions to the biblical figure of Jacob are constellated multidimensionally and reinforce the distinction between *Schein* and *Sein* (which ultimately links to paternity or feigned paternity) and their respective metaphorical associations with darkness and

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<sup>1</sup> In Brigitte Prutti's groundbreaking book, *Grillparzers Welttheater: Modernität und Traditionen*, she details the influences of Romanticism and Realism in Grillparzer's work. She describes the origins of *Der Traum ein Leben* and *Die Ahnfrau*, which she examines with respect to the topic of transgression and creative progeny: "Seine Existenz als Dramatiker verdankt sich einem Stück, das den betreffenden Aussagen zufolge als eine Miss- oder Frühgeburt mit problematischer Vaterschaft anzusehen ist, als Monster und als behindertes Kind, dem zeitlebens die besondere Zuneigung seines Verfassers gibt" (36). Grillparzer's fondness for "premature birth" in a creative sense is likened to a mother's particular affection for a physically disabled child, which is noteworthy, given so many of his heroes and heroines are lacking clarity—and even more so, self-awareness—about their parentage and expected roles in society. The importance of male fruitfulness is also highlighted, seeing Grillparzer didn't have any children of his own, and this point is related to the popular contemporary topic of womb envy. While I disagree with the notion that this concept even exists, I do note it's plausible that *Der Traum ein Leben* represents an act of creative sublimation for Grillparzer, who sought to understand the psychological complexes and inhibitions regarding his erotophobia before modern psychoanalysis came up with terminology to describe them.

light and with trickery and deception, or, in a less pejorative sense, re-duplication and multifariousness.

In this sense, too, Grillparzer's works make compelling parallels with the thematic and stylistic tendencies of his predecessor, G.E. Lessing. In works such as *Nathan der Weise* and *Die Juden*, Lessing's message of social, religious, and cultural tolerance is revealed through acts of cunning, with disguises taking on a pivotal role in plot developments. References to the tree of life exist in Lessing's *Nathan* and in Grillparzer's lyric, and in both cases, this symbol ultimately suggests that no one religion is “truer” than another, but rather, a single component of what is, collectively, a brotherhood and a sisterhood of humankind. This notion is emphasized further through Nathan's ring parable.

Thus, I argue that Grillparzer's displacement of paternity in his lyric, prose, and dramatic works is representative of the ambivalent conflation of four concepts: 1) time; 2) finitude; 3) religious truth; and 4) familial “law” as dictated by tradition. It is through the realization that all of humankind is subject to finitude—ultimately a temporal, ontological limitation that, through its very essence, evokes feelings of existential ambivalence, even *Angst*—that enlightenment takes place. Steven D. Martinson's characterization of Lessing's conception of truth as a *fermenta cognitionis* is applicable as well to Grillparzer, whose open-ended prose works and dramas reflect the Enlightenment ideals so poignantly emphasized in his lyric. Via a methodology that is sociohistorical as



well as psychoanalytic in its approach, I will examine how the fates and attitudes of Grillparzer's heroes and heroines exemplify an enlightened stance toward life, truth, religious tolerance, and love that becomes poignantly clear, albeit only in retrospect.

## **Grillparzer's Autobiographical Poetry: Paternal Sovereignty Questioned, but not Usurped**

It is particularly important to consider that Grillparzer's poetry was an outlet for his own relationship with his father. The elder Grillparzer intrigued, yet alienated the younger simultaneously, and the elder's position in the legal field combined with his aloof temperament and fondness for solitary walks led Franz Grillparzer to become frustrated with—and occasionally challenge—his authority. The difficult interplay between communication and the absence thereof—sound and silence—emphasized any differences of opinion father and son may have had socially, politically, and otherwise, but, on the whole, the younger Grillparzer's writings demonstrate, more than anything else, more ideological *similarities* than differences between the two men.

Nonetheless, living up to the family name and legacy may have become a burden to Grillparzer, which he displaced in the writing of his "Am Grabe Mozart des Sohnes." One of Mozart's son's names, was, of course, Franz, although he was publicly known by a different name, giving Grillparzer the opportunity to tell not only the Mozart family narrative through his poem, but also his own. Perhaps this was the most acceptable

mechanism to convey his ideas, and it is likely that he felt a similar reverence for his father despite his internal ambivalence toward his authority and the values for which he stood.

Given the similarities between the Mozarts and the Sonnleithners, it is plausible that Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart served as a sort of ideological father for Grillparzer, who also idealized certain political figures such as Napoleon, which led him to write a poem bearing his name. Despite his love for his father, his poem, “Als mein Schreibpult Zersprang,” also evidences his frustration in the wake of his father’s loss and the burden of his legacy, not to mention his close, yet emotionally-draining relationship with his psychologically distressed mother. Although father and son may have expressed themselves differently, Franz Grillparzer’s own reading and research ultimately led him to explore different belief systems and alternately idealize both monotheism and the Old Testament as well as a loving and benevolent Christian God. This ultimately led him to write “Vater Unser,” which served as a sort of substitution for the absence of his father and perhaps a retrospective attempt at reconciliation following his passing. All of these variations on the theme of paternal displacement inform Grillparzer’s attitudes and ideologies as they are expressed in his prose and dramatic works and relate to his status as a trailblazing enlightener, albeit with an ambivalent relationship to authority.

## **Beyond a Shadow of a Doubt: From Grillparzer and Fröhlich to Barbara and Jakob**

Another poem that is pivotal to understanding Grillparzer's obsessional personality is his "Allgegenwart," written in honor of his eternal fiancé, Kathe Fröhlich. Here we see the implications of what must have been, for him, a deadly jouissance. From the first stanza onward, the eyes become the focus of the poem, which Grillparzer describes as those of an Azriel figure—the angel of death from Hebraic and Islamic traditions. The first stanza commences as follows,

Wo ich bin, fern und nah,  
  
Stehen zwei Augen da,  
  
Dunkelhell,  
  
Blitzeschnell,  
  
Schimmernd wie Felsenquell,  
  
Schattenumkranzt. (133)

The poem suggests that what is being seen by the lyrical "I" is not an entire being or entity, but merely the eyes (superego), thus emphasizing the notion of the gaze. Distance is of not of consequence to the beholder, as the eyes are a constant companion regardless of spatial positionality. The eyes themselves represent a binary that becomes a unity in semantic instances such as in "dunkelhell." The speed at which they travel suggests that they cannot be outrun. All the while, however, the eyes described in the opening stanza are characterized simultaneously as "schattenumkranzt" or "enveloped by shadows,"

which is suggestive of the uncanny undercurrents of a known threat that is intimately familiar, yet strangely foreign.

In a subsequent stanza, the inescapability of the uncanny gaze is emphasized more strongly,

So auch immerdar

Zeigt sich das Augenpaar,

Wachend in Busch und Feld,

Nachts, wenn mich Schlaf befällt,

Nichts in der ganzen Welt

Hüllt mir es ein. (133)

This stanza depicts the eyes as a force of nature, or, at the very least, a force that exists *within* nature when it is characterized as “wachend in Busch und Feld.” The lyrical “I” reveals that these eyes are present at various stratifications of consciousness, and that it is quite possible that they will stir themselves from within the forces of nature, and perhaps even from within the “I” itself to take the “I” unaware. The opening lines of the stanza unite the poem formally and thematically through the rhyme scheme: the words “immerdar” and “Augenpaar” contain the same number of syllables and exhibit an end rhyme. The gaze of a mysterious entity that refuses to be banished from the subject's

(who is simultaneously an object) line of sight is of relevance to the conclusion of the poem.

Furthermore, the three lines “Wachend in Busch und Feld,/Nachts, wenn mich Schlaf befällt,/Nichts in der ganzen Welt” exhibit near rhyme, suggesting that while sleep and death exhibit similarities, they are not the same ontologically or phenomenologically. “Nichts” is related to “Nachts” insofar as nothing can save the “I” from the night that exists even in the *absence* of the night; the eyes themselves are powers capable of transforming darkness into light and, on the contrary, transfixing the light with the shadows that surround their enigmatic essence. “Nichts in der ganzen Welt/hüllt mir es ein” implies that just as our eyelids cannot shield us from the eyes that are our own—making reference also perhaps to our forefathers and mothers and a family lineage, origins, that cannot be changed—so too are we unable to shield ourselves from our finitude, which ultimately is ours alone.

The poem concludes that while death is always already outside of us, it is also always already within us, as we are *being toward death*<sup>2</sup>:

Abends, wenns dämmert noch,

Steig ich vier Treppen hoch,

Poch ans Tor,

---

2 See Heidegger: *sein zum Tode* as articulated in his *Sein und Zeit*.

Streckt sein Hälslein vor,

Wangen rund,

Purpurmund,

Nächtig Haar,

Stirne klar,

Drunter mein Augenpaar! (134)

For the first time, the semblance of an entire being emerges when the “I” climbs four steps and meets an image of himself. If the eyes encountered at the advent of the “I’s” musings are, in fact, those of a messenger of death, then the journey the “I” makes concludes in the final stanza with the “I’s” encounter of himself as the likeness of God. Reminiscent of the Lacanian conceptualization of the gaze, the “I” realizes upon arrival at the top of the stairs that the eyes from which he cannot seem to escape are his own; the final encounter here represents the “I’s” longing to see himself from the place where the other sees him.<sup>3</sup> However, this is as impossible as seeing oneself from the perspective of

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3 Lacan explains [this] absence—that the fantasy is always missing from what is seen, that its absence looks through its wished-for presence—in the following way: 'When in love, I solicit a look, what is profoundly unsatisfying and always missing is that—*You never look at me from the place which I see you*' (Lacan 1977b, p. 103). The lover is narcissistically projecting an image of a desire that magically completes his own, that looks at him from the place he wishes her to be; the absence breaks through the fantasy for he finds that she 'never looks at him from the place in which he sees

a beloved other, given that the subject—the lyrical “I” in this case—will never see death in the phenomenological sense in the way that “death” sees the dying being.

Many of the themes seen here are relatable to the Jungian notion of the double and the shadow, both of which play an important role not only in Grillparzer’s poetry, but also in his dramatic fairy tales such as *Der Traum ein Leben* and his novellas—*Der arme Spielmann* being no exception. It is plausible that Grillparzer finds he is reacting to the overwhelming reality of having stumbled into his double in the flesh, a topic that is examined in Otto Rank’s work pertaining to the notion of the double. His apparent fear of destruction and death can be attributed to notions cited therein, such as the following: “It is noteworthy that in some of the literary works we have discussed an echo of magical influence can be recognized in the death of the main character at the wounding of his reflection, portrait, or double. According to Negelein, “the attempt to destroy persons by wounding their doubles is widely known even from antiquity” [sic]” (52). The eyes are harbingers of what is to come, and given Grillparzer’s association with the function of the father—and in this case the father’s profession as a representative of the law—it is also possible this extends to another superstition mentioned in Rank’s analysis, detailed here: “Should a child strikingly resemble its father, the latter must soon die, since the child has adopted his image or silhouette. The same holds for the name, which the primitive views

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her'. The 'place' is where he has placed her in the field of the scopic drive, and she is discovered to be not there. The reality does not correspond to the wish, for her desires must be reckoned with. Lacan adds: '*what I look at is never what I wish to see*' (ibid.). See Wright, Elizabeth. *Psychoanalytic Criticism*. Polity Press, 1998. pp.108.

as an essential part of the personality. In European culture the belief is still retained that if two offspring of the same family bear the same name, one must die” (53).

Thus, a connection is established between Grillparzer’s poem dedicated to Fröhlich and the figure of Jakob in *Der arme Spielmann*, who dies, leaving Barbara’s son, Jakob, to carry on his legacy. In this case, however, it is only on the day of Jakob’s burial—posthumously—that he is “adopted” by Barbara and her family, as he has no one else left. It is out of love that his body is accepted by Barbara, who cannot control the tears that stream down her face.

## **The Role of the Narrator and Innocent Loss of Life in *Der arme Spielmann***

Several scholars have interpreted the perceived attitude of the narrator toward Jakob. Among them are John M. Ellis and Martin Swales.<sup>4</sup> Ellis claims that Swales and another scholar, Politzer, are the only scholars to have taken the first steps toward integrating the narrator as a character of consequence in the novella (30),<sup>5</sup> although he concludes that both analyses are lacking. Ellis notes that Swales asserts the narrator's function is to evoke feelings of ambivalence about Jakob in the context of the narrative,

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<sup>4</sup> “The Narrator and his Values in *Der arme Spielmann*” and “As ashamed of the story as if I had written it myself..”: Reflections on the Narrator in *Der arme Spielmann*.”

<sup>5</sup> See *Grillparzer's Der arme Spielmann: New Directions in Criticism*. Ed. Clifford Albrecht Bernd. Camden House, 1988. pp. 30.



while Ellis also articulates that Jakob's narrative accomplishes this objective on its own.

About Politzer Ellis asserts:

when he abstracts the thematic point that the narrator, unlike the Spielmann, undergoes a “Verwandlung” through genuine “Begegnung” with another person at the end of the story in his encounter with Barbara, and thus that communication with another human being makes an impact on him, we must surely agree with the reviewer (F. Maxwell-Bresler's review of Politzer in *Modern Language Review* 64 (1969); parentheses are my own) who points out that the text's ending contains no trace of all this.

(30)

Ellis reads the narrator as a removed observer. While other elements of Ellis's argument are aligned with my reading of the text, my interpretation of Ellis's observations differs. Ellis is of the opinion that the narrator's interest in the Spielmann displays condescending tendencies: “all that the narrator says and does, indicate that this alleged love of the people is a pretentious aristocratic pose; only while safe from them, and feeling superior to them, can the narrator indulge in it” (36). My view is that while the narrator cannot be labeled distinctly as an “angel of death” in a mythological sense<sup>6</sup>, many of his

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6 This representation of death as a “father” is characteristic of other period literature. The collection of fairy tales published by the Brothers Grimm includes “Gevatter Tod,” which similarly highlights the notion of death as the great equalizer of all peoples. In this tale, a poor man has twelve children and knows that his thirteenth, soon to be born, is in need of a godfather. Although both God and the devil offer to

characteristics and responses to Jakob suggest that he is not to be read as a human character.

Moreover, Grillparzer's frame narrative can be read as constituent of a multilayered allegory. The frame narrator is never named in his dialogues with other characters, nor does he have many of the qualities expected of a flesh and blood man in his early interactions with Jakob, particularly in a narrative that is rich in culinary<sup>7</sup> motifs. One allegorical interpretation for the structural composition of the text is that of the Holy Trinity of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit. The frame narrator is the one who helps Jacob remember his life story, in so doing recounting his memories of a father whose disappointment was anchored in his son's inability to understand worldly matters. Conceivably it is this memory of his father's disappointment that led him to save the tax books (symbolic of fiscal matters—and money as an idol) after saving the town's children

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take on the role, the father of the child rejects both and instead selects Death for the role on account of the fact that Death treats all people equally. When the child reaches adulthood, he becomes a renowned physician with the power to determine whether his patient will die on the basis of Death's position in the room. If Death stands at the foot of the patient's bed, the patient will die. If he stands at the head, the patient will be given a curative herb and recover. The godchild's troubles arise when he is confronted with the king, who is gravely ill. Although he sees that Death is standing at the foot of the king's bed, he re-positions the king in the bed so that Death is standing at his head, and he gives him the herb that will heal him. He is reprimanded by Death, who tells his physician godchild that he is never to do it again, or he will extinguish his flame of life. Despite Death's warnings, he does the same for a second time when the king's daughter is put under his care and promised to him by the king in marriage. After his second transgression, Death loses patience with his godson and extinguishes the final candle, indicating that Death will no longer take mercy upon his godson.

7 Barbara bakes cakes early in the embedded narrative, and her husband ends up being the town butcher.

from the great flood, and to his subsequent death. We can read this as the frame narrator leading Jakob to the place—the place here being the space of memory<sup>8</sup>—where he is to be tempted. This may be read as an allegory for the Holy Spirit's role in leading Christ into the wilderness where he would be tempted, and perhaps also other incidences of exile.<sup>9</sup>

Noteworthy also in Grillparzer's *Spielmann* is the rescue of innocent children, which is contradicted at times in his lyrical works. Among the poems which contradict this outcome is “Des Kindes Scheiden,”<sup>10</sup> which portrays the passing of a child at the hand of one of God's helpers. The opening lines of Grillparzer's poem are as follows,

Über des Bettes Haupt flog säuselnden Fluges ein Engel,

Und des Unsterblichen Blick fiel auf das schlafende Kind.

Wie sein eigenes Bild im Spiegel silberner Wellen,

Lächelt ihn freundlich und hold an die süße Gestalt.

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<sup>9</sup> From Luke 4:1-4 (all biblical citations in this work are taken from the King James Version of the Holy Bible): And Jesus being full of the Holy Ghost returned from Jordan, and was led by the Spirit into the wilderness, Being forty days tempted of the devil. And in those days he did eat nothing: and when they were ended, he afterward hungered. And the devil said unto him, If thou be the Son of God, command this stone that it be made bread. And Jesus answered him, saying, It is written, That man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word of God.

<sup>10</sup> See pages 93 and 94 of *Franz Grillparzer: Sämtliche Werke. Band 1*.

Leise sinkt er herab, sich freuend der lieblichen Täuschung,  
Und tritt luftigen Schritts vor das Schlafende hin.

The absence of end rhyme here is representative of the differences in mood, consciousness, and intent between the angel and the child. The child is not consciously aware of the angel at all, instead sleeping peacefully and innocently. The third person perspective gives an aura of relative detachment to the poem, and this further emphasizes the angel's unawareness of his divine task in the first stanza. Instead we learn simply that the child's sweetness and goodness mirrors that of the heavenly messenger, presumably a servant of God.

The poem goes on to describe the child in more detail. The child is here described as being at peace, although a dire change of circumstances is indicated in the lily motif:

Ach, es schlummert so süß, und Unschuld und himmlischer Friede  
Wehen im Atem des Munds, ruhn auf der silbernen Stirn,  
Kräuseln zum Heiligenschein des Hauptes goldene Locken,  
Ruhn, wie ein Lilienzweig, in der gefalteten Hand.

We see alliteration in the first of these lines, which, once again, emphasizes the sweetness of the sleep. The child's locks, however, are brought into association with the hands, thus uniting the strength of life with human and divine agency, seeing that human hair continues to grow even after death. Lilies are flowers that are used customarily as adornments for the graves of innocent children and youths, and, consequently, we

understand that the image of the child's golden locks adorning her head like a halo indicates her ascendance to Heaven.

Subsequent lines contain biblical allusions to the Book of Joshua as well as to Deuteronomy, both of which emphasize the symbolic significance of the oak tree.<sup>11</sup> They are as follows,

Freundlich lächelt der Engel; doch bald umwölkt sich sein Antlitz,  
Und mit brütendem Ernst wendet er seufzend sich ab.  
Er überschauet im Geist den Sturm der kommenden Tage,  
Dem nur die Eiche steht, der die Blume zerknickt;  
Rauschen hört er des Unglücks seelenmordende Pfeile,  
Wider die Unschuld und Recht nur ein zerbrechlicher Schild;  
Tränend sieht er das Aug, das weich die Wimper bedecket,  
Und zerschlagen die Brust, die jetzt atmend sich hebt.

It is in this stanza that we all but learn of the child's fate. The arrows of misfortune are described as “seelenmordende Pfeile,” meaning murderers of the spirit, or of the soul, not merely the body, perhaps alluding to the seeming injustice of the loss of innocent life.

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<sup>11</sup> Other important references to oak trees are found in the Bible. Among them are the following: 1) the Angel of the Lord's appearance to Gideon, making a covenant to release Israel from its oppression; 2) oaks were known also to be the sites for heathen worship, thus also denoting negative events; and 3) the oak was also a place of death or burial for other biblical figures such as Saul and Absalom.

The word “seelenmordende” itself, being comprised of five syllables, is the lengthiest of the stanza, thus describing the terrible experience. The phrase mimics the apparent slowing of time during tragic or traumatic events.

At the conclusion of the poem, it becomes apparent that the angel is, in fact, the angel of death. The angel is described here as “der himmlische Bote”:

Banges Mitleid erfaßt die Seele des himmlischen Boten,

Fragend schaut er empor, und der Allmächtige nickt.

Da umfängt er den Nacken und küßt die zuckenden Lippen,

Spricht: Sei glücklich, o Kind! – und die Kleine war tot.

At the poem's conclusion, the messenger has been called by the “Allmächtige” (God) to take the life of the child, which profoundly affects him emotionally. His empathy for the child leads him to kiss and to speak to her kindly as he carries out his duty. The opening words of the poem commence with a description of the carefree flight of an angel, while the conclusion leaves us with the words “and the little one was dead.” This stark difference in mood and atmosphere conveys the notion that finitude plays by no rules except those of God, who takes on the function of the lawman.

It is at this juncture that we come to understand the discourse between Jakob and the frame narrator—shaped by time and an ambivalent relationship with authority. I am interested, thus, in examining the following points in my second chapter: 1) philosophical and psychological attitudes toward Catholic institutions and religious bureaucracies that on the one hand foster change, but on the other, stifle the values of enlightened love and

social acceptance, as represented by the frame narrator; 2) the role of the clergy as shepherds who must walk the tightrope between the mundane and the divine, seeking to offer care and cure in the form of wisdom; 3) the obsessional neuroticism of the frame narrator and of Jakob, both of whom express ambivalence toward the world around them, but who deal with it differently by means of displacement and sublimation; 4) the Freudian concept of *Nachträglichkeit* insofar as it pertains to Jakob's memory and development and his status as a vessel of enlightenment, whose value is ultimately envisaged only in retrospect on account of narrative structure; and 5) the relationship between the figure of Jakob and the cultivation of the garden as a metaphor also relevant in Voltaire and Grillparzer's *Traum ein Leben*.

## **The Role of the Obsessional Woman in the Framework of the Jewish Question**

In the third chapter, I will trace Grillparzer's associations with prominent Jewish intellectuals in the salons between the 1820s-1860s. I am concerned with the extent to which these associations shaped Grillparzer's thought over the course of the decades, given that the process of writing his *Jüdin of Toledo*<sup>12</sup> lasted years and was interrupted sporadically. While Grillparzer's own attitude toward Judaism—the religion of the father—is relevant to my analysis, the fundamental theme that I will explore in the realm of displaced paternity pertains to Rahel's relationship with King Alphons, who, to her

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<sup>12</sup> In *Franz Grillparzer: Sämtliche Werke*. Zweiter Band. Carl Hanser Verlag, 1961.

detriment, has much in common with her own father, Isaak. Both ultimately contribute to her demise.<sup>13</sup>

In my reading of the text, I am concerned with the following points: 1) the objectification of Rahel by both her biological father and by her lover, with her personhood being reduced to her status as an artifact of the sociocultural and religious traditions of her people; 2) the problem of the framing of the Jew, and further, the importance of the Jewish question, as it is alluded to within Martha Helfer's "Framing the Jew: Grillparzer's *Die Jüdin von Toledo*, which, in tandem with Dorothy Lasker-Schlitt's reading of Grillparzer<sup>14</sup>, informs my sociohistorical reading of the text; 3) the role of kabbalistic thought and how eros is portrayed within this framework, and further, how the conclusion of this drama stands, tragically, as the antithesis to loving unity, resulting in enlightenment; 4) the nature of Rahel's female obsessionality, the role of Ludus, and the

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13 Regrettably, Rahel is seduced by glamorous and enticing appearances, as the young boy is in Grillparzer's poem, "Lehre," which goes as follows: In seines Vaters Laden spielend, fand ein Knabe Ein Stück Arsenik. Hoherfreut Ruft er: Sieh, Vater, was ich hier gefunden habe, Welch schöner Stein! Der Vater schaut und schreit Und reißt den Fund dem Knaben aus den Händen. Halt, ruft er, lasse dich vom Schein nicht blenden! Mein liebes Kind, das ist ein herber Stein, Scheint anfangs süß und tötet hinterdrein. (77) Rahel's father similarly cautions her in the opening lines of *Die Jüdin*, although his avarice ultimately gains the upper hand: ISAAK. Bleib zurück, geh nicht in Garten! Weißt du nicht, es ist verboten? Wenn der König hier lustwandelt, Darf kein Jüd – Gott wird sie richten! –Darf kein Jüd den Ort betreten. (451)

14 Here I refer to Dorothy Lasker-Schlitt's 1936 New York University dissertation entitled, "Framing the Jew: Grillparzer's *Die Jüdin von Toledo*." Noteworthy about Lasker-Schlitt's interpretation of the text is the background she provides about Grillparzer's significant and extended relationships with Jews and with the women who may have inspired the development of his character, Rahel.



fulfilment of her death wish, which, consequently, makes her somewhat of a “dark enlightener” in the drama; and 5) a comparison to G.E. Lessing’s *Die Juden*.

Martha Helfer describes in great detail the sources from which Grillparzer took his *Jüdin von Toledo* in her article, “Framing the Jew: Grillparzer's *Die Jüdin von Toledo*.” She emphasizes that Grillparzer's labeling of the text as a sociohistorical drama is, at least in part, misguided, as he chose to model his *Jüdin* after what Helfer refers to as an antisemitic myth.<sup>15</sup> She also makes note of Dagmar Lorenz's interpretation of the drama, which, according to Helfer, stands alone in offering a believable explanation of the contradictory treatment of Jewish characters.<sup>16</sup> Through this, I will provide a tempered overview of Grillparzer's various contributions to the Jewish question and to the sociopolitical discourse on religious identity.<sup>17</sup>

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15 See Helfer, Martha B.

16 Helfer writes: Situating the play against the backdrop of the 1848 revolutions and within the context of the social criticism and concern for oppressed peoples that runs throughout Grillparzer's oeuvre, Lorenz suggest that Grillparzer, while capitalizing on Jewish stereotypes (the Shylock figure, the Jewish seductress, and the Enlightened Nathan figure of reason), counteracts these stock motifs with true-to-life characters whose actions derive from a completely understandable survival instinct. Moreover, Lorenz maintains the unscrupulous Christian characters are the true villains, and *Die Jüdin von Toledo* promotes a relatively positive picture of the Jews as “die Bösewichte, die keine waren” (161).

17 Grillparzer's attitude toward religious toleration is also emphasized in his poem, “Der wahre Glaube.”

## **A Tale of Wish Fulfilment: Procrastination and Denial in Grillparzer's *Der Traum ein Leben*?**

*Der Traum ein Leben*,<sup>18</sup> tells the story of a man named Rustan and his desire to seek adventure and fame as a soldier and hunter. During his journey, Rustan and his slave, Zanga, who tempts him to undertake risky ventures, encounter a king whose life is threatened by a snake. Rustan attempts to kill the animal, but fails, whilst another man succeeds. Despite this, Rustan proclaims—on Zanga's suggestion—that he is the hero who has saved the king's life. He is offered the king's dagger and his daughter's hand in marriage, which he gladly accepts.

Ultimately, the real hero emerges and expects a reward for his courageous deed. Out of anxiety, Rustan decides to murder the hero and proceed to Samarkand, where he believes his desire for fame and fortune will come true. The dagger used to kill the king's hero is found by an old man, and it isn't long before the king recollects images of the man who actually saved him, although the king ultimately succumbs to poison. The old man who knows of Rustan's guilt proclaims it aloud; consequently, Rustan takes his own life with Zanga looking on as the latter transforms into a serpent<sup>19</sup> comparable to the

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18 In *Franz Grillparzer: Sämtliche Werke. Zweiter Band*. Carl Hanser Verlag, 1961.

19 Numbers 21:4-9 applies to this scene: And they journeyed from mount Hor by the way of the Red sea, to compass the land of Edom: and the soul of the people was much discouraged because of the way. And the people spake against God, and against Moses, Wherefore have ye brought us up out of Egypt to die in the wilderness? for *there is no bread, neither is there any water*; and our soul loatheth this light bread.

one who threatened the king's life. When Rustan awakens from his dream, he cannot seem to differentiate between the dream and reality. Shaken and forewarned about the dangers of seeking too much excitement in his everyday life, Rustan decides to content himself with the realization that he has no blood on his hands. Zanga, a constant source of temptation, is sent away to serve another master.

In any case, the blurring of reality and dream that comes to the fore in Grillparzer's dramatic fairy tale is also characteristic of Shakespeare's *As You Like it*, wherein Jacques emphasizes that all the world is a stage and the people are merely actors. The fleeting, transitory nature of lived existence, replete with its phases of infancy, childhood, youth, young adulthood, adulthood, old age, and death—old age perhaps more reminiscent of infancy than any other phase—demands that we take on various roles over the course of our lives. Indeed, human life can be compared to the notion of “living in frames” and “playing parts.” Non-being is, in fact, a frame for being, as being is embedded in non-being, just as the dream is embedded in the frame of being. The concept of playing parts within a dual structure is what enables the creation of the multi-layered allegories inherent in Grillparzer's corpus.

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And the LORD sent fiery serpents among the people, and they bit the people; and much people of Israel died. Therefore the people came to Moses, and said, We have sinned, for we have spoken against the LORD, and against thee; pray unto the LORD, that he take away the serpents from us. And Moses prayed for the people. And the LORD said unto Moses, Make thee a fiery serpent, and set it upon a pole: and it shall come to pass, that every one that is bitten, when he looketh upon it, shall live. And Moses made a serpent of brass, and put it upon a pole, and it came to pass, that if a serpent had bitten any man, when he beheld the serpent of brass, he lived.

This duality leads to my interest in the following points pertaining to *Der Traum ein Leben*: 1) the extent of Calderón's and Voltaire's influence on the dramatic fairy tale; 2) the importance of naming in a hermeneutic framework; 3) the role of the preservation and transmission of wisdom; 4) Grillparzer's framing of gender; 5) the problematic of the gift; 6) the relationship between Freud and Enlightenment; and 7) Grillparzer's impact as a prescient psychoanalytic thinker.

## CHAPTER II

# THE ROOTS OF PATERNAL DISPLACEMENT: THE TEMPORAL, THE IMMANENT, AND THE DIVINE IN GRILLPARZER'S LYRICAL WORKS

### Introduction

Among Franz Grillparzer's most poignant tributes to his long-time lover, Kathi Fröhlich, sometimes referred to by scholars and historians as his “ewige Verlobte,” is a poem of marked intensity and deference: “Allgegenwart.”<sup>20</sup> Despite its praise of the woman for whom he experienced a lifelong—albeit ambivalent—attraction, it speaks to the phobic quality marking the parental conflicts with which Grillparzer was forced to contend. His relationship with his mother was at least as problematic as that with his father, which forced him to develop virtues of responsibility, accountability, and laboriousness early in life. Grillparzer's father began to ail while he was in his teens, forcing him to abandon his legal studies to care for him. His mother, too, battled psychological problems from which she would never recover. Consequently, Grillparzer's ambitions were thwarted, and his capacity for effecting the change he wished to see in his life was stultified. Grillparzer grappled with mixed feelings of relief and guilt at the deaths of his father and mother, leaving us to question whether his work mirrors the issues described in

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<sup>20</sup> See pages 133-134 of *Franz Grillparzer: Sämtliche Werke. Band 1*.

his autobiography, including his father's moral and intellectual legacy and Grillparzer's own attitude toward the creative process. In order to trace these conflicts and their influence on his ideologies concerning authorship, wisdom, values, and the appropriation of authority, I commence here in Chapter 1 with an analysis of Grillparzer's lyrical works guided by both Freudian and Lacanian theories.

### **“Am Grabe Mozart des Sohnes” and “Der Selbstmörder”**

Grillparzer's poem, “Am Grabe Mozart des Sohnes,”<sup>21</sup> examines the theme of a son grappling with the death of his father and with the notion that his name precedes him. Furthermore, Grillparzer's interest in the relationship between the family name and legacy represents his desire to question its validity, ultimately resigning himself, in the fashion of an obsessional character, merely to challenge it, never usurping the established order or violating social convention outright. This poem is, for Grillparzer, a displacement of his own problematic relationship with his father, E.J., who worked in the legal profession and who remained distant from him as a silent authority figure, with the younger Grillparzer ultimately—and reluctantly—accepting his father's sovereignty, but not without challenging patriarchal norms in his writings. Therein lies the importance of examining the father son/relationship between the elder and younger Mozart. The opening stanza of the poem reads:

So bist du endlich hingegangen,

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<sup>21</sup> See pages 297-298 of *Franz Grillparzer: Sämtliche Werke. Band 1*.

Wohin der Geist dich ewig zog,

Und hältst den Großen dort umfassen,

Der adlergleich zur Sonne flog.

The ABAB rhyme scheme goes uninterrupted over the course of the entire poem, and the first stanza is no exception. This emphasizes the timelessness of the father's accomplishments, although he now resides in the heavens, and thus, the continuation of the rhyme scheme represents the perpetuation of the legacy of the striving father. A comparison is made to the flight of an eagle, though the poet refrains from employing simile or substituting the desired idea with a traditional metaphor. Grillparzer conveys but a single idea, and this comes in the form of a fusion: “adlergleich.” Because there are but two nouns in lines two and three in stanza one, with the initial letter being “G” in both instances, the two words, “Geist” and “Großen” take on greater importance. If the “Adler” is representative of the human father, and the words in the lines of this stanza are rearranged, we read: “den großen gleich,” or “equal to the great ones/great one.” Here the great ones are those who have achieved great things, or, alternatively, the heavenly father himself. Given that the eagle soars to dizzying heights—to the place where the heavenly father is said to reside—we can say that these lines involve, from the perspective of classical Freudian psychology, both displacement and condensation, or metonymy and metaphor.<sup>22</sup> The emphasis here is on the father's *Leistungen* themselves, which are reminiscent of

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<sup>22</sup> Elizabeth Wright contextualizes the Freudian concepts of displacement and condensation, noting that their association with metonymy and metaphor are post-Freudian and attributable to the work of Roman Jakobson: “When a professor's name, 'Gärtner' (gardener) reminds

yet another word often used to describe Mozart: a *Genie*, though this is not phonetically preferable.<sup>23</sup> The repetition of the “G” is but another continuation of the word “Grab” in the poem's title, further emphasizing the immortal name of Mozart beyond the resting place of the father.

Moreover, the second stanza brings the image of nature into contrast with man-made monuments. It reads:

Daß keiner doch dein Wirken messe,

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Freud of a botanical monograph, word-likeness is involved; when a laboratory reminds him of a colleague who works there, the association is of A being found with B, one of contiguity. Both of these associations come into his discussion of condensation. Under displacement similar linkages operate: climbing stairs is metaphorically linked with 'going up in the world' socially; a girl born in May and married in May associates herself with may-beetles, a plague which once appeared in that month. It is only after Freud that similarity and contiguity have been singled out as the two fundamental poles of language (Jakobson and Halle 1956, pp. 76-82) and subsequently equated to the rhetorical figures of metaphor and metonymy, by confining condensation to metaphoric shifts of association (based on similarity) and displacement to metonymic ones (based on contiguity) (*Psychoanalytic Criticism* 21).

23 Franz Forster reflects on Grillparzer's differentiation between “Genie” and “Talent” in his writings, which may be applicable here. He writes, citing Grillparzer: “Nach diesen zitierten Erörterungen Grillparzers scheint ‚Genie‘ verwandt zu sein mit dem Vermögen der richtigen Empfindung; das Genie äußert sich daher auch etwa in den Erkenntnissen des gesunden Menschenverstands. Genie wäre daher etwa auch gleichbedeutend mit der Einheit des Menschen und der Zusammenfassung aller menschlichen Kräfte” (122). This interpretation of Grillparzer's definition of genius insofar as it pertains to talent is noteworthy, and is written in the spirit of Enlightenment values such as reason, brotherhood, and common sense. Thus, someone who is unable to reason in this way will find it difficult to attain genius—perhaps this is an unconscious undercurrent informing Grillparzer's treatment of the relationship between Mozart and the son. The son must come to his senses by applying his skills and motivation toward reasonable goals and summon them toward something that goes beyond himself, instead dedicating his pursuits to all of humankind.



Der nicht der Sehnsucht Stachel kennt,

Du warst die trauernde Zypresse

An deines Vaters Monument.

In contrast to stanza one, we see in the third line of stanza two a condensation, a metaphor in the second person informal singular expressing that the son is a mourning cypress tree. Here we see what appears to be an allusion to Isaiah 14:8: “Even the cypress trees rejoice over you [O kings of Babylon], even the cedars of Lebanon, saying, Since you have been laid low, no woodcutter comes up against us.” In the absence of the departed father, reminiscent of the fallen kings of Babylon, there is nothing that can hold the son back from staking out his own path in the world except the weight of the father's legacy. We see an image of the father's monument in the final line of stanza two, thus suggesting that it is this monument—his father's memory—that continues to loom over him. The monument belongs to a place of remembrance, and is thus in a metonymic relationship with it, a displacement of the weight of the father's perceived greatness.

It is in stanza three that the son's paralyzing ennui comes to bear. It goes as follows,

Wovon so viele einzig leben,

Was Stolz und Wahn so gerne hört,

Des Vaters Name war es eben,

Was deiner Tatkraft Keim zerstört.

Here the very pride that is a single-minded motivation for some is a liability to the son, who finds that the burden of the father's name destroyed his own agency, rendering him helpless. Each line in this stanza, spare the third, commences with a “W” word, all of which, in a different context, may be regarded as question words, as inquiries seeking a reply. Clearly, because the son is not able to live vicariously through the fame of his family name alone, his capacity to enforce his own agency is limited unless he may rise above it.

In stanza four, the focus on the son's dilemma is more poignant. It reads,

Begabt, um höher aufzuragen,

Hielt ein Gedanke deinen Flug;

»Was würde wohl mein Vater sagen?«

War dich zu hemmen schon genug.

The focus on flight in this stanza is tied to the father's likeness with an eagle in stanza one. Noteworthy here is the opening word: “Begabt.” To refer to the son as talented suggests that he evinces the coveted qualities of his father, which is further emphasized by “aufzuragen,” meaning “to rise up.” The son's promise is stunted, as he is grounded in his own insecurities and uncertainties that remain imprinted in him. He asks, “What would my father say?” Unfortunately, it is this very thought—and perhaps this thought alone—that prevents him from spreading his wings toward the heavens, as though he necessitated his father's permission to set his sights higher, beyond the level of the idea. The thought obsession is the very thing that quells

his drive to express his own desires, and this relates, specifically, to his relationship with his *mother*.

This point is of note, as Grillparzer notes in his autobiographical writings that it “never occurred to him to have a wish that would not have been his mother's.” Although this may be characterized as a kind of symbiotic relationship, it involves also metonymy: the son's wish is part of a greater desire—conceived of as the mother's—and the mother's wish is constitutive of the—perceived—desire of the son. It can be argued, in this vein, that Grillparzer's mother was his true bride due to her unhealthy psychological state, and that any other woman, including his fiancée whom he never married, Kathi Fröhlich, would have been to Grillparzer “forbidden fruit.” As a consequence of his perception that husband and son were united in him, and that he felt ambivalence toward this reality, it is conceivable that he harbored unconscious aggression toward his father for failing to liberate him from his burden. Thus, the Grillparzer name could be deemed a burden, as well, being representative of the underlying conflict. Furthermore, one can read the situation as one in which Grillparzer identified with the imaginary phallus of the mother. He is therefore incapable of making progress on his own accord, and instead he goes over his inadequacies time and time again in a circular fashion.

Furthermore, in the subsequent stanzas five and six, we see another example of the stark ambivalence characteristic of Grillparzer's works. Stanza five reads,

Und wars zu schaffen dir gelungen,

Was manchen andern hoch geehrt,

Du selbst verwarfst es, kaum gesungen,

Als nicht des Namens *Mozart* wert.

The repetition of the [g] sound at the end of each of the first three lines of stanza five in *gelungen*, *geehrt*, and *gesungen* is reminiscent of similar repetition in stanza one and the title: *Geist*, *Großen*, and *Grab*. The difference, however, is that the repetition veers away from a noun focus to a verb (participle) focus, thus moving the scope of inquiry from the realm of people, things, and events to the scope of dynamic action. It is in the final line of this stanza that the participle repetition is broken, and although “wert” may be used as a noun, it is not used as such in this instance. The collective effect of the emphasis on action is a formal reiteration of the striving of the son, thematically conveyed in earlier stanzas. To the son's disappointment, his efforts are consistently met with *wert* as a lowercase “w”—a mere modifier of something greater than himself, and the inevitable result of his own harsh self-criticism. The consonance of the letter “n” in the final line, “nicht des Namens,” strongly underscores the significance of the name of the father.<sup>24</sup>

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<sup>24</sup> Pertaining to the “name-of-the-father,” which will be relevant in this chapter, I cite here *The Subject of Lacan: A Lacanian Reader for Psychologists*: “The “third party” is a symbolic construct created to render something enigmatic into something that is understandable—in this context, the “enigmatic something” was the hypothetical, yet intensely significant “other” who waited to hear what I would say about her [referring to a patient in a clinical case study]. Lacan (1993) fashioned the term “the name of the father” to distinguish a symbolic element around which the unconscious organizes from the socio-legal entity of a “real” father or surrogate. The “third party” refers unconsciously to the original *third party* of childhood: not Sissy's [the patient's] father per se, but *the father* as represented to the child by the mother. For example, a mother may say to a child who misbehaves, “Wait until your father hears what you have done.” Sissy [the patient] imagined a menacing third party of this sort: an audience of

In stanza six, we see a contradiction of the ideas illustrated in stanza five:

Nun öffnen sich dem guten Sohne  
Des großen Vaters Arme weit,  
Er gibt, der Kindestreu zum Lohne,  
Ein Teilchen dir Unsterblichkeit.

Here it is unclear as to whether the referent of the poem is the earthly father who is honored in the opening lines or whether the referent is, in fact, the heavenly father. From a semantic point-of-view, the language in stanza five expresses openness and generosity: “öffnen,” “weit,” and “zum Lohne” are all indicative of all-encompassing greatness and beneficence. The only verbs employed in the stanza are “öffnen” and “gibt” (geben), which further emphasize the act of giving over taking. The greatness of the father is emphasized in the term used to describe the gift that has been given the son: the diminutive, “Teilchen.” The son is fortunate, nonetheless, because he has been given a small piece of that greatness as his birthright, which is evidenced by the usage of the phrase “[...er gibt...] dir.” Interesting to note here is the usage of the word “Kindestreu,” which implies scattering or fruitfulness as in the command of God in the Book of

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analysts who would be contemptuous and critical alternately of her and of me [the analyst]" (151).

Genesis: “go forth and multiply.”<sup>25</sup> Just as Adam and Eve were made to suffer after the Sündenfall, so too can a man suffer at the hand of his name if he has done it injustice, or if it has done injustice to him; it may become his companion in joy or in pain, success or endless futility. Furthermore, his legacy has the potential to reproduce the same—either fruits or thorns—and thus he must ever be aware of the consequences of his actions. It is the type of thinking that reminds us again and again of a harsh superego that practically crushes the subject under its weight.

Moreover, the final two stanzas of the poem highlight the theme of perpetual pain that is recurrent in Grillparzer's corpus. The penultimate stanza is as follows:

Der Name, dir ein Schmerzgenosse,  
  
Er wandelt sich von heut in Glück;  
  
Tönt doch von Salzburgs Erzkolosse  
  
Ein Echo auch für dich zurück.

The word “Schmerzgenosse” here is roughly translatable as “companion in pain,” evoking the image of the proverbial “thorn in one's side.” This thorn, however, transforms itself into the harbinger of fortune when his name is spoken and the sound reverberates from the walls of Salzburg's great cathedral. The modifiers “doch” and “auch” in the final two lines bring this

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<sup>25</sup>“Fruitfulness” is another concept that Grillparzer brings into association with the *Genie* and the potential for exhibiting the qualities of such in the context of artistic creation (see Forster).

transcendent experience back to earth, thus linking the metaphysical domain with the pedestrian and the mundane. In this instance, just as with Grillparzer's "Der Selbstmörder," the threat of loss is met with the inevitability of the return of the lost object.

It is in the final stanza that we see tentativeness, a disjointedness between the lives of father and son that finds itself fused in a commemoration of the departed, an intimate, though public, experience. It reads,

Wenn dort die Menge sich versammelt,  
Ehrfürchtig Schweigen alle bannt,  
Wer dann den Namen *Mozart* stammelt,  
Hat ja den deinen auch genannt. (297-8)

The final stanza commences with the conditional word, "Wenn," the metaphorical reply to the echo referred to in the previous stanza. If and when the name of the father, and that of the son, is spoken, it *will* surely realize the promise of the father's legacy, of which the son is a part; the father's name, Mozart, is likewise that of the son. The emphasis upon the spoken word is further reinforced in the repetition of the [s] sound in lines two and three of the final stanza:

"Schweigen" and "stammelt." A contrast exists between the refusal to speak out of respect and the stammered murmurings that ensue once respects have been paid. The succession of the definite article "den" with the possessive adjective "deinen" exists merely as a further reiteration that the name is, in fact, that of the son's.

Here the importance of the family legacy is highlighted. The son deems himself unworthy of his own accomplishments, incapable of measuring up to the standard that his father's name dictated in life. Each time the son attempts to assert himself, he dismisses his creations in pain and in frustration, almost as though it were the name itself, *not the father himself* that was a burden to him.<sup>26</sup> He is liberated only in the moment that the name takes flight, which it may do only when it is vocalized in the form of sound. Thus the echo in the cathedral mirrors the flight of the bird into the heavens—the father's journey toward the heavenly father, who had given him the gift of song. In turn, the gift of song imparts its own gift to the son, whose name and legacy is given him through his father on earth. Here we can imagine the obsessional subject's desire for release—to finally liberate himself from the superego that judges him every step of the way. This remains difficult, however, as the obsessional does not truly wish to overthrow authority, but instead merely test its constraints. Even after the father's death, the son allows the father's legacy to replace the figure of his person, continuing to measure the worth and value of his endeavors and undertakings.

Furthermore, without being reductionistic in examining the connection between the author, F.S. Grillparzer, and the themes of his work, we can presume that Grillparzer's late style (at this point Grillparzer had already written numerous plays and was past his dramatic prime, which peaked in the 1830s) was informed by his use of historical figures as metaphors for his own experience. Wolfgang Amadeus had but two surviving sons, who, like Grillparzer, died

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<sup>26</sup> This is literally the case, both in terms of the family name itself and in the psychoanalytic sense of the “name of the father.”



without wives and heirs. One of his sons, Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart, Jr., was referred to by the pseudonym, Wolfgang, even though his name was actually Franz. The younger Mozart's epitaph bears the words: "May the name of his father be his epitaph, as his veneration for him was the essence of his life." Given that Grillparzer wrote "Am Grabe Mozart des Sohnes" in honor of him, it is plausible that Grillparzer, who also had brothers, displaced his father-son experience in a poem written about Franz Mozart.

On the other hand, Grillparzer's relationship with women—most particularly his mother and Kathi Fröhlich—comes to the fore in dark, psychologically conflicted poems featuring themes of 1) departure and return; 2) desperate longing vs. the desire for the nullification of the self; and 3) perpetual dissatisfaction with sadomasochistic undertones. Grillparzer's "Der Selbstmörder" (186-7) is a poem that reveals all of the aforementioned themes in a manner that is quite revelatory insofar as his relationships to those closest to him are concerned.<sup>27</sup> Here it becomes clear that many of Grillparzer's unresolved emotions toward his mother find their expression in his adult relationships. The reason for this displacement is complex, and it is likely that poetry was the most socially acceptable outlet for his tumultuous and conflicted emotions. Poetry, as a medium, is as personal as a diary or letter, and thus it *allows for* the shattering of social conventions and the creation of facades that mask the truth, which was especially valuable in an era in which the truth was, more often than not, censored if it did not correspond with pre-established standards and traditions.

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<sup>27</sup> See pages 186-187 of *Franz Grillparzer: Sämtliche Werke. Band 1*.

It is likely that Grillparzer himself was not aware of his tendency to displace his feelings early on in his development as a writer and dramatist, but that he became increasingly aware of it during the writing of *Der Traum ein Leben*, whilst he questioned and examined ideas and concepts that would later inform Sigmund Freud in his own practice and research. Furthermore, writing likely enabled Grillparzer to escape from the confines of his overwhelmingly close emotional and psychological bond with his mother, who lacked the ability to connect with his father in a way that would have allowed him—the younger Grillparzer—the freedom to seek an emotionally and psychologically balanced relationship with another woman. Worried that his relationship with Kathi Fröhlich would suffer the same fate, Grillparzer’s fear became a self-fulfilling prophecy—he was never able to separate from her, nor was he able to form a solid relationship that would lead to marriage and a family, proving that the ambivalence inherent in his ideologies and family dynamics extended well into his adult life, and making him somewhat of an enlightener in his quest to challenge unhealthy habits and behavior patterns over which he felt he had no control.

In the opening lines of his “Selbstmörder,” it is apparent that this is a poem that describes a homecoming from a journey, whether it be literal or metaphorical, or perhaps both. These lines read: “Er kam zurück nach Hause vom langgedehnten Gang,/Mit Absicht ausgedehnet bis Sonnenuntergang.” In these lines we see a man who journeys lengthily until sunset, a plausible reference to Grillparzer’s mother, whose maiden name was Sonnleithner. Furthermore, we see temporal references, water motifs, and an emphasis on the dichotomy between the interior and the exterior, which may be likened to that of consciousness vs. unconsciousness. Lines five and

six read: “Und wie die Wellen liefen, so lief sein Auge mit,/Des Menschen Los begrübelnd, des Glückes flüchtgen Schritt.” The ripples of the river are representative of the ephemerality, transience, and fluidity of happiness as the speaker defines it. The water motif is at odds with the “Schritt” of fate, as water *does not move in steps*. Like water, happiness is often fleetingly ephemeral. This apparent disjointedness in the characterization of human fate and its comparison with the flow of water is symbolic of one of the dichotomies in the poem: human agency vs. divine agency. It is as the forest “tells” the wanderer later on in lines eleven and twelve: “Auch schien das All zu rufen, der Grund, der Baum, der Wald:/Wo wir stehn, da fällt niemand, als zwingender Gewalt.” The implication here is that there are no accidents; there exists some higher power that compels the human subject to act and react.

Furthermore, the theme of agency or the lack thereof—i.e. submission to the voice of a higher power or to one's own self-destructive impulses—is the central undercurrent of lines seven and eight, which read as follows: “Ha, dacht er, käm doch einer und stieße mich hinein,/Rasch, unversehn von rückwärts, mir sollte wohler sein.” The rhyming of the words “hinein” and “sein” evokes the possibility of a word play alluding to the German colloquialism “hin sein,” meaning “completely broken” or “dead.” In both life and death—creation and destruction—the human subject is found in a cocoon: first the mother's womb, and later, the grave, the earth. Therefore, in life and death, “das Sein” is ultimately something that is experienced from within rather than without. This theme echoes the fear that is evinced in the poem, “Allgegenwart”: “nichts in der ganzen Welt hüllt mir es ein.” The aforementioned reality is, in fact, a fear of the *idea that cannot be displaced*, as articulated by Jacques Lacan in his

lectures as that which is always bracketed from the psychoanalytic practice. He states: “Death in the narcissistic register is much closer to the element of final nullification that is linked to every type of displacement and about which one can conceive, as I already indicated, that it is the origin or source of the possibility of symbolically transacting reality [*réel*]” (33).<sup>28</sup>

In subsequent lines, we see other noteworthy instances of word play. In lines nine and ten, we read: “Ja, einmal hob sein Fuß sich, doch trat er schnell zurück,/ Denn er, der Allbelaurer, sah übrall Lauscherblick.” Line nine ends with the word “zurück,” modified by the first part of the clause, “doch trat er schnell,” and line ten concludes with “Lauscherblick.” Rearranging these words, we have the word “Rückblick.” Once again, the theme of the return of the lost object—in this case, a return through memory—becomes paramount. Noteworthy about the semantics in these lines is the synesthesia motif. “Lauschen” generally means “to listen,” although it is sometimes used as a curtailed form of “belauschen.” The latter is taken to mean “eavesdrop” or “overhear.” Combining this word with “Blick” is interesting, given that the “Blick” lends itself merely to visual interpretation of sensory information. This fusion of unlike concepts is, once again, reminiscent of Grillparzer's dedication to Kathi Fröhlich. In “Allgegenwart” we read the description of the lover's eyes as “dunkelhell,” a contradiction in terms.

Toward the middle of the poem, the man's censoring super-ego overpowers him. In lines fifteen and sixteen, we read: “Erst als die Nacht gekommen mit ihren Tropfen Taus,/ Da drückt

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<sup>28</sup> From Lacan's talk on the “The Symbolic, the Imaginary, and the Real”

durch enge Gassen er schlotternd sich nach Haus.” The alliteration of the stops<sup>29</sup> [t] and [d] in “Tropfen Taus” and “Da drückt durch” mimic the stammered speech of that is characteristic of inhibitions (*Hemmungen*), fear (*Angst*) or speech disorders brought about by neurological traumas, to name a few possibilities. The contrast to this is seen in the alliteration of the alveolar sibilant [s]<sup>30</sup> in “schlotternd sich.” Thus, it is only in his decision to overcome his inhibitions—whether conscious or not—that the floodgates of speech begin to open again.

Moreover, stops and sibilants are used as instruments of meaning in lines seventeen and eighteen: “Die Stiege ist erklommen, sein alter Diener tritt,/Ihm öffnend, auf die Schwelle, er kennt des Herren Schritt.” Emphasized here is the power differential between the divine master, God, and his servant, man: “tritt” is a verb, which accentuates the latter's place as “one who serves/one who is of service to a another,” and this is further substantiated in the lines's phonetics. The verb “tritt” is *contained in* stops: [t] and [t] as an initial sound, with a double [t] at the conclusion. On the other hand, the “Schritt” of the Herr is represented as a noun, the “step of an authority figure,” and this, too, is accomplished via phonetic mechanics. The “Schritt” features a sibilant in the initial position, suggesting freer movement and more flexible

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29 In phonetics, a stop is formed by when airflow completely ceases due to the blockage of the vocal tract. Common examples of this in German are: [d] (voiced), [g] (voiced), [b] (voiced), [t] (voiceless), [p] (voiceless), and [k] (voiceless). Voiced stops are significant here because they involve the inhibition of air flow and take more effort to produce—abilities that are impeded under neurological stress or as a consequence of a psychological inhibition, to name but a few examples.

30 A sibilant is created when a stream of air is directed by the tongue to the edge of the teeth, which are held in proximity. The air here continues to flow with purpose and intentionality; the process is, conceivably, less laborious than the production of a stop, particularly a voiced stop.

expression. Here it seems that the relationship between humankind and the divine is being explored—namely, the notion of man being a servant to God, with God’s law of benevolence, love, and protection taking the upper hand and serving as the ultimately authority over humankind.

In the subsequent lines, nineteen and twenty, light and color illuminate the transformations of the weary traveler: “Ein Licht hält er erhoben, das bebt ihm in der Hand – Sieht er den Eintretten, bleich wie die blasse Wand.” Noteworthy here is the repetition of the [h] and [b] sounds. The verb “hält” and the noun “Hand” must be interpreted as an alliterative and semantic unit—likewise must the adjectives “bleich” and “blasse,” both of which describe the “Wand.” We have here a pair of synonyms conveying the same meaning: “pallid” or “sallow.” In lines four and five, the physical form of the man is united with the movement of the river: “Am Fluß war er gestanden, das Haupt hinabgeneigt./Und wie die Wellen liefen, so lief sein Auge mit.” In these examples, each body part is associated with an action or state of being. The head is inclined to “go under,”—as it is tilted downward—whilst the eye runs like the rippling river. In line nine, we see the lifting of the foot: “Ja, einmal hob sein Fuß sich, doch trat er schnell zurück.” In the foot, we see timidity, which is reinforced, reflected upon, and substantiated in the line that succeeds it: “Denn er, der Allbelaurer, sah übrall Lauscherblick.”

Moreover, the collage of images, then, involves a flame that is shaking in the hand of its bearer, which contrasts with the earlier image of the eye leaping to follow the flow of the river, and the head that is compelled to submerge. When considering the absence of the mouth and the

ear, the implication of a lack of agency—or perhaps a tentativeness toward agency—is implied. There is a conflation of sight and hearing that is represented through the seeing organ, the eyes. The pallid color of the man, like the wall, suggests that perhaps the bearing of the flame is symbolic of a vigil for the dead or the gravely ill. The repetition of the [h] sound mimics the breath, thus alluding to words such as “Hauch” and “Hoffnung,” the latter being all that remains as the former begins to expire—becoming strained under the weakness that overtakes the body as it is failing.

Moreover, the conclusion of the poem reinforces the conflict that is central to its meaning: “Und dann ein Blatt, bekritzelt, er nennts Verteid'gungsschrift,/An der er lang geschrieben und mag noch schreiben leicht,/Weil, was er heut gebilligt, er morgen früh durchstreicht.” This may be interpreted in radically different ways. The first is that the man's battle with his inner self will commence anew the following morning, and that the outcome could potentially be very different in nature: by sundown the next day he may have killed himself. An alternative interpretation is that the version of the Selbstmörder's day, as it is described in the poem and as he had envisioned it ideally concluding, in suicide, is something that he approves of before he journeys out, but something he can no longer endorse upon coming home to find what he has left unfinished. While his creator has bestowed upon him the gift of writing, only God himself has the power to cross out his name from the Book of Life.

It must, furthermore, be noted that this instance of paternal displacement involving the divine is strengthened even further by Grillparzer's use of a metrical structure that imitates that

the lyric of the German Baroque and of French classical poetry. This displacement into the French tradition is tied to his adoration of Napoleon, much to the chagrin of his father.

Traditionally, alexandrines consist of six feet on each side of a caesura that bisects the twelve-syllable line in the middle. Grillparzer's "Selbstmörder," however, contains an extra syllable in each line, amounting to thirteen. In five instances, this extra syllable amounts to an entire word; in line 1 it is "vom," in line 7 it is "er," in line 9 it is the reflexive "sich," in line 21 it is "nicht," and in line twenty-four it is "der." In addition to this, the colloquialism "net"<sup>31</sup> appears as the extra syllable in line 2, along with ten instances of *-en*, which spells "ne" reversed. When we rearrange these additional one-syllable words, an interesting thought pattern is revealed: "der, vom (von dem) er sich nicht." This translates roughly to: "he, from whom (male/neuter gender) he cannot." This leaves the analytical reader to wonder, "he, from whom he cannot *what?*" We can answer this from a psychoanalytic perspective: "der, von dem er sich nicht *trennen konnte*."<sup>32</sup> The "sich" occurs in the ninth line: "ja, einmal hob sein Fuß sich, doch trat er schnell zurück." He cannot separate himself from the father, because it is the father who prohibits the overly intimate relationship with the mother. It is the father's word—or whatever occupies the role of Name-of-the-Father—which he may challenge, but must ultimately obey, and whose power he may never usurp. Where one is lacking, absent, or insufficient, he must displace the role onto another who can assume the role of maker and upholder of the law. The "net" and the

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<sup>31</sup> This is slang for "nicht" in many dialects, including Wienerisch.

<sup>32</sup> The same could be said of Grillparzer's eternal fiancée, Kathi Fröhlich. Although he could never bring himself to marry her, he could never let her go to seek her (and his) fulfillment elsewhere.



“ne” are repetitive negations that further hint at obsessional neurosis. Grillparzer does not disrupt *both* meter and syntax simultaneously, as that would threaten to undermine authority completely, and thus *allow* the deadly jouissance evoked by his emotionally and psychologically incestuous with his mother.

Moreover, given the repetition of the letter “G” in both of the poems “Am Grabe Mozart des Sohnes” and “Der Selbstmörder,” the question arises as to whether this tendency arises from the desire, either consciously or unconsciously, to include an “artist's signature”—in this case, a poet's signature—representative of the Grillparzer family name.<sup>33</sup> The “G” alliteration is significant from a psychoanalytic perspective. “Am Grabe Mozart des Sohnes” offers us striking instances of this tendency such as *Grab, Geist, großen, Gedanke, genug, gelungen, geehrt, gesungen, and Glück*. All of these could be applied also to the worship of *Gott*. The mortal questions if he can ever fully come to understand God's love and grace, or whether he is even *worthy of* his Father's love, just as he questions whether his work is worthy of his family's namesake. It is probable that Grillparzer, who had been studying law prior to his father's death, wondered if his ultimate career path as a civil servant for the Austrian Exchequer, did his family reputation justice.<sup>34</sup> It is true that the literary and musical inclinations of Grillparzer—as

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<sup>33</sup> Noteworthy here is that Grillparzer's name is similar to the German word *Parzen*, connoting the three fates of Greek mythology—fate, destiny, and tragedy are all related to Grillparzer's pursuits as a writer of lyrical works and tragic dramas.

<sup>34</sup> The study of law is here linked to the typically paternal function of the name-of-the-father. The paternal law is subverted by art, thus merely displacing it.

expressed through his literary pursuits—led him to follow in the footsteps of his maternal family, the Sonnleithners.<sup>35</sup>

In Grillparzer's autobiography we find, furthermore, that he suffered from an inherited speech impediment, which is reflected by the meter and phonetic structure of poems such as “Der Selbstmörder.” He describes the nature of his speech inhibitions and their contribution to his shyness at some length in his autobiography. Grillparzer writes,

Man drängte sich übrigens zu diesen Darstellungen, die man vortrefflich fand, obgleich meine Tanten einen in der Familie meiner Großmutter verbreiteten Sprachfehler hatten, den auch meine Mutter teilte und dem auch ich als Knabe unterworfen war. Erst später, als ich von Desmosthenes las, daß er mit in den Mund genommenen kleinen Kieselsteinen laut und anhaltend las, wurde ich, indem ich sein Beispiel nachahmte, des Zischlautes bis zum Unmerklichen mächtig.

Ich war mir dieses Sprachfehlers, im Gegensatz meiner Verwandten, die ganz unbefangen plauderten und sogar Komödie spielten, vollkommen bewußt, und vielleicht rührte meine Schüchternheit als Knabe zum Teile daher, daß ich in große Verlegenheit geriet, sooft mich jemand Fremder ansprach, und daher jeden solchen Anlaß vermied. So wie auch mein Name so häßlich vorkam, daß ich

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<sup>35</sup> A family of famous composers and musicians, it seems that this direction gave Grillparzer freer movement in the world—paradoxically perhaps—despite his mother's psychological illness.

mich erst spät entschließen konnte, ihn meinen Stücken auf dem Theaterzettel beisetzen zu lassen. (35)

Grillparzer's account of this early experience surrounding his ability to communicate only with great difficulty is noteworthy, given his tendency toward employing consonance in his lyrical works. It is probable that this fragmentation of names appearing in his work underscores an unconscious feeling of incompleteness, of longing for ears to hear. Given the many displacements and condensations present in Grillparzer's lyrical works pertaining to the parent/child relationship and the father/son relationship in particular, it is likely that the issue of speaking and being heard is a contributing factor in their formal and thematic complexity.

Moreover, Grillparzer's relationship with the figure of his father is further emphasized in his portrayal of a man alone with nature, particularly in his description of the "Selbstmörder." In the opening pages of his autobiography, he writes of his father:

Sein äusres Benehmen hatte etwas Kaltes und Schroffes, er vermied jede Gesellschaft, war aber ein leidenschaftlicher Freund der Natur. Früher einen eigenen, später einen gemieteten Garten selbst zu bearbeiten und Blumen aller Art zu ziehen, machte beinahe seine einzige Erheiterung aus. Nur auf Spaziergängen, bei denen er, auf unglaubliche Entfernungen, manchmal die ganze Familie, häufig aber auch nur mich, noch als Kind mitnahm, wurde er froh und mitteilksam. Wenn ich mich erinnere, daß es ihm, bei solchen Spaziergängen am Ufer der Donau, Vergnügen machte, den Inseln im Flusse, nach der Art der Weltumsegler,

selbstgewählte Namen zu geben, so muß ich glauben, daß in früherer Zeit die Regungen der Phantasie ihm nicht fremd gewesen sein müssen, ja noch später, in den Jahren meiner Lesewut, konnte ich ihm kein größeres Vergnügen machen, als wenn ich ihm Romane, aber ausschließlich Ritter- und Geistergeschichten zutrug, die dann der ernste Mann am schwedischen Ofen stehend und ein Glaß Bier trinkend, bis spät in die Nacht hinein las. Neuere Geschichten waren ihm wegen ihres Konventionellen zuwider. (20)

This passage offers a partial explanation for Grillparzer's preoccupation with the subject of nature hikes and gardens, that proves a recurring motif in his work. For Grillparzer, who describes his drive to read as a “Lesewut,”—conveying such as anger, rage, or frenzy-fueled—reading and writing were therapeutic, as these activities gave him occasion to bond with his otherwise aloof, reserved, and emotionally unavailable father. Considering the era in which Grillparzer grew up—the early nineteenth century—it was not unusual for fathers to relate to their children at an intellectual and emotional distance. It is likely, however, particularly on the basis of the sentiments that F.S. Grillparzer articulates in his autobiography, that he longed for some verbal acknowledgment and approbation of his efforts and talents that would *justify* his work and person as being *worthy*—a theme that he explores in both “Am Grabe Mozart des Sohnes” (1844) and “Der Selbstermörder” (1829). Despite Grillparzer’s tendency to engage in the “Lesewut” about which he writes, it must be noted that Grillparzer was above all a peace-loving man whose personal and literary aims centered most greatly around the guardianship of wisdom and knowledge as the paragon of authorship.

## “Als mein Schreibpult zersprang,” “Napoleon,” and “Vater Unser”

Moreover, Grillparzer's frustration with the absence of his father and his ambivalent relationship with his mother led him to put his ideas down on paper in the form of an 1813 poem entitled, “Als mein Schreibpult zersprang.”<sup>36</sup> The first five lines read:

Wenn im Lenz die Bäume knospen,  
und der Saft die Stämme füllt,  
fängt im Wald sichs an zu regen,  
und des Frühlings Kuß entgegen  
dehnt, erwacht, sich Zweig und Ast.

From the outset of the poem, the image created is one of fullness, growth, and promise. The [s] sound here from a phonetic perspective conveys fluidity, doing justice to the image of sap filling the trunks of trees opening their buds in the springtime. The gentle image of springtime is nevertheless a dynamic one. In the expansive image of the final line—of entire arms and branches of trees reaching out—we anticipate kindness, softness, and love. Even the meter is suggestive of this—there is harmony and balance in the alternation between seven and eight syllable lines. There is temperance and beauty here, a most definite sense of awakening.

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<sup>36</sup> See pages 73 and 74 of *Franz Grillparzer: Sämtliche Werke. Band 1*.

Furthermore, the personification of the “Schreibpult” in the third five-line series leads the poem to a climax:

dehnts verlangend seine Adern:  
doch, nicht fähig mehr zu grünen,  
ächzt es laut auf und zerspringt.  
So, obschon vom Stamm getrennet  
und verwelket in der Blüte;

Here we are presented with a living image of a tree that is losing its luster for life. Its veins dilate, hoping desperately to find some life-giving sustenance, lest it perish. Its blooming branches separate from the trunk and break open, the life-giving roots powerless to supply the necessary nutrients to it—the beautiful, growing plant has been decapitated. There is nothing that can save the tree from its certain demise; the promise of its blooms extinguished, gone before its time. Despite this stark revelation, there is no change in the meter that would suggest anything is amiss. Instead, the poem goes on in the subsequent five lines to offer a temporal indicator of the time that has passed, thus suggesting that creation and destruction, birth and death, are cyclical.

It is in the final five lines that a revelation occurs, and the lyrical “I” appears, thus yielding a breakthrough from a psychoanalytic perspective. The poem concludes:

weckt im Frühling mich dein Atem,  
  
Himmelstochter Poesie,  
  
und mein Busen drängt und hebt sich:  
  
doch, nicht fähig mehr zu grünen,  
  
ächzt er laut auf und – zerspringt.

There is a temporal significance to the spring, given that we move to first person point-of-view: the lyrical “I” awakens. We can assume that the first seventeen lines were a dream, or, alternatively, that we are led from one image in the forest to another, which does not necessarily take place in the forest itself, but rather, in a writer's study. It is conceivable that the poem traces the history of the “Schreibpult” that is the poem's namesake. A tree had to be sacrificed to create the surface on which the writer composes the fruits of his labor. The “Himmelstochter Poesie” is conflated here with the breath or spirit of nature itself, of which the trees in the forest are a part.

If the lyrical “I” bears any relevance to the content of Grillparzer's own psychological connection to the subject matter, then it is noteworthy that the both the writing desk and the lyrical “I's” bosom, shatters and bursts, respectively. The emphasis on the typically feminine motifs such as spring—and associated symbols such as birth, pregnancy and new beginnings—is related to the description of the tree as no longer having the capability to grow, as losing the green color that is its lifeblood. Furthermore, if the tree is a metaphor for a person—perhaps, though not necessarily, the young Grillparzer himself—then the characterization of a tree that

has withered away already in its prime is a psychological stand-in for Grillparzer's feeling of a lack of control, or of agency. If the pen was, in fact, an object of displacement for his anger and desires in youth—the verb “zerspringen” is strongly suggestive of this—then the writing desk can serve as the same. Thus, the violent shattering, almost akin to an explosion, can be likened to the wrath of a disapproving father—the name-of-the-father that he has created for himself to account for the lack or weakness of this function in his own life, stemming from his parental home—his brothers having had an entirely different experience of the same, perhaps because of their varying relationships to the mother.<sup>37</sup>

Noteworthy, however, is that it is as though the “I” itself becomes the tree that bursts, that it has become the writing desk that shatters, as if something from within has reached its boiling point, erupting like a volcano. It is this tendency that Eleonore Frey-Staiger notes about “den lösenden und schmelzenden Zauber der Sinne” in *Irenens Wiederkehr*:<sup>38</sup>

Das Äußere wirkt anfänglich noch mindestens als auslösendes Moment. Dann  
«zerinnt» es in eines, es wird zum diffusen Medium verflüchtigt und so mit dem

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<sup>37</sup> It seems here that Grillparzer acknowledges his feeling of being cut-off from his Stammbaum—his heritage—and that this causes him additional frustration and anxiety.

<sup>38</sup>The passage to which Frey-Staiger refers is the following: Aus der Luft/voll Blütenduft,/auf leise wehendem Gefieder/senkt lieblich der Gesit der Eintracht sich nieder,/von seiner Hand/umschlingt ein Band/die Wesen in Lüften und Feldern und Hainen/und will das Getrennte mit Liebe vereinen./sein Band umzieht,/was feindlich sich flieht,/und was als geschieden starrt im Reiche der Sinnen,/läßt lieblich in eines sein wort zerinnen!/Und alles fühlet sein schaffendes Walten/und strebt, sich mit liebender Lust zu entfalten (*Grillparzer: Gestalt und Gestaltung des Traums* 23)



Inneren ins Gleichgewicht gebracht. Das Innere beginnt darauf das Äußere zu überschwemmen, das «Reich der Sinnen» hört auf, als etwas Wirkliches zu existieren, sobald die Phantasie eine gewisse Intensität erreicht hat. Was sich «mit liebender Lust» entfaltet, ist nicht mehr ein feststellbares, in der Außenwelt verhaftetes Ding, sondern «alles»—das Innere, das ungehindert nach außen fließt und die Welt mit Gebilden seiner Prägung erfüllt. (23)

It is conceivable that Grillparzer's tendency to identify with the “melting away” via the senses stems from the fluidity of the boundaries between himself and his mother at the point in time in which he wrote “Als mein Schreibpult Zersprang.” Grillparzer, a man in his early twenties, likely came to the realization, even if only on an unconscious level, that he was in his prime, and should thus go forth and start a family of his own, to make something of his fantasies and his rich dream life, so vividly described in the pages of his autobiography. The frustration he likely came up against was his *lack of boundaries*—namely, from a Lacanian point-of-view, the lack of his mother's desire for his father, who, at that time, had already passed away. It was perhaps because of the death of his father that the young Grillparzer registered the weakness of the name-of-the-father already since early childhood, a lack which he—perpetually—sought to fill elsewhere.

Despite Franz Grillparzer's emotionally removed relationship with the elder Grillparzer, his father is not characterized as a consistently strict authority figure in his autobiography. This is expounded upon when Grillparzer remarks on his idealization of the French dictator, Napoleon. He writes:

Ich selbst war kein geringerer Franzosenfeind als mein Vater und demungeachtet zog Napoleon mich mit magischer Gewalt an. Mit dem Haß im Herzen und zu aller Zeit kein Liebhaber von militärischen Schaugepränge, versäumte ich doch keine seiner Musterungen in Schönbrunn und auf dem Felde der sogenannten Schmelz. Noch sehe ich ihn die Freitreppe des Schönbrunner Schlosses mehr herablaufen als gehen, die beiden Kronprinzen von Bayern und Würtemberg als Adjutanten hinter sich, und nun mit auf dem Rücken gefalteten Händen eisern dastehen. Seine vorüberziehenden Gewalthaufen mit den unbewegten Blicken des Messiters überschauend. Seine Gestalt ist mir noch jetzt gegenwärtig, seine Züge haben sich leider mit den vielen gesehenen Porträten vermengt. Er bezauberte mich wie die Schlange den Vogel. Mein Vater mochte mit diesen unpatriotischen Exkursionen wenig zufrieden sein, doch verbot er sie nie. (57)

Although Grillparzer acknowledges his distaste—even hate for all militaristic displays—he, nonetheless, describes in detail his almost magical enchantment when experiencing his encounter with Napoleon at the Schönbrunner castle. Given Grillparzer's frustration surrounding his father's lack of acknowledgment, it can be surmised that this preoccupation with the French is an act of displacement. Granted it was easier to love the things his father hated than to express his aggression toward his father directly—always preferring something of a “Lesewut” or some other coping mechanism to accepting and managing his own frustration—and this idealization of Napoleon is merely another example of the same psychological process affecting Grillparzer's psyche.

It is this fascination with Napoleon that inspired a poem by that name, written in 1821, when Grillparzer was thirty years old.<sup>39</sup> The opening stanza reads:

So stehst du still, du unruhvolles Herz,  
Und bist gegangen zu der stillen Erde?  
Was fünfzig Jahr, voll Hoheit und Beschwerde,  
Voll Heldenlust nicht gab und Heldenschmerz,  
Ist dir geworden in der stillen Erde,  
Ein Sohn des Schicksals stiegst du hinab,  
Verhüllt wie deine Mutter, sei dein Grab.

The “S” alliteration in this context is enlightening. “So stehst du still” as the opening line can be likened to a clock having stopped, thus elucidating images of temporal significance, as hearts and clocks keep time. In the German, the same word is used to convey beating and ticking:

“schlagen.” *Das Herz schlägt. Die Uhr schlägt.* The subject of the poem is addressed here in the second person point-of-view, just as is the case in “Am Grabe Mozart des Sohnes.”

Consonance involving the letter “H” follows later in the stanza, succeeding the metonym, “Herz,” in the first line of the first stanza. Among the “H” words we see are: *Herz, Hohheit, Heldenlust, Heldenschmerz,* and *hinab*. The “S” words involved in the consonance include: *so, stehst, still,*

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<sup>39</sup> See pages 144-146 of *Franz Grillparzer: Sämtliche Werke. Band 1.*

*stillen* (X2), *Sohn*, *Schicksals*, *stieg*, and *sei*. Although these words do not appear together, the “S” consonance could form: “Sei still, Sohn” or “Sohn, sei still.” This notion—that the son must live in silence and hold his peace—is an anchoring point in Grillparzer's lyric, and the very fact that the rearrangement of “S” words in the first stanza of his poem “Napoleon,” yields such a statement is a powerful indicator of unconscious factors at work within his psyche. If the son is being told to hold his peace, then “Sohn des Schicksals” is even more noteworthy; Grillparzer himself may have seen in Napoleon a victim of fate, a perceived image he shared with Napoleon. Grillparzer’s fate, however, pertained to his heavy responsibilities to his family, and particularly to his mother, which may have been overwhelming to him.

Furthermore, this image of powerlessness becomes more poignant yet when considering the significance of Grillparzer's usage of “Erde.” The word is used for the first time in the second line of the opening stanza: “did you go to the still Earth?” It is in the earth that man finds his tomb, and the poem makes it clear that the earth is a still, silent, and unsatisfactory resting place for one who experienced a hero's pain, but not a hero's joy; nevertheless, the earth is now his own, which allows him to *make claim to something*. The word “verhüllt” is again similar to the line “nichts in der ganzen Welt/Hüllt mir es ein” from the poem, “Allgegenwart.” Although Grillparzer knows he is alive, he recognizes that his will is, at times, as *mummified* as the body in described in the poem. Like Mozart, Napoleon is an ideal figure with which to compare Grillparzer for a myriad of reasons, not the least of which being that Napoleon's Corsican accent, acquired during childhood, was the thorn in his side as a leader of the French. It is plausible that Grillparzer, whose voice was so important to him, saw in Napoleon a weakness with which he

readily identified and associated with his communicative difficulties. It is, likewise, possible that Grillparzer saw something in the figure of Napoleon that he assimilated into his own psyche: an instance of psychological identification, about which Freud theorizes in his writings of the early twentieth century.

However, in “Napoleon,” too, we find contradictions. A subsequent stanza reads,

Dich lieben kann ich nicht, dein hartes Amt

War, eine Geißel Gottes sein hienieden,

Das Schwert hast du gebracht und nicht den Frieden,

Genug hat dich die Welt darob verdammt;

Doch jetzt sei Urteil vom Gefühl geschieden!

Das Leben liebt und haßt, der Toten Ruhm

Ist der Geschichte heilig Eigentum.

The lyrical “I” cannot here express love for Napoleon, expressing that he brought war rather than peace. The “G” alliteration, employing here a voiced stop, [g], again indicates inhibition, being weighed down by the earthly reality, by the body—“God's hostage on earth.” Nevertheless, subsequent lines imparts a contrasting sentiment: “Doch jetzt sei Urteil vom Gefühl geschieden!” expresses the intensity of the over-developed super-ego suggested by the “I.” It is not fair or right to judge the merits of the man on the basis of pure emotion; this is strengthened in the next

“G” word: “geschieden.” Here we see fragmentation, compartmentalization—the precursor of ambivalence, seeing both sides of a situation or personality. The conclusion of this thought lends a fascinating perspective to the appraisal of history: “Ist der Geschichte heilig Eigentum.”

In the following stanza, we see, nevertheless, great praise for Napoleon. It reads,

Zum mindesten wardst du strahlend hingestellt,  
Zu kleiden unsrer Nacktheit ekle Blöße,  
Zu zeigen, daß noch Ganzheit, Hoheit, Größe  
Gedenkbar sei in unsrer Stückelwelt,  
Die sonst wohl selbst im eignen Nichts zerflösse,  
Daß noch die Gattung da, die starker Hand  
Bei Cannä schlug, bei Thermopylä stand. (144-6)

The “Stückelwelt” emphasizes the fragmentation seen in a myriad of Grillparzer's poems. “Gedenkbar” highlights the significance of the “Gedanke” in the conception of the aforementioned world, and further, its potential to melt away into nothing within the *self*. Just as alluded to early in the context of Frey-Staiger's assessment of Grillparzer, it seems that Grillparzer's tendency is to avoid this melting away into the nothingness within, and, instead, allow the senses to penetrate the floodgates to flow *without*. In the succeeding line we understand the perceived threat of the violence of nature, making reference to the Thermopylae,

the hot springs that are in Greek mythology the entrance to Hades. It is in this image that volcanic force unites with the potential for birth or destruction, reminiscent of the poem “Als mein Schriebpult zersprang” on account of its poignant intensity.

In the previous Moreover, Grillparzer's tendency to displace emotional reactions toward his father finds its expression, too, in poems idealizing a gentle, benevolent God, albeit this tendency is not free of the undercurrents of judgment and punishment directed at the lyrical “I” itself, perhaps the product of a self-persecuting super ego. Much of Grillparzer's corpus reflects his ambivalence toward the Christian faith, and toward Catholicism in particular. Franz Forster remarks on this relationship at length.<sup>40</sup> Forster explains that both those scholars who wish to see an atheist or agnostic in Grillparzer—“die Freigeistigen”—and those who seek to understand his purported religiosity—“die Strenggläubigen”—will find evidence of such in Grillparzer's diaries, notes, poetry, and prose. Particularly noteworthy is Grillparzer's criticism of the issue of unity in the Christian faith—that there exists an inherent flaw in the theology if Catholics and Protestants are able to come up with two vastly different interpretations of the same scriptures. Forster writes, citing Grillparzer's writings from 1836 and 1839, about the inherent ambivalence in his treatment of the matter of Christianity, detailing first Grillparzer's defense of the positive attributes of the faith:

Grillparzer hätte erkennen können, daß dieser Umstand in der christlichen  
Überwindung der heteronomen inhaltlichen Ethik mit begründet ist, gesteht aber,

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<sup>40</sup> See *Grillparzers Theorie der Dichtung und des Humors*.

trotz wenig wohlwollender Sichtweise und Deutung, dieser Not wenigstens folgende Tugend zu: „Die christliche Religion hat das vor allem andern voraus, daß sie sich so leicht allen Kulturstufen, gewißermassen sogar den höchsten, anpaßt. Dies rührt von dem Unbestimmten ihrer Lehrsätze und Vorschriften her, das wieder in dem Fragmentarischen ihrer heiligen Schriften seinen Grund hat. Ihre Moral “[...u.a. „Liebe Gott über alles und den Nächsten wie dich selbst”...] „ist, wenn auch überspannt, doch gut und löblich, ihre Mythen kann man symbolisch nehmen, wenn sie einem krud nicht anstehen und der schrankenlose Geist ist endlich froh sich durch etwas positives zu beschränken, besonders wenn die Schranke nicht gar zu unverdrücklich ist. So könnte man wohl sagen, die christliche Religion werde dauern bis ans Ende der Welt. Wenigstens wird sie nicht leicht von einer andern verdrängt werden”. (179)

It is clear here that Grillparzer finds value in the broad appeal of Christianity. Even for those—presumably agnostics or atheists—who cling to no particular creed or ideology, Christianity contains maxims within its theology that serve the good of humanity, in Grillparzer's opinion. He also emphasizes that it would be very difficult for another religion to take its place, or to oppress its status as a global influence. Because of the fragmentation of the scriptures upon which the religion is practiced, it allows even those at the fringes of society to find in its moral and ethical codes a standard of “truth” by which to orient themselves.



On the other hand, Grillparzer cautions against the weak points of Christian theology.

Forster writes,

Grillparzer gibt aber zu bedenken: „Diese Religion hat keinen abgeschlossenen Kodex ihrer Lehren, wie der Koran oder die mosaischen Bücher sind. Erst die Zusammenfassung oder Auslegung einer Kirche bringt Ganzheit und Zusammenhang in die Masse von Andeutungen, Parabeln, scheinbare Widersprüche und Übertreibungen. Nun wird aber keine Macht des Himmels und der Erde unsere pragmatische, auf Untersuchung, Vereinfachung, Luxus, Gewinn, nicht bloß gestellte, sondern *basirte* neue Zeit auf jenen Standpunkt der Unschuld zurückbringen, um sich fremde Auslegungen in irgend etwas blind gefallen zu lassen”...(179)

Here Grillparzer brings up a point that proves significant in the composition of both his lyrical works and his prose. The inherent shortcoming of Christianity stems from the multitude of paradoxes, contradictions, and “overexaggerations”<sup>41</sup>—a term that Grillparzer tends to use frequently when discussing religion and theology—promoted by the religion, which ultimately leads to its dependence upon some outside source to validate it. Grillparzer tends to take issue with Christianity's blind spots, which lend themselves to being taken out of context. He also notes that, for Christians, God is not a personal God, as He is for the Jews *their Jehovah* for

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<sup>41</sup> All of these—paradoxes, contradictions, and over-exaggerations—can be regarded as residual ideas, thoughts, and impressions that may come together to form new images and dreams. Sigmund Freud referred to this process as *Überdeterminierung* or *overdetermination*.

example, another point that Forster cites in his examination of Grillparzer's attitudes toward religiosity.

Perhaps the best example of Grillparzer's ambivalence toward Christianity is his poem, "Vater Unser" (1821).<sup>42</sup> The opening lines are testaments to Grillparzer's involvement in questions of love and faith:

Hör uns, Gott, wenn wir rufen!

Wir alle deine Kinder!

Eingehüllt im Mantel deiner Liebe,

Hingelagert zu den Füßen deiner Macht,

Angeschmiegt an deine Vaterbrust:

Wir alle deine Kinder!

Vater unser!

Noteworthy about this description of God are the images of his children being enveloped in his love, as if his love was a womb-like enclosure: "im Mantel deiner Liebe" and "angeschmiegt an deine Vaterbrust" are poignant examples. The Father's breast is likewise emphasized, as though he were an earthly mother. "Angeschmiegt" brings to mind the early childhood years in which

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<sup>42</sup> See pages 146-148 of *Franz Grillparzer: Sämtliche Werke. Band 1*.

an infant or toddler is dependent upon his mother's breast for sustenance, the years in which he must cling to his mother, lest he perish. This state of being seems to have *suspended itself*<sup>43</sup> in Grillparzer's life, given he writes of the idyllic fusion of his and his mother's wishes and desires in his own autobiography. Interesting in this context is that the Almighty appears genderless, which tends toward a depiction of the Old Testament God. Perhaps this is representative of the problem that Grillparzer addresses in his theoretical writings—that the Christian religion is too fragmented and suffers from the lack of unity inherent in Judaism and Islam. It is conceivable that in his all-encompassing depiction of God, Grillparzer strives to portray the kind of unity from which he feels humankind would benefit.

In the second stanza, the emphasis is placed on God's power and omnipotence. It reads:

Ob wir gleich Staub sind und Spreu,  
  
Gestern geboren, morgen tot,  
  
Ein Nichts im All, das Nichts war, eh du riefst;  
  
Ob unsre Erde gleich, die groß uns dünkt,  
  
Ein Sandkorn ist im Unermeßlichen,  
  
Das du hinwegbläst, wenn dirs wohlgefällt,

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43 This psychological “suspension” mimics the shock of the image ingrained in Grillparzer: of his mother's body hanging before him.

Wie man den Staub vom Tische bläst;  
Und du der Mächtge bist ob allen Mächtgen,  
Und über den Gewaltgen der Gewaltge,  
Der Herr der Herrn, so hoch ob aller Höhe,  
Daß der Gedanke selber, der dich sucht,  
Auf halbem Wege, schwindelnd rückwärts kehrt:  
Doch siehst du uns, doch hörst du uns,  
Von deiner Allmacht hochgestelltem Thron,  
Doch sorgst du, hilfst du, Großer, Mächtger, Hoher,  
*Der du bist im Himmel!*

The consonance here focuses, once again, on the [g], [s], [h], and [d] sounds. The first line of the second stanza highlights the transience of the human experience. The “S” alliteration of “Staub” and “Spreu” anticipates the act of “sterben” in the second line. “Gestern geboren” precedes “morgen tot,” the latter a confirmation of its anticipation in the first line. The indefiniteness of the “nothing” in the wake of the Almighty's purposefulness evoked through the usage of the indefinite article, “ein” precedes an emphasis on the word and the voice: “eh du riefst.” Thus, it is the creator's word that gives meaning to all things and this emphasizes the role of the primal father, the one before which nothing existed—no law, no prohibitions, and no command.

Moreover, stanza three conveys the relationship between communication and silence between the creator and all of His creations. It reads,

Wag ich es, dich auszusprechen?<sup>44</sup>

Bin ich es wert, dich zu nennen?

Das kleinste von den Werken deiner Hand?

Hohes beuge sich und Höchstes;

Ehre sei dir und nur dir allein;

Allgütiger, Allweiser;

Offenkundger, Geheimnisvoller,

Uranfang, ohn Ende.

Schöpfer, Beschützer, Erhalter!

In stumme Ehrfurcht

Sinke hin der Erdkreis,

*Geheiliget werde dein Name!*

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<sup>44</sup> This is a reference to the “name” of God—in French, “le nom-du-père.”

The first three lines are questions, all of which express the worthiness of the questioner to ask the question. The notion of whether it be suitable for the lyrical “I” to take the name of God into his mouth is significant. The second line of the Vater Unser prayer used across Christian denominations is recited simply as: “geheiligt werde dein Name,” or “hallowed be thy name.” Grillparzer’s questioning of this line that comprises the initial lines of his own poem is creative, but it is likewise revealing of his critical attitude toward certain aspects of the Christian religion. Although Christians are taught not to take the name of the Lord in vein, the issue of the name is perhaps of greater importance in Judaism, where the Father has many names, and where at least one of them, YHWH, is not to be said aloud by the reader; instead, one must use another name, Adonai. The poem overemphasizes the silence of the lyrical “I” in the tenth line in the usage of the word “stumme” to describe “Ehrfurcht.” Lines nine to eleven emphasize the act of “ehren,” as one would parents, authority figures, and god alike by repeating the same vowel sound in the initial position of the final word of each line: *Erhalter*, *Ehrfurcht*, and *Erdkreis*.

In the stanza that follows, the lyrical “I” explores the relationship between the needs of the body and those of the spirit and that of thought and will. The first ten lines read,

Wohl hast du die Erde schön gemacht,

Und ich danke dir drum, mein Herr und Vater.

Blumen sind da und Früchte, Quellen und Bäume,

Frühlingslust und Sommerfreude, alles aufs beste;

Auch gute Menschen, die dir dienen und recht tun.

Aber ich kenne doch was Schönres, mein Herr und Vater,

Und, als hätt ichs gesehn einmal in frührer Zeit,

Schwebt es mir vor in meinen besten Tagen;

Ein Land, wo dieser Körper nichts begehrt,

Und wenn es nichts gewährt, auch nichts versagt;

The thematic emphasis here lies not only on thanking the creator for the beautiful earth that lies before the “I,” but also for the transcendent realm which lies beyond. The lyrical “I” alludes to the existence of the Garden of Eden, to paradise, before it was lost. Furthermore, the “I” longs for that place, where the body requires nothing but spirit, no vessel which will contain it—to simply *be*, without the constant impositions of the material world. There are here several examples of phrases that begin with a voiced stop: 1) “du die”; 2) “danke dir drum”; and 3) “die dir deinen.” This repetition mimics the inhibitions connected with the obsessional’s fear of the desire of the other.

Moreover, the stanza concludes with lyrical “I’s” insistence upon a more perfect world, guided by the will not of the individual human being, but by the will of a higher power. It reads:

Wo der Gedanke *Willen* ist,

Und *Wille* ist die *Tat*;

Die Tat in Wollen und im Denken schon;

Das Land, wo, unsrer Sonne gleich, das Recht,

Und, wie der Mond, die Pflicht den Tag und Nächten leuchtet;

Wo das Gefühl nicht blind

Und der Verstand nicht taub ist allzumal;

Dort möcht ich sein, mein Herr und Vater,

Bei dir, in deiner Nähe;

Und darum, Herr, o höre!

*Zu uns komme dein Reich!*

The association between thought and action is very strong in this stanza; the thought must become the will, and the will must translate into rightful action. Human desires and actions should be guided by a duty, responsibility, and accountability for one's fellow man. Human emotion and understanding must be guided by the appropriate use of the senses—emotion must not be blind and understanding must not be deaf—it thus involves ears, the organ that is so often missing in Grillparzer's father/child representations. The father in heaven is a comfort to the lyrical “I” because it is through Him that the “I” is understood.



In successive stanzas, the lyrical “I” reflects on its shortcomings and on the desire to inflict punishment upon the self. Alternatively, these lines acknowledge merely that the “I,” whose will has been frustrated, has turned it inward against the self with pleasure in the past, but that it longs to do this no more; it wishes to be absolved of its destructive tendencies. In the following seven lines we read, first, about the negatively perceived tendencies of the “I” that it recognizes as being detrimental:

Ich bin kurzsichtig und schwach,  
  
Kaum das Nächste erreicht mein Blick;  
  
Der Zukunft Ferne ist mir verschlossen:  
  
Was gut gemacht schien, zeigte sich schädlich,  
  
Und wo Gefahr ich sah, erschien mir Gutes.  
  
Auch hab ich das Schlimme wohl gar gewollt,  
  
Ja, das Schlimme *gewollt*, mein Herr und Vater!

There are eight key words here that are of note from a psychoanalytic point-of-view, all of them used as nouns: *Nächste*, *Ferne*, *Blick*, *Gutes*, *Schlimme*, *Gefahr*, *Herr*, and *Vater*. Noteworthy here is that two of these pairs are antonyms, Gutes and Schlimme, and that two more are *nearly* antonyms, Nächste and Ferne. “Nähe,” interestingly enough, is used in other stanzas, which

further emphasizes a tendency toward fragmentation. Thus, there is an emphasis on opposites very nearly coming together in unity (the same stanza), but, ultimately, being unable to do so—this is perhaps, from a thematic perspective, the very critique of the lyrical “I.” Humankind is too shortsighted to understand the needs of today, let alone tomorrow, too narrow-minded to understand the needs of neighbors and friends. The lyrical “I” articulates that the human will requires guidance and understanding from a higher power, from a father who will take his children under his wing, under his loving tutelage.

In the lines that follow, the “I” expresses regret for causing others grief, worry, and sorrow. Here the “I” puts the will in the hands of God:

Der mir der Nächste war, ich hab ihn gekränkt,

Bekümmert hab ich, die mich liebten,

Den Zorn ließ ich walten ob meinem Tun;

Des Fremden Weh war nicht immer mein eignes.

Hab ich immer gelohnt dem, der Gutes mir tat?

Immer getan, was als Bestes sich zeigte?

Vater! wohl gar das Schlimme hab *ich getan*,

Kurzsichtig, wie ich war und schwach;

Daher walte du ob mir und meinem Tun,

Führe mich, leite mich,

Und nicht der meine, Herr,

Dein Wille geschehe!

The list of wrongs in this stanza is punctuated by inquiry—has the “I” always repaid the kindness of others with kindness and always put itself, on its own volition, on what would later prove to be the correct course? The repetition of “dein Wille Geschehe”—as it is in the original Vater Unser prayer—is especially powerful in this stanza because the “I” has come to the full realization that his power is *indefinite* compared to the power of the Almighty, whose power is *definite*. The latter is evidenced by the—exclusive—use of definite articles in this stanza: *der*, *das*, *den* (accusative masc.), *dem* (dative case—except fem.), *des* (used here as masc.—“des Fremden” from “Der Fremde”). The “I” is completely confident in the will of the divine: “dein Wille” is the will from which all certainty springs, and all uncertainty, all fragmentation ultimately disappears. Finally, there is unity, thus helping the obsessional overcome all doubts.

Furthermore, the next stanza of the “Vater Unser” poems emphasizes the ideal of bringing the transcendent into the mundane. It reads as follows:

Wenn wir all uns liebten hienieden,

Wie du uns liebst, mein Herr und Vater,

Wenn der Mensch den Menschen säh im Freunde,

Und auch in seinem Feinde nur den Menschen,

Dann wäre nicht dort oben bloß dein Reich,

Auch unter uns wär es, auch hier, hienieden,

Und der Liebe Machtgebot geschäh

Wie im Himmel, also auch auf Erden.

The opening three lines are of note, as each of them begins with a “W”—indicative of hypothesis and inquiry—and ultimately comes to its full expression in the Konjunktiv formulation: “Dann wäre nicht dort oben bloß dein Reich.” The emphasis here lies on bringing heavenly love and light to earth—in more pragmatic and humanistic terms, of promoting an ideal of brotherly love. The line, “Auch unter uns wär es, auch hier, hienieden,” is significant, as it features both assonance and consonance. “Auch unter uns” is accentuated through the aforementioned assonance, suggesting that the “Ferne” becomes the “Nähe” through an attitude of inclusion, thus facilitating intimacy of intention between neighbors and strangers alike. The “H” alliteration, on the other hand, “hier, hinieden,” when read aloud, is reminiscent of the sound of a breath, the breath of creation.

Moreover, the noteworthy conclusion of Grillparzer's “Vater Unser” leaves the reader not only with the elevation of the divine, but the elevation of every single human being on earth:

Der Mensch ist nicht schlimm,  
Obwohl leider auch nicht gut,  
Aber die Sorge für das Nächste  
Macht ihn für den Nächsten blind,  
Was eisern alle Wesen bedingt,  
Die Selbsterhaltung, beschränkt ihn  
Und hält ihn nieder am Boden,  
Statt aufwärts zu dir und den Brüdern entgegen.  
Befrei uns, Herr, von der Sorge!  
Gib uns heut unser tägliches Brot.

The final stanza of Grillparzer's "Vater Unser" is almost pragmatic in tone, offering an assessment of human nature akin to common Enlightenment conceptions of the same. The "I" recognizes that human nature is neither completely good, nor totally evil. Perhaps the most significant kernel of information this stanza provides, however, is that the issue of "Sorge" must be taken seriously; man must *care for* his fellow humans before considering the *next thing*, in a temporal sense. Priorities must be in order, *before* asking to be relieved of such: "Befrei uns, Herr, von der Sorge!" The repetition of the "B" is prominent in this, the final stanza, appearing *once in each* of the final *seven* lines: *blind, bedingt, beschränkt, Boden, Brüdern, Befrei,* and

*Brot*. This can be interpreted in the sense that the “I” wishes that humankind would be provided for—“give us our daily bread”—each of the seven days in the week, but that this is unlikely without the participation of every one of God's children. “Bedingt” appears to signify “require” in this context, although it may, in other contexts, be used to signify conditionality. Thus, we can assume that it is only when these conditions are met that man will rise from the “Boden”—at the moment he recognizes *first* his brothers, he finds the divine, and may thus be liberated by the creator. This attitude of accountability for one another and of serving others is something that Grillparzer seems to have admired about the Jewish faith, and in many ways, viewed these traits as virtues.

In this vein, it is helpful, perhaps, to understand Grillparzer's attitude toward Jews and Judaism, which I explore in greater detail in Chapter IV. Grillparzer's relationship to Hegelian thought insofar as it informs Grillparzer's attitudes toward theology, humanistic ideologies, and the phenomenology of being are worth noting here. Scholars of Grillparzer will find entries in his diary pertaining to Hegel, and, in particular, to his hatred and distaste for his philosophy. In one entry, labelled Tgb. 2010, from 1832, Grillparzer writes,

Habe Hegels objektive Logik begonnen. Das Buch ist sehr schlecht geschrieben. Auch das system scheint mir hohl. Man muß übrigens abwarten. Alles was ich Philosophisches lese, vermehrt meine Achtung für Kant. Zwar gibt es genau genommen kaum Resultate, aber der Stand unsers Wissens scheint mir noch gar nicht dahin gediehen zu sein, um eigentliche Resultate zu erwarten. Laßt sie noch

tausend Jahre die Natur beobachten; aus dem armen Ich ist nicht mehr  
herauszupressen und das Objektive ist vor der Hand noch ein Buch mit sieben  
Siegel. (486)

Hegel's "objective logic," constituent of its *Wissenschaft der Logik*, details primarily his philosophy of being and being-for-self. His philosophy of being addresses the concepts of being, nothing, and becoming, which are perhaps most relevant to Grillparzer's context. The philosophy of being maintains that "pure being," is, in essence, indeterminate and empty—it is essentially colorless, formless, and without variation, spare that it is, as Grillparzer referred to the system itself: hollow. In another entry from 1832, Grillparzer further expresses his distaste: "Gott ist das seiende Nichts. Seine Theorie möchte ich ein Postulat der *theoretischen* Vernunft nennen, im Gegensatz von Kants praktischen. Der Unsinn als Weg zum Sinn" (488). The premise upon which Hegel bases his conception of "pure nothing," on the other hand, is that it is identical to "pure being," excepting that it is merely *regarded* as its opposite in the realm of thought. Becoming, then, is the process through which something comes to be, or through which something ceases to be, with one facet dissolving into the other. It is this mutual movement that resolves any contradiction between "pure being" and "pure nothing." Grillparzer seemed very much to have preferred Kant's "practicality" and extrapolation upon "moral ethics" to the theoretical postulating of Hegel.<sup>45 46</sup>

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45 Despite Grillparzer's almost vehement dismissal of Hegel's thought initially, his own personal encounter with Hegel is described rather pleasantly and positively in his autobiography. Grillparzer writes of Hegel: "Ich fand Hegeln so angenehm, verständig, und rekonziliant, als

Given the content of Grillparzer's lyric, and his preference for Kant over Hegel, it is necessary to examine the attitudes of both thinkers toward conceptions of God and the “greatest good.” It is worthwhile, in this context, perhaps, to sketch out the debate between Kant and Hegel on the matter of Judaism. This is a topic that Eric Michael Dale explores in depth.<sup>47</sup> I will cite a passage from Dale’s work that I deem relevant to the influences underlying the poem, “Vater Unser.” He describes in detail the relationship between Jesus, Moses, Hegel, and Kantian ethics as the following:

At this point in the “Spirit” essay, Hegel introduces Jesus Christ in an explicit contrast between the Sermon on the Mount, Mosaic Law, and Kantian ethics.

Jesus appears “shortly before the last crisis” of the Jewish fate, and fights not

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ich in der Folge sein System abstrus und absprechend gefunden habe. Er lud mich für den folgenden Tag zum Tee, wo ich seine schlicht-natürliche Frau kennen lernte und auch die niedliche Sonntag fand, so daß der Abend unter heiterm Gespräch und Musik verging, ohne daß man durch irgend etwas an den Katheder gemaht wurde. Eben da erfolgte eine zweite Einladung, ich weiß nicht mehr zu Mittag oder Abend, indem mich zugleich Hegel um Erlaubnis bat, einen meiner Landsleute beiziehen zu dürfen. Ich erwiderte, daß wem er die Ehre seiner Gesellschaft gönne, mir gleichfalls willkommen sein werde” (138). Grillparzer's position toward the “love thy neighbor” maxim is powerful here; met with respect and hospitality, he is compelled to give the same.

<sup>46</sup> Interestingly, Grillparzer describes, *just prior* to his surprisingly pleasant meeting with Hegel, a stimulating intellectual encounter with a Jewess named Rahel. He writes: “Nun fing an die alternde, vielleicht nie hübsche Frau zu sprechen an, und ich was bezaubert. Meine Müdigkeit verflog, oder machte vielmehr einer Art Trunkenheit platz. Sie sprach und sprach bis gegen Mitternacht, und ich weiß nicht mehr, haben sie mich fortgetrieben, oder ging ich von selbst fort. Ich habe nie in meinem Leben interessanter und besser reden gehört. Leider war es gegen das Ende meines Aufenthaltes und ich konnte daher den Besuch nicht wiederholen” (137). Grillparzer's description of his meeting with Hegel, is, in comparison, friendly—albeit somewhat nonchalant—in tone.

<sup>47</sup> See “Hegel, Jesus, and Judaism.”



“merely against one part of the Jewish fate; . . . he set himself against the whole. Thus he was raised above it and tried to raise his people above it too.” Jesus comes in opposition to Judaism (though from within Judaism, consistent with the dialectic), as its antithesis, according to Hegel. Jesus does not come as another Moses who subjects the people to yet another law too onerous to bear and which separates them even farther from themselves, God, and their world, but with love, a unifying love which shatters the alienation of humanity from God. Unlike Kant, Jesus does not bring a call to duty, but a call to virtue, an ethical pronesis which forever does away with duty and bourgeois religiosity (8)

Interesting here is that the early Hegel, in contrast to the later Hegel, views Jesus as an instrument of virtue with the ability to undo the alienation of humankind from the divine. In Hegel's view, Mosaic law is a divisive instrument, acting over and against the people in a sole act of synthesis—the synthesis being the law itself (Dale 7). It is characterized not as a unifying influence, but rather, as an object of slavery. Hegel views Jesus, in contrast, as having the power to transcend this state of being, granting the possibility to overcome what Dale here refers to as “duty and bourgeois religiosity.” This seems not to be the point-of-view of Grillparzer, insofar as the Christian religion is concerned, given that Grillparzer sees in it a fundamental disunity. Thus, it is plausible, that Grillparzer, albeit also critical of Moses, sees a unifying principle in the Judaic tradition that is, in and of itself, missing in the Christian tradition, and it is this realization that leads him to reappropriate values, norms, and ethics in a manner that breathes new life into

old philosophies, ideologies, and belief systems—in essence, displacing one system of authority onto another.

## Conclusion

To conclude, it is clear that Franz Grillparzer's lyric reflects the challenges he faced as a consequence of a problematically close relationship with his mother and his interaction with an aloof father. Both of these tensions, along with his struggles with an inherited speech impediment and his frustration regarding the confining circumstances of his youth led him to write poetry that critiqued not only his own personal situation, but that of European society as a whole. Grillparzer's displacement of paternity finds its expression in his worship of the divine, and extends furthermore to his exploration of religious doctrines and cultural traditions that differed from his own. The search for unity, brotherhood, charity, forgiveness, and accountability for one's actions led him to explore the relationship between Christianity and Judaism more closely, which is evidenced by his allusions to the biblical Jacob in *Der arme Spielmann* and elsewhere, his depictions of Rahel and Esther in his *Die Jüdin von Toledo*, and his portrayal of feminine power and wisdom via the "old woman" in his *Der Traum ein Leben*.

## CHAPTER III

# THROUGH THE LENS OF NACHTRÄGLICHKEIT: PAPAL ALLEGORY AND PATERNAL DISPLACEMENT IN *DER ARME SPIELMANN*

### Introduction

Grillparzer's 1848 novella, *Der arme Spielmann*, has produced a multitude of interpretations in the latter half of the Twentieth Century, a testament to both its symbolic and narratological significance.<sup>48</sup> In my reading, I contend that the anonymous narrator is a dichotomous figure representative of the pope, on the one hand responsible for adhering to the values of the church and serving as the earthly shepherd of his people, and on the other, acting as a spiritual protector and guardian of knowledge. The latter is comparable to a poet's relationship with hermetic wisdom and related to Grillparzer's conception of authorship, which is, in turn, related to the maxim, "Alles scheint mir zuzuwinken, tu was neu das Alte schafft," spoken by King Osmin in another of his works, *Der Traum ein Leben*, which I explore in greater detail in Chapter V. The author is the guardian of an archaic knowledge that must be preserved and

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<sup>48</sup> Grillparzer's story, *Der arme Spielmann*, has long been regarded as one of his best works, and its popularity even seems to be increasing; since 1964 no fewer than ten interpretations of the story have appeared, a remarkable number in such a short period. See: Ellis, John M. Note: This text was published in 1988, and the novella has generated significant interest since then.

protected as a valuable source of Enlightenment, the latter the “inadvertent result” of the author functioning as the intermediary between the mundane and the divine.

It is clear that the frame narrator's interaction with Jakob is problematic—the narrator displaces his frustrations for the simultaneously bureaucratic and religious “father” that is the Catholic church onto Jakob. The Spielmann, whose life history is retold in the embedded narration, displaces his frustrations with society and his seeming dissatisfaction with earthly life onto his violin—the cracked instrument a metaphor for the fragmentation of wisdom and values and the movement away from patriarchal ideals toward fraternity and sorority. Jakob recounts memories and situations in a manner that suggests a hyperawareness of his flaws and complexes, albeit with acceptance and understanding, proving that perhaps he is more aware of society's shortcomings than the narrator himself, consequently becoming an enlightenment figure anchored within the tapestry of a multilayered Baroque allegory. Although both the frame narrator and the Spielmann, Jakob, exhibit tendencies characteristic of obsessional neuroticism, it seems that Jakob is ultimately able to sublimate his frustrations, while the frame narrator is unable to do the same, instead remaining a static character in the novella. Because of this narratological set-up, the figure of Jakob is put on a pedestal in such a manner that the reader is left to view him—if only after the conclusion of the novella—as a source of enlightenment.

## **The Narrator as Papal Allegory**

Roy C. Cowen refers to Julian Schmidt as a “literary pope” due to the latter’s involvement with the periodical *Die Grenzboten*.<sup>49</sup>

Whether 1848 also marks the inception of “Bürgerlicher Realismus,” “Poetischer Realismus” or simply “Realismus” remains a moot point that goes beyond this present topic. For, regardless of his direct or indirect influence on such later realists as Keller, Storm, Meyer, Raabe, and Fontane, Julian Schmidt established himself in the years following the Revolution of 1848 as a literary pope by articulating a new generation’s attitude toward the Vormärz and its demands for a “new” literature. Thus Schmidt writes in his article on the “Märzpoeten” in *Die Grenzboten* 9/1 (1850): “Aber wenn die Illusionen jener Tage aufgegeben sind, so ist ihre Geschichte nicht an uns verloren gegangen, und was wir in ihr gelernt haben, wird in der neuen Poesie zur Geltung kommen.” (15)

About Grillparzer, Cowen writes:

1. Whether Grillparzer correctly interrupts the temper of the time before the Revolution or not, he already senses that his novella does not correspond to “modern” expectations, and he implies thereby that his work is the product of a by-gone literary era. This feeling toward all of his work is borne out by his letter

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<sup>49</sup> Refer to “The History of a Neglected Masterpiece: *Der arme Spielmann*.” In Bernd, Clifford A. *Grillparzer's Der arme Spielmann: New Directions in Criticism*. Camden House, 1988.

of 16 June 1870 to Paul Heyse, for in it he still expresses his belief: “Von einer Ausgabe meiner sämtlichen Werke kann nur die Rede seyn nach meinem Tode, oder wenn Deutschland wieder poetisch geworden sein wird, welche zewy Zeitpunkte so ziemlich zusammenfallen dürften.”

2. Grillparzer does not consider himself a narrator by nature, and, we may infer, does not consider *Der arme Spielmann* as a personal or public refutation of this opinion.” (13)

Grillparzer, whose work belonged to the Biedermeier period, nevertheless took his literary endeavors in a direction that set him apart from other writers of his time. Although his *Spielmann* highlights the relationship between humankind and nature and the lives of loners and eccentrics such as Jakob, the narrative structure of his text elicits a politicized response, precisely because of the way that Grillparzer conflates elements of Enlightenment thought—and in particular the notion that one should overcome self-imposed ignorance—with Baroque literary devices such as temporal metaphors. Grillparzer’s attitude toward theology itself was ambivalent, and his poem “*Campo Vaccino*”<sup>50</sup> is a prime example of this as it denounces the actions of Emperor Constantine<sup>51</sup> and praises paganism. On the other hand, Grillparzer seriously

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<sup>50</sup> Eintrachtstempel, du der erste,/Der sich meinem Blick enthüllt;/Deine letzte Säule berste!/Schlecht hast du dein Amt erfüllt!/Solltest deine Brüder hüten,/Wardst als Wächter hingesezt,/Und du ließest Zwietracht wüten,/Die sie fällt und dich zuletzt.

<sup>51</sup> The Donation of Constantine, said to be a forgery, in effect granted the pope authority over Rome and surrounding territories.

considered religious service as a young man and explored the doctrines of each of the Mosaic religions in detail. He read and met with some of the foremost intellectuals of his time, going so far as to converse with Hegel (discussed in Chapter 1), with whose theoretical postulates he disagreed. Grillparzer likewise took issue with Fichte, instead taking interest in Kant, with whose work he could more readily identify on moral, ethical, and aesthetic grounds. An ambivalent intellectual who couldn't explicitly involve himself in politics out of a fear of censorship, Grillparzer was nevertheless a moral, ethical, and political thinker, which is evidenced by his progressive portrayals of women and his subtle defiance of ethnic and religious stereotypes.

If anything, we must consider the frame narration in Grillparzer's *Der arme Spielmann* to be an implicit reflection of Grillparzer's own desire to expound upon the political troubles of his time, outlined through the frame narrator's distant relationship to a poor musician whose status as an enlightener can only be ascertained by the reader in retrospect—a reality characteristic of Grillparzer's empirical worldview that demanded proof of any given hypothesis. Just as scientists formulate conclusions following the completion of their experiments, so too must the reader of Grillparzer's novella read the work in its entirety to reflect on the success of the frame narrator's sociological experiment with the obscure figure of Jakob. Thus, Cowen's view of Julian Schmidt as a "literary pope" could apply equally to Grillparzer's frame narrator, who allows the reader to get to know a man who would otherwise go overlooked by the ignorant and

unenlightened masses, his value becoming apparent only when Jakob sublimates his desires for the benefit of humanity—something that the frame narrator only achieves vicariously. Jakob, as eccentric as he may seem, is nevertheless a proponent of brotherly love who proves his dedication to his fellow man when he risks his life to rescue the town's children from the flood that threatens their lives. The narrator, no matter how dedicated he is to telling Jakob's story, nevertheless fails to prove himself as a loving and concerned member of the community in which he lives. He remains a distant representative of the patriarchy and of values that elicited ambivalence from Europeans in the decades following the French Revolution, particularly so in the wake of a religious revival that threatened many of the social reforms that would prove beneficial to the progress of society.

Noteworthy, to be sure, is the similarity between the narrator's objectives and intentions and the function of the Holy Father, even though the narrator is not granted this sort of authority explicitly. The pope's foremost duty is to show concern for each of God's people, aligned with the mission of Christ, by allowing them to express their joys and sorrows. It is a process similar to the narrator's visit to the outdoor summer festival with the goal of mingling with the diverse group of people he finds there.<sup>52</sup> Furthermore, it is the pope's responsibility to ensure that the

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<sup>52</sup> "Eine Harfenspielerin mit widerlich starrenden Augen. Ein alter invalider Stelzfuß, der auf einem entsetzlichen, offenbar von ihm selbst verfertigten Instrumente, halb Hackbrett und halb Drehorgel, die Schmerzen seiner Verwundung dem allgemeinen Mitleid auf eine analoge Weise empfindbar machen wollte. Ein lahmer, verwachsener Knabe, er und seine Violine einen einzigen ununterscheidbaren Knäuel bildend, der endlos fortrollende Walzer mit all der hektischen Heftigkeit seiner verbildeten Brust her abspielte. Endlich – und er zog meine ganze Aufmerksamkeit auf sich – ein alter, leicht siebzigjähriger Mann in einem faden scheinigen,



people adhere to the doctrines set forth by the Catholic Church. Between the years of 1830 and 1846—leading up to the publication of Grillparzer’s *Der arme Spielmann* in 1848—Europe saw the reign of Pope Gregory XVI, a traditionalist Ultramontanist who staunchly opposed the Leftism spreading across the continent. Gregory was the first pope since Peter who was elected without first having served as Bishop, and his staunch conservatism led him to ban railways in the Papal States, referring to them as “roads to hell.” He felt threatened that the common people would demand liberal reforms if they could travel so freely, and the repercussions of his tight-fistedness reverberated throughout Catholic Europe. Opposing factions with diverse ideologies were forced to come to an understanding to ensure the success of the Catholic Church’s mission, which necessitated, in the early half of the 1800s as it still does today, an understanding of the organization not only as a religious entity, but also as a political one.

Despite his attempts to thwart the growing power of the bourgeoisie, Pope Gregory XVI issued reforms and made statements that advanced a spirit of fraternity and equality among people the world over, the most significant being his December 1839 In Supremo that condemned slavery. While the British were convinced of his position, garnering the support of the Spaniards and Portuguese proved to be a more challenging proposition—evidence not only of a political conflict, but also of moral and ethical problems within the church and the faith. Grillparzer’s writing was most prolific during the 1830s, and thus his work would have been

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aber nicht unreinlichen Moltonüberrock mit lächelnder, sich selbst Beifall gebender Miene.”  
(148)

affected by these religious and political influences, particularly as a believer in the Kantian notion of the “moral good.” Grillparzer’s dramas, *Die Jüdin von Toledo* and *Der Traum ein Leben* (discussed at length in Chapters IV and V), demonstrate his enlightened view of taking responsibility for one’s own actions and regarding authority as something that is to be shared among people in a fraternal sense.

In Grillparzer’s *Die Jüdin von Toledo*, Esther is the voice of reason who, in hindsight, reiterates what Rahel should have acknowledged all along—that it is the love and wisdom of the sister, not the father, that endures. On the other hand, Grillparzer’s Rustan of his *Der Traum ein Leben* comes to recognize through his dream and the guidance of his future father-in-law that his wishes are his own and that his man-servant Zanga is not responsible for leading him into temptation, despite his initial frustration with him upon waking from his sleep. In contrast to Voltaire’s “Le Blanc et le Noir” which features an “angel of darkness” and an “angel of light” as well as two servants whose personal characteristics are outlined in relationship to pre-existing racial stereotypes, Grillparzer’s play emphasizes taking accountability for one’s actions and assessing oneself on the basis of one’s own character—understanding the wishes, both constructive and destructive, that are common to all people regardless of the race, ethnicity, age, or religion—and thus stands against the hatred and prejudice of era in which Grillparzer lived. As such, we can understand Grillparzer’s view of the papacy as complex, the concept of “fatherhood” and paternal authority not as something to be usurped entirely, but rather displaced and re-appropriated into a more fraternal model, and it is as such that psychoanalysis becomes a valuable tool in defining the relationship between the frame and embedded narrators.

As an ambivalent empiricist, the trials and tribulations of the Catholic Church were of interest to Grillparzer. Although he deemed the values of love, care, and forgiveness as imperative to enlightenment, Grillparzer understood the flaws inherent in the existing social and political order. Consequently, his work features characters who serve simultaneously as intermediaries and representatives of the displacement of patriarchal power. The pope is viewed by adherents of the faith as a channel between the mundane and the divine, just as the author or dramatist is viewed as guardian of his art form, which necessarily involves an understanding of both material and spiritual—or creative—life. The frame narrator in Grillparzer’s novella seems to be just that—a channel between the mundane and the transcendent, covetous of knowledge with a desire to observe life on earth, but seemingly without human appetites such as hunger, thirst, or a desire for physical contact. If the narrator is something of a pope in the sense of his being a guardian of wisdom that must be challenged and re-appropriated, then we must understand the relationship between a man of the church and a man of art. Richard Barrett presents a fascinating view of this relationship, describing the process through which life and art become fused as a single entity.<sup>53</sup>

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<sup>53</sup> “In a sense the priest is living the embodiment of another shape of meaning (in liturgical terms the *sinn gestalt*), that is given to him, passed on, transmitted, to be given, passed on, and transmitted. For the priest, as for few artists, life and art are made one; he is a transmitter of an over-arching unity, and thus a transmuter, to use Joyce’s expression, “of the daily bread of experience into the body of everlasting life.” The stuff of his art is life and he distills a science from the interaction of his soul with those of others; in that secret forum, mercy is dispensed which is efficacious. This is not just a message, nor a formula, but the touch of another form of life, and the priest is apprenticed, à la Vianney, Cappello, or Sullivan, to its first practitioner, Christ. The expression *cura animarum* is much more than merely a canonical adage; it savours

In his description of the relationship between art and life, he writes of how a priest must undergo a process of care, cure, and healing from within via the transmission of meaning, noting that these are transformations that likewise inform the experience of the “secular priest.” This portrayal of a priest as the intermediary between divine unity and earthly reality describes aspects of both the narrator’s and the Spielmann’s function. Issues of care, cure, and healing are, however, entirely dependent on Jakob’s embedded narration. The narrator’s function is to draw from Jakob’s experience to reveal his inner sensibilities; the narrator’s way of giving and transmitting is by drawing out the substance of the Spielmann’s character and experiences with his inquisitions. His role as transmuter<sup>54</sup> becomes obvious only when Jakob has recounted his own narration. It is in hindsight that the reader recognizes the significance of the interaction and is left to wonder why the frame narrator recounts his perceptions at length without ever becoming emotionally involved in his interaction with Jakob—that is, why he does not befriend him—and why his presence remains so obscure.

To make the narrator’s role as transmuter of Jakob’s story appear authentic, however, it was necessary for Grillparzer to make the reader feel as though the narration was taking place in the present. As a dramatist and lyricist, Grillparzer was aware of the importance of

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of care and cure, and it is attuned to both pastoral love and inner healing; the stuff of which the charism of the secular priest is made.” (88)

<sup>54</sup> My definition of transmutation in this context pertains to the manner in which the frame narrator transforms Jakob’s story from the recollections of an obscure man to the unlikely story of a kind and sympathetic enlightenment hero—the effect emphasized precisely *because of* the unknowability of the frame narrator and his status as mere instrument bridging the gap between the spiritual and material.

Gegenwärtigkeit, which he outlines in his “Über den gegenwärtigen Zustand der dramatischen Kunst in Deutschland.”<sup>55</sup> A work of dramatic literature that fails to establish a strong sense of causality will not engage, but instead fail to captivate the human imagination. This is especially true of plays with complicated plots as these can confuse and alienate the audience. Grillparzer appears to have ascribed the same theory to his Spielmann. In the frame narrator’s account, we forget that the narrator is looking back on an event in his past at all—we are with him in the moment.<sup>56</sup> One poignant example of this is the scene in which the frame narrator learns of Jakob’s belief that “words ruin the music,” tears streaming down his cheeks as he begins to play a simple song on his violin. The narrator refrains from describing the character of the song at

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<sup>55</sup> Grillparzer writes: “Die Wirklichkeit *zwingt*. Die Häuser in meiner Straße abzuleugnen, fällt mir nicht ein, und wenn ich morgen einen Stein vom Himmel fallen sehe, muß ich mirs gefallen lassen, ich mag es begreifen oder nicht. Wenn mir aber jemand erzählt, er habe ein Schiff in der Luft fahren gesehen, so werde ich es erst dann glauben, wenn ich es, durch Ursache und Wirkung vermittelt, in den Kreis meiner Überzeugungen aufnehmen kann. Kausalität zwingt den Geist, wie das Wirkliche die Sinne; und was als Gegenwart gelten will muß vor allem als Ursache und Wirkung streng verknüpft sich erweisen. Daher verweigert auch das Drama dem Zufall sein Spiel, und die eifrigsten Verfechter der Willensfreiheit die täglich von jedermann die tugendhaftesten Handlungen wie aus der Kanone verlangen, sind höchst erzürnt wenn derlei unmotiviert auf dem Theater vorkommt. Der Charakter sei nicht gehalten, sagen sie.” (688)

<sup>56</sup> The dialogue between Jakob and the frame narrator on pgs. 160-1 is a clear example of this: “Wenn ich nun so saß, hörte ich auf dem Nachbarshofe ein Lied singen. Mehrere Lieder, heißt das, worunter mir aber eines vorzüglich gefiel. Es war so einfach, so rührend und hatte den Nachdruck so auf der rechten Stelle, daß man die Worte gar nicht zu hören brauchte. Wie ich denn überhaupt glaube, die Worte verderben die Musik.« Nun öffnete er den Mund und brachte einige heisere rauhe Töne hervor. »Ich habe von Natur keine Stimme«, sagte er und griff nach der Violine. Er spielte, und zwar diesmal mit richtigem Ausdrucke, die Melodie eines gemütlichen, übrigens gar nicht ausgezeichneten Liedes, wobei ihm die Finger auf den Saiten zitterten und endlich einzelne Tränen über die Backen liefen.”

length except to note that it was “einfach” and that it nevertheless was so touching that words seemed unnecessary.

In the opening paragraphs of the novella, the relationship between humankind and nature is outlined in a manner that assumes objectivity, focusing not on the domestic sphere embraced by Biedermeier writers, but rather on the landscape of the city. The frame narrator is introduced as a perceptive onlooker who nevertheless stops short of omniscience, thus setting the stage for the subsequent first-person narration that will introduce him as a removed observer of the mundane affairs of the festival-goers, and later, his interaction with Jakob, which he will chronicle with aloof ambivalence. The description of the scene alludes to the transience of earthly life:

An den Toren der Stadt wächst der Drang. Genommen, verloren und wiedergenommen, ist endlich der Ausgang erkämpft. Aber die Donaubrücke bietet neue Schwierigkeiten. Auch hier siegreich, ziehen endlich zwei Ströme, die alte Donau und die geschwollnere Woge des Volks, sich kreuzend quer unter- und übereinander, die Donau ihrem alten Flußbette nach, der Strom des Volkes, der Eindämmung der Brücke entnommen, ein weiter, tosender See, sich ergießend in alles deckender Überschwemmung. Ein neu Hinzugekommener fände die Zeichen bedenklich. Es ist aber der Aufruhr der Freude, die Losgebundenheit der Lust.

(145)

There is a description of two streams, one composed of the crowd of people, and the other of the waters of the Donau. The scene is reminiscent of those waiting to ascend to heaven, to the advent of something greater and more perfect than everyday life on earth, which also brings to mind the passage from Matthew 7:13-14: “Enter ye in at the strait gate: for wide is the gate, and broad is the way, that leadeth to destruction, and many there be which go in thereat: Because strait is the gate, and narrow is the way, which leadeth unto life, and few there be that find it.” Just as the path of righteousness is narrow, so too is the road that Grillparzer’s Spielmann follows in his solitary musical rituals and his eventual rescue of the drowning children that precedes his ultimate demise. The frame narrator compares the flood of people to a literal natural disaster, a haunting harbinger of the aforementioned events. The movement of the water can be likened to the passage of time and the ephemerality of earthly existence—a Baroque metaphor emphasizing the melancholia of the mundane, which is further complemented by the frame narrator’s usage of the third-person, which, in turn, shifts to a first-person narration only after the opening five paragraphs of the novella. In the sixth paragraph, the reader finally encounters the first-person “I” of the frame narrator, and learns of his apparent “love of the people.” Particularly striking is his assertion that he enjoys seeing the people come together for a common purpose and for a time forgetting their individual concerns. He describes every such occasion as a “Seelenfest,” which seems ironic considering his own apparent lack of soulfulness and his drive to experience this characteristic vicariously through his conversations with Jakob, who epitomizes what he purports to desire. It is this vicarious experience that must be examined closely if we are to understand the respective roles of both the frame and embedded narrations.

## **An Unusual Encounter: The Interaction Between the Frame**

### **Narrator and Jakob**

When the narrator first comes across Jakob, he describes his estimation of him, noting Jakob's difficulty in creating any semblance of melodic unity in his song. He writes:

und so bearbeitete er eine alte vielzersprungene Violine, wobei er den Takt nicht nur durch Aufheben und Niedersetzen des Fußes, sondern zugleich durch übereinstimmende Bewegung des ganzen gebückten Körpers markierte. Aber all diese Bemühung, Einheit in seine Leistung zu bringen, war fruchtlos, denn was er spielte, schien eine unzusammenhängende Folge von Tönen ohne Zeitmaß und Melodie. (148)

The narrator does not use words that suggest absolute certainty in his descriptions, thus suggesting either ambivalence or aloofness. He is confident, yet he stops short of the assumption of infallibility or omniscience. While the narrator could have formulated his observation omitting the word “schien” and all that it potentially implies—dream, semblance, appearance, etc.—he nevertheless opts to include it, suggesting an awareness of the possibility that he is misinterpreting the nature and character of Jakob’s music. Also noteworthy is the narrator's word choice in describing Jakob's failure, which he characterizes as being “fruchtlos.” To remark on something's “fruitfulness” or “fruitlessness” recalls the harvest, of reaping what one has sowed. If nothing has been sowed, nothing can be reaped. This image is similar to the narrator's



focus on the embryo in the opening paragraphs of his narration. In this description of Jakob, we see a garden motif that takes root early in the novella and continues throughout. Jakob seems not to be understood by the people, unlike Peter, whose personage is anchoring.<sup>57</sup> This is a fallacy, however, as the Biblical Jacob is the father of the Twelve Tribes of Israel, and although not the guardian of the gates of Heaven, his personage is central to the Judeo-Christian tradition, and his status as a central figure of the Old Testament reemphasizes Grillparzer's emphasis on fraternity and shared accountability for the welfare of humankind portrayed in his poem, "Vater Unser," among others. Even more significant is the fact that the Twelve Tribes of Israel were not to take slaves, but cultivate their own land with their own labor as it is stated in Leviticus 25:10: "And ye shall hallow the fiftieth year, and proclaim liberty throughout all the land unto all the inhabitants thereof: it shall be a jubile unto you; and ye shall return every man unto his possession, and ye shall return every man unto his family." Consequently, we understand the narrator's encounter with Jakob as a familial one—an experience that emphasizes the Oedipal drama of a man always attempting to nurture the metaphorical seeds he has planted, despite the frame narrator's assumption that the Spielmann has failed to create anything of lasting value.

It is the sense of responsibility for one's family, and further, the notion of tending to one's own land that is again reminiscent of the writings of Voltaire, which influenced Grillparzer's own work. Voltaire's *Candide*, which was inspired by his desire to criticize Leibnizian philosophy, concludes with the famous maxim that one should tend to one's own

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<sup>57</sup> Applicable here also is the Parable of the Sower (Matthew 13:3-33).

garden. So too is this image of significance in Grillparzer's Spielmann when the frame narrator encounters the gardener, from whom he learns that Jakob has passed away. After Jakob has passed, Barbara's family decides that he "belongs to their garden," taking care of his burial and ensuring that he is not forgotten, treating their neighbor as a though he were a member of their family. As such, Barbara's new family stands against the mistreatment of Jakob during his life by his own father, encouraging a re-appropriation of values delegated by peers with an acute sense of community, care, and justice.

Perhaps the most significant aspect of developing this shared sense of accountability and sense of brotherhood is the ability to truly see, hear, and perceive the needs, motivations, and sufferings of one's neighbor; this includes fostering a positive relationship between the generations, whose open communication could improve the future welfare of all people. Precisely this relationship comes to the fore when the frame narrator observes the children gathering around Jakob to hear him play a waltz.<sup>58</sup> The impatience of the children and youths

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<sup>58</sup> "Ich verdoppelte meine Schritte, und siehe da! der Gegenstand meiner Neugier stand, aus Leibeskräften spielend, im Kreise einiger Knaben, die ungeduldig einen Walzer von ihm verlangten. »Einen Walzer spiel!« riefen sie; »einen Walzer, hörst du nicht?« Der Alte geigte fort, scheinbar ohne auf sie zu achten, bis ihn die kleine Zuhörerschar schmähend und spottend verließ, sich um einen Leiermann sammelnd, der seine Drehorgel in der Nähe aufgestellt hatte. »Sie wollen nicht tanzen«, sagte wie betrübt der alte Mann, seine Musikgeräte zusammenlesend. Ich war ganz nahe zu ihm getreten. »Die Kinder kennen eben keinen andern Tanz als den Walzer«, sagte ich. »Ich spielte einen Walzer«, versetzte er, mit dem Geigenbogen den Ort des soeben gespielten Stückes auf seinem Notenblatte bezeichnend. »Man muß derlei auch führen, der Menge wegen. Aber die Kinder haben kein Ohr«, sagte er, indem er wehmütig den Kopf schüttelte." (150)

begging to hear Jakob play is evident. “Don't you hear us?” is here a noteworthy refrain, suggesting a lack of understanding between the young and the old. Jakob continues to play, the youths assuming that he is unable or unwilling to hear their calls. The narrator notes, however, that this merely appears to be the reality when he uses the word “scheinbar”; he does not claim to know and understand the psychological influences affecting the dialogue between Jakob and the younger festival attendees. Jakob's response, as recounted by the narrator, suggests that he perceives of the youths' unwillingness to dance to the music he plays. He maintains that he has played a waltz, and that the young people simply have no ears with which to hear his music. The account is necessarily subjective, as we are twice removed from the intentions of the youths who have left Jakob alone with his violin. We can make judgments regarding the intentionality of the young people based on their departure alone, leading to the conclusion that Jakob's music was not pleasing to them; the question as to why the music failed to reach them remains up for speculation, and can perhaps be explained if we dissect the layers of Grillparzer's Baroque religious allegory.

When Jesus says to Peter, “Put the sword into the sheath; the cup which the Father has given Me, shall I not drink it?”, Jesus understands that he must accept his Father's divine plan without questioning it, but Peter does not. It is later, in the Book of Luke, that the healing of Malchus is recounted. In Luke 22:51, we read:

And Jesus answered and said, Suffer ye thus far. And he touched his ear, and healed him. Then Jesus said unto the chief priests, and captains of the temple, and

the elders, which were come to him, Be ye come out, as against a thief, with swords and staves? When I was daily with you in the temple, ye stretched forth no hands against me: but this is your hour, and the power of darkness.

Jesus acknowledges that there is a season for every emotion, every sorrow, and every obstacle, and in his own destiny, a time in which darkness will triumph over light. Even Jesus's life is not free of ambivalence and anger toward his heavenly father, for Jesus is embodied in the flesh. The children's failure to understand Jakob's music as a waltz is an allegory for the renewal and re-appropriation of the values of their forefathers, despite their reluctance to understand this.<sup>59</sup> Just as Jesus was ambivalent at times toward his own father in heaven, Grillparzer's Jakob urges the children to understand that the "waltz of their future" may not look or sound like the waltz of their contemporaries or those who came before them, and thus they should treat the music of their forefathers with ambivalence as it fosters new growth. Like Malchus, the children are "missing an ear" for hearing the music that would allow them to enjoy a different perspective—an opportunity to release themselves from the self-imposed ignorance that led past generations to accept social and intellectual slavery.

On one occasion, the narrator walks through Jakob's neighborhood, where he hears him play during the evening hours:

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<sup>59</sup> Here one must consider that the waltz was considered particularly progressive and revolutionary in early 19<sup>th</sup> Century Vienna, sometimes provoking controversy.

»Soll das heute einmal wieder gar kein Ende nehmen?« Der Ton der Stimme war dabei unwillig, aber nicht hart oder beleidigend. Die Violine verstummte, ehe die Rede noch zu Ende war. Der Mann ging ins Haus zurück, das Giebelfenster schloß sich, und bald herrschte eine durch nichts unterbrochene Totenstille um mich her. Ich trat, mühsam in den mir unbekanntem Gassen mich zurechtfindend, den Heimweg an, wobei ich auch phantasierte, aber niemand störend, für mich im Kopfe. (154)

The narrator points out that it is the temporal aspect of Jakob's playing that is most distressing to those who hear it. He characterizes the man's voice as "unwillig," suggesting that he is an unwilling participant in Jakob's evening Phantasieren, yet makes it a point to emphasize that the man is not impolite or brash in his interaction with Jakob. The reader can assume, consequently, that it is the excessive span of time during which Jakob plays his instrument that listeners find distressing. Unpleasant music is a nuisance when it is played for an extended period, but even the most pleasant of tunes will ultimately exasperate the listener if it is played repetitively, and in ritualistic fashion. The narrator notes that the music ceased before the desperate neighbor finishes his plea, and that the ensuing silence goes uninterrupted—an uncomfortable reality for the narrator. Consequently, he feels the need to fill that silence with Phantasieren of his own, which he describes as taking place merely in his imagination.

In the narrator's acknowledgment of his desire to make music, he reveals his identification with Jakob, which he seeks to repress as it is a source of anxiety for him. The pope

is regarded father of the church, although one could argue the opposite—that the Catholic Church is father to the pope in that the latter must obey and uphold the religious laws of the former. If we take the narrator as a papal allegory—perhaps both in the theological sense and as a dramatist who is the guardian of his art—reflected by the significance of the ear and his motivations to mingle with the people, then we can see how his actions and beliefs reflect his inability to authentically accomplish his goal. The leadership of the church—or of any institution for that matter—is no easy task, and the narrator recognizes that he can identify with the Spielmann, but realizes this identification is dangerous to him. He fears that if he identifies too much with a man he is entrusted to lead as one of his flock, then he will lose his status as shepherd, or he will be chastised by his divine father, God, for failing his mission. This risk or danger that jeopardizes his position causes him anxiety, and therefore he must repress it.<sup>60</sup> Similarly, a dramatist who identifies too closely with his characters will lose his sense of being a creator, causing similar anxieties.

If we consider Freud's writings on anxiety and reaction formation, then we understand the narrator's insistence to keep his musical inclinations under wraps. If the narrator were to hum to himself, his identification with Jakob would become too real for him. The narrator, in keeping

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<sup>60</sup> A possible autobiographical connection to Grillparzer with respect to the threat of loss is expounded upon in Ursula Mahlendorf's "*The Poor Fiddler: The Terror of Rejection*" in which she writes about Grillparzer's parental home: "The parents were very unhappy and often quarreled. They rejected all of their younger children in various degrees. Grillparzer thus knew vicariously from the treatment of his three brothers what rejection was. Moreover, with parents as rejecting and disturbed as his, he cannot have escaped their rejection entirely. Being the most loved child, he had the most to lose and hence must have felt the threat of rejection most painfully" (130-1).

with the papal stereotype, is too arrogant to identify with the people, given this would make him appear equal to the common people. As we learn early on, the Saturnalian Festival is the only time of the year in which all people seem equal, a reality to which he does not object. In fact, he seems to embrace it. In other situations, however, the narrator is ambivalent about the notion of immersing himself in the lives of the people. His ambivalence can be explained by a difficulty in balancing the demands of the church, the divine, and his own ego. His ego ascribes great importance to holding his position, while his superego encourages him to value his ethics, and to treat Jakob with regard and basic human decency, trying to point out aspects of his character and actions with which he can relate. The narrator seems to have some difficulty in resolving these conflicts and the ambivalence caused by serving as the mediator between the mundane and the divine. It is conceivable, then, that he would take out his anger on Jakob, who, in turn, assumes the role of the scapegoat. This displacement of anger exists because the narrator fears he has something to lose, which is reflected in his actions at the end of the novella when the narrator visits Barbara and her family.

## **Jakob's Nachträglichkeit**

Among the most interesting of Jakob's traits is his inability to keep time or to understand its purpose. Jakob finds it challenging to move past various elements in a sequence, seemingly unable to let go of momentary thoughts and impressions so that others may take their place. This tendency finds its expression in his inefficiency in completing daily work activities in a timely manner. Jakob tends to repeat the musical bars that he plays repeatedly despite his lack of

success, instead of acknowledging that he must learn a better way to improve his sound. Furthermore, his evening *Phantasieren* with God is something that takes away from his productivity and development in other areas of his life. Jakob is unable to organize the fragments of his thoughts, dreams, wishes, and desires into a coherent aim or goal for the future. It is not apparent, however, if this inability is the cause or the consequence of his problem with assimilating the concept of time into his psyche. An understanding of the temporal sphere of existence is requisite to success in the material world, and just as Jakob is unable to sprout creatively via a conventionally-accepted musical aesthetic, so too is he incapable of sprouting materially. Perhaps we can view Jakob's repetition as the inability to bring forth new growth—a death on the vine that is reminiscent of the themes underlying Grillparzer's lyric and his own struggle to create literature that would create a bridge between the literature of the past and the future.

Each time Jakob's father tries to prompt him to work, he clams up, unable to perform tasks as quickly and efficiently as his brothers, who seem to adjust to worldly life with ease. On the other hand, Jakob never seems to master the tasks that others take for granted. Even his memory seems skewed, which is evidenced by his declaration of not having a life story to tell the narrator. His behavior is perhaps explained, however, through an understanding that history, the inevitable basis for what we call a "Geschichte," is not identical to the past. This realization is at the heart of Lacan's extrapolation on Freud's concept of *Nachträglichkeit*. For Freud, *Nachträglichkeit* is a concept that is applied merely to the domain of sexuality and the libido with respect to memory. Freud expands on this idea, noting that events and situations are remembered



differently following the advent of puberty, and this is most evident in the case of traumatic occurrences in the subject's life.

It is conceivable that this concept is applicable to Jakob's narration of the events in his life, and thus the true nature of his experiences as they occurred is liable to be skewed. The narrator highlights this principle of memory with Jakob by prompting him to recall events that he purports to have forgotten. Jakob then launches into digressions that contradict his earlier assertions pertaining to his character and history. The fragmented character of Jakob's memory and his inability to take root is perhaps an allegory for a traveling man who is never fully accepted as belonging in the place in which he resides, although Jakob rejects this view of himself; he draws a line on the floor separating his living space from that of his two roommates, both traveling men. We can see how, from a theological perspective, Jacob must be rooted for Christianity to have its foundation, Jacob having been the father of the Twelve Tribes of Israel. Thus, it is Jakob's story in the embedded narrative that serves as a quiet rebellion against the ambivalent and obsessional tendencies of the narrator and the dogmatic patriarchal institution he represents. Jakob, though neurotic himself, is better able to accept his tendencies and sublimate his energies than the narrator, who ultimately is left no other option but to pursue ownership of one of Jakob's worldly possessions—his instrument—having failed to understand Jakob's mind and spirit.

Through the fragmented nature of Jakob's lived experience as he recounts it, we learn that he has trouble differentiating between notions of past, present, and future:

—Sie sehen mich an, sagte er, und haben dabei Ihre Gedanken?—Daß ich nach Ihrer Geschichte lüster bin, versetzte ich. —Geschichte? Wiederholte er. Ich habe keine Geschichte. Heute wie gestern und morgen wie heute. Übermorgen freilich und weiter hinaus, wer kann das wissen? (655)

It seems that Jakob's uncertainty about the future, which represents an accumulation of human lived experience, makes thinking about time useless, given that its value lies in its cumulative effect. Jakob tends toward systematic thinking that regards details as being of negligible importance, and this includes his approach toward practicing his music—all to the disdain of the narrator. For Jakob, the very reality that he plays music for God seems far more important to what he plays or how he plays. History, to Jakob, appears to be composed of building blocks that shape present realities; and, if we are to take the building analogy further, we understand that removal of just one of these building blocks jeopardizes the safety of the entire structure. The fragmentation of scriptures may contribute to a corrupted theology if all parts are not regarded both separately and as constituents of a whole entity, such as the Old and New Testaments, for example. This principle is applied to the formal composition of the narrative, given that neither narration may be read in isolation, lest the text be misinterpreted.

## **Jakob: Displacement, Sublimation, and Enlightenment**

There are scholars who have asserted that Jakob's demeanor is akin to that of an autistic person. Among them is Ursula Mahlendorf, who writes about Jakob's introversion and repetitive rituals:

He [further] emphasizes subjective musical routine by substituting his own invariant motions for the time values of the musical score. He attempts to keep time “not only by lifting and dropping his foot, but by a corresponding movement of his whole bowed body.” (36). The motion, however, is not related to keeping time. Hence, his rhythm is reminiscent of autistic rhythmical rocking, his hand and finger motions in front of his face of autistic twiddling, the repetitiveness of each having the purpose to ward off stimuli from and contact with the external world. (117)

Although I respect this position, given that Jakob evinces character traits suggestive of stunted behavioral development, I deem the tension between the material and the spiritual too poignant to take the description of Jakob's “stunted” character at face value. The followers of various religions engage in prayer that involves swaying the entire body. This practice is supported theologically, and is represented in multiple passages throughout the biblical scriptures.<sup>61</sup> If we are to take the allegorical Jakob seriously, we must examine how his character traits, as relayed to the reader via the narrator, reflect sociocultural stereotypes about Jews and Christians, given that the biblical Jacob was father to the Twelve Tribes of Israel. Jakob seems to think that he is doing one thing very well—playing music for God. The problem is that Jakob is not playing his

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<sup>61</sup> Proverbs 20:27: The spirit of man *is* the candle of the LORD, searching all the inward parts of the belly. Psalms 35:10: All my bones shall say, LORD, who *is* like unto thee, which deliverest the poor from him that is too strong for him, yea, the poor and the needy from him that spoileth him?

music well per the narrator's account, which presumably reflects his own opinion and the opinions of others. This may or may not be the truth, seeing the narrator's subjective lens clouds over the realities underlying Jakob's exchanges with other people.

Nevertheless, Jakob, the representative of the biblical Jacob, is “put in his place” by a society who does not want to learn his song. If we take his approach toward reading music as an approach toward reading the scriptures, then we see the figure of a man who recognizes that history does not cancel out the past—he has trouble letting go because he sees value in preexisting objects. While others around him can take leaps, and omit the undesirable parts of their histories, Jakob cannot skip anything, just as a theologian cannot skip over portions of theology that he does not like or understand. This can be likened to removing words from a sentence and expecting it to carry the same meaning as before—such an experiment is, ultimately, an exercise in futility.

In Jakob’s first-person narration, which stands in contrast to the frame narrator’s third and first-person narrations, we learn more about the experiences that shape his attitude toward language and memory. He recounts his father’s response to his failure on an important school exam:

Mein Lehrer, der kopfnickend und meinen Vater anlächelnd zugehört hatte, kam meinem Stocken zu Hilfe und flüsterte es mir zu. Ich aber, der das Wort in meinem Innern und im Zusammenhange mit dem übrigen suchte, hörte ihn nicht. Er wiederholte es mehrere Male, umsonst. Endlich verlor mein Vater die Geduld.

Cachinum! (so hieß das Wort), schrie er mir donnernd zu. Nun wars geschehen. Wußte ich das eine, so hatte ich dafür das übrige vergessen. Alle Mühe, mich auf die rechte Bahn zu bringen, war verloren. (159)

Jakob's retelling of this experience with his father is noteworthy because it gives the reader the indication that Jakob faces challenges in his communications with other people. It is clear that the young Jakob was either a hyper-focused perfectionist or that he faced a learning disability or psychological malady. Jakob explains earlier in his narration that he would have been perfectly happy settling for a job as a “Drechsler oder Schriftsetzer” (158), but that his father would not have it out of pride. This suggests that Jakob was more aware of his limitations than his father, or perhaps merely more willing to accept them. It is noteworthy, however, that the angry outburst of Jakob's father does not lead him to despise his father or to speak negatively about him. Here we learn of Jakob's reaction to his father's brashness: “Übrigens war mein Vater ein guter Mann. Nur heftig und ehrgeizig” (158). It seems that Jakob is compelled to make excuses for his father, displacing his anger toward him by turning it inward on himself. He initially hates playing the violin—suggestive of the displacement of anger—but later seems enamored by the instrument, which may seem absurd to the reader, unless one considers that Jakob's shortcoming may also be his strength. Jakob describes how he attempts to formulate the proper connections between words and phrases in his own mind, in the process blocking out the words of his father and minding only his own inner inclinations. In terms of removing himself from societal expectations, he is a success.

Furthermore, in following his own intuitions, Jakob's account reveals his father's own flaws and shortcomings:

Von diesem Tage an sprach er kein Wort mehr mit mir. Seine Befehle kamen mir durch die Hausgenossen zu. So kündigte man mir gleich des nächsten Tages an, daß es mit meinem Studium ein Ende habe. Ich erschrak heftig, weil ich wußte, wie bitter es meinen Vater kränken mußte. Ich tat den ganzen Tag nichts, als weinen und dazwischen jene lateinischen Verse rezitieren, die ich nun aufs Und wußte, mit den vorhergehenden und nachfolgenden dazu. Ich versprach, durch Fleiß den Mangel an Talent zu ersetzen, wenn man mich noch ferner die Schule besuchen ließe, mein Vater nahm aber nie einen Entschluß zurück. (159)

The assertion that Jakob's father never spoke with him again suggests that a serious rift ensued between the two men, something Jakob seems to deny. This is compounded by his father's decision to have him removed from his school the very next day. Despite Jakob's commitment to self-improvement and his own tenacity, it is his father's rigidity that impedes his success. His father's unwillingness to yield to his son represents his recognition of Jakob's weakness, but it also draws attention to his own flaws, to the controlling side of his persona—a stubbornness that allows him only to acknowledge his own point-of-view. Jakob willingly assumes the role of scapegoat, displacing his anger onto himself, instead of expressing his frustrations toward his father explicitly. Jakob expresses himself in a way that could be deemed masochistic if he took pleasure from it; however, it is not evident that this is the case. Instead of engaging in

masochistic behavior, Jakob sublimates his energy into his musical endeavors, which include his evening sessions playing music for God. Nevertheless, his desire to win his father's admiration and approval never fully leaves him.

Noteworthy is Jakob's admission that he does have "eine Art Geschichte" to tell. Jakob builds up to this moment by expressing his virtues, indicative of the fact that he does, in fact, have a healthy ego. Jakob recounts that he was a hardworking young man, which is not the only instance in which he characterizes himself as such—ironic considering that he is someone who suggests he has trouble adhering to time schedules and routines, his life's "work" becoming the object of intense preoccupation in his life. Jakob's attitude conveys an awareness of the hardships his path in life created for him; he knows he could have done better financially and he recounts the advancement of others before him. Even in his position as "Abschreiber," Jakob demonstrates thoroughness and attention to detail that indicates he is a cautious man and a methodical thinker, but by no means someone who does not understand the implications of his own actions because of weaknesses in his personality. Because he seems so self-aware over the course of his narration, it is hard to understand how he became an impoverished music man, unless we understand Jakob's sensitivity and idealism.

It is possible to read Jakob's narration as a cynical or ironic account of what he acknowledges only in hindsight. Certainly, Jakob's ambivalence stems from this conflict first and foremost, given his father's opinion weighs so heavily on his mind. Some of his revelations about his relationship with his father following their rift are particularly enlightening. For

example, Jakob relates to the anonymous narrator that he feels his mother's absence is linked to his father's cold indifference toward him. He recounts how he was not spoken to in his own home and how meals together did not take place after the death of his mother many years before. This exaggerated distance between the two men is indicative of the father's tendency toward emotional avoidance, if we are to take Jakob's account as truthful. It is plausible that Jakob's father avoids his son for some reason additional to his son's failure at his school exam. Perhaps his father sees something in Jakob that reminds him of his late wife. His anger at his son would then point to a flaw in Jakob that he found distasteful in his wife's character, or, alternatively, to his anger at his wife's absence in death, which he displaces onto Jakob. His tertiary reaction is emotional avoidance of a painful situation—another defense mechanism. If this is what the young Jakob perceived on some level, then it is conceivable that the silence traumatized him, leading to a disruption in his perception of time.

Although his father's silence need not point to psychological abuse, it seems to inflict harm on Jakob as the experience ultimately causes him to cut himself off from society and turn instead to solitary musical rituals. The behavior that Jakob engages in is similar to that of his father's. His father chooses silence to deal with anger and emotional pain, but Jakob is musical. Jakob sublimates his frustrations with mundane life via his connection to the divine, but not exclusively. In terms of his relationship with society, he is cut off from the world, which he subtly acknowledges. This is illustrated poignantly by his interactions with the youths who demand that he play a waltz for them. Jakob knows that they don't have ears for the kind of music that he plays, and it is somewhat unclear as to whether this delights Jakob or whether it



frustrates him.<sup>62</sup> Jakob is an individualistic man who seems to know which circumstances and events led to his status as a loner and an eccentric, but who simultaneously doesn't seem to mind his mundane interactions—or lack thereof—any longer. He has replaced the desire for human interaction with a sense of inner purposefulness that gives him fulfillment, which is enlightening in and of itself.

## Conclusion

The displacement of paternity in Grillparzer's *Der arme Spielmann*, also apparent in his lyrical works and influenced by both his own upbringing and education, is indicative of societal ambivalence toward religious organizations as political institutions—an issue of concern to Grillparzer and other European intellectuals during the first half of the Nineteenth Century. The frame and embedded narrators represent two different concepts. The frame narrator is the representative of patriarchal religious and political institutions and the need to displace and reappropriate their power, the Roman Catholic Church being a prime example of one such

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<sup>62</sup> The incident involving the waltz is similar to Jakob's failure at his Latin exam in school, insofar as both trace Jakob's relationship to the mentality of "the crowd." Robert Browning writes in his "Language and the Fall From Grace" the following: "This episode naturally also refers back to the opening frame (Poltzer says nothing of this) and the crucial sixth paragraph with its enunciation of the doctrine of necessity of the artist's submission to the voice of the crowd. It is not by accident, surely, that this is a *heathen* doctrine and that the Christian view is the exact opposite. We have already quoted 1 Corinthians 3:19: "For the wisdom of the world is folly with God." The world and its *cachinum* are on the side of Horace, the Spielmann on the side of Paul." (61)

institution. On the other hand, Jakob, the voice of the embedded narration, is representative of the need for empathy, compassion, self-sacrifice, and forgiveness in the wake of changing social mores and expectations—his rescue of the town’s children is an act of brotherly love and the paragon of the re-appropriation of values based on “fraternal law.”

## CHAPTER IV

### OBSESSIONAL TENDENCIES: SEEKING THE NEW

### FRATERNAL ORDER IN GRILLPARZER'S *DIE JÜDIN VON TOLEDO*

#### Introduction

Intriguing are the thematic tensions and complex allegories that characterize Grillparzer's dramas, including the interplay of elements of both the Enlightenment and the Baroque. Like his novellas and his poems, Grillparzer's dramas are historical, autobiographical and formally complex, and they reflect Grillparzer's own personal, professional, and psychological development, colored on one hand by his exposure to Catholicism, and on the other, by his interest in Kantian ethics and scientific empiricism. His writings are not without shortcomings and political prejudices, and yet the insights revealed via an allegorical reading of his oeuvre demonstrate an ambivalence that belongs not only to the author himself, but to 19th Century European society in its most expansive sense. Grillparzer's apparent neuroticism is striking, and his awareness of a need for both dramatist and lyricist to serve as guardians of an ancient, hermetic wisdom with a transcendent awareness of the brotherhood of humankind is noteworthy, and it stems from his immersion in a variety of belief systems and his interest in Orientalism.

A deep-seated anger and frustration toward the paternal order that was propagated by the power of the Catholic Church lies at the heart of the ambivalence so evident in Grillparzer's works. Well after the advent of Martin Luther's Protestant Reformation in Europe several hundred years before Grillparzer was born, the issue remained central to the most prominent intellectuals of Grillparzer's time. The French Revolution and the era that succeeded it, of which Grillparzer was a part, taught people throughout Europe that a new fraternal order was upon them, no longer the old order of the father, who had been decapitated as though with a guillotine, but of the brother.<sup>63</sup> A stress upon liberty, equality, and goodwill among peers marks the exchanges of this era, and this is something we see in Grillparzer's lyric in poems such as "Vater Unser" and others. In this vein, too, we see an emphasis upon sharing the blame when it is called for. No one man or woman can carry full blame for events that involve multiple parties with conflicting needs and desires.

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<sup>63</sup> See passages of *The Regime of the Brother: After the Patriarchy* by Juliet Flower MacCannell. The following excerpt is particularly noteworthy insofar as it pertains to Grillparzer's case: "Reborn of itself, however, the people as a whole no longer assigns the parental role, setting the agenda of desire, to the superego, which should at this point take on the aspect of fraternity, equality, and liberty. But the 'people as a whole' has been forged in the mirror-stage which denies (with horror) its own division by the other. A dramatic act of forgetting—powerful repression of a trauma in the Freudian sense—lies at the root of this 're-birth,' and requires constant energizing. The dialectic of the 'Law' thus results in the emergence of an unconscious, misrecognized superego, one which risks again becoming the tyrannical, despotic pre-Oedipal Father of *Totem and Taboo* (or the all-consuming Sovereign of Rousseau's *Second Discourse*). The motive of the 'people,' the 'democratic' drive is thus seen by Rousseau as a dialectic of desire, of a competition between Eros and Thanatos" (65-6).

Moreover, like his novella, *Der arme Spielmann*, *Die Jüdin von Toledo* is not a unidimensional dramatic work. Although a surface reading of the text has led some scholars to speculate that it is merely a tragic tale of an imbalance of power between two lovers gone horribly awry, I contend that this work demonstrates not only the problematics of passion, power, betrayal, and tyranny, but also of duty, responsibility, loyalty, and unconditional love.<sup>64</sup> Its plot and characters highlight the process of rediscovering one's roots and of reclaiming Eros via a path of self-destruction. Both König Alfonso and Rahel have strong aggressive drives with

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<sup>64</sup> When I refer here to the notion of unconditional love, I apply it to the love and concern that Esther seems to have for her sister despite her unwise actions and the disapproval of those around her. For example, Esther speaks about her sister in the following excerpt: "So sei denn stark durch feige Furchtsamkeit./Doch nenn ich andre, was ich selber war./Als sie nun kamen und, vom Schlaf erwacht./Ins letzte, ferne, innerste Gemach/Ich hin zur Hilfe meiner Schwester eilte;/Da faßt mich einer an mit starker Hand/Und schleudert mich zu Boden. Und ich Feige,/Ich fiel in Ohnmacht, als es galt,/Mein Leben für die Schwester hinzugeben,/Zu sterben wenigstens zugleich mit ihr./Als ich erwachte, war die Tat geschehn,/Vergebens jedes Mittel der Belebung./Da konnt ich weinen, mir die Haare raufen./Das ist die rechte Feigheit. Weiberart." Similarly, although the King and Queen married, the text states that the couple "lived together as children" and emphasizes their absence of passion for one another, which could be ascribed simply to youth or inexperience: "Wir haben bis vor kurz gelebt als Kinder./Als solche hat man einstens uns vermählt,/Und wir, wir lebten fort als fromme Kinder./Doch Kinder wachsen, nehmen zu an Jahren,/Und jedes Stufenalter der Entwicklung,/Es kündet an sich durch ein Unbehagen,/Wohl öfters eine Krankheit, die uns mahnt,/Wir sei'n dieselben und zugleich auch andre,/Und andres zieme sich im Nämlichen." Despite this and the Queen's own shortcomings, for which Rahel must pay dearly, the Queen endeavors to understand her husband's needs and stands by him with an unwavering, yet almost sisterly sort of detachment. Although she is bound by patriarchal traditions to do so, her honesty and avowal of the conditions of their relationship suggests an "unconditional acceptance" of her husband that goes beyond what is necessary or expected of her.

which they must come to terms, and likewise both characters seek a channel through which to express the intensity of their emotions. Rahel's daring and reckless personality tempts her to throw herself at the feet of Alfonso, knowing full well that the outcome is liable to be disastrous, but it is her conflict with her father, who reminds her constantly of her likeness to her materialistic mother, that drives her to oblivion. Alfonso admits he has lived as a child with his wife, who, in his eyes, represents the traditions he is forced to continue, the office he is forced to uphold by paternal virtue, and the status quo he seeks to disrupt, and it is this realization that ultimately leads him to stray. Both König Alfonso and Rahel represent the destructiveness that can ensue when two psychologically obsessional characters meet in the context of an erotic relationship, and this, too, reveals something about the true nature of the human psyche—it may be chaotic, mysterious, and illogical at times, resulting in upheaval that has consequences that go beyond individual relationships, involving entire groups of people. It is through a singular encounter between Rahel and Alfonso that duty is rejected and tragedy ensues, ultimately demonstrating the fragility of patriarchal moral and ethical value systems during an era of rapid transition.

Indeed, the displacement of powerful desires plays a significant role in the development of both the father and Rahel. In Rahel's case, it is her anger at her father's materialistic projections that she attempts to displace in her desire to form a relationship with Alfonso—in essence a displacement of paternal displacement—although she is unsuccessful. Alfonso, on the other hand, endeavors to displace his frustrations against the paternal order onto Rahel, who just happens to come along as a convenient victim. He cannot reasonably express his anger toward

the office itself, his people, or his wife unceremoniously, but he can express his sexual passion toward Rahel as long as she is annihilated before the conclusion of the narrative.<sup>65</sup> Ultimately, although Alfonso seems willing at certain points to usurp the paternalistic tradition he has been forced into, he remains a slave to the worldly order, because it seems that he ultimately desires merely to test it, rather than overthrow it. This willingness to test authority without necessarily desiring to remove it is characteristic of an obsessional psychological structure. He never does attain that taste of the divine that he seems to crave in his Rahel, instead destroying her in the process. This, too, may be read as an allegory for the dramatist's craft and duty as a preserver of poetic wisdom.

In order for the wisdom to be transferred, it must first be accepted and acknowledged by the masses, and this is something that Grillparzer realized was unlikely to occur during his time. Grillparzer espoused the view that humankind should use wisdom to reshape the structure of the paternal order into a more enlightened and just form that would integrate a broader perspective than the those that had been offered the generations before him. He knew that his work would be rendered silent as though it were dead, only to be resurrected later (as I discussed previously in Chapter 2 in connection with his attitude toward poetry and authorship). In this way, we see parallels to the shared blame the characters must take at the conclusion of the drama. The responsibility for no longer preserving and valuing the "priestly" or hermetic wisdom of the poet

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<sup>65</sup> Here we can surmise that the childish maneuver Rahel pulls off is perhaps a guise, an act which she devises to attain some degree of personal power and jouissance even if she realizes that it is headed for catastrophe.

and the author cannot be ascribed to any one individual, but to a broader societal negligence taking place over the course of many years. It is probable that Grillparzer saw something of a “Jewish instinct” geared toward the preservation of sociohistorical, literary, intellectual, religious, and cultural knowledge that he felt was lacking in his own circles.

Most certainly, the inclusion of various references to the Jews as being close to their origins and to God in his *Die Jüdin von Toledo* suggests that this topic was not only relevant, but significant to Grillparzer.<sup>66</sup> Here we must also consider Grillparzer’s interactions with Jews in his daily life, of which there were many. He met a myriad of intellectuals during his travels through Austria and Europe at large, and would often converse with Jewish writers, artists, and scientists at the salons. On one poignant occasion, he met a Jewish woman with whom he conversed through the night and into the morning hours, stating how enamored he was with her mind and the ideas she expressed so fluently and thought-provokingly. Through these collective

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<sup>66</sup> König Alfonso expresses an admiration of Jewish origins and the biblical story of Jacob, despite his agreement with the general consensus among Christians of the time that he did not generally “like” their people. In the following passage, the king states: “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./Zudem ist etwas Großes, Garceran,/In diesem Stamm von unstet flüchtgen Hirten./Wir andern sind von heut, sie aber reichen/Bis an der Schöpfung Wiege, wo die Gottheit/Noch menschengleich in Paradiesen ging,/Wo Cherubim zu Gast bei Patriarchen,/Und Richter war und Recht der einge Gott./Samt all der Märchenwelt, die Wahrheit auch,/Von Kain und Abel, von Rebekkas Klugheit,/Von Jakob, der um Rahel dienend freite –/Wie heißt das Mädchen? (466). Here we see that the king is fascinated with the notion that the Jews are nearer to the one and only almighty God, and that he believes them to be in touch both with the world of fairy tales and with the truth, perhaps in a way that modern civilization could not hope to grasp or understand. It is this underlying respect for the Jewish storytelling tradition that must be noted in Grillparzer, as it alludes to a greater theme within the corpus of his work.



encounters, Grillparzer was exposed to God from a monotheistic perspective, allowing for yet another displacement of paternity that simultaneously fulfilled his ideal of social accountability—something he evidently noted as a virtue of the Jewish community.

As a consequence of the text's complexity, we must read not only for the psychoanalytic dimension of the interpersonal relationships between characters, but also for the historical developments underlying the treatment of Jews during the Golden Age of the Spanish Baroque and Austria during Grillparzer's time. Furthermore, we must come to an understanding of woman's role as seductress and enchantress--of the dark, feminine magic that characters such as Rahel are believed to partake in, a mere projection of the qualities that are feared in a civilized society—something that expresses itself here as displaced aggression toward the father that concludes with the murder of the mistress. Finally, we must come to an understanding of the author's role as mediator between the Christian world and the ancient Jewish world, where shepherds were not lacking and where civilization lay before the cradle of creation. In this respect we must consider additionally the matrilineal inheritance of the Jewish faith and its associated cultural traditions and where this must be placed in the context of this discussion.

### **Historical Underpinnings of *Die Jüdin von Toledo***

Following the example of one of his Spanish Golden Age idols, Grillparzer carefully crafted the text over the course of many years, often interrupted, and it was not to be finished until relatively late in his life. The history of the Jews in Spain is a rich one, dating back to the Middle Ages and a lengthy period of Muslim rule in the Iberian Peninsula. Tumultuous political

events ultimately led to an overthrow of the established order during the Eleventh Century, but a strong Jewish presence persisted in the area and in Toledo in particular all the way up until the end of the Fifteenth Century, at which point the Jews were forcibly expelled from the country under the Edict of Expulsion issued by Christian leaders in 1492.

As such, a number of traditions were shared by peoples of various faiths and passed down from generation to generation. The Queen's fear of sorcery and other forms of enchantment in the drama is probably a reference to some of these practices, which include engagement in Kabbalah and various forms of divination such as palmistry, the making of amulets, and a belief in summoning the angels through a connection with the divine. Participants in these traditions believed in what we would today label as spiritualistic and homeopathic medicinal practices. Furthermore, believers in Kabbalah asserted that it was possible to have psychic experiences such as premonitions that would manifest themselves in reality.<sup>67</sup>

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<sup>67</sup> See titles such as *On the Kabbalah and its Symbolism* (1965) from Gershom Scholem, *Kabbalah and Eros* (2005) from Moshe Idel, and *The Mystery of Love* from Marc Gafni. Interesting to note here as it pertains to Grillparzer's espousal of neighborly and fraternal love is Gafni's description of the relationship between the erotic and the Shechina. He writes: "Just as it is nonerotic for love to exist only in a museum, so too is it nonerotic for love to exist only in a small circle of caring. When we fall in love with one woman or one man to the exclusion of all other people, the Shechina is in exile. When you are truly erotically engaged then through the love of one comes the love of all. For true love partakes in the essential connectivity of being. Unity is not divisible; it is holographic; in every moment of love are all the lovers and all the love in the world. Too often love is merely a synonym for a radically narrowed circle of caring. We let only the smallest possible—sometimes only one person—inside to our Holy of Holies. We feel alienated, deceitful, or apathetic about the rest of our lives. The Shechina is in exile" (57).

Despite the fear that such esoteric practices might evoke in some, many of these rituals are not at all threatening or unusual. For hundreds of years, societies all over the world have engaged in some variation of the same activities that bring about such fear and suspicion in the Queen. Instead of viewing these acts as sources of wisdom and avenues for spiritual and intellectual exploration, she reacts with paranoia and doubt, afraid that Rahel's person might be associated with some kind of bewitching power that she does not understand. The Queen's reaction is but a type of witch hunt initiated out of anger and a lack of understanding of the traditions with which Rahel was presumably raised, or at least familiarized, though this is only an assumption on the part of the monarch.<sup>68</sup> We can view this type of behavior on the part of the female monarch as a kind of interfaith rivalry, in that we can assume that she feels threatened by traditions that are foreign to her. Her husband's attempts to understand Rahel's culture even if he does not accept it suggest that he is more enlightened than the female figurehead. Despite this, he inevitably does not follow through on his promises or his perceived commitment to the welfare of Rahel and her family. In this sense, he stops short of affirming her cultural heritage and her

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<sup>68</sup> The Queen's discussion with her husband is noteworthy on this point (found on pp. 498-99):  
O, laß mich glauben, was mich hält und tröstet. Der Mauren Volk und all, was ihnen ähnlich,  
Geheime Künste üben sie, verruchte, Mit Bildern, Zeichen, Sprüchen, bösen Tränken,  
Die in der Brust des Menschen Herz verkehren Und seinen Willen machen untertan. Her husband  
responds: Umgeben sind wir rings von Zaubereien, Allein wir selber sind die Zauberer. Was weit  
entfernt, bringt ein Gedanke nah, Was wir verschmäht, scheint andrer Zeit uns hold, Und in der  
Welt voll offenbarer Wunder Sind wir das größte aller Wunder selbst.

faith as valid and acceptable, when it is exactly this that may have brought various figures into reconciliation with one another.<sup>69</sup>

Here we must consider how enlightened Grillparzer's characters appear to be. For the most part, Grillparzer portrays his characters as flawed and alludes through their interactions with one another to the fact that they could all do better. Unlike G.E. Lessing, who in his *Nathan der Weise* portrays the flaws of characters and yet smooths over their imperfections so that they ultimately achieve some form of harmony or acceptance of what they have done wrong, Grillparzer's characters remain unable to accept their wrongdoings as such. Though Grillparzer's characters could be described as enlightened, or, at the very least, on the path to enlightenment, they will not accept the unpleasant realities that they would rather deny. The treatment of women in his *Die Jüdin von Toledo*, however, is strikingly similar to that of Lessing's *Emilia Galotti*, in which Emilia loses her own life in order to save the reputation of her father and her family. The similarities between Grillparzer's *Die Jüdin von Toledo* and Lessing's *Die Juden* also come across poignantly, and thus I devote the last portion of this chapter to this topic.

In her research pertaining to *Die Jüdin von Toledo*, Martha Helfer makes a compelling argument for examining the text not only in terms of the power dynamics between the characters,

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<sup>69</sup> This failure is a radical departure from the Enlightenment brotherhood and acceptance expressed by G.E. Lessing in his *Nathan der Weise*. Although Grillparzer alludes to many of the same concepts and problems, he resolves to portray the outcome somewhat more realistically, preserving the human failings that here foreshadow tumultuous consequences and disaster, perhaps to emphasize exactly those failings that Grillparzer deemed worthy of rectification.

but also with greater concern for the Jewish question, which cannot be ignored. She writes the following:

Citing the fact that most scholars bracket the descriptions of Jews from their analyses and still find ample material to interpret, Sigurd Scheichel too argues the Jewish question cannot be of central importance to the play. Scheichel raises an important methodological consideration. Many compelling readings have not addressed the Jewish characters, and many critics have not come to grips with the conflicting representations of Jews. But to conclude from this that the Jewish question is of no import amounts to circular reasoning. Texts by their very nature are multidimensional, and an essential layer of meaning emerges when the play's portrayal of Jews is analyzed in a thoroughgoing manner. (161)

I contend that Martha Helfer's observations are perfectly on point. Given Grillparzer's characteristic ambivalence and his blending of genres, not to mention his own psychoanalytic complexity reflected in his work, the text must be handled as though it were a tapestry of interwoven threads hinting at an important kernel of wisdom—that wisdom itself is a virtue and must be handled delicately, and that the guardianship of such must be re-appropriated with care. The Jewish undercurrents exist not only in his *Die Jüdin von Toledo*, but also in the entirety of his oeuvre—in his lyrical works, as we have already seen, and in his novellas, particularly in his *Der arme Spielmann*, which I examined at length in the preceding chapter.

It is interesting to note, as Helfer does in the context of her overall argument, that the historical basis for the text itself is questionable, leaving scholars to wonder why Grillparzer may have taken it up.<sup>70</sup> She writes:

While there may be some truth to the account, the conclusion that Alfonso's military defeats were divine retribution for his relationship with the Jewess clearly is fabricated: from the beginning the affair was linked erroneously to a failed crusade Alfonso purportedly undertook with Richard the Lion-hearted in 1189-1192 (in fact he did not participate in the Third Crusade), and later to his defeat at the Battle of Alarcos in 1195. Other early chronicles by Roderich of Toledo and Lucas of Tuy make no mention of the affair, a circumstance that draws both its historical authenticity and significance into question. (162)

It is plausible that Grillparzer's rewriting of this fabricated affair gave him the opportunity to critique the issues he deemed important during the decades in which he was active as a writer and dramatist. Noteworthy, however, is that it took Grillparzer many years to complete the

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<sup>70</sup> Helfer also notes Grillparzer's own point-of-view regarding Lope de Vega's version of the drama as he had expressed it in writing. She notes the following, citing Grillparzer: "Of even greater importance is Grillparzer's evaluation of Lope de Vega's *Las pazes de los reyes, y la Judía de Toledo*, the other major literary source for *Die Jüdin von Toledo*: Merkwürdig ist übrigens, daß Lope de Vega sich so ziemlich auf die Seite der Jüdin stellt. Sie ist durchaus edel gehalten und selbst den Mackel des Judenthums nimmt er für den Zuseher dadurch hinweg, daß sie vor ihrem gewaltsamen Tode begehrt, eine Christin zu werden. Wieder ein Beweis von seiner Vorurtheilsfreiheit (HKA 372)." (162)

work, suggesting that he may have been tracking historical events as they developed over the course of his life in real time, particularly insofar as they pertained to the Jewish question. It would not be a stretch to suggest that Grillparzer sought to assimilate as much knowledge and information as he could regarding the lives and motivations of Jewish intellectuals in Austria and in Europe more generally through first hand experiences. Thus he spoke with them in the salons and engaged with them as intellectual sparring partners before finishing the play. During the late 1840s, Grillparzer worked on the text quite zealously, suggesting that he was engaged in the issues surrounding the Revolution of 1848 and the rights and privileges of Jews that were, at that time, being debated at length by the educated classes.<sup>71</sup>

Moreover, I must recapitulate that Grillparzer took offense at some aspects of the Christian and Catholic theology that he felt were divisive and which detracted from the unity of the faith and its followers; in this sense, it appears that he explored the philosophies underlying other belief systems in an effort to understand what he felt was lacking in the patriarchal

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<sup>71</sup> One reference from *Grillparzer's Attitude Toward the Jews* is particularly noteworthy in this context: "Grillparzer was [also] a frequent guest in the salon of Josef Wertheimer, before his complete withdrawal from social activity. It was there that he made many valuable contacts, including some Jewish ones. This salon had attained the great prominence which was once reserved for the salon of Caroline Pichler. Among the people who came to Wertheimer's home, in addition to Grillparzer, were Hammer-Purgstall, Feuchtersleben, Seligman, Frankl, Bauernfeld, Kuranda, Lorm, Holbein, Laube, Witthauer, Baumeister, and Betty Paoli. Since racial prejudices did not exist in this, as well as the other salons of the time, Grillparzer had an opportunity to observe the free and friendly association between Jews and Christians" (24).

structures of the faith in which he was raised. He certainly expressed a great deal of respect and admiration for those who were able to find their own truth and model lives of virtue on the basis of the beliefs they held dear. His poem, “Der Wahre Glaube,” is a wonderful testament to this. In a stanza true to his own beliefs, he writes the following: “Sag Freund! Mir wie der Schöpfer heißt!/Dann lob ich deinen großen Geist/Und will wie einen Gott dich ehren.” It is this concept that must guide any reading of Grillparzer’s *Die Jüdin von Toledo*.

## **The Psychoanalytic Dimension: Paternal Displacement and Obsessionality**

Grillparzer utilizes his characters to emphasize the same points he underscores regarding authorial guardianship and the preservation of the cultural and intellectual wisdom of a society. His *Die Jüdin von Toledo* is no exception. Rahel, Isaak, and König Alfonso all represent different aspects of his sociocultural critique. In the final assessment, he makes all of his characters responsible for the debacle, but it is the manner in which this is done that is most striking. It is the Jewish character, Rahel’s sister, Esther, who makes all of the others aware that what they have done was wrong, and that they all deserve part of the responsibility for the tragedy that has transpired. The Christian characters refuse to acknowledge this of their own accord, and conduct themselves as though nothing out of the ordinary had taken place. This is not to say that Isaak, the father of Rahel and Esther, is not as unenlightened as his Christian counterparts, but then again, he is also a father.



Given that the patriarchy is something that Grillparzer noted more or less subtly as being an institution that had weakened over time, we can understand the paternal displacements we see in poems such as “Napoleon,” “Vater Unser,” and others as well as in his novella, *Der arme Spielmann*, in which the weak or semi-absent father plays an important part. Nevertheless, despite the fact that the father or function of the father is often displaced, the father is never actually dethroned or done away with—an attitude of preservation indicative of an obsessional psychological structure. The distinguishing feature of Grillparzer’s dramas, novellas, and much of his poetry is the tendency to displace paternity, striving in vain to find its proper place under the monikers of fraternity or sorority, or leaving his attempt open to interpretation as he does in *Der Traum ein Leben*.

## **Isaak and His Daughters**

First we must consider the relationship between Isaak and his daughters, Rahel and Esther. Rahel expresses her disappointment with all of the men who she feels had a duty to come to her rescue. Instead, she praises her sister as a hero, given she has traits that the male characters fail to express, despite her hopes and expectations. Here Rahel expresses her frustration:

Seht euern König nur! Er glaubt zu lieben,

Und doch, sprech ich zu euch, drück euch die Hand,

Ihn kümmerts nicht, und wie ein guter Hauswirt

Vollbringt er den geschäftig lauten Tag,

Zufrieden schließt der Abend nur die Rechnung.

Geht nur! Ihr seid wie er und wie die andern alle.

Wär meine Schwester hier! Sie ist besonnen

Und klüger weit als ich; doch fällt der Funke

Von Willen und Entschluß in ihre Brust,

Dann lodert sie in gleichen Flammen auf.

Wär sie ein Mann, sie wär ein Held. Ihr alle

Erläget ihrem Blick und ihrem Mut.

Ich will indes nur schlafen, bis sie kommt,

Bin ich doch selbst ein Traum nur einer Nacht. (484)

Noteworthy is Rahel's recognition of her sister's commendable qualities, which she claims not to possess herself. Rahel seems to value the strength and wisdom that her sister exhibits, even in adversity. The scene she describes involves her sleeping until her sister arrives to save her, evoking an imagery comparable to a fairy tale prince coming to rescue the fair lady, whom he serves out of pure love and affection. This embrace of sorority is akin to Grillparzer's descriptions of fraternity, and again serves to undermine the paternal authority. Her assertion that perhaps her person is but a dream of the night elicits fear and apprehension on the part of the reader, who must make the comparison between sleep and death, rest and the final annihilation of

the self. Underlying her somewhat cutting remarks is the feeling that she has been ignored, undermined, and prevented from thriving as she should have in her own right. Having failed to be reborn as the person she desired to be, and unable to remove herself from the negative projections fueled by her own father's narcissism—Isaak being unwilling to accept the qualities that are actually his own and not those of his daughter—Rahel is forced to accept that she must become her own hero or perish. The problem is that becoming her own hero is very difficult, if not impossible, given her station in society.

Perhaps one could read the emasculated character of Isaak as a man who felt he was a weak Jew; that is, that he felt a lack of power of the lives of his daughters because of the absence of his wife. He does a poor job of holding himself to a high standard morally and ethically. With his free-wheeling, materialistic, and cowardly ways, he is not a good Jew who regularly works to serve the community in which he lives and he does not read the Torah or make any mention of his religious leanings, making his character in the overall plot fairly unidimensional. He lives to criticize others and benefit from their gain or loss, a description that lends itself fairly well to a Baroque caricature.

It seems that Isaak treats Rahel as though she were an extension of her mother. As Patricia Gherovici and Jamieson Webster refer to it in their clinical article, "Observations from Working with Female Obsessionals," when citing the work of Joan Riviere, it is conceivable that Rahel suffers from a need to put her femininity on display as if she were melodramatically acting the part, given her father makes her apparent likeness to her mother something to be despised. In

flaunting her feminine attributes and attempting to attract the attention of the entire kingdom, not merely Alfonso himself, Rahel endeavors to compete with the mother and somehow be more worthy in the eyes of her father, or find a substitute for that appreciation where it is lacking. Here Gherovici and Webster note that there is a link between a completely developed womanliness and female obsessionality, in that the latter is always found, at least to a degree, in the former.<sup>72</sup> They write the following, citing portions of Riviere's study:

Riviere analyzes the situation as an expression of an unresolved rivalry with the mother and interpreted the sexual acting out as an unconscious attempt to ward off the anxiety which would ensue on account of the reprisals she anticipated from the father-figures after her intellectual performance. The exhibition in public of her intellectual proficiency, which was itself carried through successfully,

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<sup>72</sup> The title of Gherovici and Webster's study is "Feminine Masquerade and Obsessional Womanliness." The analysand's situation is described as follows: All her life a certain degree of anxiety, sometimes very severe, was experienced after every public performance, such as speaking to an audience. In spite of her unquestionable success and ability, both intellectual and practical, and her capacity for managing an audience and dealing with discussions, etc., she would be excited and apprehensive all night after, with misgivings whether she had done anything inappropriate, and obsessed by a need for reassurance. This need for reassurance led her compulsively on any such occasion to seek some attention or complimentary notice from a man or men (Riviere 1929, p. 305). They also cite the following: Those men she would seek were father-figure substitutes who not only reassured her about her performance but also offered her sexual attention. "[S]he was attempting to obtain sexual advances from the particular type of men by means of flirting and coquetting with them in a more or less veiled manner. The extraordinary incongruity of this attitude with her highly impersonal and objective attitude during her intellectual performance, which it succeeded so rapidly in time, was a problem" (ibid.).

signified an exhibition of herself in possession of the father's penis, having castrated him (ibid).

In this clinical case study, we understand that it is the woman's self-accepted success that represents to her the castration of her father. She feels as though her intellectual ability put on display before the public represents having stolen his penis from him, thus emasculating him. This could be interpreted merely as a kind of early oedipal revenge for her father having chosen her mother over her as a very young child, or, alternatively, the feeling of having castrated her father could stem from her own visions of masculinity and femininity that were imparted on her as a very young girl. If a woman understands that the only way to attain power in society is to submit to potential suitors in sexual intercourse by receiving the penis, then she may feel guilty or fear reprisal for doing anything that takes away from what has been allocated to him on the basis of social mores. Namely, if it is the male alone who should enjoy success in the situations she finds herself in, such as the aforementioned public talks that she must give, then she will feel as though she has done something wrong if she does not fail. This attitude need not be instilled in a woman through her parental home as it could also stem from cultural, social, or religious beliefs that inform her upbringing in society.

Moreover, imperative to understanding this study and the kind of woman who would conduct herself in this way is the notion of the feminine mask or guise. Gherovici and Webster go on to write:

According to Riviere, she offered herself sexually to these men to appease what she imagined as their desire for revenge for having castrated them. “This was done by masquerading in a feminine guise...It is significant that this woman’s mask, though transparent to other women, was successful with men, and served its purpose very well. Many men were attracted in this way, and gave her reassurance by showing her favor. Closer examination showed that these men were of the type who themselves fear the ultra-womanly woman. They prefer a woman who herself as male attributes, for to them her claims on them are less.” (ibid., p. 310-11). Both men and women in this example play with masquerade as an exchange whereby the woman is given and/or has a penis.

Though the situation that Rahel finds herself in is somewhat different, the underlying motivations for her behavior are related to the scenario involving the woman who seeks male attention to appease her anxiety about her intellectual performance. Rahel seems to have the impression that her father does a poor job of protecting her and her sister, Esther, as a father should. It is plausible that she views his attacks on her character as excuses for his own weakness, and that the intense responsiveness of Alfonso emasculates her father, giving her the penis so-to-speak, particularly because Alfonso is a Christian—thus holding more power in society—and her father is a Jew. One of the reasons her father attacks her mother is because, as a Jewess, she apparently desired to mingle with Christians and be a part of their society, which he regards with disdain.

Given that Judaism is a matrilineal faith, it is plausible that Rahel would see these comments as a challenge to her—that her mother was not a real Jewess and thus unsatisfactory and that she was, likewise, not a Christian, and thus not a woman of influence in the society of which she presumably wished to be a part. In degrading her mother, it is conceivable that Rahel would deem herself to be something of a *persona nongrata* in the eyes of her father, someone who didn't measure up even to her unworthy mother. It is easy to see how a child-like Rahel would have an identity crisis, particularly if she recognized the projective tendencies of her father, who disowned his own materialism, ascribing it instead entirely to his wife, an apparent lover of Christians. Thus, when Rahel does engage in relations with König Alfonso, she feels reassured that she has been able to accomplish something, even if that is ultimately destructive to her own well-being.

As a consequence of this pitiful situation, Rahel and Esther are left to fend for themselves in a world that is hostile to people of their background. Rahel devises a plan to reinvent herself in a way that ultimately costs her dearly—she loses her life at exactly the point at which she should be beginning her journey in the world. It seems that the narcissistic drives of her father take their toll on her as she seems driven to expunge the vision her father has of her character. It is precisely this topic of parental narcissism and the child's need to overcome it that anchors Serge Leclaire's research.<sup>73</sup> Leclaire differentiates between the first death that all people must

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<sup>73</sup> See his *A Child is Being Killed: On Primary Narcissism and the Death Drive*.

face in their lives so that they may begin not only to live, but to love.<sup>74</sup> The opening chapter describes the case of a child named Pierre-Marie after an older child that his parents lost prior to his birth. Pierre-Marie experiences an alienation crisis brought on by the idealized fantasies of both his mother and his father, making it hard for him to discover his own identity in the process.<sup>75</sup>

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<sup>74</sup> Here Leclaire differentiates between the first and second deaths which he contextualizes via his clinical case studies: “It is a common practice to confuse the “first death” the one we must continually live through, with the “second death.” This is a stubborn and solidly anchored confusion: not only does it allow us to not recognize the most imperative summons of our bondage—to be born again and again to language and desire, all the while never ceasing to mourn the loss of the fascinating *infans*—but it also gives us the illusion of working against death, no matter how doomed the endeavor. The results of this confusion give a measure of how deeply rooted it is: the glorification of failure or the making of life into a sacred venture, the cult of despair or the defense of faith.” (4) Leclaire goes on to give an example of how these concepts function in a human life. He writes: “The logic behind suicide derives from a perfect syllogism: in order to live, I must kill “myself”; or else, I don’t really feel alive (this is no life!), therefore I commit suicide. If only we could clear up (*but at the cost of what labor?*) the confusion underlying the truth of the first statement—in order to live I must kill the tyrannical representation of the *infans* within me—then another logic would appear. The new logic would be governed by the impossibility of ever carrying out this murder once and for all and by the need to commit it every time we start to truly speak, and every moment that we begin to love” (4).

<sup>75</sup> Noteworthy here is that Grillparzer was preoccupied with the death of children in a manner that can be taken both literally and figuratively, which I alluded to already in the introduction of this work. In that context, I noted the connections to the figure of Jakob in *Der arme Spielmann* and the poem, “Des Kindes Scheiden,” which depicts the death of an innocent child. The penultimate stanza reads: Freundlich lächelt der Engel; doch bald umwölkt sich sein Antlitz, Und mit brütendem Ernst wendet er seufzend sich ab. Er überschauet im Geist den Sturm der kommenden Tage, Dem nur die Eiche steht, der die Blume zerknickt; Rauschen hört er des Unglücks seelenmordende Pfeile, Wider die Unschuld und Recht nur ein zerbrechlicher Schild; Tränend sieht er das Aug, das weich die Wimper bedeckt, Und zerschlagen die Brust, die jetzt atmend sich hebt.



In a passage that could do well to describe the type of process at work in Rahel's life, Leclair explains the problems that arise as a consequence of the primary narcissism exhibited in the parent-child relationship. He writes:

To undertake the "killing of the child" and sustain the necessary destruction of the primary narcissistic representation (primary narcissism in Freud's text) is everyone's task, as imperative as it is impossible to complete. How can the child be eliminated? How can one get rid of something unconscious, indelible? Conversely, however, how can one avoid that necessity or elude that constraint without remaining in the limbo of the infans, on this side of desire? For such is indeed the "insane destiny awaiting anyone who cannot begin to murder the all-powerful child and destroy the primary narcissistic representation. (13)

It is precisely this conflict that takes hold in the life of Rahel, albeit unconsciously. She knows there is something she seeks to accomplish and that she will not rest before she can bring it to fruition, but she does not understand what it is that drives her. The child in her is something that Alfonso ultimately recognizes as constituting her whole person. This is a fallacy if we understand Rahel's seemingly childish behavior as just the opposite—a masquerade she puts on in order to exterminate from her person the infans that has been instilled in her by her elders. Clearly the extermination of this image is not the only conflict with which Rahel must contend, but it

influences her relationship with her family, her lover, and the society in which she lives quite substantially.<sup>76</sup>

It is significant that Leclair addresses the two-edged sword that lies at the crux of the problem. He elaborates in the passage that follows:

The primary narcissistic representation (the child in ourselves) is indelible, as is any unconscious representative; moreover, to call that representation unconscious—quite rightly—is to say that it does not nor did it ever present the least inroad to consciousness. How, therefore, can one conceive giving up something to which one has never had success? Such is the general problem attending our connection with unconscious representatives proper, those under the sway of original repression, which we can know only, if luxuriously, from its effects, in other words its offshoots. (13)

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<sup>76</sup>Worth noting in this context is the gender problematic and the connection between deception and the feminine, which Gherovici and Webster sum up as the following: “A certain level of inconsistency and surprise in the Other may allow for the emergence of desire. This essential attitude of the analyst of being open to surprise is a subjective disposition that can be described as a state of semblance, which Lacan described as “*faire la dupe*” (to simulate, to deceive). Lacan says “*la dupe*” using the noun in the feminine, thus pointing to a link between femininity and semblance.” Rahel’s feminine guise is a masquerade designed to evoke desire in Alfonso and thus allow her to kill her inner child and separate herself from her father’s skewed view of her character. Alfonso’s obsessional structure makes it easier for her to do so, given his singular objective is to use her as an erotic object.

It is only through the offshoots, the byproducts of the issue, that we learn of the effects of the original repressions, and this is particularly true in the case of Rahel. Without a thorough examination and analysis of her complex character and potential motivations for her actions—bearing in mind we are dealing with a fictional literary character here and not a real person—it would be impossible to comprehend why any person would put themselves in a position that would further threaten his or her safety or stability, particularly if the individual is aware of the dangers and pitfalls going into the situation. Some would suggest that perhaps this is a function of the character’s naivete, of her inability to comprehend the extent of the consequences should she throw herself at the feet of a monarch and pursue an erotic relationship with him. The evidence, however, suggests otherwise. She acknowledges that she knows he doesn’t love her and admits that she has never known true love, and despite her critiques of the world around her, she persists with some vague hope that something in her life might take hold.

There are various reasons that Grillparzer might portray her in this way, not the least of which is that he portrays Rahel as a female obsessional, which, arguably, reflects his own nature, given his suffocatingly intimate relationship to his mother.<sup>77</sup> The literary theorist might inquire

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<sup>77</sup> A clinical case with features similar to those exhibited between Grillparzer and his mother is described by Danielle Bergeron in her essay, “Perverse Features and the Future of the Drive,” which is featured in the book, *After Lacan: Clinical Practice and the Subject of the Unconscious*. She writes the following, found on page 147: “Mr. Beauregard’s mother’s excessive investment in him put him in the position of an imaginary phallus—that of the one who could give satisfaction when the father seemed unsatisfactory. The obsessional subject then begins to try to respond to the mother’s unrelenting and ever-unsatisfied demand. “I have always tried to fulfill my mother’s dreams,” says Mr. Beauregard, adding “I had to be perfect, only my parents were allowed to make mistakes; this outrageousness was assaulting me.” Confusing the mother’s lack with her demand, the obsessional child then *represses his or her*

here as to what would lead to the conclusion that Rahel's psychic structure is akin to that of a female obsessional, and to define this I turn to Joël Dor's research.<sup>78</sup> *The Clinical Lacan*. He writes in a section pertaining to the problematics of obsessional neuroses the following:

The question here is rather one of supplementing what is missing in the satisfaction of the mother's desire, which presupposes that this satisfaction was clearly represented to the child as lacking. The above-mentioned ambiguity lies precisely in this dependence of the mother's desire concerning the father. What the mother indicates to the child, out of his awareness, can be summarized in two elements that do not entirely overlap. On the one hand, the child is well aware that the mother is dependent on the father when it comes to her desire; but, on the other hand, she does not seem to be getting from the father everything she presumably expects from him. When the child perceives this gap in the maternal satisfaction, he sees the way clear to providing a supplement. (111)

It is conceivable that Isaak's remarks regarding Rahel's mother and her penchant for chasing money-toting Christians belies a sense of ineffectiveness or deficiency on his part, that she was not entirely satisfied by what he had to offer to her. Consequently, it is plausible that Rahel would have sensed this lack also on the part of her mother in terms of her desire for her father, if

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*own desire*, which would have been easily accessed, if only the setting up of the phallus had been clear. The mother forces herself on the obsessional son through her continual demand and her son will become the object of her own desire.”

<sup>78</sup> See *The Clinical Lacan*.

we take the events that constitute the narrative at face value, and that we apply basic logic to the situation—a man who feels deficient is likely experiencing a lack of desire for what he has to offer his partner (whatever that may be), which is, in essence, a form of castration. Thus, the daughter, afforded with a strong maternal image and a weak paternal image, is frustrated by the scene; she is trapped in the realm of the mother's unsatisfied desires and her father's dissatisfaction for not being wanted, evoking in her intense feelings of anger that must find an outlet via displacement.

## **König Alfonso: the Male Obsessional**

In the context of *Die Jüdin von Toledo*, we must also examine the psychological structure of König Alfonso, who may also be classified as an obsessional, as revealed through his romantic and erotic behavior patterns. Dor writes the following about the male obsessional in relation to his chosen love objects:

Generally speaking, the obsessional strategy consists of appropriating a living object in order to turn it into a dead one and to see if it remains that way. For the most part, this is the precondition for his having loving relations with her. To attain this goal, he can also ennoble his object by making her ugly, that is, by transforming her into an object that is less and less desirable—which, in a way, guarantees her death. Moreover, this dethroning of her when it comes to desire has the additional advantage of securing imaginary ownership of the object in the face of the constant possibility that there may be a rival. (127)

It is obvious that König Alfonso's romantic tendencies are very much akin to Dor's description. First of all is his interaction with his wife, who is described throughout as a cold fish who knows very little of passion, he himself being described as the same before he makes the acquaintance of the fiery Jewess. In a way he seems comfortable with this state of being, because such a woman is unlikely to seek anything from another man, reinforcing his own image of complete ownership. Rahel makes the perfect mistress for him, for she is the embodiment of sensuality, yet she is a Jewess, and as such, she has no right to demand anything of him. When, however, he is confronted with the emergence of Rahel's personality, he is uncomfortable as he must acknowledge that she is attempting to make demands of him. She will not take a backseat, and she forces him to acknowledge her the way she would like to be addressed. It is from this point forward that Alfonso attempts to diminish her attractiveness in his own eyes and in the eyes of others.

Noteworthy also is the relationship between the obsessional's love object and death. Dor goes on:

Not all obsessionals necessarily set out to make their love object undesirable. Some of them are keenly aware of the eroticization of the other's body. This eroticization, however, is tolerable only if the other is reduced to the level of an object, an object that can be displayed and whose brilliance can only reflect imaginarily on the owner. But here, even more than in any other situation, the object must then be completely extinguished, even radically dead. Only on this

condition can it exist erotically. In a certain sense the erotic subject serves the same function as a sports car, whose ideal role is to keep still so that its owner can be admired in it. (128)

In the the case of König Alfonso, we also see something of this tendency. Toward the beginning of the play, he reinforces that although the Jews are not a group of which he would like to be a part, they are close to the cradle of creation and the origins of civilization. In a sense he praises himself here for the rare vintage jewel he has discovered in Rahel as though she were an ancient artefact finding itself in his possession. Over time, however, he sees that he cannot own her; those closest to him will not accept his own image of the Jewess, and in order to retain what he already owns, he must release the object that threatens to jeopardize his sense of security.

Ultimately, Alfonso must relinquish the woman who causes this threat, which actualizes itself in Rahel's physical death. Alfonso's reaction to the event is peculiar, but not particularly so bearing in mind that his character exhibits an obsessional psychological structure. His goal is to render his love object mute in terms of desire, to restrict the object from being able to express anything bearing any resemblance to desire toward him, making Rahel's death superfluous.

## **Rahel's Contribution to the Drama: Devil's Advocate or Social Reformer with a Death Wish?**

Among Rahel's interesting characteristics are her genuine respect for peace and the brotherhood and sisterhood of humankind and her willingness to criticize what seems unjust

about the behavior of those she encounters. Unfortunately, the majority of interpretations of her function in the drama completely overshadow this point or neglect to regard it with any importance. One such example of these characteristics is poignantly illustrated by her discussion with Garceran. It goes as follows:

Ihr seid ein echter Ritter in der Tat,  
Nicht nur dem Namen nach, wie sies gelernt,  
Die stolzen, eisernen Kastilier,  
Von ihren Feinden, von der Mauren Volk,  
Nur daß, was jene zierlich und geschickt  
Als Ausdruck üben angeborenen Sinns,  
Sie rauh und derb nachahmen, weil geborgt.  
Gebt mir die Hand! Sieh doch, wie ist sie sanft,  
Und doch führt ihr das Schwert wie jene andern.  
Nur seid ihr heimisch auch im Fraungemach  
Und wißt, was Brauch und heitern Umgangs Sitte.  
Hier dieser Ring ist wohl von Doña Klara,



Die viel zu bleich für wangenfrische Liebe,

Wär nicht die Farbe, die dem Antlitz fehlt,

Ersetzt durch stets erneutes Schamerröten.

Doch hier seh ich noch andre Ringe mehr.

Wieviel habt ihr Geliebte, nun, gesteht. (483)

Noteworthy here is Rahel's worldly knowledge given her young age. She understands that there is a difference between surface appearances and reality, and, despite Garceran's seemingly mild-mannered demeanor and apparent courtesy, he is a fallible man full of imperfections. Rahel is not the immature girl Alfonso makes her out to be, nor is she the purely ignorant and vapid materialist that her father imagines her to be. Rather, she understands the difference between private and professional matters and the unfortunate reality that peace and goodwill between various ethnic and religious groups is but an idyllic dream. She knows that there is not merely one woman in Garceran's life and she comprehends that decorum is but a semblance that must be maintained before the people. Given Rahel's relatively well-rounded character, we must understand her function in the drama as representing a concept that goes beyond mere sexual object, victim, or fickle and naive instigator of a laughable power game. She makes an effective commentary that critiques not only her lover, but the entirety of the established order, including all of his subjects and confidants.

Among the most striking of her actions is the decision to remove Alfonso's picture from its frame, which is significant both from an allegorical standpoint and a psychoanalytic perspective, seeing she is bent not only on the removal of the item, but also on anchoring the image upon a fixed point of display. Rahel's monologue goes as follows:

Und werds auch diesmal nicht.

Das Bild gefällt mir. Sieh, es ist so schön,

Ich häng es in der Stube nächst zum Bette.

Des Morgens und des Abends blick ichs an

Und denke mir, was man nun eben denkt,

Wenn man der Kleider Last von sich geschüttelt

Und frei sich fühlt von jedem lästgen Druck.

Doch, daß sie meinen nicht, ich stahl es etwa,

– Bin ich doch reich und brauche Stehlens nicht –

Du trägst mein eigen Bild an deinem Hals,

Das hängen wir an dieses andern Stelle.

Das mag er ansehen, so wie seines ich.

Und mein gedenken, hätt er mich vergessen.

Rück mir den Schemmel her, ich bin die Königin,

Und diesen König heft ich an den Stuhl.

Die Hexen, sagt man, die zur Liebe zwingen,

Sie bohren Nadeln, so, in Wachsgebilde,

Und jeder Stich dringt bis zum Herzen ein

Und hemmt und fördert wahrgeschaffnes Leben. (469-70)

It is noteworthy that she speaks of removing her clothing as though it were a liberation from pressure and burden. This can be interpreted as a relief from having to play the role of woman before society or from masquerading as the mindless, vapid, child-like flirt that she is made out to be. Rather, this decision to remove the picture from the frame demonstrates an awareness of her own predicament. In order for her to be reborn as the woman she wishes to be, she must succeed at removing her self-image from the frame that others have imposed on her and cut herself off from their own narcissistic projections, regardless of the source. The attire she wears is but a mask for her true purpose. Furthermore, Rahel is not satisfied with her image dangling from a charm on a necklace as it is not firmly anchored, instead wishing to fix it upon a point from which it may not easily be removed—a place where it is rooted and admired properly, a putting on display of the phallic object.

It is not enough for her to see the image fastened to a fixed point, however, in a place where one would expect to find the image of the female monarch. She desires also for the image of the other, Alfonso's likeness, to be fixed to the chair, representing her attempts at recognition of her own purpose and identity through her interaction with something outside of herself. In fixing his image to the chair, it is plausible that she feels vindicated for her negative experiences with her father, and in this, she is putting the disappointing males in her life in their rightful places and assuming her new status as a queen, albeit not of the kingdom, but of her own identity.<sup>79</sup> The problem in this, of course, is the highly inappropriate manner in which she has conducted herself. Rahel has gone too far in her quest to assert her own feminine power, which is substantiated by the final lines in the passage, which smack of sorcery, perhaps even of voodoo, the magical manifestations of a desire to make her dreams of a new life in which she is free from all stereotypes and judgments a reality.

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<sup>79</sup> This relates directly to the realm of the Imaginary in Lacanian thought, which Malcolm Bowie expounds upon on pg. 92 of his *Lacan*: "The Imaginary is the order of mirror-images, identifications and reciprocities. It is the dimension of experience in which the individual seeks not simply to placate the Other but to dissolve his otherness by becoming his counterpart. By way of the Imaginary, the original identificatory procedures which brought the ego into being are repeated and reinforced by the individual in his relationship with the external world of people and things. The Imaginary is the scene of a desperate and delusional attempt to be and to remain 'what one is' by gathering to oneself ever more instances of sameness, resemblance and self-replication [...] Lacan's 'Imaginary' thus creates a bridge between inner-directed and outer-directed mental acts, and belongs as much to the objects of perception as to those internal objects for which the word is usually reserved in ordinary speech."

Although Rahel's obsessive chair and photograph rituals are bizarre to say the least, the most revealing passage insofar as her psychological make-up is concerned is the portion of her monologue in which she speaks of her desire to drink the blood of her victims. The following are her words:

O, gäbe jeder dieser Stiche Blut,

Ich wollt es trinken mit den durstgen Lippen

Und mich erfreun am Unheil, das ich schuf.

Nun hängt es da und ist so schön als stumm.

Ich aber red ihn an als Königin

Mit Mantel und mit Krone, die mich kleiden.

Ihr ehrvergeßner Mann, stellt euch nur fromm,

Ich kenne dennoch jeden eurer Schliche.

Die Jüdin, sie gefiel euch, leugnets nur!

Und sie ist schön, bei meinem hohen Wort,

Nur mit mir selber etwa zu vergleichen. (470)

It is noteworthy that Rahel compares her desire for revenge with the act of drinking, of bloodthirstiness.<sup>80</sup> Furthermore, it is revealing that she delights in the harm that she herself will have created, addressing Alfonso as though she were his wife. Particularly important is to her the attire that she will wear, the outward symbol of status and position, part of the masquerade she puts on before the kingdom. She bluntly and brusquely states that she knows every one of their tricks, indicating that she is not nearly as naive as those who encounter her make her out to be. What she goes on to state is indicative of her foremost goal, to gain control over her own life and situation; she will no longer stand for her mistreatment at the hands of her father and of society. Rahel will conduct herself as though she now has the ultimate authority to decide where she will position herself and how she wants herself to be seen. No longer will anyone else have the power to compare her to another. Henceforth she will make comparisons only on the basis of her own

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<sup>80</sup> This relates to the notion of “blood libel,” a term that refers to the false belief that Jews kidnapped children for ritual sacrifice during religious holidays such as Passover and Easter. Robert Weinberg writes the following on pgs. 275-6 of his “The Blood Libel in Eastern Europe”: “Church officials in Rome issued numerous papal bulls that rejected the notion of blood libel, asserting that Jews did not engage in Host desecration or use gentile blood for the baking of matzo. But the Vatican had difficulty stemming the belief among parishioners and clergy, particularly during the Passover and Easter holidays. The disappearance of a child was often sufficient to raise the cry of ritual murder, and if the child’s body turned up bruised or mutilated, Jews would be arrested, tortured, or even executed by local authorities. Suspicions about the role of Jews in these alleged murders created situations in which gentiles attacked their Jewish neighbors with impunity and prompted communities to expel Jews, particularly in German-speaking Europe. The best-known case of blood libel from this time period occurred in Trent in 1475, when a group of Jewish men and women, subjected to savage torture on the strappado, confessed to killing a two-year-old child and were then burned at the stake.”

achievements and progress. As darkly this wish may seem to manifest itself, freedom from judgment and independence from the expectations of others are both valid desires, if only she were able to achieve her aims more healthily and with less potential for ruin or disaster.

Furthermore, Rahel's descriptions of nailing portraits to chairs—likened to the manner in which witches drive pins into the bodies of their unsuspecting victims—are true manifestations of her pent up desires, forever enslaved to the dissatisfying world her mother inhabited, in so doing, forcing Rahel to remain there with her. The story of Rahel is the tale of a young woman who unconsciously tried, perhaps for the first time, to assert herself in the world in an effort to release herself from the ties that bound her to a life that was ultimately dissatisfying. The image of the portrait anchored to the chair could be likened to that of a person tied to a chair in a metaphorical sense, firmly planted with no chance of escape, no sense of control over the situation, and the impossibility of making a decision unless the rope is cut by some external source that comes to the rescue of the victim. Underlying her apparent devil-may-care attitude, Rahel is just a young woman with hope for a brighter destiny not only for herself, but for the entire kingdom. She is a champion of the underdog and of those who feel they cannot help themselves, and thus she, along with her sister, Esther, reinforce the model of sorority and fraternity that Grillparzer espouses in his poetic, lyrical, and dramatic works.

Ultimately, we can conclude that both Rahel and König Alfonso somehow felt thwarted in their lives as a consequence of patriarchal expectations and narcissistic parental projections. This feeling of being stuck in the world breeds resentment that can manifest itself as turning

against oneself, or, alternatively, through a vengefulness directed at others, or some combination of both. Displacement of anger, frustration, and the libido is merely a temporary solution; the reality revealing itself in the context of this drama is that the defense mechanisms of the obsessional do not fix the underlying problem(s), nor do they offer a solution to the subject's internal conflicts, which must ultimately be faced directly. The function that a psychoanalytic reading such as this one accomplishes is to reveal the various undercurrents underlying the subjective experiences and motivations of the author, and, furthermore, to understand how the psychological structures of given characters can function as allegorical instruments of sociological critique, thus emphasizing the bigger picture shaping the attitudes of entire generations. It is necessary in this context to emphasize that the author's critique may not be conscious, and that these undercurrents may contradict the author's perceived purpose for writing. Furthermore, these may conflict with the dramatist's own theories regarding the correct method of approach for the genre.

For Grillparzer, allegory serves a function that effectively accentuates the disjointedness between nature, society, and the self; he demonstrates how humans may strive to understand and reconcile these elements, but that they ultimately elude human grasp. Grillparzer's Rahel is overcome by the instinctually-driven mob that has overrun the kingdom just as his Jakob in *Der arme Spielmann* is killed not directly by the great flood that took the lives of many, but by the societal ideals that were instilled in him. In both cases, nature compels, but it is nurture that overcomes the characters and removes them from the world through what Serge Leclaire would refer to as "the second death." It is this underlying element of the human threat that hints at



Grillparzer's ever-present message of social idealism—that the fear of one man at the hands of his neighbor is to be overcome via the acceptance of differences without letting stereotypes and unfounded prejudices take hold over his entire life.

In Grillparzer's theoretical writings about the nature of the drama, he writes about the function of the tragedy, which is essential to understanding his motivations and approach as an author, and to placing him with regard to both his predecessors and his successors. He writes:

Es ist ein Schicksal, das den Gerechten hienieden fallen läßt und den Ungerechten siegen, das »unvergoltene« Wunden schlägt, hier unvergolten. Laßt euch von der Geschichte belehren, daß es eine moralische Weltordnung gibt, die im Geschlechte ausgleicht, was stört in den Individuen; laßt euch von der Philosophie und Religion sagen, daß es ein Jenseits gibt, wo auch das Rechtthun des Individuums seine Vollendung und Verherrlichung findet. Mit diesen Vorkenntnissen und Gefühlen tretet vor unsere Bühne und ihr werdet verstehen was wir wollen. (303)

Here Grillparzer extrapolates upon his view that it is through history that humankind learns of the moral institutions that order society, and that this is where the individual must seek his redemption. It is through philosophy and religion that humankind comes to embrace the present and to understand that this is where the good-natured efforts of humankind come to their fruition. In the drama, however, and particularly in the tragic drama, what is right and what is just must be

separated from the performance that is to take place on stage. Audience participants must bring this knowledge to the theatre, lest they misunderstand the true purpose of the dramatist.

## **Comparison to Lessing's *Die Juden***

Worthy of examination in the context of this analysis are the thematic similarities between Lessing's play, *Die Juden*, and *Die Jüdin von Toledo*. Martin Krumm and Michel Stich (the names betray their devious ways) formulate a plan to deceive Martin's master, the Baron, by wearing disguises designed to fool him into thinking they are Jews, thus concealing their true identities. Their plan is foiled when they encounter a traveling man who protects the Baron from his attackers. In a twist of events, the Baron's daughter and the traveler develop a mutual romantic interest in one another, which prompts the Baron to enlist his servant, Lisette, to find out more about the traveler's background and circumstances. She does this by making conversation with the traveler's servant, Christoph. The trouble arises when it is discovered that Martin Krumm has stolen a box of tobacco that has changed hands multiple times, being given as a gift in exchange for favors and information. After the Baron comes to the realization that the traveler has saved him more than once from his less than honest servant, Martin, he decides that his daughter must marry the traveling man. Unfortunately, the traveler makes an admission about his Jewish faith that prevents him from taking the Baron's daughter as his bride. The comedy serves as a reminder that an individual's character should not be judged on the basis of religion or ethnic heritage.

This play is interesting, seeing the traveling man gets shortchanged due to no fault of his own, unlike Rahel, whose downfall is brought about in part due to her own unwise reaction to circumstances she had little control over. In contrast to Rahel, the traveling man is a wonderful moral and ethical role model. Because he has done everything right throughout the development of the plot, the end result makes the discrimination and unjustness of the situation all the more clear. The dishonest men who pretend to be Jews masquerade as the negative Jewish caricature that Grillparzer's Isaak seems to represent—the greedy, self-interested character who cares about nothing other than his own material satisfaction. In Lessing's version, this character type is effectively reprimanded, although the traveling man goes without reward, which too strongly emphasizes that he has been mistreated.

## **Conclusion**

It is possible that Grillparzer's depictions of his characters in *Die Jüdin von Toledo* serve simply to underscore the psychic realities underlying the dark underbelly of society—to depict the obsession, fanaticism, narcissism, envy, fear, dissatisfaction, misunderstanding, and hatred that can arise within the human psyche and the subsequent collisions that result when these unresolved emotions intersect in the everyday interactions between people. This is as true today as it was during Grillparzer's prime as an author and dramatist in early to mid 1800s Austria and prior to his birth. It is likely that Grillparzer recognized that many of the lessons of the Enlightenment had not been learned, and that humankind would persist in its weaknesses and shortcomings despite the lessons that history should have taught the generations. Thus the stage

is the forum to present all of the unpleasant realities alongside the more pleasant ones, that place in which we meet the person we ourselves are, reflected back at us through the eyes of a character playing a role on stage. Grillparzer's *Die Jüdin von Toledo* follows, in part, this pattern of a hierarchical order in which each character must assume his or her place in society. The play features characters such as Isaak, who seems not to deviate from his rigidly-defined role. To put it bluntly, he is a greedy, narcissistic embarrassment, a disappointment to his daughters, and he makes no effort to rise above his shortcomings. In this sense, he is exactly the type of father his daughter, Rahel, needs in order for her to assume her respective function in the play. She is the only character who dies a tragic and unfortunate death, and in the sense that she was the only one who tried earnestly to purge herself of societal expectations in order to uphold her own virtues and make an attempt at finding her own freedom, she is the only character that could truly be described as dynamic. It is as König Alfonso puts it: "sie aber reichen bis an der Schöpfung Wiege, wo die Gottheit noch menschengleich in Paradiesen ging, wo Cherubim zu Gast bei Patriarchen, und Richter war und Recht der einge Gott."

When approaching Grillparzer's *Jüdin von Toledo*, we must understand the benefits that a psychoanalytic reading of the text affords us. In examining the apparent obsessional psychological structures of characters such as Rahel and König Alfonso and the Baroque representations of characters like Rahel's father, Isaak, we understand the role of paternal displacement in both this work and the entirety of Grillparzer's oeuvre. Grillparzer's obsessional tendencies rooted in his overly intimate relationship with his own mother find their expression in his lyric and inform his approach toward his role as a dramatist and a writer of prose.

Despite the apparent ambivalence toward and frustration with the role of the father and with patriarchal institutions, authority is generally tested, but never overthrown. In a conflation of Baroque and Enlightenment techniques, the dramatist seeks to portray the world as is—including its reprehensible and undesirable elements—while suggesting simultaneously that the reader or audience member is responsible for his own intellectual liberation and enlightenment. Authority is not taken from the father entirely, as his function is imperative for the obsessional, but instead re-appropriated toward brotherhood and sisterhood. Esther's re-affirmation of the necessity for understanding is the highlight of the drama—a plea for the agape type of love that the world must strive to sustain.

## CHAPTER V

### AN OBSESSIONAL'S DREAM: THE SEEKER AND THE WISE MAN IN GRILLPARZER'S *DER TRAUM EIN LEBEN*

#### Introduction

Grillparzer's depictions of obsessional neuroticism reach a climax in *his Der Traum ein Leben*, in which masculine and paternal ideals are put to the test. The drama's main protagonist is a youth whose life is about to change inalterably, leaving him with fears, doubts, and unfulfilled hopes and desires. Armed with a sense of adventure and a vague idea of what it means to be a man, he decides that it is time for him to put his manhood to the test, fighting for his right to win what's his. Putting his existing love affair with fiancée, Mirza, in jeopardy, and leaving his Oheim<sup>81</sup> and future father-in-law, Massud, frustrated by his apparent lack of foresight, Rustan embarks on a challenging journey with his man servant, Zanga.

What sets this drama apart from Grillparzer's other works, however, is that it focuses on the dream—what it is comprised of and what stakes it reveals. A series of events transpire, some exciting, some enlightening, and some utterly horrifying. Throughout the experience, Rustan has no indication that he has actually been dreaming the entire time. Consequently, both readers and

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<sup>81</sup> We understand from this that Rustan is to marry his female cousin, given that "Oheim" is an archaic German term signifying an uncle.

critics are kept completely in the dark about the meaning of the plot until the drama has concluded. It is upon awakening that Rustan acknowledges his grave error and understands that it is the wise man, not the man of war, whose life he should seek to emulate. At the same time, the psychoanalytic critic understands Rustan's interactions with Zanga as dialogues with the symbolic representative of his own unconscious, and his frustrations with Zanga as displaced anger at his own motivations revealed through the dream. As complicated as this may seem on the surface, it is actually very simple. It is Rustan's shadow that leads him to undertake the unfortunate dream journey in which he kills a man and takes his own life, and it is through Zanga that his conscious ego understands he has done wrong.<sup>82</sup>

Furthermore, the play emphasizes Grillparzer's status as an accidental enlightener and prescient trailblazer in the field of psychoanalysis. Grillparzer's emphasis on brotherhood is supported here with ideals of prudence, wisdom, and practical foresight, which are tied to the biblical allusions he explores in his novellas and some of his other dramatic works. Here Grillparzer focuses on the type of man a youth should aspire to be—not a man of war like David, but one of wisdom, like his son, the wise King Solomon. Interesting to note is the importance of the King David and Solomon narrative not only in Christianity, but also in Judaism and Islam, a

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<sup>82</sup> Relevant here is the Jungian concept of the shadow as repressed material that represents the opposite of the ego image. The shadow is projected onto others, and is, in this sense, misappropriated as belonging to another as opposed to belonging to the self.

narrative that is, in essence, unifying rather than divisive, in that the story is known and respected by followers of all three Mosaic religions.<sup>83</sup> The undercurrents of Goethe's Orientalism are apparent, and the text's biblical allusions are complemented by pregnant metaphors taken from the Iranian epic.<sup>84</sup> The displacement of paternity is especially relevant here, because the absence of Rustan's father is a driving factor in his desire to explore and conquer foreign territories and assert himself as a ruler elsewhere to delay making important decisions in his waking life.

In addition, we must also note the significance of naming in the play's interpretation, in particular with respect to the names Rustan, Zanga, Mirza, and Osmin, which I will lay out as having cultural, sociohistorical and psychoanalytic ramifications of the play. Naming becomes particularly important as wisdom is transmitted to the reader via this mechanism. In a hermeneutic sense, we understand the text as a dream only in retrospect, naming aiding us in the process of interpretation, awakening, and discovery. Important to consider is the relationship between Enlightenment and psychology—and especially Freudian psychology—as it is outlined

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<sup>83</sup> Although biblical figures are not explicitly referred to by name in the text, the dichotomy between the man Rustan wants to be and the man his betrothed's father hopes he will become corresponds with the character traits of the father/son pair, David and Solomon.

<sup>84</sup> Perhaps we can owe this richness to Grillparzer's childlessness and to treat his though creations as though they were his children, as Brigitte Prutti refers to it in her *Grillparzers Welttheater Modernität und Tradition*: "Die künstlerische Produktion erscheint [...] als ein Akt der männlichen Selbstschöpfung, der die Gebärfähigkeit der Frau überbietet und den biologischen Ursprung erfolgreich überwindet" (38). Because Grillparzer himself did not have any children of his own, it is plausible that this work represents a wish fulfillment for him—perhaps working through his own desire to create something worth remembering.



by Jürgen Habermas, who asserts that psychoanalysis does not work to ascertain cause and effect relationships, instead dissolving them altogether.<sup>85</sup> The ending of Grillparzer's "dramatisches Märchen" is particularly interesting in this context—we know that Rustan has become aware of his repressed desires and that he plans to act, yet we do not learn whether he does act, or whether he continues with his *Verschiebung*, a trait characteristic of obsessionals. We, the readers, are left with a "hanging image"<sup>86</sup> that keeps us in suspense, which in effect spurs us to question concepts such as fate, destiny, and free will: will we become instruments of peace and unity or war and division? What effect do the symptoms of obsessional neuroticism have on families and entire societies? These are the questions that Grillparzer's text poses, making Grillparzer something of an inadvertent enlightener precisely because we expect action and can merely interpret the nature of Rustan's quandary. The reader is left wanting for resolve, hoping to find out where Rustan and Zanga will go next and to determine whether Rustan actually makes good on his promise to Mirza. An observation that must be made, however, is that the reader does receive Rustan's acknowledgement of what he is relieved not to be. From this, we understand

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<sup>85</sup> Habermas writes: "Die Psychoanalyse ist für uns als das einzige greifbare Beispiel einer methodisch Selbstreflexion in Anspruch nehmenden Wissenschaft relevant. Mit der Entstehung der Psychoanalyse eröffnet sich die Möglichkeit eines methodologischen, von der Logik der Forschung selbst gebahnten Zugangs zu jener von Positivismus verschütteten Dimension. Diese Möglichkeit ist nicht realisiert worden, denn das szientistische Selbstmißverständnis der Psychoanalyse, das Freud, der Physiologe, der er von Haus aus war, selber inauguriert hat, hat jene Möglichkeit verstellt. Freilich ist das Misverständnis nicht ganz unbegründet. Die Psychoanalyse verbindet nämlich Hermeneutik mit Leistungen, die genuin den Naturwissenschaften vorebehalten zu sein scheinen"(262-3).

<sup>86</sup> Here again we are reminded of the suicide of Grillparzer's mother by hanging and his own obsessional traits.

that Rustan has encountered his shadow and taken the first steps of integrating it, and that he has thus resolved to let the light into his consciousness. At the very least, we understand that Rustan wishes to love rather than to hate, which reemphasizes Grillparzer's emphasis on love in the context of Enlightenment—something that goes beyond pure reason.

In the first section of this chapter, I will address some of Grillparzer's influences and inspirations for writing *Der Traum ein Leben* and provide background regarding the relevance of gender, the connection between the Occident and the Orient, and Grillparzer's aim to breathe new life into archaic wisdom by placing it into a contemporary framework. The second will feature a psychoanalytic interpretation of the characters and the formal structure of the text, examining how symbols reveal the meaning of the dream. The final section will tie the aforementioned observations together, demonstrating how the biblical allusions and symbolic interpretations reveal Grillparzer as an unwitting enlightener focused on the preservation of knowledge and the guardianship of wisdom above mindless war and a blind belief in the patriarchal structure of society as it existed prior to the French Revolution.

## **Influences and Originality: Gender, Love, Theology, and the Intersection Between Occident and Orient**

There are elements of Calderón's drama *La vida es sueño* that Grillparzer seems to have borrowed for his own corpus of dramatic works, including *Die Jüdin von Toledo*. Calderón's Rosaura has much in common with Grillparzer's Rahel and Esther, both of whom must find their

own paths on account of their father's unwillingness to come to the defense of his daughters when their lives are in peril. Rosaura compares herself to a mythological female warrior, which is very much the type of archetype that Rahel seeks to adopt, although this leads to her own self-destruction and a tragedy of the highest magnitude. In both of these cases, we see the emergence of a character type that defies the traditionally established order. The portrayals of women in Grillparzer's plays are, as in the plays of Calderón, worthy of examination insofar as they relate to the ambivalent points-of-view that the former seems to support. On the one hand, Grillparzer is a traditionalist who seeks to guard and revive the wisdom of a lost age, and on the other, he begins to portray women who, on the one hand, throw caution to the wind, and on the other, seek to control as many details of their lives as possible.

That said, Grillparzer's representations of women emphasize their wisdom and sensibilities, but also demonstrate self-destructive tendencies that are exhibited not because of but through their interactions with the opposite sex. *Der Traum ein Leben* is a noteworthy work because he chooses to depict a male hero who has qualities of both Rahel and Esther from his *Die Jüdin von Toledo*, his fate differing from Rahel's perhaps only because he is dreaming. When considering the role of gender in the drama, we must simultaneously address the matter of love. We can infer that Grillparzer's emphasis is on developing a style of loving that could best be described as agape or storge as opposed to holding on to notions of erotic or pragmatic love. In the embedded dream, we see Rustan experiencing love as Ludus, given that he is involved, unknowingly, in an encounter with his shadow.

In *Die Jüdin von Toledo*, we see the same concepts configured differently. Rahel suffers at the hands of the men in her life, and though the king's "love" is erotic, she embraces Ludus in self-deception. Despite her understanding that these male figures promise her only grief, she persists anyway, failing to acknowledge that her fatal, self-destructive desire is her own. Her fear results from what is perceived to be a very real threat, but her subsequent actions are committed on her own volition, for which she must take responsibility. Ultimately, Rahel's strong and unintegrated shadow causes her to realize her death wish. On the other hand, Esther is wise enough to know what Rahel is doing, but fails to stop her. It is because she does not stop her that the drama enlightens us—at last we see the image of the strong and wise woman, Esther, who teaches us the folly of acting mindlessly—without forethought—and failing to consider not only the plight of our neighbors, but also of the capacity for destructiveness that lies within each and every one of us. In this sense, Esther serves a didactic function for the reader already on the path to Enlightenment. Grillparzer's hero, Rustan, on the other hand, also teaches us that love—no matter which type it may be—is something to be cultivated. Rustan's heroine (die Sonne—die "Erleuchterin") in turn, is the light, which helps him to overcome his own darkness.

It is at this point of intersection between gender, love, and the dichotomy between light and darkness that we can best come to understand Grillparzer's incorporation of orientalist symbols and motifs. Grillparzer's dramas and lyrical works have much in common with Goethe's *West-östlicher Divan*, which was written prior to 1814 and 1819—some time after the

young Grillparzer himself had already started exploring these themes in his own poetry.<sup>87</sup>

Samarakand, the destination that Rustan seeks to reach is a real place with a rich history. Located in what today is modern day Uzbekistan, the area was conquered by a variety of peoples throughout the centuries, including the Iranians, the Persians, and the Turks. It was the site of a flurry of activity during the years in which trade between China and the Mediterranean countries flourished on the Silk Road. Artists, architects, mathematicians, traders, musicians, and scholars called the area home, and the city housed followers of a great many religions, including Christianity, Judaism, Buddhism, Hinduism, and Zoroastrianism, to name but a few. In this sense, Samarakand was one of the most cosmopolitan cities in the world, making it an attractive setting for Grillparzer, whose studies in Judaic and Islamic theology led him to believe that their tenets held some value in modern society on the grounds of their tendency toward unity.

It is probable that an interest in the Orient caused Grillparzer to emulate some aspects of Voltaire's French tale "Le Blanc et Le Noir" in his own work, though the influence likely reflects more powerfully on Grillparzer's own desire to borrow fragments of the tales he had encountered over the years in an effort to present literary wisdom in a new way. Voltaire sought to criticize Leibniz's theories pertaining to the notion of pre-established harmony in the universe and the conclusion that God's chosen universe is the best of all possible worlds, and thus his approach in *Candide* was to reflect on those ideas critically, ultimately concluding that a simple life of labor is preferable to a life of adventure and incessant philosophical reflection. To be sure, such

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<sup>87</sup> Grillparzer's interest in Eastern religions and the orient is seen already in his poem from April of 1806 entitled, "Der wahre Glaube," which I reference elsewhere in my analysis.

incessant thought is detrimental to developing a tempered lifestyle, and it seems that Grillparzer's ideology incorporates some elements of both sides of the Leibniz/Voltaire dichotomy. Grillparzer approached both religion and science ambivalently, sometimes favoring one at the expense of the other; nonetheless, it is his approach toward love and equality that is most poignant.

On the other hand, Voltaire's "Le Blanc et Le Noir" plays into the racial stereotypes of the era in that the angels of "light" and "darkness" are differentiated by the color of their skin and their social status, although Grillparzer's own version of the tale does not, and in fact, does the opposite. Grillparzer's version does not explicitly contain angels or divine messengers, and yet, his take on the tale is rich in symbolism and biblical allusions that are, simultaneously, both subtle and glaringly enlightening. In addition, the naming of his characters is significant only—though not by any measure insignificantly—insofar as it becomes a hermeneutic tool of discovery that reiterates what is already present in the plot and in the religious and cultural allusions that are found there.

Given Grillparzer's originality and his influences, it is my contention that Grillparzer was concerned with the topic of neurosis and its relationship to the changing societal ideals of his time. Perhaps we can owe this to Grillparzer's own obsessional neurosis formed as a consequence of an overly symbiotic relationship with his mother, to his engagement with philosophies and religions foreign to him, and to his views regarding the politics surrounding the rights of women and minority groups in his native Austria. I do not view Grillparzer's *Der*

*Traum ein Leben* as a Biedermeier drama concerned merely with the affairs of the domestic sphere, but rather as a realistic depiction of the process through which humankind discovers itself—its dreams, hopes, wishes, fears, and vices. I assert that Grillparzer holds true to his Baroque inspirations in a subtle and unique manner that could almost go unnoticed in light of the complexities evinced by the plot and the interactions between the characters themselves. We see traces of the Baroque in the author's relationship to divine authority and his implementation of trochaes, for example.

On the whole, we see elements of Enlightenment thought that urge us first to tend to the gardens of our families and communities and to be accountable for own knowledge and actions, lest we delay this important work, instead over-philosophizing and engaging in thought and behavior rituals that are detrimental to the cultivation of balanced and insightful personalities. Grillparzer depicts the totality of life and the means through which persons and places are connected through a chain of events, but never with the aim to excuse them from their actions or to evade reality. He does, however, focus on the role of the author in serving as the guardian of wisdom and a messenger of important knowledge contained in the philosophies, religions, and literary canons of bygone eras. In doing so, he breathes new life into old systems of thought, examines the neuroses and obsessions developed by individuals and entire societies, and depicts the beauty of human vulnerabilities and frailties. Psychoanalytic insights are merely byproducts of the authenticity of his representations of social and personal ambivalence—conflicts between unfulfilled hopes, wishes, guilt, and the ego.

## **Dialogues Between the Ego and the Unconscious: the Seeker**

### **Embarks on a Journey**

Before the advent of Rustan's journey and while he is still deliberating with his man servant, Zanga, an interesting exchange takes place, alluding to the fact that Zanga alone is not to blame for the misfortune that is to come, but rather, that the idea arises from a dialogue between both men—a dialogue that indicates that it is Rustan's wish to prove himself and that Zanga is merely aligned with that wish. Here Rustan expresses his desire to follow in the footsteps of his father, abandoning a life of peace and boredom for something he deems more fulfilling:

Schon mein Vater war ein Krieger,

Meines Vaters Vater auch,

Und so fort durch alle Grade.

Ihr Blut pocht in diesen Adern,

Ihre Kraft stiehlt diese Faust,

Und ich soll hier müßig träumen? (99)

The most obvious observation here is that Rustan fears he is wasting his capacities. He feels that he is a strong young man with a great deal of potential, and that if he does nothing to exercise his power, he will lose out on the honors that could have been his for the taking. Of course, this use it or lose it attitude belies another fear, and that is the fear of castration. Somehow Rustan thinks



that he is less of a man if he does not follow in his ancestral footsteps, and in doing so, he will embark on a rite of passage that all young people must undertake in order to come into their own. Like Grillpazer's Rahel from *Die Jüdin von Toledo*, Rustan must give birth to his own self-image; in this case, however, the father's image of his child is withheld, an unknown. Rustan will be an adventurer and a hero at any cost, and no one is able to talk him out of it. As is the case with König Alfonso, the circumstances surrounding Rustan's mother are something of a mystery, although we see a mother surrogate appear in the form of the old woman.<sup>88</sup> The reader is also left in the dark insofar as the whereabouts of Rustan's father are concerned, leaving only the exotic imago of the dream father surrogates and his future father-in-law as representatives of his relationship with male role models. This mystery is what ultimately places the focus on the substance of the dream, at not on irrelevant descriptions of trivial matters; instead, we as readers understand that Rustan is obsessed with always finding and challenging the father elsewhere.

In his efforts to clarify what it is that Rustan is actually seeking, Zanga neither discourages nor encourages him outright but instead reinforces his motivations:

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<sup>88</sup> Prutti examines Grillparzer's self-described "Mondkalb" (a term borrowed from the Grimms) and the concept of discovery via intimation resultant in the "fatherless" birth in *Die Ahnfrau* here: "Der angehende Autor hat literarisches Moonlighting betrieben und ein Monster produziert oder, ins Positive gewendet, ein Original, den der spielerisch verwendete negative Begriff unterstreicht mit diesem Wort die Selbstständigkeit seiner quasi-mütterlichen vis imaginative gegenüber geläufigen generischen Mustern und Traditionsvorgaben, den Primat der Erfindung gegenüber der Nachahmung (d.h. Ähnlichkeitsrelation), und er verteidigt das Resultat dieser vaterlosen Geburt im Zeichen des Mondes. Es gibt noch ein weiteres Stück, das Grillparzer in seiner Autobiographie als Mondkalb bezeichnet hat, nämlich das zwischen 1818 und 1831 entstandene exotische Märchendrama *Der Traum ein Leben*" (49).

Ihr sollt nicht, beim Himmel, nicht!

Wenn ihr wollt, ei, Herr, so handelt.

Ja, wenn die da drin nicht wären!

Dieser Oheim, diese Muhme

Hängen euch wie schwere Fesseln – (99)

In essence, Zanga expresses that Rustan should follow his own desire. He does not try to stop him, but Zanga will not go so far as to employ the first person and express his own thoughts at this stage in the dialogue. Instead, he defers to his master, who must ultimately take responsibility for his wishes. Noteworthy is Zanga's characterization of Rustan's Oheim, who is described as dogmatic, inflexible, and rigid—someone Rustan seems to delight in evading. Rustan experiences these rules for his prescribed lifestyle as stifling, living as though he were shackled. Unfortunately for Rustan, he does not seem to understand that his metaphorical imprisonment is self-imposed, and that it can be attributed to his inability to acknowledge the nature of his own desire, because, at the outset, both he and the reader are unaware of its existence. And, at the end of the narrative, we realize only in his renunciation of taking immediate action (because Grillparzer does not show it to us, either intentionally or unintentionally)—in his disavowal—that Rustan is, at the very least, aware both of the existence

of his unconscious and of the creative and destructive potentials of the desires that he finds there.<sup>89</sup>

Whether Rustan is, in fact, able to make this choice remains to be seen. His ambivalence about remaining in his community and wedding his cousin, Mirza, expressed through his dream wish to go on a journey and make a new life for himself, can be explained by a trait that isn't uncommon to obsessionals: the tendency to distort one's own desire. Obsessionals often fail to understand that their conflicts are reactive responses to their own interests in external possibilities. In essence, the neurotic becomes alienated from his or her own intentions because the conflict has its origins in precisely those intentions. This topic is examined by David Shapiro, who describes the different forms of neurotic self-estrangement. He cites two particular examples that are relevant to Rustan's psychological type. The first is that of a woman who consistently disparages her relationship with her male partner, referring to it as an addiction. Although she speaks about him with affection, she simultaneously discounts her feelings for him as being problematic. About this, Shapiro writes the following:

It is not remarkable that someone should disapprove of a wish or an interest of theirs and feel conflict for that reason; nor is such conflict on that account

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<sup>89</sup> "*His*" is ambiguous here. The questions we must ask are the following: why does Grillparzer stop short of revealing Rustan's desire? To enlighten his audience by leaving them in suspense (the result of a successful and praiseworthy creative endeavor), to deny his own evolving desire (as a reaction against the self), or to save himself the embarrassment associated with impotence?

neurotic. Rather, the remarkable thing is that an unarticulated and reflexive reaction against one's own feelings should have the effect of narrowing the awareness of those feelings to the sensation of a quasi-alien "addiction." The remarkable thing, in other words, is that this woman's reaction to her affection for this „inappropriate“ man should obliterate her awareness of her wish to be with him. (6-7)

This problem certainly appears to apply to Rustan, who thinks there is something fundamentally feminine about staying in his own village and tending to the affairs of his family. Although we would suppose that he could find freedom—and battles to fight—within his own community, he seems to think that choosing this option emasculates him. In this sense, his desire to go forth and conquer is separated from questions of love, interest, and romantic desire. The issue seems to lie in his fear of what others should think of him should he choose to stay. As a consequence of his judgments, which he turns inward against himself, he feels the need to battle the shadow that lies within him. If Rustan had the wisdom to understand that he had the power to build temples and coliseums wherever he would like, he would not have to undertake the journey at all. However, from the point-of-view of Rustan's father-in-law, Massud, it is wiser to let him discover himself on his own, lest he project his own desire for Rustan's self-discovery onto him, leaving Rustan clouded as to where the wellspring of his own desire is to be found.

In this sense, Massud's function in the drama is identical to that of Esther in Grillparzer's *Die Jüdin von Toledo*, who knows that Rahel must discover for herself that her desire has been

distorted—unfortunately for Rahel (and fortunately for the kingdom, if they could take heed), she realizes her sadomasochistic death wish in a manner that demonstrates how both her family and the kingdom faltered terribly, failing to realize their moral and ethical shortcomings. The firestorm of hatred toward the Jews—which the Jews, like Rahel’s father, Isaak, then displaced onto one another—inflicted enough harm on Rahel’s developing psyche to obliterate her. Fortunately for Rustan, the external threat is not as immanent—or perhaps it doesn’t exist at all, because, even if it is not immediately clear to him, he is enveloped by the love of his family waiting for him back home.

Despite the similarities between Rustan and other Grillparzer characters such as Rahel and König Alfonso in *Die Jüdin von Toledo*, both of whom suffer from obsessional tendencies, there is one fundamental difference between the two dramas. *Der Traum ein Leben* features not one, but two characters who lead the way on the path to enlightenment, given that Rustan’s conversations with Zanga likewise help him reveal his internal conflicts and fears. Rustan feels threatened by the peace that surrounds him, as though it were akin to a death of sorts, and he seems paralyzed by an inability to articulate what exactly it is that he wants. His speech is always indirect and he always defers judgment to Zanga; ultimately he blames him for the actions he undertakes freely out of his own desire for excitement, all characteristics that Dor describes as being part of the obsessional structure.<sup>90</sup> Hysterics conduct themselves in such a way as to

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<sup>90</sup> Dor writes: “On the one hand, obsessional neurosis always bears the mark of imperious need. On the other hand, the obsessional is stricken with weakness in the expression of his demand. His familiar masochistic passivity is largely the result of his finding it impossible to make a demand. He therefore tries to make the other guess at and articulate what he himself desires

thwart their own desires.<sup>91</sup> Rustan is not especially concerned with instilling desire in the other, but he is, on the other hand, very particular about language and being heard, another characteristic that smacks of obsessionality. He proclaims: “Weil, was Brot in einer Sprache,/Gift heißt in des andern Zunge,/Und der Gruß der frommen Lippe/Fluch scheint in dem fremden Ohr” (97). This stands as a testament to his anxiety concerning language that goes interrupted or that escapes interpretation, as there is always something that gets lost in translation. It is as Dominique Miller writes: “the obsessional subject cannot bear the structure of the signifier, the gap inherent in the signifying chain. Any interruption of the patient’s speech,

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but can never manage to ask for. More generally, this weakness is part of the involuntary servitude in which the obsessional so readily confines himself. The inability to formulate a demand leads, paradoxically, to the *duty* to accept and endure everything. He feels constrained to accept all of the consequences of his inability to demand, and does so mainly by occupying the place of the object of the other’s *jouissance*. This passive attitude is an invitation to sadistic mistreatment at the hands of the other.” It seems to be exactly this character trait that later compels Rustan to find blame with Zanga when his adventures lead him astray. He comes up with his very own plan as Zanga begins increasingly to identify with him in conversation, ultimately acting as his partner in crime, but never the sole instigator. Nevertheless, Rustan refuses to own up to his own desire.

<sup>91</sup> Dor describes hysteria as such on pg. 81 of his *The Clinical Lacan*: “For it is the case that, in hysteria, seduction is always fundamentally in the service of the phallus more than it is in the service of desire. In other words, it is more important to reinforce the imaginary identification with the phallus than to desire the other. What must happen, against all odds, is to cause the other to desire, to make him desire this fascinating object that is displayed as the object that can satisfy his lack. But it is even more important to keep the other in suspense during this process. As long as the other is running after such an object, the hysteric can maintain the fantasy of his phallic identification. But, as we know, as soon as the other stops merely pursuing and wants to do something about his desire, he usually runs the risk of being shown the door. Hysterics are, in effect, masters at not getting what they want.”

the ending of a session, or only an unexpected word—any one or all of these can throw her [Florence] into a fit of anxiety.”<sup>92</sup> This tendency, too, is particular to Grillparzer’s Jacob from his Spielmann, who cannot seem to recover his thoughts in an articulable manner when he lacks but a single word.<sup>93</sup>

As the conversation progresses, however, Zanga speaks of how he shared the same desire when he was young, and what it contributed to his life experience. He relates to Rustan:

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<sup>92</sup> Taken from: “Obsession: A name of the Super-Ego” at [http://www.lacan.com/symptom6\\_articles/obsession-nameofsuperego.html](http://www.lacan.com/symptom6_articles/obsession-nameofsuperego.html): *The Symptom Online Journal for Lacan.com*

<sup>93</sup> This can also translate into ambivalence about the spoken word, particularly when information about the context is lacking. Shapiro cites a clinical case study in which a man cannot seem to verbally articulate his love for his wife to her directly:

Therapist: Do you mean, then, that if you could, you would like to?

Patient: Well, I don’t know....Maybe I can’t say it because I am not sure it’s true. Maybe I don’t love her.

Therapist: Certainly it’s possible that you don’t, but you do seem to be quite careful in what you say to her not to go too far. (8)

In this case, the man is afraid to speak these words to her precisely because he has uttered them to others in the past, and they hadn’t carried quite the same meaning, seeing he feels more strongly for his wife than other women he has been involved with. He admits his fear of coming across as sentimental if he uses these words, and thus, he would rather not tell her at all, even though he knows that it is precisely this utterance that she wants and needs to hear from him. On some level, it is likely he knows this will cause damage to the relationship. Still, his desire to keep his masculine guard up and protect himself from his own vulnerability takes precedence—this, too, is a reaction against the self, and is comparable to Rustan’s writing off of Mirza’s concern and anxiety when she inquires about his travels and desires his reassurance of his safe return to her. The obsessional constructs his correspondences carefully to avoid giving away his true feelings one way or the other, always postponing such declarations, and pushing both the objects and feelings associated with his desire increasingly farther away from himself, so that it is unclear to the onlooker what or whom he, the subject, actually desires.

Jetzt Feinde, jetzt Brüder

Streckt der Mordstahl nieder.

Empfangen und geben,

Der Tod und das Leben

Im wechselnden Tausch,

Wild taumelnd im Rausch. (101)

Here Zanga highlights several significant dichotomies that lie at the heart of human conflict. He describes how enemies and friends alike are united at the intersection between life and death, hinting at the conflict brewing within Rustan's own psyche. His desire to exercise his willingness to fight is, in essence, a merging of Eros and Thanatos at work within him, and Zanga does fairly well to describe the interplay between both elements. Perhaps it is ironic that the opponent that Rustan is fighting lies within him and not without, but this isn't something of which he is aware just yet. Moreover, Zanga describes the joy of the victor when he sees all of those he has killed, almost as though they were trophies to display as tokens of the former's inner strength. For the male obsessional, there is nothing more exciting than a challenge, and this is exactly what Rustan sees before him, a means through which to test not only himself, but also the father figures he will surely encounter along the way.<sup>94</sup>

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<sup>94</sup> On page 21 of his *The Clinical* Lacan, Dor writes: "It goes without saying that these traits derive their inexhaustible energy from the obsessional's attempt to achieve the control of



Over time, Rustan's need to displace his growing frustration becomes stronger and stronger, finding expression in his anxious words:

Ich muß fort, ich muß hinaus,

Muß die Flammen, die hier toben,

Strömen in den freien Äther,

Drücken diesen heißen Busen

An des Feindes heiße Brust,

Daß er in gewaltgem Anstoß

Breche oder sich entlade,

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*jouissance*, that is, the place of the father. Obsessionals are mighty conquerors in this respect, mobilizing the most insane and protracted means to win this fantasied mastery. But to no avail: no sooner is a goal reached than the obsessional sets out toward another one. Moreover, he is often quite offhand about turning away from what he has attained, giving it a good kick once he has mastered it. In each of these "performances" the obsessional routinely fails to recognize that he is undergoing castration, which, for him, entails a return to the boundary that limits the illusion of totality, of achieving a global experience. This is why the conquests of the obsessional have so little appeal for him. What counts more is the new thing to be conquered, one further trophy in his endless ascent toward the absolute control of *jouissance*. Obsessionals are champion climbers: the more forbidding and complex the path, the more they will go out of their way to make the journey." This particular attitude drives Rustan throughout his conquests and adventures. He is not satisfied merely with the peaceful life he leads, nor is he totally satisfied within the context of the dream. Once he has achieved one of his goals, his mind leaps already to the next.

Muß der aufgeregten Kraft

Einen würdigen Gegner suchen,

Eh sie gegen sich selber kehrt

Und den eignen Herrn verzehrt. (105-6)

Rustan's characterizations of the circumstances surrounding his frustration indicate that it is the silence with which he must come to terms that is unacceptable to him. It is almost as though he fears that the blood coursing through his veins will cease to flow should he fail to take action as soon as possible. With a sense of urgency, he expounds upon yet another fear—that his passion and masculine aggression will turn against him if he fails in turning it outward, in displacing it. Rustan feels as though he is on fire and he must embark on a journey, a vacation perhaps, that will enable him to put it out. This suggests that Rustan does not desire to take leave of his former life for all time, but rather, that he seeks time and space to release the feelings and instincts that lie within him. The image of Rustan's heart becoming distorted by his own unfulfilled wishes is poignant, and suggests ultimately that he must find a healthy way to deal with his impulses lest his behavior get the better of him.

## **The Gift of the Ancestress**

It is not until Rustan meets the old woman that his goals are put to the test, as Rustan's dialogues with the old woman reveal important truths about his journey. The passage that follows is pivotal in understanding the revelations made at the conclusion of the play:

Ei, ich zwinge niemand, Sohn!  
Bietend reich ich meine Gaben,  
Wer sie nimmt, der mag sie haben.  
Und so stell ich hin den Becher,  
Der dich reizt und der dich schreckt.  
Wird dein Übel, Söhnlein, schlimmer,  
Weißt du, was dir Heilung weckt.  
Doch nicht bloß an dich gebunden,  
Andern auch hilft dieser Trank,  
Macht die Kranken schnell gesunden,  
Die Gesunden freilich krank. (141)

We can interpret the old woman as a mother surrogate in the context of the drama. The reader knows nothing of Rustan's relationship with his mother, and thus this depiction of an ancestress reveals aspects of the mother-child relationship that would otherwise go unexamined. The old woman here refers to Rustan with the diminutive -lein, emphasizing his small size or his young age in comparison to her own, suggesting that she is more distant from him than a mother—

perhaps a grandmother or great-grandmother—seeking to offer him something he can only learn from another who has enjoyed the benefit of having reached an advanced age.<sup>95</sup> She emphasizes that Rustan is sick, although she doesn't specify if this sickness stems from the mind or the body, and she warns that King Osmin fears Rustan will take his life. Ever more interesting is her assertion that Rustan desires for her to make him accept her liquid panacea, although she maintains that she will not force her hand on anyone.

On the basis of her observations, we see that the old woman is diagnosing Rustan's obsessional neurosis. She understands that he has trouble asking for what it is that he wants, but reinforces that she will not give in to his guessing game. Furthermore, she refers to him as being contagious, a metaphorical reference to the process the obsessional undergoes as he tries in vain to supplant the symbolic representative of the father over and over again, imbuing more and more objects with the potential to fill exactly that role. In the same way that the individual plots an action pertaining to his destiny, entire groups of people plan their war strategies and their political alliances, which Grillparzer critiques perhaps inadvertently at this stage in his authorship. It appears that Grillparzer's underlying observation pertains also to the sickness of the masses, the inability to foresee or prevent catastrophes that build on the shoulders of national pride and a lack of understanding of both the needs of their allies and their foes.

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<sup>95</sup> This image starkly contrasts with his idealized image—that of a strong, competent man of battle.

Also significant is the old woman's apparent lack of desire for anything. She comes to Rustan offering him a service, but without the desire of receiving anything in return, removing from him the ability to project his own needs or desires onto another, and thus encouraging him to take responsibility for his own actions. In relaying her observations, she stands removed from him, enabling him to come to his own conclusions, should he be ready and willing. While it is possible to interpret her personage simply as a witch or hag, I disagree with such an interpretation as the woman exists not to instill fear in Rustan, to tell him of a prophecy that he cannot change, or to cause him to do something that will cause his ruin. She exists to challenge his actions and propel him on a course that will help him gain the necessary virtues to overcome the battle he is waging within himself.

Interesting to note here is a connection to the biblical figure of Naomi, whose name means "pleasantness" in Hebrew, but who, after experiencing a series of unfortunate reversals and heavy sorrows, exclaims that she should be called "Mara," because Shaddai had dealt bitterly with her.<sup>96</sup> Rustan's fate, however, offers him the opposite outcome—the bitter poison of confronting his potentially destructive unconscious desires offers him the opportunity to control his fate through his conscious will—to make wise and constructive choices in his life and to return home armed with new knowledge.<sup>97</sup> His exile and the crimes he commits are but part

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<sup>96</sup> Grillparzer's Libussa experiences similar circumstances, although she is able to make good on her turn of fate.

<sup>97</sup> If we examine the problematic of the gift more closely insofar as it pertains to Rustan's character and objectives, we come to understand that it is both a blessing and a curse for him. His metaphorical unwillingness to cleanse himself of his ill-doings also represents his

of a dream; his misfortune is not done unto him by a higher power. Though it appears frightening, it is grace that the old woman offers him, and yet we do not learn whether Rustan goes through with the marriage after he returns home or what he does with his newfound psychological discovery, because, after all, he cannot put a name on it—he does not know what it is, but he knows it exists. The reader is left in suspension, not knowing whether he takes constructive action.

That being said, among the most significant passages of the drama are found at its conclusion and involve Rustan's encounters with Zanga, Mirza, and Massud. Rustan exclaims upon waking the following:

Dank dir, Dank! daß jene Schrecken,

Die die Hand mit Blut besäuml,

Daß sie Warnung nur, nicht Wahrheit,

Nicht geschehen, nur geträuml,

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rejection of the social contract. Marcel Mauss writes about this problematic when he details the practices of gift-giving and the sharing of meals between individuals involved in social exchange. In his refutation of Utilitarian ideals, he details his objections against the ethical notions subscribed to by the likes of Jeremy Bentham and other proponents of various forms of consequentialism. Furthermore, he highlights the notion that gift-giving, can, under certain circumstances, breed resentment between parties. A good example of this is too expensive a gift given in the wrong context, because it creates a moral obligation for the recipient to reciprocate a gift of the same value. This can be interpreted as an ostentatious display of wealth and as an attempt to degrade the recipient as opposed to forming a bond.

Daß dein Strahl in seiner Klarheit,

Du Erleuchterin der Welt,

Nicht auf mich, den blutgen Frevler,

Nein, auf mich, den Reinen, fällt. (177-8)

Rustan, like Grillparzer's Graf Starschensky from his *Das Kloster bei Sendomir*, understands the great weight of guilt that rests upon the shoulders of those who have blood on their hands, and he is completely relieved to know that he has not committed such an act, especially so given his obsessional tendencies. He uses natural metaphors to describe the revelations that bore themselves to him; his own innermost self he describes as a warm rain, and his enlightenment, as a ray of light. Noteworthy is Grillparzer's usage of the term *Erleuchterin*, suggesting that the source of this knowledge is feminine, akin to the grammatical gender of the German word for the sun, *Die Sonne*. He uses the word *rein*, suggesting his moral purity—indicative of the fact that he has not lost it, another horror for the male obsessional. Rustan knows how fortunate he is to have been warned of his potential for wrongdoing and prevented from undertaking anything that would soil his conscience, proving that he does have control over his fate, something he lost during the dream.

Both the tendency toward maintaining control and the unraveling of control characterize the psychological structure of the obsessional, and thus the dream is particularly distressing to Rustan, who wants to make sense of his life without losing anything in the process. Hate is to

Rustan something that is intolerable as it negates the meaning of life and the hope of transcending an ominous destiny. He learns that he cannot have control over every detail in his life and must learn to let go and accept whatever may be—that this new destiny has the capacity to change the future for the better no what it may appear to be from the outset. Ultimately, he resigns himself to accepting that he is not infallible, and must move forward with the knowledge that evil lurks in every last one of us. Still, he speaks about the innocence of the pious and devout days gone by and his willingness to forgive everyone in the world who has ever done him wrong, suggesting that he remains hopeful about the future and retains faith in the inherent goodness of humankind—something that comes across strongly in Grillparzer’s lyrical works.

## **A Return to the Father, Displaced: Freud, the Father-in-Law, and the Hermeneutics of Naming**

Ultimately, it is Massud who reiterates to Rustan what he has learned about human nature, which he describes thus:

War vielleicht die dunkle Warnung

Einer unbekanntn Macht,

Der die Stunden sind wie Jahre

Und das Jahr wie eine Nacht,

Wollend, daß sich offenbare,



Drohend sei, was du gedacht,

Und die nun, enthüllt das Wahre,

Nimmt die Drohung samt der Nacht.

Brauch den Rat, den Götter geben,

Zweimal hilfreich sind sie kaum. (176-7)

Massud emphasizes the the exaggerated effects of temporality in the realm of the dream. In a dream we see many constellations of images that seem to cover a large span of time because of the deep insights and multilayered tapestries of meaning they convey. Massud describes the thoughts expressed in the dream as being threatening, suggesting that they form as ominous storm clouds would, signs of an approaching tempest that might blow over, or, alternatively, decimate the landscape that surrounds it. He interprets the dream as a sign from God that Rustan should take into account the dangers of threatening the love and the blessings he has received in his life, maintaining that it is the singularity of the dream experience that makes it valuable. In this lies one of the most striking similarities between Calderón's drama and Grillparzer's rendition. In the latter, Massud, the father surrogate, acknowledges the divine nature of the warning, whereas in Calderón's, it is Segismundo himself who upholds the law. This tendency to portray his father surrogates as infallible upholders of the law, as he does Massud, once again demonstrates how Grillparzer searches always for a symbolic father to lay down the law for his

characters. The law of the father in Grillparzer is never usurped, although Grillparzer's aim is to strengthen and supplement it with an enduring platonic and fraternal love.

Following Zanga's release as a free man, Massud leaves Rustan with a final admonition regarding his experience:

Nicht, daß jetzo du so fühlst.

Doch vergiß es nicht, die Träume,

Sie erschaffen nicht die Wünsche,

Die vorhandnen wecken sie,

Und was jetzt verscheucht der Morgen,

Lag als Keim in dir verborgen.

Hüte dich, so will auch ich. (179)

This is perhaps the most noteworthy passage of the entire drama, as Massud's words are illuminating. Rustan's decision to send Zanga away is backed by Massud, who nevertheless warns Rustan that the dream that faded away at the first light of day was lurking within him all along, and that he should thus take heed. Significant here is that Massud does not exempt himself. He acknowledges that he, too, must be aware of the thoughts that lurk within, given that it is not dreams that awaken wishes, but wishes that are latent in dreams. Zanga, the apparent source of threat, is not the epitome of the beast, as Rustan fears. Rather, Rustan's encounter with

Zanga is the symbolic manifestation of the former's encounter with his own unconscious. Thereafter, when Massud, Rustan, and Mirza realize that Zanga has found a new master, we understand that Zanga is a universal servant in that the human unconscious is common to us all. Underneath the egos we all possess lies an unconscious that contains unrealized hopes, wishes, and desires that may frighten us so intensely that we fear we are being possessed by something completely foreign to our being.

In Freudian psychoanalysis, we understand the human psyche via the iceberg analogy that Freud introduced to help conceptualize the interrelationships between the ego, the preconscious, and the unconscious. The ego is the aspect of the psyche that is readily accessible to the subject, whilst the preconscious consists of all of the psychic matter that is easily accessed via the individual's memory. The third component, the unconscious, is perhaps the most significant and the most problematic, as the subject is capable of repressing all sorts of wishes, desires, and traumatic memories therein, making these difficult to understand and interpret unless this is undertaken via some psychoanalytic mechanism, typically expressed in the forum of the clinic. Dream work enabled Freud to facilitate this process.

Around the turn of the 20th Century, Freud developed and refined his own theories regarding the dream, noting that the dream provides a less obstructed view of the contents of the human unconscious, owing to the fact that ego defenses are lowered while the subject is

dreaming. This allows more repressed material to come to the surface. Serge Leclaire explores the issue of translating dream language according to Freudian psychology.<sup>98</sup> He writes:

Freud taught that dreams ought to be deciphered like rebuses. He attempted thereby to illustrate the fundamental fact of a very clear distinction between the manifest content of the dream or the literal text of the rebus, on the one hand, and the latent content, or the dream-thoughts, on the other [citing Freud here]: “the dream-content seems like a transcript of the dream-thoughts into another mode of expression.” He immediately adds, although without insisting on it, that this other mode of expression is not in any way sufficient in itself and has to be referred to (or is constituted by) the set of dream-thoughts: “another mode of expression whose characters and systematic laws it is our business to discover by comparing the original and the translation.” (17)<sup>99</sup>

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<sup>98</sup> See *Psychoanalyzing: On the Order of the Unconscious and the Practice of the Letter*.

<sup>99</sup> Leclaire cites Freud on pgs. 18-19:

I have a picture-puzzle, a rebus, in front of me. It depicts a house with a boat on its roof, a single letter of the alphabet, the figure of a running man whose head has been conjured away, and so on. Now I might be misled into raising objections and declaring that the picture as a whole and its component parts is nonsensical. A boat has no business to be on the roof of a house, and a headless man cannot run. Moreover, the man is bigger than the house; and if the whole picture is intended to represent a landscape, letters of the alphabet are out of place in it since such objects do not occur in nature. But obviously we can only form a proper judgment of the rebus if we put aside criticisms such as these of the whole composition and its parts and if, instead, we try to replace each separate element by a syllable or word that can be represented by that element in some way or the other (*SE 4: 277-78: GW 2: 284*)

The aforementioned remarks are applicable to the interpretation of Rustan's dream. If the reader and interpreter of the text were to go into it completely unaware of Rustan's circumstances from the outset, many important details regarding the potential significations of various items, objects, and even names, would go overlooked. Thus, Grillparzer demonstrates through the interplay between the contents of the frame of reality and the embedded dream that together comprise the formal structure of the drama, the symbolic interaction between manifest content and latent thoughts. One such example is the meaning of beloved's name, Mirza. The name, which consists of the letters Mir- and -za is a compound of a German personal pronoun signifying things that pertain to the self and which reflect back on the self and the first two letters of his man servant's name, Zanga.<sup>100</sup> The word Mirza itself is of Persian origin, and is, in actuality, a title signifying a male of royal blood, typically a prince or high nobleman.<sup>101</sup>

In this, his beloved's name refers to something belonging to him and partially to Za-nga, or rather, something that manifests the content of both Zanga as a symbolic entity and Rustan's conscious self as a symbolic entity. Given that Zanga is Rustan's shadow and that he is made a free man who can attach himself to another subject, his function is as a suffix which alters the meaning of a word without necessarily changing it entirely. The name can thus be seen as the

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<sup>100</sup> The meaning of "mir" is variable depending on the words around it, but typically signifies "me" or "to me."

<sup>101</sup> One could also interpret him as perhaps having latent homosexual tendencies, or at the very least, of sharing strong emotional bonds with other men who resemble Zanga, even if not in an erotic sense—an interesting subject that, while worthy of examination, I will not explore at length in this analysis.

symbolic representation of Rustan's true desire, as Zanga represents his unconscious wish and Mir represents its true origins within himself. Thus, Rustan returns to the true object of his desire, his fiancée, Mirza, who is but a component of his (Mir) wish plus -za. Mirza is the one he wants, but Mirza has been fragmented into a rebus that can only be understood if we understand something of Rustan's thoughts and intentions prior to his dream.<sup>102</sup> We can also read the figure of the newly freed Zanga as the representative of obsessional thought, as described by Dominique Miller: "Since, furthermore, the obsessional thought functions by way of metonymy, it may shift endlessly, attaching itself to any object in sight: the printed word *voisin*, a knife, the picture of an eating dog, the sound of a hatchet."

Another name that hints at Rustan's true desire is Osmin, the name of the dream King. Osmin means "God's protection," which is interesting when we consider his poem, "Vater Unser," where we see the motif of God's cloak of love.<sup>103</sup> Here we see how the significations of the dream king contrast directly with the symbolism inherent in the brown coat which we may interpret as the cloak of lies that Rustan has created. He pretends, of course, that he is the hero who saved the King from the serpent and subsequently murders the good samaritan—the man

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<sup>102</sup> The final part of Zanga's name, *-nga*, escapes the grasp of representation. Thus, we might think of it as an *objet petit a*, given these letters have fallen out of the symbolic order, representative of the superfluous byproduct of the psyche's division into the conscious: *mir* and the unconscious: *Zanga*.

<sup>103</sup> Osmin is also the name of the overseer in "Entführung aus dem Serrail," which was written by Mozart (music) and Gottlieb Stephanie (libretto).

from the cliff—who actually rescued him, not to mention that he lets the king die despite his knowledge that he would be poisoned, a displaced act of aggression.

In the dream symbol of Osmin, Rustan is protected from himself, a most welcome blessing that saves him from the vices of Grillparzer's König Alfonso, who becomes implicated in a love triangle involving himself, his wife, and his mistress, Rahel. This, too, is not an atypical scenario for the male obsessional to find himself in. Oftentimes the male obsessional exhibits a Madonna/whore pattern in his choice of erotic objects, with the wife or permanent partner exhibiting the qualities of the former and the mistress exhibiting those of the latter—the latter also representing to him the objet petit a. Rustan is confronted with many of the same decisions, responding to them one by one in his path of self-discovery.

## **The Ancestress Returns: Comparisons to Orientalist Narratives**

There are perhaps no two biblical figures that are more different from one another than David and his son, Solomon. David, of course, is the man who defeated Goliath with a rock and sling and took the place of King Saul after the latter disobeyed the Lord, having made an unlawful sacrifice.<sup>104 105</sup> Consequently, David is seen as a man of daring and of war, despite his

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<sup>104</sup> Taken from KJV Samuel 1:17:45-47: Then said David to the Philistine, Thou comest to me with a sword, and with a spear, and with a shield: but I come to thee in the name of the LORD of hosts, the God of the armies of Israel, whom thou hast defied. This day will the LORD deliver thee into mine hand; and I will smite thee, and take thine head from thee; and I will give the carcasses of the host of the Philistines this day unto the fowls of the air, and to the wild beasts of the earth; that all the earth may know that there is a God in Israel. And all this assembly shall know that the LORD saveth not with sword and spear: for the battle *is* the LORD'S, and he will give you into our hands.

origins as a peaceable harp player. On the other hand, his son Solomon is of a very different character, a man who is ultimately anointed King of Israel on account of his wise nature and understanding. He is also the man who ultimately sets out to build the temple, proving he is a builder, rather than a destroyer.<sup>106</sup> The story of David and Solomon is significant because the wisdom of Solomon is renowned not only in the Christian tradition, but also in Judaism and in Islam, inspiring songs, literature, and narratives that were derived from the events surrounding his life.

In the pages of *Der Traum ein Leben*, allusions to the story of David come across subtly, but should not be missed. In the following excerpt, we read:

Schatten sind des Lebens Güter,  
  
Schatten seiner Freuden Schar,  
  
Schatten Worte, Wünsche, Taten;

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<sup>105</sup> KJV Samuel 1:16:23: And it came to pass, when the evil spirit from God was upon Saul, that David took an harp, and played with his hand: so Saul was refreshed, and was well, and the evil spirit departed from him.

<sup>106</sup> KJV 1 Kings 6:11-14: And the word of the LORD came to Solomon, saying, *Concerning* this house which thou art in building, if thou wilt walk in my statutes, and execute my judgments, and keep all my commandments to walk in them; then will I perform my word with thee, which I spake unto David thy father: And I will dwell among the children of Israel, and will not forsake my people Israel. So Solomon built the house, and finished it.



Die Gedanken nur sind wahr.

Und die Liebe, die du fühlst,

Und das Gute, das du tust,

Und kein Wachen als im Schläfe,

Wenn du einst im Grabe ruhst.

Possen! Possen! Andre Bilder

Werden hier im Innern wach.

König! Zanga! Waffen! Waffen! (108-9)<sup>107</sup>

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<sup>107</sup> The stage directions on pgs. 108 and 109 indicate the fluctuating nature of the harp music, starting up and fading into the background, ultimately returning: *Er sitzt auf dem Ruhebede, Harfentöne erklingen von außen. In halb liegender Stellung, mit dem Oberleibe aufgerichtet. Er spricht die Worte des Gesanges nach, die sich jetzt mit den Harfentönen verbinden.*

Noteworthy here is the repetition of Schatten, indicative of the fact that Rustan's identification of a shadow side is slowly emerging, even though he does not register the source of the phenomenon. At the same time, this term alludes to the presence perhaps of dark spirits and ghostly entities, a direct allusion to the evil spirits with which the biblical Saul was forced to contend. Ultimately David played the harp for Saul to soothe his soul and drive away the entities that were plaguing his consciousness, which Rustan cannot do for himself at that stage in the drama, as he has not yet arrived at his own awakening. Like Saul, Rustan is in a state of disequilibrium and he is in need of peace. He simply knows not where to find it, being interrupted by the images of weapons and war that appear before him, coveted prior to the advent of his journey and perhaps then falling short of his expectations. The word Schläfe immediately evokes the image of Grabe, after which Rustan speaks of whole host of additional images that follow this thought, another tendency characteristic of an obsessional mind.<sup>108</sup>

We find references to historical and mythological father-son conflicts not only in the Judeo-Christian tradition, but also in ancient Persian literature and the traditions that sprung forth from a well of thinkers and poets such as Ferdowsi, dating back to the year of 1000 CE and

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<sup>108</sup> Dominique Miller writes: "Obsessional thought and obsessional ritual can be distinguished. The ritual emphasizes the meaning, whereas the obsessional idea emphasizes the act of thinking. One could even distinguish ritual as metaphoric symptom, from obsession as metonymic system. Metonymy is apt to exhibit the pressure of the drive, according to Freud the mission of the symptom. The symptom manifests as the restlessness of the drive unable to find the object that would satisfy it. The structural defect in the knowledge of the Other pointed out by Lacan is synonymous with this object that forever lost must forever be refound. Hence it appears that the pleasure principle is not the only master of the drive. The drive harbors an archaic heritage compelling it to relentlessly seek satisfaction."

perhaps earlier. Noteworthy about these texts is that they feature a character named Rostam, or Rustam, the national hero of the Iranian epic. The spelling of this name is strikingly similar to that of Grillparzer's main character, Rustan, whose name borrows from the English for rust's estate, evoking images of deterioration, of wasted opportunities and lost laurels.<sup>109</sup> Rustam, on the other hand, signifies a strong man of great stature, the man Rustan desires to become. In a section of the *Shanahmeh* pertaining to the reign of Bahram Gur, one finds a passage describing the interaction between Mahyar, his daughter, Arezu, and their visitors, one of whom, unbeknownst to all of them is a man of great stature.<sup>110</sup> Just as is this case with Grillparzer's Rustan, the hero is drawn to the area because he hears the sounds of a harp. Mahyar goes on to fetch his daughter to tell her of what he has learned, dictating to her how she should conduct herself in light of the news that they have made the acquaintance of a king:

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<sup>109</sup> We can also interpret Rustan's name as sound/word play alluding to a knight who engages in the *action* of putting on his armor—a "Rittergerüst ("Rust/Gerüst an")—in preparation for battle. Perhaps this represents the true fulfillment of his destiny—overcoming his obsessional traits by making decisions and embracing the twists of fate that he must encounter.

<sup>110</sup> The king laughed long and loud and said, "My name is Goshasp, and I'm a knight; I came here because I heard the sounds of a harp, not for somewhere to rest." His host replied, "This daughter of mine makes me so proud I feel my head's in the heavens! She serves wine, plays the harp, and sings better than anyone. Her name is Arezu. " Then he called to Arezu, who was as elegant as a cypress tree, Bring your harp and show Goshasp what you can do. The harp-player came before Bahram, moving as beautifully as if she were a Hindu idol, and said to him, "You are a fine knight, and in everything you are like a prince. You should understand that this house is here for your pleasure, and that my father is both your host and your treasurer. May the dark nights bring you good fortune and lift your head above the clouds! " Bahram replied, "Sit down, and take your harp: I want a song now." (745)

He went to Arezu's room and said to her, "My dear, you've always loved your freedom: well, that was Bahram, the King of Kings, who came to our house last night. He had been hunting and turned aside from the road to Kohandezh. Now get up and put on your Chinese silk gown, and put on that diadem you were wearing last night. Make him a present of some of our best jewels, give him three red rubies worthy of a king. When you see his sun-like face, bow before him and cross your hands over your breast, and don't look him in the eye. You're to think of him as your own body and soul. If he questions you, speak gently, humbly, and respectfully. I won't put in an appearance unless he calls me and places me among servants. To think that I sat at the table with him last night as an equal, it makes me want to smash every bone in my body! How could I be so forward with the king? Wine leads young and old alike astray!" At that moment a slave ran in and said, "His serene highness the king has woken up." (748)

The images here of the king's sun-like face are reminiscent of the images and symbols inherent in Grillparzer's lyric and his relationship with the maternal side of his family, the Sonnleithners. Here we also see a focus on the simple realities common to all men such as the notion that the consumption of wine is intoxicating to young and old alike, a reminder of the similarities between wealthy and poor and young and old despite any differences they may have between them, just as death, too, is a great leveller and equalizer.

That said, there are masochistic elements at play in this passage that are, likewise, worthy of examination. The breaking of one's own bones is a noteworthy symbolic act, as it suggests tearing apart the very structure of which the organic body is comprised. When all semblances fall away and all facades break down, the human body is revealed as the vulnerable entity it is, just as only bones remain after all flesh has decayed following organic death. Thus, the act of breaking one's own bones during life is among the most destructive actions one can undertake against oneself. It is representative of an attack against one's own organic and psychical structures, and metaphorically it implies a breaking down of the worth of the individual in favor of a master outside of himself. In this case, we can interpret the man's act of deference as an action that destroys his own integrity and reinforces an archaic power structure that Grillparzer endeavours to dissect, yet simultaneously retain—another ambivalent act.

The love of wisdom and of its preservation is found not only in the lines of Grillparzer's autobiography in which he describes the role of the poet, but also within the lines of *Der Traum ein Leben*, in which we read following lines spoken by King Osmin:

Ich bin müd, bringt mir zu trinken,

Selbst die Freude schwächt die Kraft.

Alles scheint mir zuzuwinken:

Tu, was neu das Alte schafft.

Described here poignantly is Osmin's state of profound mental, emotional, and spiritual exhaustion. Everything around Rustan seems to be a sign indicating that he should take heed of the message being relayed to him, and it is almost as though he himself is undergoing a process of enlightenment suggesting that he should take what is old and make it new. The process of renewal, of course, has been symbolized in a myriad of ways over the course of centuries and across traditions all over the world, two of the most common symbols being the serpent and water. Water is representative of cleaning, renewal, and the process that one must undergo in order to be purified; on the other hand, the serpent is portrayed as both a force of good and of evil. The serpent was the animal that the healer, Asclepius, bore on a rod as a symbol of healing and regeneration, something we recognize today as part of the caduceus, representative of the medical profession. And, like Solomon, Rustan is called upon to take the warning afforded him by the dream and utilize his newfound wisdom to build something—perhaps a new life with his kind and devoted fiancée, Mirza, although that remains to be seen.

All of this being said, the question regarding the role of the woman in the drama continues to insist. The old woman featured in the drama and discussed earlier in this chapter is an interesting character in that her wisdom contains the kernel of truth that Rustan has yet to learn. Her character is in some ways the antithesis of Rustan's love interest in the dream, Gulnäre. The similarities between the old woman and the Samaritan woman that Jesus encounters at the well of Jacob are relevant here, except that the situation is reversed—Jesus gives the woman water to drink and explains his purpose:

Then cometh he to a city of Samaria, which is called Sychar, near to the parcel of ground that Jacob gave to his son Joseph. Now Jacob's well was there. Jesus therefore, being wearied with his journey, sat thus on the well: and it was about the sixth hour. There cometh a woman of Samaria to draw water: Jesus saith unto her, Give me to drink. (For his disciples were gone away unto the city to buy meat.) Then saith the woman of Samaria unto him, How is it that thou, being a Jew, askest drink of me, which am a woman of Samaria? for the Jews have no dealings with the Samaritans. Jesus answered and said unto her, If thou knewest the gift of God, and who it is that saith to thee, Give me to drink; thou wouldest have asked of him, and he would have given thee living water. The woman saith unto him, Sir, thou hast nothing to draw with, and the well is deep: from whence then hast thou that living water? Art thou greater than our father Jacob, which gave us the well, and drank thereof himself, and his children, and his cattle? Jesus answered and said unto her, Whosoever drinketh of this water shall thirst again: But whosoever drinketh of the water that I shall give him shall never thirst; but the water that I shall give him shall be in him a well of water springing up into everlasting life. (KJV John 4:5-14)

It is this likeness that leads us back to Grillparzer's interest in the biblical narrative of Jacob and the notion that the poet must serve as a literary guardian, protector, and defender. We can easily compare the function of the poet with the function of the spiritual leader or prophet, including as in this instance, Jesus himself. It is the poet that must provide the raw materials of wisdom to the

people, in a form that they themselves must decipher, this being possible only if the people are willing and open to receiving such wisdom, which Grillparzer noted was unlikely during the time in which he lived and worked. In the context of *Der Traum ein Leben*, Jesus, a man and a Jew, would not customarily be expected to speak to a woman, and much less, a gentile, but he nevertheless converses with her freely, relating that whoever should drink from the well of his wisdom shall attain everlasting life.

In the case of the interaction between the old woman and Rustan, we must understand this concept differently, yet as expressing the same underlying concept. The old woman refers to Rustan as “Söhnlein,” which suggests also an affection of sorts as a grandmother or great-grandmother would express for a child. Little Rustan is urged to remember that David, although smaller than Goliath, was able to defeat him, and that Solomon, perhaps wiser than his father David, was given the gift to create and maintain beautiful things on the basis of his wisdom—possibly the most wonderful blending of virtues. Given the allusions to David and Solomon we can also interpret the old woman as a Ruth or Naomi figure, given that Ruth gave birth to Obed who begot Jesse and who, in turn, begot David, and that Naomi raised Obed. Naomi had lost her husband and her sons, forcing her into exile with her daughter-in-law, Ruth. This portrayal of an Ur-Mutter who comes bearing her wisdom to a male descendant is significant, especially insofar as Grillparzer opts to create a female character to fill this function as opposed to a male figure.<sup>111</sup>

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<sup>111</sup> Rustan asserts that all of his male ancestors were “men of war,” but given his fanciful dream revealing his inner wish, we cannot be sure that this is a reality for him, leaving it up for debate.



Rustan is at this point in the drama a traveling man, a foreigner, and this ties his narrative to both that of Jesus and the woman at Jacob's well as well as to Naomi and Ruth.

As is the case with Calderón's Rosaura and Grillparzer's Rahel and Esther, Naomi and Ruth must learn to come to terms with a life without their male counterparts, who, unlike the characters in *Die Jüdin von Toledo* and *Der Traum ein Leben*, were forced to do so because their partners had died. We must wonder, then, whether Grillparzer meant to point out that female strength had fallen by the wayside in some of the literary characterizations of women in the literature of his time. It is certainly plausible that he supported the development of the "feminine instinct" in both women and men and vice versa—to include men acting as "strong men" and women taking on more "masculine" roles out of necessity, but not out of mere desire. Zanga's exclamation in *Der Traum ein Leben* supports the development of a well-rounded character featuring both masculine and feminine characteristics: "Gibt dem Weibe Männerstärke/Und dem Manne Weibersinn!" (102).<sup>112</sup> Thus, Grillparzer's ideal character is strong, modern, and

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<sup>112</sup> Grillparzer's fondness for a balance of the anima/animus and, alternatively, a conflation (in the sense of a unity) of the masculine and the feminine is similar to the sentiments expressed in Schlegel's chapter, "Dithyrambische Fantasie über die schönste Situation," from his *Lucinde*. About life, love, and unity unto the grave and beyond, Schlegel writes: "Ich kann nicht mehr sagen, meine Liebe oder deine Liebe; beide sind sich gleich und vollkommen Eins, so viel Liebe als Gegenliebe. Es ist Ehe, ewige Einheit und Verbindung unsrer Geister, nicht bloß für das was wir diese oder jene Welt nennen, sondern für die eine wahre, unteilbare, namenlose, unendliche Welt, für unser ganzes ewiges Sein und Leben. Darum würde ich auch, wenn es mir Zeit schiene, eben so froh und eben so leicht eine Tasse Kirschlorbeerwasser mit dir ausleeren, wie das letzte Glas Champagner, was wir zusammen tranken, mit den Worten von mir: »So laß uns den Rest unsers Lebens austrinken.« – So sprach und trank ich eilig, ehe der edelste Geist des Weins verschäumte; und so, das sage ich noch einmal, so laß uns leben und lieben. Ich weiß, auch du

sensible—prepared to use the wisdom of old to his or her advantage and the advantage of all of humankind.

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würdest mich nicht überleben wollen, du würdest dem voreiligen Gemahle auch im Sarge folgen, und aus Lust und Liebe in den flammenden Abgrund steigen, in den ein rasendes Gesetz die indischen Frauen zwingt und die zartesten Heiligtümer der Willkür durch grobe Absicht und Befehl entweiht und zerstört. Dort wird dann vielleicht die Sehnsucht voller befriedigt. Ich bin oft darüber erstaunt: jeder Gedanke und was sonst gebildet in uns ist, scheint in sich selbst vollendet, einzeln und unteilbar wie eine Person; eines verdrängt das andre, und was eben ganz nah und gegenwärtig war, sinkt bald in Dunkel zurück. Und dann gibt es doch wieder Augenblicke plötzlicher, allgemeiner Klarheit, wo mehrere solche Geister der innern Welt durch wunderbare Vermählung völlig in Eins verschmelzen, und manches schon vergessene Stück unsers Ich in neuem Lichte strahlt und auch die Nacht der Zukunft mit seinem hellen Scheine öffnet. Wie im Kleinen so, glaube ich, ist es auch im Großen. (10-11). This is the sort of love that Grillparzer's characters crave (Rahel and Jakob are good examples), but never seem to recognize or to believe in enough to actualize, instead turning inward against themselves. In *Der Traum ein Leben*, Rustan learns only toward the end of his narrative that his path to wholeness is ongoing. Schlegel's lines, "Nichts kann uns trennen und gewiß würde jede Entfernung mich nur gewaltsamer an dich reißen," (11) and "Wie könnte uns die Entfernung entfernen, da uns die Gegenwart selbst gleichsam zu gegenwärtig ist" (11) expression the irrelevance of time and space in true erotic unity, another desire that is commonly expressed in much of Grillparzer's poetry. Interesting also is the following excerpt from the same chapter that pertains to the expression of feelings in writing: "Ich sehe hier eine wunderbare sinnreich bedeutende Allegorie auf die Vollendung des Männlichen und Weiblichen zur vollen ganzen Menschheit. Es liegt viel darin, und was darin liegt, steht gewiß nicht so schnell auf wie ich, wenn ich dir unterliege. Das war die dithyrambische Fantasie über die schönste Situation in der schönsten Welt! Ich weiß noch recht gut, wie du sie damals gefunden und genommen hast. Aber ich glaube auch eben so gut zu wissen, wie du sie hier finden und nehmen wirst; hier in diesem Büchelchen, von dem du mehr treue Geschichte, schlichte Wahrheit und ruhigen Verstand, ja sogar Moral, die liebenswürdige Moral der Liebe erwartest. »Wie kann man schreiben wollen, was kaum zu sagen erlaubt ist, was man nur fühlen sollte?« – Ich antworte: Fühlt man es, so muß man es sagen wollen, und was man sagen will, darf man auch schreiben können" (12). This is precisely what Grillparzer's Rustan discovers when he is awake—he knows what he *does not want*, and this puts him on the path to discovering that he must take action, whatever that may be. For Grillparzer, writing *Der Traum ein Leben* was precisely that—putting his words down on paper in black and white to express his wish explicitly.

## Conclusion

In conclusion, we must view Grillparzer's *Der Traum ein Leben* as a groundbreaking work that alludes to processes operating within the human psyche that would later form the basis for dream work within the framework of Freudian psychoanalysis, and which, in turn, would influence the work of Lacan. It is through the interaction between Rustan and Zanga in both the frame and embedded narratives that the reader is able to interpret the meaning of Rustan's dream. Furthermore, in examining the symbolic and allegorical significations of Grillparzer's characters, we understand the importance of virtues such as strength, fortitude, and wisdom. These are the best weapons to combat the unenlightened hatred, bloodthirstiness, and egoism that has led entire societies and civilizations astray. In balancing constructive virtues, we control our fates with temperance and foresight, always willing to accept and forgive, and seeking evermore to grow and evolve together in unity.

## CHAPTER VI

### CONCLUSION

When considering Franz Grillparzer's oeuvre, we must keep several factors in mind. First of all is that Grillparzer's lyric alludes to his preoccupation with the problem of obsessional neurosis that makes its mark also on his novellas and his dramatic works. We can attribute some of this to the subjectivity of the poetic genre, which enables Grillparzer to expand upon many of his personally held beliefs and feelings expressed in his own autobiography and elsewhere.<sup>113</sup> Many of Grillparzer's literary and dramatic characters exhibit thought obsessions and ritualistic tendencies that find their expression in their daily routines and in the way they interact with other characters, creating complex situations that reveal humanity at both its finest and its worst. These thought obsessions and rituals express and recapitulate circumstances and situations in Grillparzer's own life from which he had difficulty extracting himself, the most significant of which was his emotionally intense relationship with his mother, whose desire he had trouble separating from his own. Consequently, Grillparzer displaced, quite repetitively, the paternal

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<sup>113</sup> Relevant in this context is the work of Käthe Hamburger, and in particular, her writings on the topic of "non-fictionality." Hamburger, along with other scholars such as Dorrit Cohn, argue that there are certain signposts of fictionality that set it apart from "non-fiction." However, some scholars argue that these don't offer definitive proof of fictionality. For example, J. Alexander Bareis argues in his "The Role of Fictionality in Narrative Theory" the following: "Although Hamburger and Cohn's signs of fictionality tend to occur primarily in fictional texts, they can also be found in non-fictional texts. The same is true from the opposite perspective: discourse typical of non-fictional texts can often be found in fiction. Nevertheless, there are certain narrative techniques that come across as more natural in what we usually refer to as fiction—whatever that is: This is, arguably, one of the core questions in the field, namely what kind of theory of fictionality one subscribes to" (153).

function not only in his life, but also in his work. His characters, too, exhibit a need to displace paternity in a destructive manner that often ends in tragedy. The only exception is *Der Traum ein Leben*, in which paternal displacement serves a positive function, the dream warning the protagonist of the dangers of the human unconscious, where desires as taboo as patricide may reside.

Moreover, the problem of obsessional neurosis seems to be the driving factor that leads Grillparzer's characters to experience tragedy, typically as a consequence of failed relationships between parents and their children and between lovers. The reasons underlying the failure of these relationships are numerous, but time and time again we see characters such as Jacob, König Alfonso, Rahel, Esther, and Rustan who seem dissatisfied with the lives they lead, frustrated by some parental conflict involving either the absence of a parent or the implied absence of the parents' desire for one another, or plagued by the idealized images of the lives they *ought* to lead, as opposed to the lives they themselves *desire* to lead. In all cases, a parent has projected their own psychological material onto their image of the child or the child feels compelled to live up to an idealized fantasy image the parents have created in the wake of unfulfilled hopes and dreams.

These conflicts, often damaging to the main characters of Grillparzer's novellas and dramas—and particularly those discussed in the context of this analysis—reveal important truths about the destructive side of human nature. They reveal, first and foremost, the realities of repression, denial, neurosis, obsession, and fear in the wake of changing social mores and the

slow evolution of changes involving the family and its relationship to the proper functioning of society and the preservation of civilization.

In Grillparzer, depictions of characters with obsessive tendencies work in tandem with complex allegories to form symbolic tapestries that weave through the repressed memories and wishes, ultimately revealing the fundamental conflicts at hand. The dichotomy between the material and spiritual features prominently in many of Grillparzer's plots—particularly so in *Der arme Spielmann* and *Die Jüdin von Toledo*—as does the problem of ascertaining wisdom and passing that wisdom down to future generations. The allusions portrayed are biblical more often than not, or at the very least inspired by the Judeo-Christian tradition—in particular the story of Jacob—and in most cases, they involve stories of inheritance, both spiritual and material. It is the spiritual inheritance, however, that fundamentally inspired Grillparzer, and which he suggested was undervalued by European society during the Nineteenth Century.

It seems that the foremost question that arises in Grillparzer is thus: in light of the changing structure of the family and of society itself, whose wisdom should we value and how should we appropriate it? Having replaced paternal and patriarchal structures with a more fraternal model, how can we determine who should hold the ultimate authority for preserving cultural, literary, and philosophical knowledge and how should it be passed on to future generations? Moreover, how do the ritualistic acts and thought patterns of the obsessional reveal such questions and conflicts both in families and in entire societies, and how can these rituals and thoughts be both constructive and destructive in determining appropriate solutions? Ultimately

these are the questions at stake when reading Grillparzer, and thus we must reconsider them to recall we have needed to speak about obsessional neurosis in this context.

In Grillparzer's poems, "Vater Unser," "Der Selbstmörder," "Als mein Schreibpult Zersprang," "Am Grabe Mozart des Sohnes," and "Napoleon," we have seen Grillparzer's tendencies to explore themes of desire, fear, repulsion, and ambivalence begin to emerge. Each of these poems involves thought obsessions or bizarre rituals that are ultimately tied to the relationship between the parent's legacy and the images that are thus ascribed to the child, or, alternatively, a fear of breaking free of parental expectation, leading ultimately to a paralyzing fear of Eros with which the child struggles indefinitely. In "Der Selbstmörder," a man attempts to battle his own demons daily, knowing that the obsessive thoughts that plague him are relentless, and that he may not live to see another day. Despite this, he resolves to bring his ideas onto paper as he fights courageously against the spiritual and emotional cancer that threatens to take his life. References to the suicide of Grillparzer's mother abound in this poem, and it is through reading and interpreting it that we understand the profound influence that the incident must have had on his own life. "Als mein Schreibpult Zersprang" is a poem describing the desire and frustration of a youth on the cusp of adulthood. Here we learn about the ambivalent emotions of a young man seeking to free himself from the desires of his parents in order to build a new life for himself. The explosion of the desk represents his wish to destroy the narcissistic expectations of those around him so that he may find his own desire, a theme that is common to Grillparzer's plays, and in particular, *Der Traum ein Leben*.

Further, “Am Grabe Mozart des Sohnes” is a poem that, like “Napoleon,” focuses on real historical events that have been given a personal connotation by Grillparzer. In the former, Grillparzer examines the plight of Mozart’s son, highlighting the inadequacies and doubts that likely plagued him, perhaps even more so following the loss of his father. Again we see the depiction of a man with an obsessional mind focusing always on the comparison between his father’s virtues and talents and his own, in the process throwing him into a paralysis that prevents his own creative light from shining as brightly as it might, or as it *should*. In the latter, we understand “Napoleon” as a man who shares at least some of Grillparzer’s own qualities, such as problems with his speech for which he stood out unfavorably, and, conceivably, a desire to bring about a new order based on fraternity for which the world was not yet ready. Grillparzer’s love of history is evident here, and this helps the reader to understand what the dream king in *Der Traum ein Leben* means when he says, “Alles scheint mir zuzuwinken: Tu, was neu das Alte schafft.” The concept expressed by these lines is something at which the obsessional excels, given the extreme focus on linking ideas to one another with continuity and without interruption, leaving no gaps, no lack, and thus no loss.

It is this very idea that Grillparzer highlights in his “Vater Unser,” which focuses first and foremost on notions of forgiveness and absolution, of clearing the conscience so that the chain of continuity can resume, allowing all of humankind to move forward with its brethren without the undertones of hatred, jealousy, envy, and slander that often plague the everyday interactions between people. Without forgiveness there is no moving forward; there is an awkward silence marred by discontinuity and paralysis that destroys friendships, relationships, families,



institutions, organizational structures, and entire societies—early to mid 1800s Europe being no exception. On the basis of Grillparzer’s autobiographical writings, we can conclude that he was hardly so naïve as to believe it would be possible to achieve this dream in reality, but we can infer that he did hold true to many of the ideals expressed in the poem, believing that society could, at the very least, seek to preserve the wisdom afforded it via history and use it intelligently to keep the best interests of all people at heart. His frustration with Christian structural and theological disunity led him to examine both Judaism and Islam, something that expresses itself not only in his lyric, but also in *Der arme Spielmann* and in many of his dramas, including the two examined in the context of this analysis, *Die Jüdin von Toledo* and *Der Traum ein Leben*.

In *Der arme Spielmann*, we understand the interaction between the anonymous narrator and Jacob as that of a curious, ambivalent, and emotionally-detached artist inquiring about the intricacies of the life of a man whose character he cannot readily categorize. Both men exhibit symptoms or characteristics of obsessional neurosis. Jacob engages in nightly musical rehearsals for God, which seem to follow the pattern of obsessional ritual, and he also exhibits large memory gaps and problems dealing with time—all suggestive of obsessional neurosis.<sup>114</sup> The narrator, on the other hand, seems perturbed by his inability to put Jacob in a category that would help him to understand and explain his behavior, so much so that he interviews him on numerous occasions pushing him to tell his story. The narrator lays claim to him as though he were an

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<sup>114</sup> See here Sigmund Freud’s 1907 essay, “Zwangshandlungen und Religionsübungen” in which he argues that there is a relationship between the rituals of the obsessive compulsive and those practiced by religious followers.

object, and although he purports to have long forgotten about his encounter with Jacob, he can't resist investigating the circumstances behind his death and inquiring if he could possibly purchase his most prized possession—his musical instrument. It is almost as though he feels a need to acquire the coveted object in an effort to replace the loss left in the wake of failing to have categorized Jacob successfully.

On an allegorical level, the novella expresses the tensions inherent between the function of the Pope and the people. On the one hand, the Pope serves a patriarchal institution, and on the other, he must seek to adopt the role of shepherd, a balancing act that is not so easily achieved. As such, the novella critiques the narcissism and corruption of the institution, while offering a solution in the form of another layer of symbolism—that of a “literary pope” or guardian who effectively plays the role of shepherd via a hermetic connection to archaic wisdom and protection akin to the qualities espoused by the Holy Spirit. Jacob's *way of life*, though affected by his tendency to engage in obsessional rituals and his greater than normal awareness of his flaws, is unmarred by the narcissism and hypocrisy that plagues the narrator, enabling the former to sublimate his conflicts into a creative pursuit that allows him to continue functioning independently. His *manner of death*, however, is evidence of the destructive potential of the negative thought obsessions instilled in him through society—*nurture*, not nature.

Another narrative of thwarted desire under the conditions of delegitimated patriarchy, Grillparzer's *Die Jüdin von Toledo* expresses the horrors that ensue when frustrated desires are turned inward against the self, or, alternatively, outward toward innocent victims as a

consequence of an internal and unresolved psychological conflict. Grillparzer's Rahel is perhaps one of the best examples of a character who goes on a suicide mission akin to that of his "Selbstmörder," striving to do battle with her inner demons and the negative projections of a weak and ineffectual father figure who does little to protect his own daughters in the wake of an external threat. König Alfonso typifies the male who treats his erotic interests as objects—treating Rahel almost as if she never lived, even prior to her organic death, probably as a means through which to guard him from her desire, which he ostensibly fears. In the final assessment, Rahel is the only character who dies tragically and it is in her death that Esther hopes the others will realize their own flaws, sins, and shortcomings, acknowledging without stating it explicitly that it is the constant search for a new object or a new territory to conquer that has brought her sister to ruin.

In treating Rahel as though she never lived, König Alfonso is able to pretend that nothing was ever lost in her death, thus supporting his equilibrium and causing him to live on in blissful ignorance of the obsessive tendencies that lie within his own heart and psyche. Symbolically we can read Rahel's death as the tragedy that ensues when humankind abandons the structure upon which its values are founded in favor of a novel and revolutionary concept, failing to understand that sometimes it is preferable to breathe new life into an old belief system or ideology before sealing it into the vault of history forever. Perhaps reinvigorating it so that nothing is lost completely, and that all is simply transformed—reshaped, revised, and reformed—is preferable to a thinker of Grillparzer's variety, something that can certainly be substantiated by his own remarks regarding the tenor of his life and times, and something that is perhaps still true today.

Among Grillparzer's richest works is his dramatic fairy tale, *Der Traum ein Leben*, which reveals through its very structure the point of intersection between the unconscious, preconscious, and conscious elements of the human psyche, in the process illustrating the dangers of unawareness—not of an external threat, but of the desires, wishes, and latent hopes that lie within the individual. Rustan is a character who recognizes only through the wrongdoings he commits during his dream that a shadow side lies within the recesses of his mind. It is through his future father-in-law, whose rules and standards for conduct he seeks to escape, that he is reminded that all people need to take heed of the wishes that dreams reveal. The thought obsessions revealed in his dream disturb him, and the overwhelming sense of guilt that subsequently takes hold of him upon waking sheds light on an inner conflict of which Rustan himself does not seem to be aware—that he holds ambivalent feelings in his heart toward both the object of his affections and the father figure that shapes his social reality.

On the one hand, Rustan feels the need to preserve authority, and on the other, he feels deeply frustrated about having to hold himself to a standard that he has no control over. Zanga doesn't signify evil, but rather, he represents the unconscious element of Rustan's thoughts, the latent material he has repressed. Regardless of the ambivalence this encounter evokes in him and his subsequent decision—supported by the father-figure, Massud—to send Zanga away, the reader must understand that Zanga highlights the enlightenment that ensues when the subject has come to own his or her own desire by making an active effort to acknowledge and understand

it.<sup>115</sup> Rustan describes his new insights as a ray of light, indicating that it is by working through this material that true freedom is achieved. Massud's cautionary statements are testaments to this, and ultimately Rustan feels cleansed by the literal and metaphorical light of day following the frightening dream events that plagued him over the course of the preceding night.

Although modern psychoanalysis has begun to propose solutions to some of the problems that Grillparzer introduced via his literary works, human nature remains a complex and elusive field of inquiry that sometimes leads, like philosophy, merely to more questions than it does concrete answers and solutions. At the end of the day, it is the individual who must seek

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<sup>115</sup> It seems that Grillparzer, nevertheless, acknowledged that humankind would forever have trouble understanding this, at least as a young thinker in 1807 when he wrote the poem, "Der Unzufriedene," thus emphasizing the problem of forever yearning to find the object that would satisfy human desire without ever finding it. The final six stanzas of the poem, which follow below, describe a problem that modern psychoanalysis would begin to address via the theories of Sigmund Freud—who would later read some of Grillparzer's work—and Jacques Lacan. Um den Menschen zu beglücken,/Gab die Gottheit ihm Verstand,/Doch in seines Geistes Blicken/Fesselt ihn ein festes Band./Was in seines Wirkens Kreise/Er bedarf, doch soviel nur,/Gab ihm der allgütige, weise/Vater jeder Kreatur./ Doch statt für die Huld zu danken,/Die der Gütige ihm beut,/Überspringt er kühn die Schranken/Seiner schwachen Endlichkeit./ Manches kann er nicht verstehen,/Was Gott weise ihm verhehlt;/Da schafft kindisch aus Ideen/Er sich eine eigne Welt,/ Er verkörpert seine Träume/Und ein Bild der Fantasie/Suchet er durch ferne Räume,/Sucht und findet es doch nie. Drum laß ab von eitlem Streben!/An des Lebens Rand, am Grab,/Erst in einem bessern Leben/Fällt das Band der Augen ab!«

solutions to his or her own problems and determine which patterns are destructive to the quality of his or her own life. Likewise, the individual must decide which course of action is the most fulfilling to his or her own destiny. No one holds all of the answers to questions pertaining to war, peace, love, or wisdom, but it is the responsibility of every man and woman to be accountable for his or her thoughts, wishes, and desires, even if they run counter to a preexisting belief system. Wisdom is there for the taking, but just as one can lead a horse to water, no one can force it to drink. Sometimes, however, fate offers humanity a blessing in disguise, if only it could recognize it as such, a reality aptly described by the final lines of Grillparzer's 1822 reconciliatory poem, "Gedanken am Fenster," which read:

Doch horch! welch leis Bewegen  
Rauscht durch die Blätterwand?  
Was Strafe schien, wird Segen,  
Vom Himmel rieselt Regen  
Und tränkt das durstge Land. (150)

Written with the intent of mending his strained relationship with Kathi Fröhlich, Grillparzer's poem teaches us that love, regardless of the form it may take, goes beyond mere emotion and is a conscious action—one that must be repeated day after day and year after year, so that we may preserve the gardens of wisdom, culture, and intellect that we have cultivated for many years to come. Regardless of what we may face, we are the authors of our own destinies by way of our

responses to challenges that change our hearts, minds, and directions. In acknowledging and integrating the shadows with which we must all learn to live, we harness a creative energy that spurs us to build magnificent, albeit fragile, monuments to our love for one another.

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