PARADISE LOST AND FOUND:
A Comparative Study
of
Kleist's Prinz Friedrich von Homburg
and
Keller's Romeo und Julia auf dem Dorfe

CATHLEEN LIEDA BELL

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ABSTRACT

There is a thematic and structural resemblance between Kleist's Prinz Friedrich von Homburg and Keller's Romeo und Julia auf dem Dorfe which is too marked to be ignored. This study was undertaken to establish whether this is merely fortuitous or whether it expresses a significant identity of outlook on the part of their authors.

The Introduction deals with some of the problems inherent in such an investigation; first, that there is an absence of evidence outside their writings to support an assumption that there is a direct link between Kleist and Keller, who are generally held to represent quite different traditions--with the added qualification that even within his literary period Kleist is recognized to be an "Außenseiter" and to occupy a unique position. Section I undertakes a survey of the development of tragedy from Schiller to Hauptmann, in order to assess the contribution of Kleist and Keller within a wider perspective. In this broader view, it emerges that the "Weltanschauung" of Kleist and Keller shows, in one major respect, a shift of

emphasis away from the classical traditions. Section II considers in broad terms the lives and personalities of Kleist and Keller, in order to determine the factors which went to make up their permanent spiritual and social attitudes. Section III is concerned with a close study of Prinz Friedrich von Homburg and Romeo and Julia auf dem Dorfe, in particular those component parts which resemble each other most strongly. In this way the detail in Section III is seen not in isolation but as corresponding to the wider context of Kleist's and Keller's thought as outlined in Sections I and II.

I should like to acknowledge here the assistance I have received from the members of the Library staff both at Memorial University and at the Schillermuseum, Marbach am Neckar. I should also very much like to thank Dr. A. E. Ratz for his help during the preparation and the writing of this thesis, for his encouragement and sound advice.

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"Glauben heißt: das Unzerstörbare
in sich befreien, oder richtiger:
unzerstörbar sein, oder richtiger:
sein." --Kafka.[1]

INTRODUCTION

To many, the comparison of works by two such supposedly different authors as Kleist and Keller would appear to be as arbitrary an exercise as, say, the contrasting of the works of Chaucer and Joyce Cary, or of Hans Sachs and Günther Grass. It is foolish to oversimplify, but generally-held assumptions of Kleist as pioneer of the break from Classicism into Romanticism,[2] and of Keller from Romanticism into Realism[3] would appear to make mutually exclusive the categories to which each is popularly considered to belong.

It is, nevertheless, with something of a shock of recognition that, in Romeo und Julia auf dem Dorfe, one finds elements so strikingly reminiscent of those in Prinz Friedrich von Homburg that one is impelled to explore the question whether both works do not, in essence, express a common aesthetic purpose. Are Kleist and Keller really so far apart as they are generally represented to be? Or will an examination of the parallels

found, however interesting, show nothing more than the coincidental resemblance one would expect to find in the work of any two great writers?

The attempt to justify a comparison of such disparate authors is certainly made more difficult (and not the less challenging!) by a failure to find anything more than the slightest of references to Kleist in Keller's letters, though his admiration for other writers such as Schiller, Goethe and Gotthelf is often expressed, indeed woven into his works and explicit there too.

There are, in fact, only two letters in which the name of Kleist appears at all.[4] It is hard to believe that Keller had not read Kleist--is it even conceivable that he had not? It seems an even more astonishing assumption when we consider how wide and thorough a reader he was. The omission of Kleist seems particularly unlikely when his correspondence with Hettner and Storm (to mention only two) shows Keller to have command over a field that ranges from Lessing, Wieland, Schiller and Goethe to that of his contemporaries Grillparzer, Hebbel and countless others, and which includes the literature of other countries e.g. Scribe, Calderon, Shakespeare, Scott, Burns, Defoe. Indeed, his familiarity with especially the contemporary German literature and his penetrating insight into its works showed him so highly

respected a critic that Hettner for one openly confessed his indebtedness to him in the writing of his book on modern drama.[5]

Even if we may assume that Keller had read Kleist, we must wonder--for his casualness suggests it--whether for Keller Kleist was on a par with Wildenbruch, for whom he seems to have no decided regard. Because of his hesitation in committing himself on the subject of Wildenbruch, we do not know whether the comparison of the latter with Kleist is flattering or not. In this connection one remarks a certain caution in Keller which, except in the matter of modern German dramatists, leads him to be conservative in the choice of those writers on whom he comments at length: mainly on solidly established ones like Schiller, Goethe, Shakespeare. He does not offer impulsive opinions. We have his hesitation in the case of Wildenbruch's newest work three years after his first flattering (?) comparison with Kleist;[6] and when one considers that "Fast ein Jahrhundert brauchte es, bis [Kleists] Werk den Deutschen zugänglich wurde",[7] and that it is only recent criticism that has explored the full depth of Kleist, it is perhaps not altogether surprising that Keller may have ignored him if he had read him. It is interesting to note the dismissive tone in his only comment on Ibsen, for example, and the un-

favourable comparison he makes with Schiller, in a letter to Paul Heyse:

> "Die dänische Studien trösten mich wenig, obgleich ich es den Dänemärksern wohl gönnen mag, wenn sie Deine Gunst erwerben. Soweit es sich um die norwegsche Partie handelt, kann ich mich immer noch nicht stark für die Sache begeistern. Ich nehme manchmal aus dem Wirtshaus, wo die fliegenden Buchhändler mit den Reclamschen Büchelchen hausieren, einen Ibsen oder Björnson mit nach Haus und muß gestehen, daß mich die ewigen Wechsel- und Fabrikaffären, kurz alle die Lumpenprosa wenig erbaut, noch weniger der pseudogeniale Jargon, der mir gar keine Diktion zu haben scheint. Freilich lese ich nur Übersetzungen. Ich komme nicht darüber hinaus, immer wieder an den guten Schiller zu denken, der schon vor 80 Jahren in seinem 'Schatten Shakespeares' die Situation ausreichend behandelt hat. (Keller: Briefe, vol. 3 (1), p. 65)

In this we note the conservative, moralistic side that formed a large part of Keller's nature. We know Keller admired Goethe, and what Goethe's view was of Kleist; Keller may have shared Goethe's reaction[8] to that which disturbed him in Kleist's work, and remembered his words regarding the "Schauder und Abscheu" which Kleist excited in him "wie ein von der Natur schön intentionierter Körper, der von einer unheilbaren Krankheit ergriffen wäre"[9]--indeed there is an echo of this sentiment in especially the second letter to Wildenbruch.[10] With such a precedent, who can blame Keller for ignoring a highly controversial Kleist, a writer whose full stature has only begun to be appreciated and who is, outside Germany, still relatively unknown? What Keller might have called

'romantic emotionalism' was negative and distasteful to him who dreaded the undisciplined and the diseased, and who aimed constantly in himself and in his work at the positive and the wholesome. His reserve on emotional matters is well known; inherited from a mother equally cautious and controlled, it reveals itself in his letters, and in the almost total suppression of those events which must have affected him most painfully: his passion for Betty Tendering can only be guessed at by reading between the lines, and he does not once mention the name of his fiancee Luise Scheidegger who tragically committed suicide. So perhaps Keller's very reserve and conservatism may have made him immune to an active and conscious interest in Kleist. It may indeed well be that he found raw and exposed in Kleist the very qualities he found dangerous to himself and which he sought to eradicate in his own nature and in his work.

For whatever reason, however, there is no suggestion of a recognition on Keller's part of an affinity between himself and Kleist. The context within which he mentions Kleist makes even the hint of admiration appear ambiguous and suspect. On the other hand, although of the threesome --Jean Paul, Hölderlin, Kleist--Hölderlin is not mentioned once in Keller's letters, and Kleist only twice, Jean Paul, to whom we know from Der Grüne Heinrich that Keller

was greatly indebted, is also given only a passing line in each of two letters.

Among Keller's literary critics, too, although there is an increasing tendency to 're-discover' Keller and to explore his relationship to other writers,[11] there is no mention of Kleist which suggests a possible influence. There is a silence in this area which is strange when one considers that Kleist, had he lived, would have been only 42 when Keller was born, and that they must have had more than one acquaintance in common: General Ernst von Pfuehl, for instance, the charming old gentleman to whom Keller refers several times in his letters as having met at Berlin soirees, was, with his younger brother Friedrich, an intimate friend and correspondent of Kleist.

To sum up, we do not know for certain what Keller's opinion was of Kleist, and do not have evidence from any direct source that he was at all consciously influenced by him. The only certainties are those found expressed in the works themselves, and these alone can at least partially deny the gulf which apparently separates the 'Classic-turned-Romantic' from the 'Romantic-turned-Realist', for what we know of Kleist and Keller shows them to have a brand of what Matthew Arnold called 'high seriousness' in common, which, in

two specific works, is expressed with a similarity that is remarkable.[12]

Kleist and Keller, when seen in a larger context, appear to have more essentially uniting them than dividing them; an examination of their relationship to writers before and after them shows more clearly what they have in common. Section One of this dissertation will therefore be given to a discussion of this wider perspective; for the present purposes this will be limited to a brief survey of the time--just a little more than a century--between Schiller and Hauptmann. Section Two discusses the personalities of Kleist and Keller, their lives and attitudes in general terms. Section Three undertakes to give a close investigation of the points of similarity between Prinz Friedrich von Homburg and Romeo und Julia auf dem Dorfe. Kleist and Keller are, of course, distinct and highly individual writers, but certain assumptions will be made of them in the first section which will be substantiated in the second and third.

I

All works are, in a sense, derivative, and a comparison of the 'realism' of Kleist and Keller with that of other writers must be prefaced by the platitudinous remark that 'realism' is itself a relative term. As Keller wrote:

> "Ich lese auch den Rabelais zum ersten Male und bin frappiert, wie viele literarische Motive und Manieren, welche man so gewöhnlich für nagelneu oder von einer gewissen Schule herstammend ansieht, schon seit Jahrhunderten vorhanden sind, ja wie man eigentlich sagen kann, alle wirklich guten Genres seien von jeher dagewesen und nichts Neues unter der Sonne." (Briefe, vol. 1, p. 398)

Great works seldom spring from virgin soil, for each great writer expresses, with his own individual genius for clarity, the accumulated insights of those before him. As little, therefore, as one can imagine a Dürrenmatt without a Hauptmann, can one imagine a Hauptmann without a Keller, a Hebbel, a Kleist or a Schiller.[13] Some works, however, stand out as landmarks in the development of literature--which is, after all, the expression of man's attitude to the meaning of his

life in the society around him. Lessing, Kleist and Hebbel, for example, are key figures who expressed, in the crises of their times, an attempt to revalue and revive the real. Some, like Kleist and Blake, prematurely sense a change of direction; their uniqueness is seen as something so alien and out of context that they are not recognized in their time and it is left to posterity to value their contribution.[14] Others, like Keller, by some fortunate coincidence of genius and relation to the period, find easy and immediate acceptance, though not always for the right reason. Keller's 'realism' appealed to his generation; Kleist's 'realism' (as shown most markedly in Prinz Friedrich von Homburg, III/5) offended his. Even Goethe wrote of Amphitryon and Der zerbrochene Krug respectively:

> "Amphitryon von Kleist erschien als ein bedeutendes, aber unerfreuliches Meteor eines neuen Literatur-Himmels"[15]

and:

> ". . . die ganze Darstellung dringt sich mit gewaltsamer Gegenwart auf. Nur schade, daß das Stück auch wieder dem unsichtbaren Theater angehört . . . Könnte er . . . eine wirklich dramatische Aufgabe lösen und eine Handlung vor unsern Augen und Sinnen sich entfalten lassen, . . . so würde es für das deutsche Theater ein großes Geschenk sein."[16]

But however great a change the 'realism' of Kleist and Keller represents from the orthodoxy of their times, or from that which went before, it was still, relatively speaking, a change within an accepted structure of

attitudes; a unique shift of emphasis indeed, but not a radical break from it as is seen, for instance, in Hauptmann's Bahnwärter Thiel.[17] Between the extremes of despair evident in Hauptmann's 'Naturalism' and the hopefulness of Schiller's 'Idealism', Kleist's and Keller's ambivalent works appear to stand half-way.

Before we can begin to assess that which is old and that which is new in Prinz Friedrich von Homburg and Romeo und Julia auf dem Dorfe, and to estimate the pivotal importance of these works which, like Janus, glance to the past and to the future, it is necessary to step away from them some distance; in the scope of this study this will have to be just far enough, at least, to include in view the main aspects of the more immediate traditions they inherited. Without being so thorough as to go back to ancient tragedy (as perhaps one should, for the essence of the tragic implications in Prinz Friedrich von Homburg and Romeo und Julia auf dem Dorfe as later fully brought out in Bahnwärter Thiel is closer to the ancient view than to any in Christian times), a quick survey of the period between Schiller and Hauptmann may give in outline some of the traditions which Kleist and Keller inherited and which the two works under review show them to have anticipated.

There is in Prinz Friedrich von Homburg and Romeo und Julia auf dem Dorfe a hopefulness of outlook quite lacking in Bahnwärter Thiel. Kleist and Keller might share the view that "every ordinary judgment, everything we can possibly say about the world is 'riddled with contradictions' and is therefore mere Appearance, not true Reality",[18] yet their answer is not totally despairing; it contains the hope that man, by accepting life as it is in all its mystery, can apply himself and come to practical terms with it. In the positiveness with which they approach this problem, Schiller's 'idealistic realism' is seen to be a strong influence.

Although 'Realism' and 'Idealism' are terms so variable that they require constant qualification, use must be made of them and it is convenient to accept the standard definition of 'Realism' as "the picturing in art and literature of people and things as it is thought they really are, without idealizing", and of 'Idealism' as "imaginative treatment in art or literature that seeks to show the artist's or author's conception of perfection".[19] Of the paradoxical combination of 'Realism' and 'Idealism' found in Prinz Friedrich von Homburg and Romeo und Julia auf dem Dorfe, their authors might together have said: "With the firmest conviction

of the unity of the two, we combine the most distinctly conscious belief in the impossibility of this unity being known."[20] For, conscious of the dualities in a world 'riddled with contradictions', they have nevertheless given a coherent picture of the world which owes much in four areas to the views of Schiller: those which pertain to nature, to freedom, to society and to individual balance.

Kabale und Liebe, belonging as it does to Schiller's early period, does not fully reflect the 'Realism' more evident in his later mature works; but it is for this very reason that we select it; for even here the younger, 'idealistic' Schiller expresses a view of reality which, even if it is not identical, anticipates in large measure that of Kleist and Keller. It explores aspects of life with which Kleist and Keller show themselves clearly concerned in Prinz Friedrich von Homburg and Romeo und Julia auf dem Dorfe: human worth, the relationship of the individual to his society and his struggle to find the right balance without compromise to his integrity. Furthermore, by including on its stage characters who represent the lower social strata, Kabale und Liebe opens up the way to considerations of the worth of the individual regardless of his social origins and leads to later works

such as Romeo und Julia auf dem Dorfe, Maria Magdalene and Bahnwärter Thiel whose milieu is solely that of the lower middle classes.

The problem of man's nature, both in its physical limitations and in its potential for spiritual strength, the extent to which his character is moulded by fate and the degree to which his spirit is independent, was one that occupied Schiller (as it did Kleist and Keller) throughout his life. In 1783, during the time of his refuge at Bauerbach where he was writing Kabale und Liebe, he wrote to his friend Reinwald: "Ich bin nicht, was ich gewiß hätte werden können. Ich hätte vielleicht groß werden können, aber das Schicksal stritte zu früh wider mich."[21]

The letter shows him at his most pessimistic, for if one were to single out one dominant trait in Schiller's character it would be that of spiritual courage, an essential prerequisite for human greatness, in which Schiller was certainly not lacking. He was not one to admit defeat, and came later to formulate a much more optimistic view of fate: that man is born under and into an order of natural laws which he cannot but obey physically, but which need not vanquish him spiritually. These laws man cannot escape, for though

they are 'Zufall' and outside him, they encompass him. His very being, comprising 'Natur' and 'Geist', and the external circumstances with which life presents him, are all part of the pattern into which he is born and with which he shares his identity. It is therefore axiomatic that he should cherish this co-identity, that it is his duty to sustain this natural balance and that it is a crime to rebel against it, for his rebellion would be a revolt against himself and must lead to his own destruction. As a pebble thrown into a pond will spread concentric circles, the duty of the individual is seen to become increasingly far-reaching as it extends into the circle of the family, of society, even of history in as much as it is the sequential expression of man and the reflection of his spirit. So there is seen to be a series of interdependent relationships, all controlled by this 'höhere Ordnung' to which man can either slavishly submit or voluntarily offer himself. Only in the latter way does he both resign himself to natural law and prove his superior spiritual strength. In order thus to 'control' his destiny "dem Begriff nach"[22] the individual must first spiritually control his own nature: he must achieve a balance, "ein selbständiges und vollendetes Ganze"[23]--an heroic ideal, of which we see a modifica-

tion in Kleist's and Keller's views.

At the time of writing Kabale und Liebe, Schiller had not yet fully developed the system of thought outlined above, but with this "Totalität"[24] in mind, he has given us a play in which the theme is implicit rather than explicit. For he shows here the reverse side of the coin: the imbalance in characters who, lacking insight and integration, bring about not only frustration to themselves but disruption to their families and to the society in which they live.

In the story of ill-fated love between Ferdinand and Luise, the prejudices of class distinction which attempt to separate them, and the intrigues of a totally corrupt court, the tragedy is seen to derive from two main sources: wickedness of the antagonists (including despotic power, corrupt society and class prejudice)--and delusion of the characters, caused by lack of insight which blunts their awareness. Incorporating both, we have the sense of a parahuman fate which is in control and which again and again blocks their getting at the truth: a thought which, in Schiller's "Seltsam, o unbegreiflich seltsam spielt Gott mit uns"[25] resonates later in Kleist's "Und doch --o wie unbegreiflich ist der Wille, der über uns waltet!" (Werke, vol. 5, p. 244) and in Keller's

"So gehen die Weberschiffchen des Geschickes aneinander vorbei, und 'was er webt, das weiß kein Weber!" (Werke, vol. 3, p. 78).

Schiller's preoccupation with the question of imbalance in the human make-up is seen in the way characters are paired and opposites are contrasted; individually they are shown off balance, in that each is the personification of a dominant trait lacking in another: Wurm, for instance, well-named, is the epitome of corruption--and Luise, of innocence; Miller, of his authority as father--and Luise, of her filial obedience; the President, of impure realism--and Ferdinand, of idealism; Ferdinand, of passion--and Luise, of duty. In all except perhaps one of these characters (Luise), there is a lack of insight and integration, and a consequent denial of their own and the other's full worth and essential humanity;[26] in each it is the dominant characteristic which, carried to excess, leads to his own eventual ruin.

Not only individual weakness but social pressures are seen to play a contributory part in the downfall of the individual. In Kabale und Liebe Schiller takes a realistic and critical look at the society of his time. In the second half of the eighteenth century there was corruption in the state of Württemberg that was common

knowledge to many and personal experience to Schiller, who showed courage--of the kind Kleist displayed in Prinz Friedrich von Homburg--in his exposure in this play of such atrocities as the selling of soldiers to a foreign country during the Seven Years' War, of the abuse of power by the despot Karl Eugen (whom Schiller called "der alte Herodes", the murderer of his childhood) and the using of people, especially the poor and vulnerable, as pawns. With its recurrent monetary imagery, the play reiterates the motif that human worth is sacred, too precious to be bought and manipulated.[27]

This drama is a powerful social statement. It is also more. In the interwoven themes it is easy to isolate one for lack of seeing the tapestry as a whole; a strongly emphasized political or ideological theme often masks deeper truths. But Schiller is here both the realist and the idealist, and there are more than socio-critical and sectarian implications in: "Es ist was Gemeines, daß Menschen fallen und Paradiese verloren werden."[28] In the play's emphasis on human worth it transcends mere topicality. In its attack on prejudice, class distinction and social evil it is not only a regional call to the state or to reformers to affirm human worth in others, it is a timeless challenge

to man to find and affirm it in himself.

While it is a powerful play of great complexity, vitality and worth, it nevertheless has weaknesses that suggest an as yet immature genius. It suffers firstly from theatricality; there is an excess of ranting and idle threats which make the high points lose effectiveness; the last scene is particularly ludicrous, and one is not surprised to learn that Schiller wrote this part under great pressure of time. Secondly, it suffers, in that the characters are not always psychologically well drawn, from contrived, unmotivated and inconsistent action.

The strengths, however, largely disguise the weaknesses. Even young Schiller knows how to keep the play dramatically alive; his use of suspense and antithesis, his handling of contrasts in character, situation and language show him a master of stagecraft; furthermore, in breaking with the conventions of eighteenth century drama and in 'realistically' employing a setting other than that of the court, he gives a fuller view of humanity and revives an interest in the common man.

The outward structural symmetry is interesting and serves a purpose at once dramatic and thematic. The protagonist of the decadent high society is the

President, ambitious and power-mad, who uses people, even his son Ferdinand, as tools, and for whom Ferdinand consequently feels neither love nor loyalty. In the opposite camp we have Miller as head of a humble working-class family, to whom his daughter Luise is devoted through feelings of duty and love. Schiller further emphasizes the contrast between the two social circles; the language of the President and his entourage, excluding Ferdinand, is generally high-flown and over-refined; their words show hate and coldness. That of Miller's family is earthy and coarse, but generally loving and warm. On the one hand we have an excess of 'Kopf' qualities--from coldness to hate and scheming cruelty; on the other an excess of 'Herz'--from warmth to love to over-possessiveness.

The portrait of Miller is a concrete example of Schiller's 'realism'. On the one hand he represents the ideal of the father, whose responsibility it is to defend and preserve the paternalistic family as the core of society. On the other hand he is shown in his execution of this rightful duty as being all too human. Free though he is of political ambition of the corrupt and sophisticated kind, he is over-jealous of his power as head of the family and treats his wife with contempt, as for a creature who is his to abuse.

He is brutal in his authoritarianism towards her: "Schier dich zum Satan, infame Kupplerin!"[29]--"du Rabenaas".[30]

His attitude to his daughter is similarly exaggerated. She is the father's precious possession, his "Himmelreich",[31] his "ganze Barschaft von Liebe",[32] but his love for her takes on grotesque, even apparently incestuous overtones. Such words as the following, to name only a few, "naschhaft",[33] "das liebe Fleisch",[34] "Wenn die Küsse deines Majors heißer brennen als die Tränen deines Vaters--stirb!"[35] suggest that his feelings for her go beyond those which are natural and justifiable. Miller's portrait is realistically drawn to the point of crudity; his language is that of 'the people'; it is forthright and blunt:

> "Das Mädel setzt sich alles Teufelsgezeug in den Kopf; über all dem Herumschwänzen in der Schlaraffenwelt findets zuletzt seine Heimat nicht mehr."[36]

This speech is a good example of Schiller's interlocking technique, for into this short passage are condensed Miller's authority as head of the family, his weakness and humanity, prevalent class distinctions of which he is shown to be both victim and advocate, and Schiller's view that disruption of the family as 'Heimat' and natural order works against the common social good.

Miller's excess of coarseness, which at first seems

unnecessarily bizarre, acquires deeper meaning in the light of the play's insistence on human dignity, for it emphasizes in a direct, physical manner the basic, primitive nature of man which constantly requires control. Similarly, the play's imagery which reflects an apparent obsession with dirt and degradation draws attention to the degradation which man suffers as both agent and victim when the sanctity of individual worth is defiled.

In the "Xenien" Schiller gives credit to three men for their influence on his thought; Lessing, Kant and Garve. In his prologue to Ferguson's "Grundsätze der Moralphilosophie", Garve writes:

> "Die Maschine wirkt, weil sie so gestoßen wird; das Tier handelt, weil es die Sache so empfindet; der Mensch, weil er so denkt",[37]

and one can see the direct connection between these words and Schiller's "Alle andere Dinge müssen; der Mensch ist das Wesen, welches will."[38]

In Kabale und Liebe Schiller depicts the dynamic interplay of forces in the impact of fate on man, the forces outside his control and the forces within himself. Inasmuch as Schiller had not yet fully resolved for himself the relationship between man and Nemesis, he shows us undeveloped, one-sided characters who are not aware of their own potential inner power. In V/2,

Ferdinand says "Mein Vater billigt meine Wahl. Das Schicksal läßt nach, uns zu verfolgen." Free from the machinations of external forces, they yet plunge to their doom and fail themselves; when the initial impetus from without is withdrawn, their own lack of equilibrium continues to determine their further downward fall. The President, for example, although 'absolute ruler', is not in control, but is the victim of his own excess, his own cruelty, and is Herod out-Heroded. None of the characters breaks free of his own volition. Even Luise, the protagonist of Schiller's ideal, is not fully in command; she first decides on suicide, is then dissuaded from it by her father and is finally murdered by Ferdinand, to become the victim of his unbalanced passion as much as of her own indecision. Each character, unintegrated and using only part of his inner spiritual wealth, is at the last hoist with his own petard.

If Schiller has not given us here a truly tragic heroine, he has presented us, in Luise Millerin, with an embryonic Maria Stuart. Later, he will show us characters who are not limited within themselves, who knowingly will their own fate and so become part and yet independent of their 'Schicksal', and who, through full spiritual extension, become creatively free; later, he

explores more fully the question which is central to Prinz Friedrich von Homburg and Romeo und Julia auf dem Dorfe: the extent to which the freedom of the individual to preserve his integrity is consonant with those restrictions that society in the natural order of things rightly imposes on him; and how the individual, by achieving the balance "einer schönen Seele",[39] maintains at one and the same time the equilibrium, the 'innere Harmonie' of the world in which he lives.[40]

In contrast to writers like Lessing, Schiller, Hebbel and later Holz and Schlaf, Kleist and Keller--with their aversion for the theoretical and the speculative--have left very little in the way of philosophical essays on the aesthetics of prose and drama or on their view of life. What we know of these must be culled from their letters or the works themselves. These show that they share with Schiller his seriousness and high moral aims. The ideals to which they aspired are expressed in the didacticism implicit in Prinz Friedrich von Homburg and Romeo und Julia auf dem Dorfe and in the dedication of their approach:

> "Würde wohl etwas Großes auf der Erde geschehen, wenn es nicht Menschen gäbe, denen ein hohes Bild vor der Seele steht, das sie sich anzueignen bestreben?" (Kleist, Werke, vol. 5, p. 180)

and

> "Ich [halte] es für Pflicht eines Poeten, nicht nur das Vergangene zu verklären, sondern das Gegenwärtige, die Keime der Zukunft so weit zu verstärken, und zu verschönern, daß die Leute noch glauben können, ja, so seien sie, und so gehe es zu!" (Keller, Briefe, vol. 3 (2), p. 195)

Reichert writes:

> " . . . the interesting fact remains that while Keller scholars have never made any serious attempt to correlate the philosophies of Schiller and Keller, almost all of them were nevertheless compelled at one time or another to recognize the bond between the two men."[41]

In Kleist's writings there is, as in Keller's, "a striking similarity in both terminology and content"[42] to Schiller's thought on such topics as 'Schicksal', 'Bestimmung', 'Natur' and 'Freiheit'. There is, for instance, more than an echo of Schiller in Kleist's:

> "Ein freier denkender Mensch bleibt da nicht stehen, wo der Zufall ihn hinstößt; . . . er fühlt, daß man sich über das Schicksaal[sic] erheben könne, ja, daß es im richtigen Sinne selbst möglich sei, das Schicksaal zu leiten." (Kleist: Werke, vol. 5, p. 41)

The passage is doubly interesting, for it shows Kleist making, apparently unconsciously, the illogical transition from "Ein freier denkender Mensch" to ". . . er fühlt", and how he--like Keller--"derived his basic notions from his own interpretation of Schiller's ideas."[43] For, while to a large extent they shared Schiller's heroic ideals, Kleist and Keller reoriented the intellectual basis of his thought to one of feeling, believing intuition to be the only sure way to the

truth about ultimate reality. This insight, moreover, was to be applied to immediate experience:

> "Die Ideen wachsen wieder aus der Wirklichkeit, sie schweben nicht mehr in dem ausgehöhlten Raume des entvölkerten Himmels."[44]

With whatever -ism they are labelled, it must be recognized that all great writers are realists, in the sense that great works of art deal with the fundamental problems of man's existence and are an attempt to arrive at, or to come to terms with, the meaning of his reality. The differences between them merely reflect differences in their conception of that reality. Idealism and Realism have thus naturally developed side by side and are inept terms, but the distinction they represent is fundamental--together they express the essential ambivalence in man's nature. Even Schiller, 'the great Idealist', was neither Idealist nor Realist but both simultaneously:

> "Die Bewältigung aber dieser Paradoxie, ohne Preisgabe der Idee, aber auch ohne Preisgabe des Wirklichen, ohne Verrat an der Freiheit des Menschen, aber auch ohne utopische Überspringung seiner natürlichen Bedingungen und Grenzen, dies macht die eigentliche Klassizität Schillers aus."[45]

For Schiller shows, at the same time, a realistic recognition of the two sides--the animal and the spiritual--of man's nature and an idealistic hope for

balance between them. Later generations came to feel this vain and unrealistic. One can see the beginnings of this process of disillusionment in the reluctant scepticism of Kleist. When Kant entered the field with his Kritik der reinen Vernunft, he destroyed the hope of ever arriving at the absolute knowledge of Truth. Kleist then became even more confirmed in his faith in the instinctive as the only certainty, and his view--like Keller's--shows a repudiation of the intellectual basis of what had been taken for granted before, and of what was positive and optimistic in Schiller's view that much--if only dialectically, "dem Begriff nach"[46]--was possible to the courageous individual; and with a work such as Michael Kohlhaas the emphasis is shifted very strongly away from the rational and towards the irrational depths of human nature. The foundations of a reasoned belief in a reasoned universe were shown to be profoundly shaken once again (for long before that time men like Hume and Wieland and writers of the 'Storm and Stress' period had doubted them)--and it is this that makes the important difference between the 'Klassizität' of Schiller and that of Kleist and Keller. Whereas one could equally say of these two authors that, in Prinz Friedrich von Homburg and Romeo und Julia auf dem Dorfe,

they portray the 'classic' resolution of conflict "ohne Preisgabe des Wirklichen, ohne Verrat an der Freiheit des Menschen, aber auch ohne utopische Überspringung seiner natürlichen Bedingungen und Grenzen",[47] the fundamental premise of the classical writers is changed; in these two works the impetus which spurs to resolution is not intellectually-based Will but intuition, which derives its strength from the instinctive and the natural. It is just this difference from the classical works of Schiller that make Prinz Friedrich von Homburg--perhaps especially Michael Kohlhaas--and Romeo und Julia auf dem Dorfe the stepping-stones to Bahnwärter Thiel.

A look at the development of tragedy might also serve, by tracing the historical antecedents of Hauptmann's genre Novelle, to show the part Kleist and Keller played in the growth of a trend that eventually led to Naturalism.

In Germany there had been various attempts at tragedy in a contemporary setting. Lessing, with his Hamburgische Dramaturgie, succeeded in reviving real values and in showing the way to pruning away the dead wood of superficiality which overlay the base of Aristotelian drama. Greek tragedy had not achieved greatness through analysis of character; and Lessing was perceptive enough to see that while the drama of his time had lost its greatness, it had preserved

only a shallow imitation of the ancient hero's archetypal stature. Admiration for Shakespeare's insight into character led Lessing to advocate not action for its own sake, from without, but action from within that grows naturally from the complexity of a particular personality. A new importance was thus given to the individual. The hero was given a moral responsibility for his actions that was unknown to Greek tragedy where the hero, 'psychologically mobile only within the narrowest limits . . . opposes to the inscrutable countenance of fate only (his) inscrutable mask'. (Valency, The Flower and the Castle, p. 35/36). While, however, Lessing's ideas helped to change and deepen the conception of tragedy for the future, his innovation with Emilia Galotti, although it is a drama in a contemporary courtly setting, cannot be considered a true tragedy. Schiller's Kabale und Liebe, closely related to Emilia Galotti, did little--great play though it was for other reasons--to advance the idea of middle-class tragedy per se, that not in any case being Schiller's primary aim. As far as middle-class tragedy was concerned, the important influence came from Hebbel's Maria Magdalene.

In this play the tragic antagonist is public opinion, against which the characters are seen to be powerless. For the first time, they are seen to have lost their traditional potential to choose: to control by will

or to submit proudly to their fate; and here, for the first time, the adversary, society, has its very fabric and order open to doubt. A new hopelessness and pessimism had set in; previously accepted morals rooted in Christian and humanistic beliefs are seen in a novel, questioning light. With his Maria Magdalene Hebbel achieved 'for the first time in a middle-class setting something like tragic figures in the antique style'. (Valency, The Flower and the Castle, p. 72). Like Antigone, 'Maria Magdalene' is trapped between two laws, and her father is as blind a victim of a blind society as any ancient tragic figure opposed by a fate he cannot understand. In the last line of the play spoken by Anton there is heard a note of truly tragic and universal despair: "Ich verstehe die Welt nicht mehr."

From this literary turning point, there was a steady growth towards a view of life that culminated in nineteenth-century Naturalism, with its acknowledged loss of faith in traditionally established values; but even in the revolt of the Naturalists there can be seen the disillusionment of the frustrated idealist, for it is part of man's nature to find it necessary, even if it is only through his art, to be

positive even in despair. At the root of their objectivity, their plain speaking, their horror of sentimentality, their hostility to convention and their pessimism, it is easy to discern the loss of hope in an age which parallels our own. This revolt against the 'establishment' was a desperate attempt to survive in an age when stability was undermined on all sides; shaken by changes in society, in religious, scientific and psychological thought, and dwarfed by the machine, it was the despair of "those who were forced by reason to relinquish their faith in God, and by experience to give up their faith in man."[48]

Between the time of Hebbel and Hauptmann, writers like Storm and Keller had sought to introduce, into their matter-of-fact acceptance of external reality, a quality of beauty which raised it from a purely materialistic level to one which contained in it an element of mystery and hope. With Fontane this trace of idealism in the Poetic Realists is muted; not angrily or cynically, but kindly and sceptically, his work admits a sense of changing times; his novels such as Effi Briest and Der Stechlin give us instead a gentle shrug of resignation. From this position, poised between a conditional acceptance of the mores of the society in which he lived, it is a logical step

to the more active outlook of Holz, Schlaf and Hauptmann.

It would be worth while to devote a little time to Bahnwärter Thiel in order to see how in this work certain of the insights which are presented to us by Kleist and Keller are extended to their logical and extreme conclusions by the young Hauptmann.

The story of Bahnwärter Thiel could be summarized in very few words, the more so because it does not unfold linearly; it is largely static; the violence in it does not come about through an external, logical action, but erupts from the inner dynamics of depths unseen. It is not so much a story as the dramatic revelation of a state, a condition of Being. Working with only a small surface, upon which a mere handful of figures move between only two locations, that of the village on the Spree and that of a railway line in the forest on the other side, Hauptmann exposes that which is unconscious and universal in the primitive nature of man. The surface level is deepened in the story through the psychological and into the metaphysical levels; on to a new Naturalistic form Hauptmann has grafted much that he inherited from Hebbel, Kleist and Keller and, in the manner of the Poetic Realists with their symbolic fusion of the actual and

the ideal, has made a symbolic pattern of the old and the new in such a way that he ends in presenting a conception of man which, though not identical, is nearer to that of 'naked' ancient tragedy than is any German work from the Renaissance up to his own time.

That which is commonly regarded as Naturalism is often only the narrowest interpretation of its real aims, an unabridged and sequential exposure which, taken to its extremes, led to dramatic presentations such as Antoine's The Butchers, where whole carcasses of beef were displayed on the stage, and where the very unselectivity in the presentation of the whole and bitter truth paradoxically denies the very essence--the selectivity--of art. In its widest sense, Naturalism reflects a new outlook; it demands an objectivity of the author that will allow him, while accenting the external reality of life, to avoid any tendency to exaltation, or elevation of it into the ideal. Thus untrammelled by frames of reference or by the author's too subjective view, a deeper and fuller understanding, it is hoped, can be 'received'--not 'given'--of reality as it is, and a freer perception arrived at of the whole of life: both its physical and its mysterious inner truth. So perceived, life unrolls before our eyes, as it were, and is not so much

described as allowed to emerge, seen as though freshly and for the first time. Paradoxically, such impersonal narration on the part of the writer (as far as any writer can be impersonal!) can only result in a greater subjectivity, through intensification of that deep and whole yet Sphinx-like reality--portrayed in Prinz Friedrich von Homburg and Romeo und Julia auf dem Dorfe--which Arno Holz envisaged, and which the painter Hollrieder in the tragedy Sonnenfinsternis cannot attain:

> "Das . . . Unsagbare, das . . . Unnennbare, das Unbegreifbare . . . das . . . rätselhafte . . . lebendige . . . Zittern der Seele, das . . . vom höchsten Genie . . . noch kaum erst Geahnte, das . . . Hinter-allen-Dingen . . . das Aller-Allerletzte [das sich] von uns aus . . . nicht mehr erreichen läßt."[49]

To achieve this, Hauptmann shows his mastery in employing only as much of those Naturalistic techniques as will serve the purpose that prompts their use. For him, as for Keller, realism is not an end in itself but a means to other ends; he shows only as much of Thiel's external everyday world as will suggest the deeper inner one below the surface; so that we see, one might say, wisps of smoke, but continually hear the inner volcanic rumbling. From the visible conditions of reality he moves to the invisible and metaphysical truth. In an extension of the manner of Kleist and Keller in Prinz

Friedrich von Homburg and Romeo und Julia auf dem Dorfe, Hauptmann objectivizes through the unique, concrete example of Thiel and his immediate reality, that which is universal and hidden. We are here given a view of life which is, firstly, as enigmatic as that in Prinz Friedrich von Homburg and Romeo und Julia auf dem Dorfe, and in which there is, secondly, a short-circuiting of the intellectual in the direct emphasis on that which is physical and instinctive. Kleist and Keller show reality to be as full of terror and beauty and mystery as Hauptmann does in Bahnwärter Thiel. They have 'made the unconscious conscious' in a similarly direct way. Most strikingly in the 'humiliation' and 'bridge' scenes they have attained to hidden truths through the physical in the manner of the 'sense theatre' later to be advocated by Artaud:

> "Well I propose to treat the audience just like those charmed snakes and to bring them back to the subtlest ideas through their anatomies."[50]

But Hauptmann's view of reality differs from that of Kleist and Keller in one basic respect: the central character is not held responsible; he is no longer held to account either for himself or to his society.

From the beginning, Thiel is shown to us not as a doer, but as a man to whom violence is done, both from

without and, more importantly, from within. He appears essentially passive. Clenched fists and gestures tell us his emotional reactions. This is not the classic hero; passive, primitive, unintellectual, Thiel is an apathetic, stifled man in the grip of that which he does not understand and cannot control, whose whole being is driven by the tension of the conflict generated in him, a product of the fundamental dissonance of his own nature, and who achieves a measure of awareness of this his life condition only unconsciously, through visions and hallucination. There is no exercise of Will here--as in Schiller--on the part of the 'hero', and no conscious hope of resolution or of possible order to be attained through intuition--as in Kleist and Keller--only a clairvoyant perception of chaos: "Das wahre Drama ist seiner Natur nach endlos. Es ist ein fortdauernder innerer Kampf ohne Entscheidung."[51]

Hauptmann the 'Naturalist' has given us a work in which, paradoxically, mysticism is central. While it barely enters into Schiller's writings, the mystical element is strong in Faust, disguised as the occult in Käthchen von Heilbronn, and brought out more fully in Prinz Friedrich von Homburg, where the 'Nun, o Unsterblichkeit' monologue shows it an important aspect; it is present under the surface of the realism of the

everyday in Romeo und Julia auf dem Dorfe and emerges clearly in Hebbel's view of the universe as 'Gottes-wunde'; but in Bahnwärter Thiel it forms, in the nature of the main character, the core from which his agony flows.[52] Without the mediation of reason but only unconsciously, in mediumistic trance, he penetrates the veil of spiritual truth. Such self-knowledge and awareness, it is suggested, can only be fragmentary; the piercing perception of it must end in disintegration and lunacy.[53] Direct and blinding intuition of the chasm that divides him from the God who is yet within him is man's perpetual torment, for it is a recognition of chaos, a vision of such terror that makes of life a constant looking into Hell. Hauptmann echoes Kleist's own frustration:

> "Die Motive unseres Handelns sind prinzipiell unerklärlich, ja, unverständlich. . . . Denn der Mensch ist eben nur ein Mensch, weder Gott noch Tier, aber beiden verwandt, wenn auch von beiden grundsätzlich geschieden. Er ist das Tier, das spricht, und der Gott, der stirbt."[54]

Whereas Kleist and Keller even in their pre-Kant and pre-Feuerbach days found comfort in replacing their lost faith in Christianity with an independently-arrived-at practical formula, which allowed them in Prinz Friedrich von Homburg and Romeo und Julia auf dem Dorfe to show a workable model for living, Bahnwärter Thiel shows no such evidence of hope. Here, Paradise is

irrevocably lost.

With no romantic contrast of rich and poor as that in Kabale und Liebe or of the actual and the ideal in Romeo und Julia auf dem Dorfe, the milieu in Hauptmann's Novelle which is solely that of the lower middle class is given with factual and unvarnished detail. The village on the Spree, the workers' houses, Thiel's home life, are shown with an appreciation of the small and everyday things that is reminiscent of Gotthelf and Keller, but the emphasis on the physical here is more marked and more extreme. Descriptions of the sordid ugliness of Lene's cruelty to Tobias, or of her raw, animal quality have a nuance beyond even the novel, frank sensuousness in Romeo und Julia auf dem Dorfe, and suggest a degree of intimacy tactfully omitted in previous works.[55] Physically ugly details are introduced to reflect the harsh poverty of the villagers' lives: the mangy dog, the cracked ceiling, the strident voice. But Hauptmann neither romanticizes beauty, nor introduces squalor for its own sake; it is true that he shows a great deal that is 'naturalistically' sordid, but where the central character is concerned he gives only as much 'surface' brutality as will expose the terror which is subterranean; he shows the effects of the murder, not the killing itself--in

order to keep attention focused on the chthonian forces at work within. So with the express train he concentrates not on its dirty, polluting aspects but on its speed, its magnificence, its frightening power, through which he suggests the basic rhythms of the elemental and daemonic--as is done in Michael Kohlhaas through fire--and attains an atmosphere reminiscent of that which Storm achieves through the ocean as symbol in Der Schimmelreiter. Here, as there, we sense the metaphysical truths behind the helplessness of man. But here, symbolically, Hauptmann makes us see man as totally bound and persecuted, perpetually on the rack; it is a portrayal of unrelieved suffering, independent of incidental earthly or social conditions. In Bahnwärter Thiel we have a portrait of a man torn by the conflict in him between the two poles of his being, each of which inhibits the other and which together generate a fundamental paralysis. In Thiel's torment we see played out the mysterious drama of the life condition:

> "Denn 'dramatisch' ist . . . die angemessene Bezeichnung für das Menschenleben selbst: das Leben als ein ständiges unerlöstes Ringen zwischen schöpferischen und zerstörerischen Gewalten, die nicht so sehr durch die Vernunft und die sittliche Natur des Menschens, sondern vielmehr aus seinen unbewußten Tiefenschichten heraus wirken."[56]

Thiel is an anti-hero who must inevitably fall prey to

the powers that engulf, whereas in Prinz Friedrich von Homburg and Romeo und Julia auf dem Dorfe the central characters still retain enough of the classically heroic, and are shown in at least some degree to exercise control over their lives. For Kleist and Keller, although they had rejected the pattern of order based on Christian ethics and Cartesian thought, had substituted for it another sustaining pattern based on their own inner conviction of abiding, natural law.

Even Hebbel's pessimism embraced a philosophy which held that man's blind and futile suffering was justified by its contribution to the maintenance of the cosmic process, and Hauke Haien's suffering in Der Schimmelreiter is redeemed by the necessity for order in the social whole; but Thiel's agony is meaningless, unsupported by any rational or moral framework. His "Scham"[57] and "Reue"[58] are less conscious guilt as such, than an expression of the psychically disturbed state of an innocent savage, the nameless fear of man, who is the bewildered victim of elemental forces, the "Gummiball"[59] of 'Urgewalten', plaything of the gods.

In Bahnwärter Thiel there is evidence of Naturalism, of Poetic Realism, even of Romanticism, but such resemblances as there are to the old are contextually superficial. Using much that is modern in realism and

psychology, Hauptmann gives us a conception of tragedy, of guilt and suffering that differs as fundamentally in one major aspect from that of Kleist and Keller, as Kleist's and Keller's differed in its turn from that which went before them.

> "In his 'Birth of Tragedy', which is really about the death of tragedy, Nietzsche blamed the radically new prestige of knowledge and conscious intelligence--which arose in ancient Greece with the figure of Socrates--for the waning of the instinct and of the sense of reality which made such ancient tragedy possible."[60]

There is about Bahnwärter Thiel, with its strongly sensual language, its magnificence and brutality, once more a sense of the Dionysian (as can also be found in Kleist's Penthesilea); in its reiterative imagery, which keeps constantly before us a vision of blood and violence, there is a sense of terror and intoxication[61] --and in the inevitability with which Thiel is driven, unconsciously and compulsively, towards a mad, 'intoxicated' slaying, there is a sense of ancient curse and blood sacrifice that make us see in him a descendant of the House of Atreus.

Kleist and Keller had shown a shift in emphasis away from the traditions they inherited, and towards those of the future. Their contribution is evident in Bahnwärter Thiel; they helped to lay the foundations on which Hauptmann built and made 'ancient' tragedy possible again.[62]

II

Of Penthesilea Kleist wrote: "Es ist wahr, mein innerstes Wesen liegt darin . . . der ganze Schmerz zugleich und Glanz meiner Seele" Kleist: Werke, vol. 5, p. 358),[1] and Keller wrote: "Es liegt mein Stil in meinem persönlichen Wesen" (Keller: Briefe, vol. 3 (1), p. 197).[2] A work of art is of course not a carbon copy of an artist's life, but, as the works of Kleist and Keller are recognized to have been built more obviously on their basic life experiences than is the case with some other writers,[3] it is rewarding to review those aspects that touch on the essential nature of each.

Beyond the obvious differences such as those of birth and upbringing--Kleist into the Prussian nobility, Keller into the Swiss middle class--there are sufficient similarities to make an interesting parallel. Both were only sons who suffered a father's death at an early age and grew up in mother-and-sister-dominated households; both endured involuntary bachelorhood;

both were essentially outsiders who lived lonely lives to the end, and whose inner natures cut them off from real intimacy with those around them.

We know from Kleist's letters that the incompatibility he felt in the relationship between himself and others was, and remained, for him a basic frustration;[4] we see this in an early letter to Ulrike:

> "Tausend Bande knüpfen die Menschen aneinander, gleiche Meinungen, gleiches Interesse . . . alle diese Bande knüpfen mich nicht an sie . . . Mein Interesse besonders ist dem ihrigen so fremd . . . und ich werde mich dazu bequemen müssen, es immer tief in das Innerste meines Herzens zu verschließen;" (Kleist: Werke, vol. 5, p. 49)

and in another, to Wilhelmine, he writes:

> "Manches, was die Menschen ehrwürdig nennen, ist es mir nicht, vieles, was ihnen verächtlich scheint, ist es mir nicht. Ich trage eine innere Vorschrift in meiner Brust, gegen welche alle äußern, und wenn sie ein König unterschrieben hätte, nichtswürdig sind. Daher fühle ich mich ganz unfähig, mich in irgend ein conventionelles Verhältniß der Welt zu passen." (Kleist: Werke, vol. 5, p. 259)

Achim von Arnim called him "der kindergute" and "feste" Kleist;[5] one can imagine how such a man, defenceless against intrigues and trusting, would have been bewildered by the unreality of the haut monde in the sophisticated salons of Berlin; perhaps this helped him to the decision to abandon the career of officer in favour of the more withdrawn life of a scholar. At any rate,

his personal insecurity must have aggravated his agitation at the meaninglessness of life that must illogically, incomprehensibly, end in death:

> "Ach, es ist nichts ekelhafter, als diese Furcht vor dem Tode. Das Leben ist das einzige Eigenthum, das nur dann etwas werth ist, wenn wir es nicht achten. Verächtlich ist es, wenn wir es nicht leicht fallen lassen können, und nur der kann es zu großen Zwecken nutzen, der es leicht und freudig wegwerfen könnte . . . Und doch--o wie unbegreiflich ist der Wille, der über uns waltet! --Dieses rätselhafte Ding, . . . ein Ding, wie ein Wiederspruch[sic], flach und tief, öde und reich, würdig und verächtlich, vieldeutig und unergründlich, ein Ding, das jeder wegwerfen möchte, wie ein unverständliches Buch, sind wir nicht durch ein Naturgesetz gezwungen es zu lieben?" (Kleist: Werke, vol. 5, p. 244)

His inability, yet his longing, to find a meaning in existence is what produces man's thirst for the absolute, a striving for security in a position that is basically insecure. The essentially paradoxical nature of the human condition leads him to seek and formulate an equation by which he can intellectually or spiritually comprehend--or satisfy his non-comprehension of--the perplexity of a life in which the very body he inhabits is subjected to decay. The awe felt for the incomprehensible, for the mystery surrounding his existence is fundamentally a religious impulse; the animal in man directs him, if only for mere physical survival, earthwards to the known; his imagination leads him to the unknown, in an effort to explore that

which is beyond his understanding. He is an antithetical entity, painfully conscious of the inherent antithesis yet continually striving for its resolution --"Der Gott, der stirbt, und das Tier, das spricht."[6] Kleist was acutely aware of this:

> "Wer wollte auf dieser Welt glücklich sein. . . . Welch eine Kurzsichtigkeit, o du edler Mensch, gehört dazu, hier, wo Alles mit dem Tode endigt, nach etwas zu streben. . . . Ach, es muß noch etwas Anderes geben, als Liebe, Glück, Ruhm usw. x, y, z, wovon unsre Seelen nichts träumen. Es kann kein böser Geist sein, der an der Spitze der Welt steht; es ist ein bloß unbegriffener!" (Kleist: Werke, vol. 5, p. 326)

While one cannot speak of a 'faith' in Kleist, his compulsive yearning, his lifelong search for absolute truth and absolute certainty and his frustration are in the words:

> "Wir können nicht entscheiden, ob das, was wir Wahrheit nennen, wahrhaft Wahrheit ist, oder ob es uns nur so scheint. Ist das letzte, so ist die Wahrheit, die wir hier sammeln, nach dem Tode nicht mehr--" (Kleist: Werke, vol. 5, p. 204)

If we accept Kleist's 'Wahrheit' as his term for The Absolute, the abstract conception of the meaning of life, i.e. everything that a believer would call 'God', we see, in the last sentence quoted, the beginnings of a sentiment which comes close to Keller's renunciation of belief in an after-life after his contact with Feuerbach's ideas, and how even closer the extension of the thought is in Kleist's next words, which he gives,

with variations, in more than one letter:

> "Ich will mich nicht um meine Bestimmung nach dem Tode kümmern, aus Furcht darüber meine Bestimmung für dieses Leben zu vernachläßigen. Ich fürchte nicht die Höllenstrafe der Zukunft, weil ich mein eignes Gewissen fürchte, und rechne nicht auf einen Lohn jenseits des Grabes, weil ich ihn mir diesseits desselben schon erwerben kann." (Kleist: Werke, vol. 5, p. 131)

This was written, it is true, during the 'Kant crisis', whose effect on Kleist--although profound--far from changing his attitudes, merely taught him anew to distrust rational explanations--especially by others--of the meaning of existence; it helped him to clarify and consolidate the faith in his inner feeling, and to continue a trend towards increased trust in himself already intimated in a letter to Martini:

> "Aber was heißt es: der Überzeugung eines Andern trauen? Aus Gründen einsehen, daß seine Meinung wahr ist, das heißt, seine Meinung zur Meinung machen, und ist es dann nicht immer nur meine eigene Überzeugung, welcher ich traue und folge?" (Kleist: Werke, vol. 5, p. 24)

Also previously, he had written to Ulrike:

> "Bei dem ewigen Beweisen und Folgern verlernt das Herz fast zu fühlen; und doch wohnt das Glück nur im Herzen, nur im Gefühl, nicht im Kopfe, nicht im Verstande." (Kleist: Werke, vol. 5, p. 48)

In 1799 Kleist had obtained his discharge from military service in order to devote himself fully to study. His period in Paris, however, brought him to a state of nervous exhaustion bordering on breakdown. A letter to

Ulrike dated 23.3.1801 shows how profoundly shaken he was by Kant's philosophy that no guarantee could be given to rational explanations of the meaning of things, because the world of pure thought transcended proof and demonstration:

> "Der Gedanke, daß wir hienieden von der Wahrheit nichts, gar nichts, wissen, daß das, was wir hier Wahrheit nennen, nach dem Tode ganz anders heißt, und das folglich das Bestreben, sich ein Eigenthum zu erwerben, das uns auch in das Grab folgt, ganz vergeblich und fruchtlos ist, dieser Gedanke hat mich in dem Heiligthum meiner Seele erschüttert." (Kleist: Werke, vol. 5, p. 207)

The direction in which he had hoped to find security had turned out to be for him a wrong one, for his nature was too firmly rooted in a feeling-oriented reality.[7] He gave up his studies of the sciences, disillusioned with a life spent in pursuit of the intellectual, and now perceived more clearly what he had already, perhaps unconsciously, intimated in works such as Penthesilea, that it was destructive of the creative, intuitive side of man, and too often endangered what he came to believe in as the sanctity of "Gefühl". More and more he came also to realize that his real direction lay in the re-creation of this reality through its poetic representation in art. He advises Rühle:

> "Ich höre, du, mein lieber Junge, beschäfftigst dich auch mit der Kunst? Es giebt nichts Göttlicheres als sie! Und nichts Leichteres

> zugleich; und doch, warum ist es so schwer? Jede erste Bewegung, alles Unwillkührliche, ist schön; und schief und verschroben Alles, so bald es sich selbst begreift. O der Verstand! Der unglückseelige Verstand! Studiere nicht zu viel, mein lieber Junge. . . . Folge deinem Gefühl." (Kleist: Werke, vol. 5, p. 328)

The 'Kant crisis' helped him to arrive at the certainty that the road to "Ruhe" for which he yearned lay not in the direction of "Verstand" but through his own pure feeling. Confidence in the very reasoning process by which he had arrived at intellectual doubts of the existence of God had now been undermined; if the world were a rationally conceived system, he argued, God, as engineer, alone could be expected to understand it:

> "Urtheile selbst, wie können wir beschränkte Wesen, die wir von der Ewigkeit nur ein so unendlich kleines Stück, unser spannenlanges Erdenleben übersehen, wie können wir uns getrauen, den Plan den die Natur für die Ewigkeit entwarf, zu ergründen? Und wenn dies nicht möglich ist, wie kann irgend eine gerechte Gottheit von uns verlangen, in diesen ihren ewigen Plan einzugreifen, von uns, die wir nicht einmal im Stande sind, ihn zu denken? Aber die Bestimmung unseres irrdischen Daseins, die können wir allerdings unzweifelhaft herausfinden, und diese zu erfüllen, das kann daher die Gottheit auch wohl mit Recht von uns fordern." (Kleist: Werke, vol. 5, p. 129)

Here is another suggestion of a move in Feuerbach's direction: that God emanates from man, not man from God; that the idea of a God independent and outside human limitations is man's invention; that the attributes of God imagined by man are already in himself or he could

not conceive them. The illogicality of Kleist's anger at a God in whose existence he cannot quite believe is only a step away from the view that to begin with a belief in God--the Christian and Hegelian postulation of a force entirely outside of man as source of inspiration--is to initiate an argument which, because it is based on an essentially false premise, must itself end illogically. At any rate, Kleist felt that the intellectual road led him nowhere, and he turned his back on the labyrinth. Convinced that "der Mensch hat von Natur keinen andren Vertrauten, als sich selbst" (Kleist: Werke, vol. 5, p. 195), he could now very clearly and consciously formulate:

> ". . . nie in meinem Leben, und wenn das Schicksal noch so sehr drängte, werde ich etwas thun, das meinen innern Forderungen, sei es auch noch so leise, widerspräche." (Kleist: Werke, vol. 5, p. 261)

Kleist's championship of "innern Forderungen", which gives his work its existential character, has wider than purely individual connotations. Like Schiller's, his belief that man's primary responsibility is to himself is not a narrowly private but social one. In Kleist's day, beset as it was by the Napoleonic wars and the aftermath of unrest and social instability, the nature of society, its duties and its rights, became a newly

interesting and pertinent topic. The views of his friend Adam Müller must have had, in the context of Kleist's development, a significance beyond the academic and philosophical. Kleist's passionate patriotism and political involvement as seen in his letters were an expression also of his concern for the integrity of the State, which he saw impugned and against whose violation he protested in the Hermannsschlacht. Preservation of integrity is seen as the inner moral law, on obedience to which the stability of the State, as the sum of all individuals, rests. Man's highest duty is to himself; his most sacrilegious act is a defiance of that intuition for truth, of all that is holy and eternal in him.[8] The subjective inner law must be obeyed before the objective external law can be valid, for the State, as macroanthropus, is only as great as the individuals of which it is composed. Although fully aware of the allegiance he owes the State, only the most worthy of subjects therefore can defy the State and say:

> "Ich soll thun was der Staat von mir verlangt, und doch soll ich nicht untersuchen, ob das, was er von mir verlangt, gut ist. Zu seinen unbekannten Zwecken soll ich ein bloßes Werkzeug sein--ich kann es nicht. Ein eigner Zweck steht mir vor Augen, nach ihm würde ich handeln müssen, und wenn der Staat es anders will, dem Staate nicht gehorchen dürfen."(Kleist: Werke, vol. 5, p. 151)

Reviewing Kleist's spiritual development, we see that he

first rejected orthodox Christianity in the form of one of its basic tenets, that of faith in a life after death, and rejected the intellect as guide to human behaviour.[9] He could not, however, altogether reject the idea of a monarchic, controlling power whose very mysteriousness he found inspiring: "Es kann kein böser Geist sein, der an der Spitze der Welt steht; es ist ein bloß unbegriffener!"(Kleist: Werke, vol. 5, p. 326)

In what he retained as positive belief--in his acceptance of this life as the only one that man could reliably concern himself with; in the seriousness with which he held that the ideal relationship between the individual and society was a mutually responsible one; and in the certainty of his faith in the natural and instinctive--there is nevertheless enough to suggest that Kleist might have been as ready a 'convert' as Keller was to Feuerbach's existential views.

There is some justification for thinking of Kleist as the tortured introvert and of Keller as the genial extrovert,[10] but a look at their letters makes one wonder whether the roles are so clearly defined. Kleist believed himself doomed and undermined by what he called a "höhere, festgewurzelte und unheilbare [Traurigkeit]" (Kleist: Werke, vol. 5, p. 435), and yet he could say:

"Wenn nur der Grund recht dunkel ist, so sind auch

matte Farben hell." (Kleist: Werke, vol. 5, p. 238) Where Kleist's letters are full of his inner life and his private agonies, Keller's show a masking of these; a close guarding and an almost fierce determination not to be revealed. For all that, the self-confessed "Grundtrauer" (Keller: Briefe, vol. 3 (1), p. 381) of Keller's personality cannot be explained away either for its being so rarely mentioned, or as the climate of the age reflected in him. He says of himself: "Es fehlt mir die Charis, die Sonnenwärme." (Keller: Briefe, vol. 3 (1), p. 491). Certainly there is a big difference between his inner life and his much-vaunted geniality.[11] We know of his cantankerousness, his boorishness even, his occasional but violent eruptions of anger, his horror of being pried into.[12] His wryly humorous, self-deprecatory remarks about his works are not to be taken at face value; they are an expression of reserve, even perhaps a forestalling of criticism by others.[13] Although outwardly he was often voluble, spontaneous and likeable, inwardly he was an isolated, secretive and often suspicious man; we know of his horror of "Nachlaßmardern"[14] and his mistrust even of Baechthold, whom he trusted enough to name (see Note 16) the executor of his literary estate. We have his own word for it that his heart was a "Gramspelunke",[15] and remarks

like the following have the more force for their rarity and for the acquired control of their style:

> "Mehr oder weniger traurig sind am Ende alle, die über die Brotfrage hinaus noch etwas kennen und sind; aber wer wollte am Ende ohne diese stille Grundtrauer leben, ohne die es keine echte Freude gibt?" (Keller: Briefe, vol. 3 (1), p. 381)

If Keller is known as a controlled and genial man--an assumption probably based largely on the clarity and ease of his writing--one senses that the control was obtained at some expense and after a strenuous inner battle, and that it was not a wholly natural ease. Of his 'effortless' style he tells us:

> "Meine Faulheit, von der Sie nachsichtig schrieben, ist eine ganz seltsame pathologische Arbeitsscheu in puncto litteris. Wenn ich darin bin, so kann ich große Stücke hintereinander wegarbeiten bei Tag und Nacht. Aber ich scheue mich oft wochen-, monate-, jahrelang, den angefangenen Bogen aus seinem Verstecke hervorzunehmen und auf den Tisch zu legen, es ist, als ob ich diese einfache erste Manipulation fürchtete, ärgere mich darüber und kann doch nicht anders . . ." (Keller: Briefe, vol. 3 (1), p. 183)

which makes an interesting comparison with Kleist's admission:

> "Wirklich, in einem so besondern Fall ist noch vielleicht kein Dichter gewesen. So geschäftig dem weißen Papier gegenüber meine Einbildung ist, und so bestimmt in Umriß und Farbe die Gestalten sind, die sie alsdann hervorbringt, so schwer, ja ordentlich schmerzhaft ist es mir, mir das, was wirklich ist, vorzustellen. Es ist, als ob diese, in allen Bedingungen angeordnete Bestimmtheit, meiner Phantasie, im Augenblick der Thätigkeit selbst, Fesseln anlegte." (Kleist: Werke, vol. 5, p. 427)

That Keller had long periods of depression there is no doubt. Deep isolation, reserve and melancholy which inclined to bouts of drunkenness and indolence, a brusque and often insulting manner in his dealings with people, long morose silences, verbal and physical violence, unpredictable outbursts of anger [16]--all these were part of the instability of which Keller was very much aware; he fought it in himself and projected his concern with it on to his work. C.F.Meyer's words could equally apply to Kleist: "Keller war kein einfacher Charakter, er war sehr zusammengesetzt."[17]

At the root of his complicated personality, like that of Kleist, lies a conflict of two extremes: the urge to maintain, at all costs and without compromise, his integrity and rugged independence--and the urge to conform and to be an accepted and responsible member of his community, of which a practical demonstration of his determination to find steadiness between the two is in his acceptance of the post of Staatsschreiber, and the sixteen years of conscientious service that followed.[18]

Both men had the moral courage and scrupulous honesty that are so often found in highly self-critical natures. Like Kleist, Keller was deeply introspective and self-analytical; unlike him, he was controlled by

a strong and moderating self-corrective drive, an ability to turn negative into positive that Kleist applauded but could not acquire:

> "Und nun, mein Freund, will ich Ihnen eine Lehre geben, von deren Wahrheit mein Geist zwar überzeugt ist, obgleich mein Herz ihr unaufhörlich widerspricht. Diese Lehre ist, von den Wegen, die zwischen dem höchsten äußern Glück und Unglück liegen, grade nur auf der Mittelstraße zu wandern, und unsre Wünsche nie auf die schwindlichen Höhen zu richten. So sehr ich jetzt noch die Mittelstraßen aller Art hasse, weil ein natürlich heftiger Trieb im Innern mich verführt, so ahnde ich dennoch, daß Zeit und Erfahrung mich einst davon überzeugen werden, daß sie dennoch die besten sein." (Kleist: Werke, vol. 4, p. 65)

Kleist did not give himself time to learn the lesson of moderation; Keller, more able to resign himself to frustration, lived to a ripe old age.

Keller admits to a close identification with Der grüne Heinrich, of which he wrote:

> "Der Roman war für mich keine unbefangene und objektive Aufgabe, indem derselbe, wie Sie im fertigen Buche sehen werden, auf eine zu ernste Weise mit meinem eigenen Wesen verflochten ist, als daß er mir so leicht von der Hand laufen konnte, wie etwas Fremdes." (Keller: Briefe, vol. 3 (2), p. 59)

Especially the part dealing with childhood is largely autobiographical.[19] On this level (remembering of course that it is not only that--and that if it is the spiritual biography of the man it is, more importantly, the spiritual biography of the artist), it shows us his

own dissatisfactions with what he considered unstable in himself. Keller makes this clear:

> "Nun noch einige Worte über den Henri vert. Ich habe bei diesem Unglücklichen das gewagte Manöver gemacht, daß ich meine eigene Jugendgeschichte zum Inhalt des ersten Teiles machte, um dann darauf den weiteren Verlauf des Romanes zu gründen, und zwar so, wie er mir selbst auch hätte passieren können, wenn ich mich nicht zusammengenommen hätte." (My underlining of the last lines. L.B.--Keller, Briefe, vol. 1, p. 356)

The story of Heinrich Lee's life is essentially a story of man's struggle to attain balance.[20] Keller again makes this point explicit:

> "Die Moral meines Buches ist: daß derjenige, dem es nicht gelingt, die Verhältnisse seiner Person und seiner Familie im Gleichgewicht zu erhalten, auch unbefähigt sei, im staatlichen Leben eine wirksame und ehrenvolle Stellung einzunehmen. Die Schuld kann in vielen Fällen an der Gesellschaft liegen, und alsdann wäre freilich der Stoff derjenige eines sozialistischen Tendenzbuches. Im gegebenen Falle aber liegt sie größtenteils im Charakter und dem besonderen Geschicke des Helden und bedingt hierdurch eine mehr ethische Bedeutung des Romans." (Keller: Briefe, vol. 3 (2), p. 15)

Heinrich's innate imbalance is shown early as a child in his excessive imaginative life, which substitutes for and fills the vacuum in him between his inner need for all-embracing experience and his inadequate relations with the ordinary, everyday world. The overbalance through living in the image results in a denial of the real for the artificial, which is a denial of the potential in him for natural wholeness. The insight

which comes only once to him--in the course of reading Goethe's works--that he lacks 'Phantasie für die Wahrheit des Realen', is of course, as Boeschenstein points out, Keller's own.[21] It is this deficiency in Lee's character which stands in the way of his achieving integration and fulfilment. In the first version, the 'romantic' ending is one of despair, which was later corrected in the second to the more 'realistic' one of hopeful compromise. Through insight, it is implied though not made explicit, the individual may attain awareness of himself which, though painful, is enriching enough to make his life more real and meaningful. The difference between the two versions tells us much about Keller's own reorientation to his world. In this connection, what seems surprising is that Keller did not make a similar adjustment to Romeo und Julia auf dem Dorfe, and did not write a second version changing the subjectively negative ending to a more socially positive one. Perhaps his disparagement of it may be interpreted as a private dissatisfaction with it on this score?[22]

Much of Keller's other work also shows an exploration of the theme concerning adjustment of attitudes to reality and unreality, where deviation from balance leads negatively to tragic complication or comic error,

or positively, to a mature attitude which assumes a sense of responsibility and so ensures the continued existence of society and its order. Feuerbach had written:

> "Wie zur Liebe, so auch zum Verstande, wie zum Leben, so auch zur Philosophie, gehört das Ich und das Du. Nur diese Einheit ist das göttliche, das allmächtige Wesen."[23]

As well as his concern with the problem of individual responsibility to society, we know from what Keller had written previously on such topics as Christianity, death, the hereafter and nature, that his earlier attitudes anticipated those of Feuerbach.

The episode in Der grüne Heinrich, where Lee as a child found himself unable to compromise his integrity by saying grace in the spirit of his mother's bidding, "weil, wenn ich es getan, es doch nicht wahr gewesen wäre in dem Sinne, wie sie es verstand" (Keller: Werke, vol. 1, p. 32), show Keller's early recognition that he was at variance with the forms of Christianity as believed and practised. His early lyrics, while deeply religious in tone, show that the religious experience was for him not a social act of communication with a personal God, but an intensely private one, unconscious, direct, impersonal.[24] In images of darkness, distance, silence, timelessness, God is seen, not as a distinct

and intimate Being, but as mystery--product of man's awe. Stille der Nacht particularly expresses the religious experience as a natural, intuitive one, in which human limitation is transcended through identification with the eternal world rhythm: "Ich fühle mich so leicht zumal/Und wie die Welt so still und gut." (Keller: Werke, vol. 8, p. 7)

At the age of eighteen, Keller had written to Müller: "Der Mensch soll nicht tugendhaft, sondern nur natürlich sein, so wird die Tugend von selbst kommen." (Keller: Briefe, vol. 1, p. 155/6). In accepting a morality based on natural law, he showed that regard for nature which is expressed metaphysically in the lyrics.[25] In these, concepts as dissonant as Infinity and Nothingness, Life and Death, become unified. In Die Zeit geht nicht, the human soul experiences infinity in a moment, and so the live spirit triumphs over time and space; there is the recognition that the truly infinite is life itself. Thus perceived, death is therefore no longer feared, for death is absorbed by life instead. Even though man dies and cannot hope for eternal life beyond, he is glorified and in a sense immortalized by being part of the cycle of becoming and dying. It is in this sense that, accepting renunciation

of an after-life as part of Feuerbach's philosophy, Keller could answer the question "Wird die Welt, wird das Leben prosaischer und gemeiner nach Feuerbach?" (Keller: Briefe, vol. 1, p. 275) with:

> "Wie trivial erscheint mir gegenwärtig die Meinung, daß mit dem Aufgeben der sogenannten religiösen Ideen alle Poesie und erhöhte Stimmung aus der Welt verschwinde! Im Gegenteil! Die Welt ist mir unendlich schöner und tiefer geworden, das Leben ist wertvoller und intensiver, der Tod ernster, bedenklicher und fordert mich nun erst mit aller Macht auf, meine Aufgabe zu erfüllen und mein Bewußtsein zu reinigen und zu befriedigen, da ich keine Aussicht habe, das Versäumte in irgend einem Winkel der Welt nachzuholen." (Keller: Briefe, vol. 1, p. 290)

Far from emphasizing the meaninglessness of life, death gives life its deepest meaning--"es wird alles klarer, strenger, aber auch glühender und sinnlicher", (Keller: Briefe, vol. 1, p. 275)--and consequently places more importance than ever on the individual, whose striving after integrity is emphasized as his personal contribution to cosmic integration. Man becomes responsible for his own salvation here on earth, precisely because there is no hereafter, and assumes both the role of God and His divinity: "Gott strahlt von Weltlichkeit."[26]

It is clear that Keller was unable to channel his strong sense of awe in the direction of conventional Christianity; neither did he concern himself with the theoretical question of God's existence. The expression

of 'His' being through the mediation of nature, however, was capable of immediate apperception, and this is the direction his religious impulse took. Nature was for Keller not an ideologically contrived concept, but a practical experiencing of the mystery in the here and now.[27] Natural health and wholeness of being thus became Keller's realistic ideal.

In a letter to his mother he writes: "Ich habe immerwährend das Bedürfnis, mit Gott in vertrauensvoller Verbindung zu bleiben, aber . . . " (Keller: Briefe, vol. 1, p. 62--my underlining. L.B.)

The "aber" is significant. For, alongside the religious awe that Keller felt, he developed a healthy mistrust of the illusions to which a misdirected imagination is prone, and the part it can play in dislocating the personality and rendering it unreal and ineffective. There is a consistency in Keller's stories of belief that the potential in human imagination should be used, and not wasted; that its insights should be employed productively towards eventual integration and not disorientation; that it should heal, not inhibit. This is the uniqueness of Keller's 'realism': the practical application of his sense of mystery to the confines of a workable reality. This was for him a religious con-

viction--'God' through nature in man--but one which is not so much dogmatic as therapeutic.[28]

Kleist sought in vain for a supporting formula which would give a satisfactory endorsement to his view of man as essentially a non-intellectual being; he found no such philosophical confirmation from an outside source. Kant merely cleared away the deadwood for him and left him, if more isolated than before, more firmly convinced that his belief in his own feeling was the only certainty to which he could cling. We are not concerned here with the question whether Kleist interpreted Kant correctly; we merely observe that his convictions seem surprisingly modern, for the age he lived in was not yet ready to accept the views of a Feuerbach, who later endorsed and consolidated those of Keller.[29] All the same we hear Kleist, who was strongly influenced by Rousseau,[30] expressing convictions about the natural which are very similar to those of Keller.

Extreme honesty and personal integrity which gave them the courage to take a fresh and critical look at reality however fearful and mystifying they found it led to a refusal in Kleist and Keller to pay lip-service to traditional religious views and values.

Both searched for an authoritative answer to the deepest questions of life. Kleist, after Kant, came as we have seen through despondency to a clarified feeling of trust in his own inner nature and instinct for truth; Keller, after hearing Feuerbach's lectures, came to rely on the principles of external nature as the example according to which man should regulate and control his life. How comforted, one feels, might Kleist have been by the corroboration of his belief in Feuerbach's words:

> "Gott ist das in mir, mit mir, durch mich, auf mich, für mich handelnde Wesen, das Prinzip meines Heils, meiner guten Gesinnungen und Handlungen, folglich mein eignes gutes Prinzip und Wesen."[31]

The view of man as responsible for and capable of his own salvation, as primarily a being with a sound, natural instinct for truth, is basic to the thinking of Kleist and Keller, and the central tenet in their faith in "Gefühl" and "Natur" respectively. "Ruhe" was for each a personal goal which, in its identification with natural rhythm, is symbolized for Kleist in the figure of the "antigrav" Marionette and for Keller in the words: "Willst du, o Herz, ein gutes Ziel erreichen,/Mußt du in eigner Angel schwebend ruhn." (Keller: Werke, vol. 8, p. 86).

In their works, too, though their techniques differ, the starting-off point is that of man--and, moreover, man as individual. Their approach is fundamental. Keller's attitude--like Kleist's--was that "nicht der Boden, die Vegetation, die Atmosphäre, sondern der Mensch selbst der Gegenstand seiner Anlagen ist," (Keller: Briefe, vol. 1, p. 383), when he writes:

> "Ewig sich gleich bleibt nur das, was rein menschlich ist, und dies zur Geltung zu bringen ist bekanntlich die Aufgabe aller Poesie, . . ."[32]

and Kleist speaks for the same intuitive and sensual quality in the creative process of them both when he writes:

> ". . . der Gegenstand, fühle ich unaufhörlich, ist kein Gegenstand der Einbildung: mit meinen Sinnen in der wahrhaftigen lebendigen Gegenwart mögte ich ihn durchdringen und begreifen." (Kleist: Werke, vol. 5, p. 428)

It seems that, while they had forsworn Christianity and the idea of an after-life yet hungered for a sustaining faith, their belief in "Gefühl" and "Natur" was a case of "wenig glauben, um Sicheres zu glauben,"[33] and what they retained was more than a merely pragmatic materialism; for the terms contained for them all the religious awe felt for the mystery of man's origin and --as will be shown expressed in Prinz Friedrich von Homburg and Romeo und Julia auf dem Dorfe--a strong confidence in the positive powers of the sub-conscious:

a well, as it were, from which man draws (or can with insight draw) a recuperative force for health and integration.

As in their lives, so aesthetically in their works they show a preoccupation with finding a balanced relationship between inner imaginative and outer factual reality, but whereas Kleist, in his, mostly records a shattering or distortion of equilibrium, Keller on the whole shows the road to its attainment.[34] This generalization will have to be qualified, however, in regard to the two works here to be explored, each of which is something of an exception to the rule. The pessimism of Kleist the man who wrote:

> ". . . wenn es in meiner Macht gewesen wäre, so versichre ich Dich, ich würde den Entschluß zu sterben, den ich gefaßt habe, wieder aufgegeben haben. Aber ich schwöre Dir, es ist mir ganz unmöglich länger zu leben; meine Seele ist so wund, daß mir, ich mögte fast sagen, wenn ich die Nase aus dem Fenster stecke, das Tageslicht wehe thut, das mir darauf schimmert. Das wird mancher für Krankheit und überspannt halten; . . ." (Kleist: Werke, vol. 5, p. 433)

is belied by the 'optimistic' ending Kleist the dramatist gave to his Prinz Friedrich von Homburg, with its suggestion of reconciliation; and the moderated optimism of Keller's:

> "Wenn zwischen 365 Regentagen des Leidens nur ein Sonntag der heiteren Freude und des Mutes hervorlacht, so will ich alle jene Regentage

> vergessen und mein dankbares Auge nur auf diesen sonnigen Freudentag heften . . ."[35]

is not affirmed by the ending of Romeo und Julia auf dem Dorfe, his only tragedy.[36]

The conflict between what man owes to his society and what he owes to himself gives rise to much of the dramatic tension in Prinz Friedrich von Homburg and, more obliquely, in Romeo und Julia auf dem Dorfe; in both, the individual's obligation to his society is explored as a moral theme so important that some critics consider it to be central. There is also, however, a duality between external and inner reality which is at the root of the ambivalence of their endings where, despite the strong pull towards social responsibility, the heroes' duty is seen to be to themselves.

In each of these two controversial works, we are given a representation, first, of unconscious serenity in the opening scenes, then its loss, and, finally, its re-attainment. We find in them an almost seamless intertwining of the factual and the metaphysical. The economy and tautness with which they are interrelated make it extremely difficult to separate one from the other, and it is with good reason that Prinz Friedrich von Homburg and Romeo und Julia auf dem Dorfe have been

called highly ambivalent works that defy synopsis.

The complex pattern of Prinz Friedrich von Homburg is based on the straightforward development of one central character through whom Kleist, though he forsook the middle way for himself, gives in this play "den sichern Weg des Glücks zu finden." (Kleist: Werke, vol. 4, p. 57). It is, at its simplest, the story of a young man's growth to maturity, which leads him through disobedience and into acceptance as a worthy member of his community once more.

Use of a central character for the same purpose is common to many of Keller's works, as in Der grüne Heinrich, Pankraz der Schmoller, Spiegel, das Kätzchen and Martin Salander. As such, each is more than a picaresque tale, and a subtle variation of the Romantic 'Wanderer' theme.[37] Their heroes' pilgrimage through life is not a pilgrimage per se. It is not journeying for its own sake, but for the purpose of reorientation to reality (in the course of which the nature of reality is questioned) and integration into the order and relationships of human lives. On another level the works, though based realistically in the particular,[38] attain a significance that is universal, and give a metaphysical view of the cycle of man; they show the

tightrope he has to walk between obeying his inner law and the external one that society imposes on him: his difficult road to personal balance.

Prinz Friedrich von Homburg and Romeo und Julia auf dem Dorfe have Romantic aspects in common; they are of course less obvious in the latter. The individually heroic aspects are de-accentuated, which makes the whole relatively impersonal, and the effect of the narrative more static and spatial, less dramatic and linear than in Prinz Friedrich von Homburg. Other elements, too, among them those of milieu and language, are de-romanticized; Keller has not employed a court setting in Romeo und Julia auf dem Dorfe as Kleist has in Prinz Friedrich von Homburg; there, a court setting was not merely a traditional one for Kleist to employ; it was natural for him to set his characters against a background with which he was familiar. It was equally natural for Keller to choose a humbler one with which to achieve a similar aim: "die Würde der Menschheit im Volke aufzusuchen"[39] and to show "daß ihr Herz auf die gleiche Weise schlägt wie das der feinen Leute; . . . daß ihre Liebe und ihr Haß, ihre Lust und ihr Leid so bedeutungsvoll ist wie die Leidenschaften der Prinzen und Grafen; . . . "[40] but though its setting and

language are 'of the people', the more 'realistic' tone of Romeo und Julia auf dem Dorfe should not prevent us from recognizing its essential theme and the vision it gives of a reality higher than, though superimposed upon, that of the mundane and everyday.

To sum up, the theme of both works is an exploration of the conflict between subjective/individual and objective/external law, a conflict which in itself becomes a questioning of the nature of the reality that surrounds the precarious human condition. The existential theme of attaining balance in the dialectic between 'Dasein' and 'Existenz' in its turn serves the more complex, metaphysical one; the struggle for equilibrium between the inner and the external becomes a finding of the way to man's salvation, a process in which the powers of the subconscious are seen to play a significant part.

In order to compare those aspects of Kleist's drama and Keller's Novelle which are in our view remarkably similar in general structure and in effect, particular attention will be given to the following: firstly, the initial dream scene of Prinz Friedrich von Homburg, I/1, and the 'ploughing' scene of Romeo und Julia auf dem Dorfe; secondly, the 'humiliation' scene of Prinz Friedrich von Homburg, III/5, and the 'bridge' scene of

Romeo und Julia auf dem Dorfe; thirdly, the roles of the Elector in Prinz Friedrich von Homburg and of the Dark Fiddler in Romeo und Julia auf dem Dorfe; and, fourthly, the closing scenes of both works.

*

III

Prinz Friedrich von Homburg

". . .das Paradies ist verriegelt und der Cherub hinter uns; wir müssen die Reise um die Welt machen und sehen, ob es vielleicht von hinten irgendwo wieder offen ist." (Kleist: Werke, vol. 4, p. 137).

This is the theme of Prinz Friedrich von Homburg: the theme of Paradise Lost and Found--man's fall from natural, unconscious grace and his recovery of it; his achievement, through suffering, of a new awareness of himself and a fuller self-knowledge of that which is temporal and eternal in him.

The sequence of the play leads from dream--through awakening, guilt and realization--to waking dream. The overall shape is interestingly and suitably circular and symmetrical. It begins and ends with scenes that are curiously similar in setting, yet subtly different in tone. The opening scene shows a state of the Unconscious, in trance--the closing one a state of Consciousness, in ecstasy. The last echoes the first,

and shows the result of the progress the Prince has made, having developed, through humiliating awareness of his mortal 'sin', to a state of harmony within himself and between him and his universe.

It is important for an understanding of this play to remember that the elements dominating Kleist's letters are 1) the preservation of faith in his inner instinct for truth, 2) the frustration at the gulf separating him and society and 3) his sense of the everpresent but barely comprehended eternal. In Prinz Friedrich von Homburg, Kleist links these three conflicting motifs of his basic life experience into an apparently compatible whole. But while the play probes, from three angles, the truth in the mystery of life, and gives a positive and hopeful solution on one plane, on another it emphasizes Kleist's basic frustration, his realization that man is inherently incapable of differentiating rationally between illusion and truth. It is Kleist's genius that he has been able to present the essential paradoxical meaning of existence in such a unified, compelling play.

As far as the plot is concerned, this first outer level turns on the impetuous action of the Prinz von Homburg who, in defiance of explicit orders not to lead

his men into battle until he receives a pre-arranged signal, plunges forward on his own initiative. He is shown to act 'instinctively' but wrongly; he errs through being falsely motivated and acts on what is vain and unreal in himself. Although the battle ends in victory, the Elector feels impelled to punish this breach of discipline and, not realizing that the culprit is his own nephew, condemns the offender to death on a charge of indiscipline. In terror of the grave, the Prince breaks down completely, renounces fame, fortune and love, and abjectly begs for mere life. The Elector hears of this, and decides to allow the Prince to be his own judge. When in a letter he informs Homburg that, if he thinks he has been unjustly accused, he will be pardoned and set free, the Prince reinstates himself as a man of honour, admits his guilt and demands punishment by death. Having made this decision, however, he is at the end set at liberty.

At a second, deeper level, the Prince's dilemma arises from a fundamental conflict between the right to freedom of the individual, and the duty of society to maintain order. The play poses the question whether these two conflicting rights can be compatible. Can the individual, with confidence, surrender that which is most precious to him, his inner integrity, his inner

reality, to the outer reality of society? Can he do this without fear of violation to himself?

At the third and deepest level, the play is not a drama of action in the accepted sense at all, but a poetic statement of the reality of the human soul; of the perplexing complexity of the human condition within the realities of the world in which he must live. The Prince comes to realize that his breach of discipline against the external social law is an act of mutiny against the harsh, eternal law of life and therefore, as he is part of the life process, against himself. Until he is converted into accepting this as incontrovertible fact, he is not fully alive and has no inner reality to defend. The confrontation between the individual here and the representative of society--between the Prince and the Elector--is a confrontation of religious significance. It is the confrontation between Man and 'God'--or, more correctly, between Man and the mystery that is life.

When the Elector relinquishes his responsibility for the death sentence, he is denying his authority, and is placing a burden on Homburg's shoulders. Who then, asks Kleist, is ultimately in charge--Man or 'God'? If 'God' will not, cannot, admit that he is the ultimate authority, the ultimate Reality, we see the tragic

predicament of Man, who asks: "Gott der Gerechtigkeit!/ Sprich deutlich mit dem Menschen, daß er's weiß/Auch, was er soll!" (Die Familie Schroffenstein, V/1) and who, receiving no answer, answers himself in astonishment: "Mich selber ruft er zur Entscheidung auf!" (Prinz Friedrich von Homburg, IV/4).

We cannot of course assume any conventional view of God even from the use of the word in these lines; between the time of writing "Gott der Gerechtigkeit! . ." (from Familie Schroffenstein, published 1803) and "Mich selber ruft er zur Entscheidung auf!" (from Prinz Friedrich von Homburg, begun 1808 and finished 1811), the 'Kant crisis" had in any case precipitated a modification of Kleist's views. We may only take the word 'God' as Kleist uses it to be synonymous for the mystery of existence with its cruel and puzzling contradictions, perhaps as an answer to the question why man, given all his powers of imagination, is yet so bound by the limitations of his human existence that he cannot pierce the veil between himself and ultimate truth.

It would be as well here, before going on to the opening scene, to survey the various levels on which Prinz Friedrich von Homburg has been understood.

Interpretations of the play have been many and varied, but must, it is implied, fall into one of three often-quoted groups:[1]

1) Triumph of Society and its demands, in the name of Law and Order, of the individual
2) Triumph of the integrity of the individual, i.e. subjectivity of inner feeling
3) Mutual triumph--reconciliation between the above extremes.

Some of the most superficial fall into the first category and have to be discarded out of hand, as having stopped at one level and having ignored the deeper. It seems the critic, when faced with a work as puzzling as this, decides, in a gesture of despair, to explore only one line of thought. Such criticism does not see the wood for the trees; it does not see the figurative whole for the isolated literal meanings, and ignores the very curious inconsistencies and paradoxes that give the play its depth. Such unusual elements we state here very briefly, for we shall be considering them later; the following alone must warn us to be on the alert and that this is an extraordinary, certainly not a simple, work: the fact that Homburg's guilt is equivocal; that it is he who must accept the responsibility for deciding a drastic verdict; that, if the

Elector is not all-powerful, he is at least flexible, but curiously mysterious in his ways; that there are not one, but two, denouements; and that the play begins and ends with strangely moving, strangely ambivalent dream scenes. All these are hints of the play's complexity.

The spatiality of Prinz Friedrich von Homburg does not hold only one, but several, themes, and these are unfolded on several planes, some parallel, some antiphonal and some, in fact, invisible undercurrents. One cannot, unilinearly, pursue only one line of thought in examining it; the categories as given on page 75, although contradictory, are shown in this dramatic poem to be not necessarily mutually exclusive. The aspects implicit in them have to be seen as a unit, for they are related and interrelated in such a way as to present a fourth-dimensional view that embraces all three. The ambivalences and paradoxes in the work should warn one not to destroy its prismatic unity by trying to fit its complexity into a neatly contrived theory. If Kleist himself saw man's position as perplexing and ambivalent, who are we to correct his vision?

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The Opening Scene

That for Kleist tragedy lies in man's inability to distinguish between true and untrue, between real and unreal,[2] is found to be substantiated in the opening scene, which is a poetic and pictorial suggestion of this state of inability and an exposition which anticipates the crux of the play: the later re-discovery by Homburg of the genuine reality within him, as revealed to him in the first, silent part of the first scene. He is not in the first scene aware of this inner reality, for it is revealed in the form of a dream which he is later to misinterpret, helped to this deception by the entrance of society and its other, outer reality. So this inner reality is twice veiled. He is not yet in full equilibrium, not yet the true 'marionette figure' he is later to become.

The visual impact of Scene 1, with its moonlit stillness, is one of great simplicity, but this must not lead us into assuming that it is not complex and ambivalent. Despite the initial impact, the impression of the whole of the scene (that is, if we look at it in its two-fold entirety, and do not isolate the initial pure 'innocence-of-being' unit which Kleist has incorporated) is one of confusion. In this sense, Müller-Seidel is justified in saying that "Der Traum der

Eingangsszene im 'Prinzen von Homburg' zeugt vom Doppelsinn";[3] and von Wiese is justified in his evaluation of it as "Wahrheit des Unbewußten"[4] only if we consider the Prince's dream of the first, silent unit on its own. For there are two parts to the opening scene: the dream of Homburg as we first see him, and the dream of the intrusion into that dream of the Elector and his entourage.

The stage directions make it clear that Homburg, in his isolating trance, is at first silent and alone. The moonlit setting effectively presents a vision of purity: the invisible made visible: the unspoilt essence of Being: Man before he is man.

When the Elector's party enter, this silence is dramatically broken, and--figuratively--man is born. Now with skill Kleist introduces a new theme, and the initial purity of the first dream unit is thrown open to doubt. A new phase has begun.

Hohenzollern's phrase describing the wreath as "den prächt'gen Kranz des Ruhmes" (PvH, I/1, l. 28), --which the stage directions had previously called, very simply, only "einen Kranz"--carries connotations of vainglory, and introduces for the first time thoughts of human ambition and impurity. There is a suggestion of enticement, too, in the Elector's sub-

sequent jest of offering (and yet not offering!) the Prince the wreath, which in the context can be seen as the tempting of man, in this garden, to approach the tree of knowledge: a gesture anticipating his fall. The stage directions describe the first step:

> "Der Kurfürst nimmt ihm den Kranz aus der Hand; der Prinz errötet [!] und sieht ihn an. Der Kurfürst schlingt seine Halskette um den Kranz und gibt ihn der Prinzessin; der Prinz steht lebhaft [!] auf. Der Kurfürst weicht mit der Prinzessin, welche den Kranz erhebt, zurück; der Prinz, mit ausgestreckten Armen, folgt ihr." (PvH, I/1, p. 24)

This is a symbolic, ceremonial enactment of life blood-brotherhood, and the mutuality between life and Homburg is established--the "Kranz" and the "Halskette" are entwined. The Prince is now "lebhaft" and the stage is set for his entry into society as life member.

As deliberately now, Kleist accelerates the breakdown of purity into impurity, of simplicity into confusion, of clarity into bewilderment. Where we at first saw the Prince through himself in a pure dream state, other-worldly and innocent, we now see him through the eyes of the onlookers, mortal and less than innocent, in an unnatural somnambulistic trance. (Kleist gives us a Hall of Mirrors!--in I/4, the Prince, having forgotten his first purity, will see himself as the onlookers now see him!) The point of view is being

subtly changed; the confusion of the scene is now emphasized by the contradictory attitudes of those around him; their remarks which are both kindly and condescending, sympathetic and mocking, show the Prince at a disadvantage. At a distance from (their) normality, he is isolated and vulnerable, caught in a web of uncertainty between two worlds. The words of the bystanders show him as foolish, mad, or ill: "Was sagt der Tor?"--"Der Rasende!"--"Er braucht des Arztes!" (PvH, I/1, l. 66--l. 69--l. 33, respectively). Yet his isolation is minimized by their kindliness, his trust awakens a protective response, and his bravery in action draws admiration:

> "Er ist gesund, ihr mitleidsvollen Frauen,
> Bei Gott, ich bin's nicht mehr! Der Schwede
> morgen,
> Wenn wir im Feld' ihn treffen, wird's empfinden!"
> (PvH, I/1, ll. 35/37)

With the impending battle against the Swedes, highlighting as it does the inner battle of Homburg which it precipitates, attention is drawn to inner and outer reality, and the conflict between the two.

The Prince is ill, yet well; he sleeps, yet wakes; is mortal, yet 'immortal'; which is he? In Hohenzollern's words: "--Schade, ewig schade,/Daß hier kein Spiegel in der Nähe ist!/Er würd' ihm eitel, wie ein

Mädchen, nahn . . ."(PvH, I/1, ll. 59/61), there is implied, in the mirror image, a further distortion of reality. What is truth, and what illusion? The question is clearly asked.

The first half of the scene, the pure dream, is now distanced, almost buried; it has become the genuine core in an ambiguous, 'real' setting--"die Perle" in the "Ring, der sie in Fassung hält." (PvH, I/4,ll. 151/2)

In the first unit of the first scene, Homburg is seen as protected; in the effect of the whole scene, he is vulnerable. The entirety of the opening scene is paradox: it hints at a future confusion of consciousness, yet incorporates the serenity of the unconscious, which elements together prophesy that the dream-marionette in Homburg of the first silent unit is to lose its equilibrium through contact with mortal existence. With its inner and outer realities the opening scene, then, is a dream within a dream, and states equally that Prinz Friedrich von Homburg is to be a play within a play.

The second scene of Act I re-emphasizes the confusion of Homburg now that he is mortal man. It is a clearly enunciated scene of transition between his first untested innocence and the challenging world he has entered. The first is now obscured, but dormant.

He has become self-conscious, and is about to err. Kleist's words take on a special meaning here:

> "Jede erste Bewegung, alles Unwillkürliche, ist schön; und schief und verschroben Alles, so bald es sich selbst begreift."
> (Kleist: Werke, vol. 5, p. 328)

In I/4, we are brought back into a world we think we understand and are, with Homburg, lulled into a sense of false security. For is not Homburg now 'normal' once more? Soon after his initial puzzlement: "Ich weiß nicht, liebster Heinrich, wo ich bin" (PvH, I/4, l. 111), the sight of the glove sparks a dim recollection of his "sonderbaren Traum" (PvH, I/4, l. 140); he struggles impatiently--"Aber stör' mich nicht!"(PvH, I/4, l. 157)--to recall it; and finally, with his "--Da hast du recht. Laß uns zu Bette gehn."(PvH, I/4, l. 205), he dismisses the dream, and with it the genuine reality of the first unit, as but a dream. His mortal course is now set: and only fleetingly and unacknowledged will come reminders of that first revelation.

The outer action is accelerated; he now plunges blindly into battle, soaring like Icarus to a peak of mortal ambition as he exults: "O Cäsar Divus!/Die Leiter setz' ich an, an deinen Stern!"(PvH, II/8,l.714)

His vision, having lost sight of that which is genuine in himself, is seen to be in error; the star he is following is false, and that which is natural and precious and dormant in him is being actively denied. His arrogance leads to the breach of discipline and directly to his downfall and humiliation in III/5.

> "Falsch ist jedes Ziel, das nicht die reine Natur dem Menschen steckt."
> (Kleist: Werke, vol. 5, p. 226)

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Romeo und Julia auf dem Dorfe

An earlier comment was made to the effect that the optimistic tone of reconciliation made Prinz Friedrich von Homburg an exception in the body of Kleist's works; Romeo und Julia auf dem Dorfe, while similarly exceptional for being Keller's only tragedy, is distinctive also for the fact that, although use is made of a central character in so many of his works, Keller does not here do so. Instead, he makes use of two sets of characters--Manz and Marti on the one hand, and Sali and Vrenchen on the other--to give, from a different, more distanced angle, what amounts to a poetic abstraction of the same theme: divergence from, and recovery of, natural balance. Although Keller presents a definite contrast between the two pairs in the 'descent' of Manz/Marti and the 'ascent' of Sali/Vrenchen, we must continually remember that the contrast is not a clean-cut one between impurity and innocence, for each pair contains something of both. They are separate, but related--both in the literal sense of parents to children, and figuratively. In these two

pairs, however, are posed the two extremes of human potential for losing and finding grace.

The circularity and symmetry of Prinz Friedrich von Homburg is found to be paralleled in the structure of Romeo und Julia auf dem Dorfe. Here, as there, the story begins and ends with a picture of man's identification with nature. It begins with one generation and ends with the next--inducing a sense of the human cycle whose timelessness is reinforced by the final scene; bearing the lovers, the river flows on--vividly suggesting the permanent flux of eternal nature.

The first few pages are strongly reminiscent of those in Die schwarze Spinne. There is the same sunny, idyllic quality without, however, the Christian overtones, in the pastoral scene which represents man in close identity with the land. It is interesting here to note the way in which Keller deliberately sets about de-individualizing the men, so that the reader sees them not so much as independent individuals, but as abstractions, as dependent natural objects in their natural setting. He first describes the scene in such a way as to suggest distance and a lack of particular time or space:

> "An dem schönen Flusse, der eine halbe Stunde entfernt an Seldwyl vorüberzieht, erhebt sich eine

> weitgedehnte Erdwelle und verliert sich, selber wohlbebaut, in der fruchtbaren Ebene. Fern an ihrem Fuße liegt ein Dorf, welches manche große Bauernhöfe enthält, und über die sanfte Anhöhe lagen vor Jahren drei prächtige, lange Äcker weithingestreckt, gleich drei riesigen Bändern nebeneinander."
> (RJ, p. 69--my underlining.L.B.)

Using words that are evocative of flow, grandeur and spatiality, Keller conjures up a distant, panoramic view of a fertile garden-world. Then only, he brings details into focus and introduces the relatively small figures of "zwei Bauern auf zweien dieser Äcker."(RJ, p. 69)

Having reduced them in size by contrast against the wide background, and by a magical use of numbers which defines their smallness in the neatness of two of three parallel fields, we suddenly see them as if through a telescopic lens. The tiny figures become "lange, knochige Männer von ungefähr vierzig Jahren" (RJ, p. 69), but, although the focus is changed, they are still distant and impersonal; they are written of in the plural; their clothes, "wie in Stein gemeißelt" (RJ, p. 69), are identical, down to the detail of their caps:

> "So glichen sie einander vollkommen in einiger Entfernung; denn sie stellten die ursprüngliche Art dieser Gegend dar, und man hätte sie auf den ersten Blick nur daran unterscheiden können, daß der eine den Zipfel seiner weißen Kappe nach vorn trug, der andere aber hinten im Nacken hängen hatte. Aber das wechselte zwischen ihnen ab, indem sie in der entgegengesetzten Richtung

> pflügten; denn wenn sie oben auf der Höhe zusammentrafen und aneinander vorüberkamen, so schlug dem, welcher gegen den frischen Ostwind ging, die Zipfelkappe nach hinten über, während sie bei dem andern, der den Wind im Rücken hatte, sich nach vorn sträubte."
> (RJ, p. 70--my underlining. L.B.)

Only two pages later are they named; but even then the names 'Manz' and 'Marti' have an alliterative twin-ness that detracts from their individuality as persons and endows them with a shared identity. Very skilfully, Keller achieves their anonymity, in order to suggest an agelessness and an identity with the eternal in nature: "denn sie stellten die ursprüngliche Art dieser Gegend dar". They do not dominate the land; they are part of its primitive peace, and are in natural harmony with it. This meaning is reinforced by their calm, measured progress behind the plough as they silently cross and re-cross the fields. Subtly an equation is brought about between them and the regularity of the seasons. They are, like stars in orbit, one with the natural rhythm, the silence, the mystery.

It comes with a sense of sudden shock, therefore, when these two figures spring out of their 'sleepwalking' serenity into life. We feel deceived and disillusioned as we watch them plough, with the same automatic regularity as before, slowly, relentlessly,

greedily, into the middle field which neither owns. Beauty stealthily turns to ugliness before our eyes.

It is a superbly managed transition. Like that in the opening 'dream' scene of Kleist's Prinz Friedrich von Homburg, Keller's transition gives a poetical representation of man's emergence into Being.

In pictorially suggesting the change from the trance-like state of unconscious innocence in such a way that its insidiousness brings about a sense of outrage, Keller--in a manner similar to Kleist's--forces the unsuspecting reader into a direct experience of a truth, however horrifying, about his own nature: that it can lead him, almost unaware, into guilt. The ease of this metamorphosis from original innocence into 'sin' (remembering that with Keller there are no overtones of morality in the Christian sense) is emphasized; the men almost inadvertently fall from grace:

> "Jeder sah wohl, was der andere tat, aber keiner schien es zu sehen, und sie entschwanden sich wieder, indem jedes Sternbild still am anderen vorüberging und hinter diese runde Welt hinabtauchte." (RJ, p. 77)

They are seen at first not so much as consciously responsible individuals, but as natural phenomena expressing the mysterious force of nature. Their innocence is as yet untried. As they become incarnate,

however, they incorporate not only the capacity for 'good' by retaining in unconscious memory the harmony of their natural source, but also--on becoming man and losing sight of it--the capacity for 'evil'. 'Evil' thus equals human denial, through unawareness, of natural 'good'; but, mysteriously, they are one: linked by nature, the Christian antithesis is resolved.

Manz and Marti's apparently well-ordered existence is suddenly and inexplicably disrupted; their fate "glich fortan der träumerischen Qual zweier Verdammten" (RJ, p. 83), and leads to the wild climax of the fight on the bridge.

In Die schwarze Spinne Gotthelf shows in Christian terms part of what Keller shows through nature. There, the contentment that comes from acknowledged obedience to the authority of God turns to complacency and negligence. Here, the land between the two outer fields is fallow and unploughed, reflecting the dormant potential to guilt; for years, presumably, Manz and Marti have worked the fields on either side, until their complacency turns to greed for the middle field. Their past respect for the law of ownership and its authority disappears; they proceed to plough it for their own ends, to violate it and so destroy themselves.

Desecration of the land is, in fact, desecration of that which is 'holy' in themselves. Blindness to it, and lack of insight into what has happened causes each to blame the other as his evil star:

> ". . . der Haß zwischen ihnen wurde täglich größer, da jeder den andern als den Urheber seines Unsterns betrachtete, als seinen Erbfeind und ganz unvernünftigen Widersacher, den der Teufel absichtlich in die Welt gesetzt habe, um ihn zu verderben." (RJ, p. 85)

The sacrilege committed against nature--and so against themselves--is made visible through the deterioration of their outward lives. Marti's wife dies; he and Vrenchen continue in increasingly wretched poverty. Like Marti, Manz gradually loses more and more of his land, and moves away [!] from it into the city, where he tries without success to make a living as an innkeeper, but is reduced instead to putting himself outside the law completely and to becoming a receiver of stolen goods. His wife becomes as ridiculous as he is despicable until, too late, she mends her ways, and the dilapidated tavern is the outward symbol of inner neglect:

> "Die Wände waren schlecht geweißtes, feuchtes Mauerwerk, außer der dunklen, unfreundlichen Gaststube mit ihren ehemals blutroten Tischen waren nur noch ein paar schlechte Kämmerchen da, und überall hatte der ausgezogene Vorgänger den trostlosesten Schmutz und Kehricht zurückgelassen." (RJ, p. 91)

An examination of the opening scenes of Prinz Friedrich von Homburg and Romeo und Julia auf dem Dorfe shows both strong similarity and subtle difference.

Both scenes strongly suggest change, metamorphosis, conversion of dream into awakening. There is similarity in the authors' portrayal of the state of pre-fallen man and his loss of innocence: his estrangement from it on becoming man. In each scene there is shown a divorce from that which is natural in him, a losing sight of that which is eternal and 'divine'. In both, the primaeval innocence is seen to be a natural state, and the losing of it likewise a natural process.

We have seen that for Kleist "Ruhe" meant that state of rest in which man is in direct communion and in obedient unison with the inner law of his "Gefühl"; that for Keller it meant being in direct, intuitive harmony with the inner laws of nature; and that for Kleist and Keller "Gefühl" and "Natur" were, respectively, terms that condensed for them their view of that in man which is most holy.[5] In each of the opening scenes which portray its denial, the characters are seen to be, if not totally oblivious of their deep selves, at least passive; denial of it is not conscious or deliberate; such awareness as there is is minimal

and subconscious.

The difference between these opening scenes is largely one of emphasis on the degree of subjective intensity. Attention has been drawn to the fact that Kleist uses one central character, whereas Keller uses two pairs of 'types'.[6] Where Kleist shows the growth to maturity of the Prince in a linear development, Keller's technique is to give a spatial rather than a linear view. He spreads energy, as it were, over two pairs, (even in his description of Manz and Marti we noted a deliberately induced anonymity of identity) and so disperses the individual over four characters, which leads to a minimization of that 'heroic' quality found in the Prince. We make much of this difference in their technique purposely because it is indicative of the difference in perspective of Kleist's and Keller's Weltanschauung. Although both works are permeated with a strong sense of the universal, Kleist's immediate focus is on the individual, while Keller's is on the universe in which he lives.

In Prinz Friedrich von Homburg the Prince dominates the stage in the opening scene; in Romeo und Julia auf dem Dorfe the ploughmen, anonymous and small, are dominated by the largeness and the grandeur of the

landscape against which they are seen. Subjectively, Kleist shows the universal through the individual in which it is centred in his "Gefühl"; more objectively, Keller shows us the individual only as the light of the universal is filtered through him.

Kleist's view in this play is in keeping with his views recorded in his previous writing, regarding man vis-a-vis his fate. Defiance of destiny is a recurrent theme in many of his letters. The following extract is one of many:

> "Ein freier denkender Mensch bleibt da nicht stehen, wo der Zufall ihn hinstößt; . . . Er fühlt, daß man sich über das Schicksaal [sic] erheben könne, ja, daß es im richtigen Sinne selbst möglich sei, das Schicksaal zu leiten. . . . der Zustand, . . . ein Spiel des Zufalls, eine Puppe am Drathe [sic] des Schicksaals--dieser unwürdige Zustand scheint mir so verächtlich, . . . daß mir der Tod bei weitem wünschenswerther wäre."
> (Kleist: Werke, vol. 5, pp. 41 and 43/44)

The belief in man as a heroic being who could--should--be in control was, however, very different from the classical one that was held before. For not through reason, even "dem Begriff nach",[7] but through his instinctive "innere Forderungen" (Kleist: Werke, vol. 5, p. 261) was how Kleist saw man at all able to influence his destiny.

Keller's attitude, on the other hand, is shown in Trübes Wetter: "Und meine Seele rüstet sich/Ergebend ihrem Schicksal zu."[8] (My underlining. L.B.)

Interestingly, according to Fränkel, Follen had changed these lines into "zum Kampfe mit dem Schicksal zu" (Keller: Werke, vol. 8, p. 45), which would have attributed to Keller the very outlook that he had not.[9] His actual line "Ergebend ihrem Schicksal zu" does not, however, indicate a passive resignation; Keller admired Schillerean courage as much as Kleist did. But in his view man, though infinitely precious, is, in being an essential part of nature, only as important as the drop is to the ocean. He cannot therefore command nature, for nature contains him as particle.[10]

In Kleist's opening scene, the transition is from that which is individually precious: his own unconscious knowledge of harmony with its source. To understand the meaning in Keller's transition, his own words give us the lead:

> "Ich mache einen großen Unterschied zwischen dem, der die Natur nur um ihrer Formen, und dem, der sie um ihrer innern Harmonie willen anbetet . . ." (Keller: Briefe, vol. 1, p. 152)[11]

Keller clearly distinguished between 1) nature as the world of tangible reality as expressed, for instance, in her landscape, which is only her outward revelation, and 2) that which is really important: the inner harmony and beauty of her natural laws. The following passage from Der grüne Heinrich expresses the importance Keller attached to this differentiation:

> "Schon früh hatte er ohne theoretische Einpflanzung, unbewußt, die glückliche Gabe, das wahre Schöne von dem bloß Malerischen, was vielen ihr Leben lang in Sinne steckt, trennen zu können. Diese Gabe bestand in einem treuen Gedächtnis für Leben und Bedeutung der Dinge, in der Freude über ihre Gesundheit und volle Entwicklung, in einer Freude, welche den äußern Formenreichtum vergessen kann, der oft eigentlich mehr ein Barockes als Schönes ist."[12]

In the opening scene of Romeo und Julia auf dem Dorfe, which like that of Prinz Friedrich von Homburg is made up of two units, we see, firstly, the ploughmen in harmony with their natural surroundings and, secondly, that this harmony is a brittle state. Like that of the Prince, their harmony is not that of the truly adjusted Marionette, for they are seen to lose their balance very easily. Their fall from its grace is shown in the transition to have been a blindness to "das wahre Schöne" --for they do not possess "unbewußt, die glückliche Gabe" to perceive it. Like the Prince in his somnambulistic trance, they too are 'unaware'. Unlike him, they do not ever attain the insight into what they have lost, and so are unable to make the "Reise um die Welt" in order to see "ob es vielleicht von hinten irgendwo wieder offen ist",(Kleist: Werke vol. 4, p. 137) to effect their re-orientation and re-enter Paradise.

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Prinz Friedrich von Homburg: Act III, Scene 5

We broke off discussion of the opening scene at the high point of the Prince's exclamation: "O Cäsar Divus!/Die Leiter setz' ich an, an deinen Stern!" (PvH, II/8, l. 714).

It is the battle cry of a man in pursuit of the highest, earthly fame. The parallel motif of inner, genuine glory, however, accompanies this outer, mortal rise. Like an undercurrent to the stream of life there are subtle reminders that the dream within the dream was the true reality. There is the incident of the glove in I/4, and again in I/5, where the Prince, his attention being sufficiently distracted by it from concentrating on the battle orders, is led to become guilty on two counts: neglect of the true inner reality and neglect of the outer. Again, the theme of glory is taken up in a double sense in the first of the Prince's three monologues, in which the Prince arrogantly challenges Fortune to fulfil her promise. As Müller-Seidel says: "Der Schein des Ruhmes bezeugt sich im Wort der Dichtung als das 'Flüchtige'. Der Ruhm, den

Homburg erstrebt, ist ein flüchtiger Ruhm, ohne daß er selbst es weiß oder durchschaut oder unterscheidet."[13] The words in the monologue such as 'Windeshauch'--'Schleier'--'Segel'--'Locken' have connotations of transitoriness, and are unconscious warnings that the glory to which he aspires is vain and fleeting, and that he is pursuing illusion. Such phrases as 'auf deiner Kugel, Ungeheures' repeat the duality of the battle to be fought without and within; they suggest confusion and anticipate clarification in the same way as the opening scene was found to do.

Homburg's error is in accepting the standards of society, rather than fundamental values; in ignoring, through involuntary blindness, the timeless basis of his being. He has been tempted, on becoming man, to lose sight of the original innocence, and must rediscover it through pain and perception. Fricke states:

> "Man muß jedoch, wie es die Interpretation des Marionettentheaters als notwendig ergab, das endliche Bewußtsein darunter begreifen, das sich verwirrend und herrschend vor die Unendlichkeit des ewigen Gefühls stellt. So ist bei dem Prinzen alles, was er tut, rückbezogen, re-flektiert auf sein zeitliches Dasein. Erst der dritte Akt offenbart, daß die scheinbare innere Einheit des Prinzen im ersten und zweiten unecht war, daß der Prinz tatsächlich nicht von der heiligen Mitte der Seele, sondern von einem Endlichen, Willkürlichen geleitet wird . . ."[14]

The Prince's blind trust in his illusory security is

shown in his reaction to the accusation laid against him in II/10, which ironically follows so soon after his hubristic "O Cäsar Divus! . . ."--he ignores it! and his subsequent imprisonment is both figurative and literal. Kleist makes the first scene of Act III a long one, which emphasizes the Prince's mystification. In his words:

> "Bin ich nicht alles, was ich bin, durch ihn?
> Und er, er sollte lieblos jetzt die Pflanze,
> Die er selbst zog, bloß, weil sie ein wenig
> Zu rasch und üppig in die Blume warf,
> Mißgünstig in den Staub daniedertreten?"
> (PvH, III/1, ll. 835/39)

we see his shaken trust in the loving authority of his uncle; misplaced because, as he will later realize, he has been too passively dependent. He has not yet learnt to trust his inner self and to take full responsibility, and through him we hear an echo of Kleist's own dismay at man's dilemma: placed in a trusting position by forces beyond him he is yet, by these very controlling powers, held accountable. So we see, in Homburg's bewilderment, Kleist's view of the doubly tragic lot of man, who is yet held to be guilty in his ignorance of the law which he does not understand, because he is unable to do so:

> "Hat es die Tragödie nicht zumeist mit einer
> objektiven Schuld zu tun, für die man nicht
> subjektiv verantwortlich ist? . . . Gibt es
> nicht jederzeit eine Verantwortlichkeit gegenüber

> dem, was man nicht weiß, nicht wissen konnte und nicht wissen wollte?--Kleist macht es uns nicht einfach."[15]

Homburg is clearly in a state of emotional confusion; even when he finally believes the death sentence passed, he and Hohenzollern believe so little in his guilt that they come to think of a devious reason--Natalie's marriage plans having gone awry--other than the given one, to explain the Elector's anger. The Prince leaves his prison in panic to plead for mercy, which Hohenzollern does not appear to doubt he will receive: "Und gleich, in wenig Stunden, bist du frei."(PvH, III/1, l. 939). Soon after, the guard significantly says: "Die Ordre, die man mir erteilt hat, lautet,/Dich gehn zu lassen frei, wohin du willst."(PvH, III/2, l. 944/5) Once more Kleist makes his paradox, paradoxically, very clear: under the imprisoning law of Fate, Man the prisoner can be free!

In Act III, then, we see the sinking of the Prince to complete inner despair. In III/5, with an audacity that his Prussian compatriots found offensive, Kleist shows us Man at his most pitiful in Homburg who, having seen his open grave and having come face to face with the full horror of death, abjectly renounces all he has held of most value--all, except life itself: "Seit ich mein Grab sah, will ich nichts, als leben,/Und frage

nichts mehr, ob es rühmlich sei!"(PvH, III/5, l.1004)

The primitive origin, the eternal in man, is laid bare; in terror of annihilation, the Prince recognizes for the first time the transitoriness of life and, by implication, the emptiness of the values which he had attached to it.

What follows is Kleist's 'invisible theatre'[16] at its most compelling. Like Homburg's private confrontation with death at the site of the grave between III/2 and III/4, the result of which we see made public in III/5, the regeneration of his most hidden spirit (and the essence of the whole play) occurs off-stage, between III/5 and IV/4; and in IV/4 we shall see made public the result of this.

III/5, the high point of the drama,[17] is seen through the moment of its lowest ebb. For the scene of the Prince's deepest despair is merely the outward sign of the inner restoration; Homburg's inner triumph begins at the very point where his outer humiliation is most complete. It is a resurrection and a symbolic death[18]--a Death-in-Life--a Life-in-Death. Life becomes most meaningful when it is seen as meaningless; most meaningless when it is, in terms of earthly fame, seen most meaningful. In Homburg's renunciation of fame and love in life as he knows it, do we not see already an

unconscious acceptance of death? Kleist's words from Penthesilea: "Sie sank, weil sie zu stolz und kräftig blühte!"(Kleist: Werke, vol.2, sc. 24, l. 3040), are pertinent here, "Denn das Leben hat noch immer nichts Erhabneres, als nur dieses, daß man es erhaben wegwerfen kann."(Kleist: Werke, vol. 5, p. 287).

The second monologue, IV/3, shows Homburg reflective; we have not known him so contemplative; and in IV/4 he shows no trace at all of the abject cowardice of III/5, and little trace of the swashbuckling feckless-ness of II; he has gained in maturity, and one might even say he is a changed man. His refusal to be hurried by Natalie's anxious impatience shows him composed and in control. Interpretations that make the Elector the deciding factor for Homburg's transformation, which even make the Elector the hero of the play, or give the Elector's "Er ist frei!"(PvH, IV/1, l. 1186) the credit for the Prince's regained inner freedom, we therefore find invalid. What happens in IV/4 is no sudden conversion, but, rather, a slow and painful re-growth. With conscientious deliberation the Prince reflects upon the meaning of the Elector's letter, and, with infinite care, upon the nature of his reply. He is no longer passively dependent; his independence is already established, and within himself he is already

receptive to the idea of self-decision before it is demanded. His: "Mich selber ruft er zur Entscheidung auf!"(PvH, IV/4, l. 1342) and his:

> "Ich will ihm, der so würdig vor mir steht,
> Nicht, ein Unwürd'ger, gegenüber stehn!
> Schuld ruht, bedeutende, mir auf der Brust,
> Wie ich es wohl erkenne . . ."(PvH, IV/4, l.1380/3)

show him rising in dignity to meet the challenge, and show him calling on the reserves of inner strength unrecognized before III/5. His words:

> " . . . kann er mir
> Vergeben nur, wenn ich mit ihm drum streite,
> So mag ich nichts von seiner Gnade wissen."
> (PvH, IV/4, l. 1383/5)

which would, before III/5, have sounded merely petulant and perverse from Homburg, now have, as Fricke stresses, a deep significance in establishing the Prince's recognition of his own 'divine' worth:

> "Das Verhältnis hat sich in der Tat umgekehrt:
> Die Heiligkeit des Gesetzes ist kein vergötztes,
> fremdes Trugbild mehr, das die Wirklichkeit des
> Ich vernichtet, sondern das Gesetz ist nur
> Schöpfung und Setzung des Ich, aber nicht des
> endlichen Subjekts, sondern des ewigen Ich, der
> Seele, des Gefühls, und in der Heiligkeit des
> Gesetzes spiegelt und bewährt sich nur die Ewigkeit
> des Ich und seine erfüllte göttliche Bestimmung--
> denn diese und nichts anderes ist Grund, Inhalt
> und Recht des 'Gesetzes'."[19]

It is under this "Gesetz", this objective eternal law, that we must see the Elector's role, and not in the most obvious sense of his being representative of earthly law.

The difficulty of interpreting Prinz Friedrich von Homburg lies in Kleist's having written too good a play --indeed, that he has too brilliantly given us three plays in one. At the simplest, most straightforward level, we already have a fine drama even if we omit the illumination of the first and last scenes and ignore the 'divine' connotations throughout; we would then have an Elector reduced from the complex character he is to, simply, a wise pronouncer and pardoner of crime; in which case the play would be a near character tragedy and have a purely moral, dogmatic message. At a deeper level, where philosophic problems are posed concerning the relationship between man and society, by omitting only the opening and final scenes, we would have an even more finely textured play, and one which could more plausibly be interpreted in the Hegelian sense. But, in Prinz Friedrich von Homburg as Kleist gives it to us, we have both the previous ones--the first version within the second--again telescoped into the third, with its mystical beginning and end adding another dimension.

Add to this the fact that each of the characters is wonderfully, humanly convincing, and we see the factors that tend to obscure the play's essential--but buried--meaning. We have to be more than usually on our guard.

We must not forget that these characters are not only taking part in a specially set up life situation within human control, but outside of it; that when they appear to be consciously in control, they are in fact being uncontrollably led. We must remember that they are playing out a drama, a pure drama, of Kleist's poetic purpose:

> "Was er dichtend erstellt, sind Konstellationen, in denen er, was in der Realität nicht möglich, menschliches Handeln und seine Bedingungen unter bestimmten Voraussetzungen und in bestimmten Verhältnissen, die Verhältnisse der leidvoll erfahrenen Welt sind, erprobt, um Möglichkeiten des Bestehens für die wirkliche Welt, verbindliche Wahrheiten über die Bestimmung des Lebens zu gewinnen."[20]

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Romeo und Julia auf dem Dorfe: The 'bridge' scene

The 'bridge' scene in Romeo und Julia auf dem Dorfe is structurally the point of conjunction between the first half of the story and the second. As such, it therefore has an important dramatic function. It is, however, also theatrical in itself as an independent unit of four pages.

Although--perhaps even because--it is told in Keller's measured, leisurely sentences and is a relaxed, even humorous description of a pitifully sordid fight between parents whose children fall in love, Keller achieves, by continual use of the theatrical device of contrasts, an overall effect that is sensational and horrifying.

The accompaniment of a waxing thunderstorm adds to the spectacular quality of the scene; with this device of poetic fallacy, Keller introduces and helps to escalate dramatic tension as each parent/child group approaches the other from opposite banks of the river, until they meet in fury on the bridge over it in a tightly-knotted, physically intimate unit:

> "Es fing an zu blitzen und erleuchtete seltsam die dunkle melancholische Wassergegend; es donnerte auch in den grauschwarzen Wolken mit dumpfem Grolle, und schwere Regentropfen fielen, als die verwilderten Männer gleichzeitig auf die schmale, unter ihren Tritten schwankende Brücke stürzten, sich gegenseitig packten und die Fäuste in die vor Zorn und ausbrechendem Kummer bleichen zitternden Gesichter schlugen."(RJ, p. 97)

Each step in the action which leads to the clash has forced the next until the inevitable moment of explosion into violence (mixed, Keller's masterstroke! with "Kummer" and sadness), the climax of which is then intensified by contrast with its opposite: the gentleness of awakening love. To emphasize the contrast in this scene between the darkness of disorder and emerging light, the heavens are seen to open in sudden illumination; the thunderclouds part fractionally, and the storm is momentarily stilled:

> "Unwillkürlich legte er aber seine Hand an seinen eigenen Vater . . . so daß der Kampf eine kleine Weile ruhte oder vielmehr die ganze Gruppe unruhig hin und her drängte, ohne auseinander zu kommen . . . und in diesem Augenblicke erhellte ein Wolkenriß, der den grellen Abendschein durchließ, das nahe Gesicht des Mädchens und Sali sah in dies ihm so wohlbekannte und doch so viel anders und schöner gewordene Gesicht."(RJ, p. 98)

In this apparently simple scene is mirrored the complexity of the theme of Romeo und Julia auf dem Dorfe, of which it is the crux. The persistent use of contrasts, and the physicality of the contact between the persons who represent these contrasts, combine to

suggest that which is raw and primitive in man's nature. The scene in which the parents and children struggle as a unit on the swaying bridge obtains a dimension into the mysterious by virtue of the recognition that these opposites are interrelated; that even in their polarity they both repel and attract while they co-exist. Hatred and love (seen here as synonyms for illness and health, or ugliness and beauty, or imbalance and balance) are juxtaposed--yet united by sorrow. The physical relatedness of the group suggests that they are inseparable, that the nature of man contains the propensity for both and can as easily lead from light into darkness--as was shown in the opening scene against the background of the 'eternal' landscape--as from darkness into light--as is shown here in reverse, against the background of the 'eternal' river. Neither impurity nor purity can in Keller's terms be regarded as the sole prerogative or destination of any of the four persons involved. He has set up a constellation in Romeo und Julia auf dem Dorfe which is described in such plausibly realistic terms that the reader may be deceived into looking upon the characters as 'real people' rather than the types they are. They are not in themselves growing characters, but figures in an aesthetic formula. So, although

through Manz and Marti we see man's downfall into guilt in the first half of the story, they are not wholly 'bad' in themselves, but merely represent the potential for imbalance in Keller's constellation. Similarly, neither are Sali and Vrenchen altogether 'good' through representing, in the same way, the upward rise to balance. In this scene, their love is seen to germinate, as it were, from the hatred of their parents, yet later its purity will be seen to be tainted too.

Keller gives, in apparently simple, physical terms, an exposure of the complex, primitive nature of man and its mystery; the "schwankende Brücke"(RJ, p.97) of the human soul and the instability which arises from the horrifying affinity between 'Good' and 'Evil'. (We use these terms hesitantly, for Keller's vocabulary does not really contain them, and certainly not in the baroque or in the Manichaean sense: "Keller fragt nicht nach Gut und Böse, er fragt nach Gesund und Krank."[21]) What the 'bridge' scene achieves here is ". . . das Ziel, die Menschheit auf sich selbst hinzuführen, den Menschen mit sich selbst bekannt zu machen"[22] in a way that is very similar to that of the 'humiliation' scene in Prinz Friedrich von Homburg.

Whereas the 'heroic' Prince begins to develop within himself in III/5 to a new-found state of grace in the closing scene, Manz and Marti do not. Like "zwei untergehende Gestirne"(RJ, p. 70), they are excommunicated from paradise; they continue blind, and become as impoverished in real life as they are inwardly; from now on there is no beauty in their lives that run relentlessly downhill.

The upward rise to salvation that the Prince undergoes in Prinz Friedrich von Homburg and that begins in III/5, is, in Romeo und Julia auf dem Dorfe, taken up aesthetically in the radiant lives of Sali and Vrenchen, in the second half of the story that complements the first. It is in this sense that we mean that, together, Manz/Marti and Sali/Vrenchen make up Keller's view of the negative/positive entity of man.

Kleist, then, gives us the developmental line of one character: his innocence and loss of it in the two units of the opening scene--his humiliation at the realization of it--his recovery of balance between the temporal and the eternal in the closing scene. Kleist, in fact, gives us a classic anagnorisis. Keller, on the other hand, uses four characters, in none of whom does the full cycle of development in all its successive

evolving stages take place. Detached, like Chekhov, he shows decline and growth through the group, and therefore through the audience's insight. The line of his story is thus: he shows half the development in one pair (Manz/Marti), and the other half through Sali/Vrenchen. In the opening scene, we are shown the state of innocence and its loss in Manz/Marti; they do not rise again; their lives take a continuing downward path. What would have been their upward rise is shown through Sali/Vrenchen, and the 'exact' point at which the downward curve of Manz/Marti and the upward curve of Sali/Vrenchen meet is given graphically in the meeting of the two pairs on the bridge. The 'bridge' scene is therefore literally and figuratively a bridge between the symmetrical halves of the story. Like the 'humiliation' scene of Prinz Friedrich von Homburg, it is the halfway point between the loss of balance that occurs in the opening scene and the regaining of it, if ambivalently, in the final one.

The 'humiliation' scene is as crucial to Prinz Friedrich von Homburg as the 'bridge' scene is to Romeo und Julia auf dem Dorfe; each emphasizes the cyclical shape which embodies the meaning of the work to which it belongs. They are central scenes in that, in each, growth is regenerated towards the integration

and balance attained at the end. In addition, each scene is pivotal; it signals the end of the first half of the development and the beginning of the second. Both show the result of the loss of innocence prophesied in the opening scene and the promise of its recovery at the end, and as such they are the central knot into which the strands of the first half lead, and from which those of the closing scene emerge. In the sense that both look back, but more positively forward, each, even given the despair that generates it, is essentially optimistic.

The scenes share a common constructive purpose: the attainment of self-knowledge. Whereas, however, in Romeo und Julia auf dem Dorfe (the characters being 'unaware') the insight into the truth of their encounter is, 'objectively', the reader's, in Prinz Friedrich von Homburg the peripateia is primarily the Prince's, within the 'subjective' structure of the play. But, although we know that Kleist hoped--indeed expected--that his public would applaud his search for truth in human values and that they would participate in Homburg's insight, we also know that he was disappointed in this. Perhaps he expected too much of his patrons in trusting them to honour, as he did, truth above patriotism; their

rigid Prussian code was so affronted by particularities in the play that they were prevented from seeing the truth he was daring enough to tell.[23] Reluctance to admit distasteful truth is, of course, a human failing that is not confined to Prussians, and it was not, in any case, just Kleist's contemporaries who failed to understand him; even much later others--and not always Germans--continue to do the same, and so to underrate his work. Nevertheless, his public showed that it was, in fact, as exactly lacking in a sense of true values as the Prince was himself and--ironically--did not see their own blindness in his, which led to the very 'humiliation' scene to which they so negatively reacted!

In their denunciation of the scene as offensive they were of course right. It <u>is</u> an offensive scene; as offensive as unpalatable truth always is. More than that, the scene has an unprecedented direct 'physicality' of presentation that they might well have found crude.

In the 'bridge' scene also, there is such a coincidence of form and content. In order to make visible that which is invisible, it similarly presents truths about the primitive nature of man in what one might for lack of a better word call a direct, <u>visceral</u> way.

Just as in the 'humiliation' scene hope emerges from despair, so in the 'bridge' scene light emerges from the dark. Both suggest human degradation and humiliation as fertile soil for the soul's rebirth.[24] Both are central to the structure and integral to the meaning of the works; both are unique in their direct, 'physical' manner of portrayal. They are similar, too, in that each is simultaneously the high point and the lowest point from which the development rises to the denouement at the end; each is seen to be the fulcrum in the scale of balance.

Thus these two scenes establish the structure of the play and the Novelle, and the structure in turn reinforces the theme. They speak compellingly of the enigma of man's being: the mystery of his human entity which, containing within it the contradictory yet conjoined forces continually at work within, also enables him to rise, like the Phoenix, from the ashes of his despair.

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Prinz Friedrich von Homburg: (a) the role of the Elector
(b) the closing scene

(a) For lack of seeing this play as Kleist's "Versuchsspiel",[25] as a kind of purposely constructed constellation, interpreters especially fail to see the Elector's overall symbolic meaning, and--in the manner parodied in "How many Children had Lady Macbeth?"--[26] go to great, irrelevant lengths to explain away his 'human' complexity.

The Elector is an enigma; we find in him a character that does defy analysis. He is mysterious, at times apparently sinister in his dealings but not actively or personally menacing; the lines: "Wenn ich der Dey von Tunis wäre . . ."(PvH, V/2, l. 1412) make clear that the Elector is no tyrant. He is the personification of Life as Kleist saw it, without, however, its more seemingly hostile aspects. In him are again crystallized the three planes of the play. As Homburg is seen as individual, as man finite/infinite within society and as man finite/infinite within the framework of Life/Fate, so the Elector is also not only

the individual, nor only the individual as ruler of society, but both of these and Life itself. He projects all the incompatibilities of Kleist's life experience into an apparent, hopeful solution of all three. Prinz Friedrich von Homburg as a play, and the figure of the Elector incorporated within it, might well be said to be an exegesis of Kleist's words:

> "Es kann kein böser Geist sein, der an der Spitze der Welt steht; es ist ein bloß unbegriffener!" (Kleist: Werke, vol. 5, p. 326)

Like Life, he is merely there--and of himself he says to Natalie: "Kennst du nichts Höh'res, Jungfrau, als nur mich?"(PvH, IV/1, l. 1119)

It is the Elector who both sentences Homburg to death and who allows him the freedom to preserve his inner faith in himself and his 'divine' integrity, while at the same time resolving his conflict with society. He it is who, in this hopeful solution, appears to close the rift. On the first level, the Elector is the kindly and loving uncle, who understands Homburg and respects him for what he is:

> "Die höchste Achtung, wie dir wohl bekannt,
> Trag' ich im Innersten für sein Gefühl:"
> (PvH, IV/1, l. 1183/4)

who is "betroffen", "im äußersten Erstaunen", "verwirrt." (PvH, IV/1, stage directions, ll. 1147, 1156, 1175, respectively). On the second level, he is the wise,

implacable ruler, who knows he must uphold the law:

> ". . . das Gesetz will ich,
> Die Mutter meiner Krone, aufrecht halten,"
> (PvH, V/5, ll. 1567/8)

--and, finally, he is mystifying, secret and devious Fate. It is in this sense of Life as a directive force that Catholy's interpretation of the Elector as "weniger eine Figur, als der Veranstalter eines Schauspiels",[27] carries weight. He has indeed the detachment and the inscrutability of a Master of Ceremonies. For he who has the confidence of all, who is the one to whom all turn, makes a confidant of none; not even his right-hand men, his colonels, know what his next move will be. Does he have specific plans? And does it make any difference to Homburg's inner development what his plans are?

The Prince's crisis into maturity takes place without the Elector's active help: his inner vision, as we have shown, is correcting itself independently and unseen during the very time that Natalie is sustaining her plea for mercy. The Elector, like Life, has only the power of death. Homburg's decision to die, in signing his own death-warrant with his reply to the Elector's letter, is already made in IV/4, long before Hohenzollern and Kottwitz plead with the Elector

in V/5 to decide in his favour, and long before anyone knows what the Elector's final decision will be. This, though it is hinted at in V/4, is only made known in V/9, when he publicly tears up the document which--significantly--he has had ready and signed in his possession all this time. Equally significant is the casualness with which he is seen to destroy the death-warrant, and the fact that his 'pardon' is not a personal pronouncement; the action is muted by being given merely as a stage direction: "DER KURFÜRST (zerreißt das Todesurteil). So folgt, ihr Freunde, in den Garten mir!"(PvH, V/9, l. 1829).

In the second unit of the opening scene, the passivity of the Elector is underlined by the fact that the wreath is offered indirectly to Homburg via the Princess, so that he cannot be seen as the personally active agent. In the following passage, the words which refer to the Elector's actions are evocative of withdrawal rather than direct participation; those that connote the latter, on the other hand, refer to the Prince:

> "Der Kurfürst nimmt ihm den Kranz aus der Hand; der Prinz errötet und sieht ihn an. Der Kurfürst schlingt seine Halskette um den Kranz und gibt ihn der Prinzessin: der Prinz steht lebhaft auf. Der Kurfürst weicht mit der Prinzessin, welche den Kranz erhebt, zurück; der Prinz, mit ausgestreckten Armen, folgt ihr."(PvH, I/1, l. 64--my underlining, L.B.)

Additional support for the argument that the Elector's role is impersonal and passive lies in the structure of the play: the Elector and Homburg hardly meet; apart from the opening and closing scenes, they meet only three times--in I/5, II/10, V/7, where two out of the three can scarcely be called personal encounters--and they communicate once by letter.

The Elector can only be seen as providing the catalytic environment. Very interestingly, it has been pointed out that the Elector asks only rhetorical questions:

> "Es sind fast alles 'unechte' Fragen: Der Kurfürst kennt von vornherein das, wonach er fragt. Aber durch eine Art sokratischer Erziehungsmethode, die er allen Figuren gegenüber anwendet, die sich zu Verteidigern des Prinzen aufgeworfen haben, versucht er, diesen Figuren, vor allen Dingen jedoch dem Prinzen selbst, zu einer bewußteren Stellungnahme, zu einer klareren Selbstbeurteilung zu verhelfen."[28]

The Elector neither provides nor expects answers. His first accusation of guilt (which leads the action to the grave and so to the meaning of death--and life) and his words to Natalie:

> "Wenn er den Spruch für ungerecht kann halten,
> Kassier' ich die Artikel: er ist frei!--"
> (PvH, IV/1, l. 1185/6)

are only the indirect impetus to Homburg's free anagnorisis. So Kleist gives, in the Elector, a symbol of Life, which provides the environment and the challenge

to the individual to realize, through his suffering, his inner strength and true integrity.

The Elector's 'sadism' in his mocking jest of the opening scene and his cruel practical joke of the end are seen in perspective when viewed in this light. Life's cruelty can be kindness, if the suffering it causes brings about the perception which gives man a deeper insight into the 'divine' meaning dormant within himself. At its best, and at its kindest, Kleist seems to say, life can be viewed not as hostile antagonist, but as an infinitely challenging sparring-partner.

We see that the Elector's intervention spurs Homburg to inner maturity but does not direct its growth. We cannot, however, be certain that his intervention is even the spur, for Kleist deliberately shrouds the Elector's role in Homburg's regeneration with mystery. Take, for example, the vague timing of his "Er ist frei . . ."; the point at which Homburg's vision starts to clear is not defined; as pointed out earlier, it happens merely somewhere between III/5 and IV/4. Does the Elector's conditional offer of freedom precede, coincide with or succeed Homburg's change, as evidenced by his changed attitude in IV/4? Take also the last scene, V/11: his part in the removal of the

blindfold we can only assume. The stage directions are vague, and we have to imagine the Elector's whispered instructions to Hohenzollern, and the latter's whispered instructions to Stranz, who only then comes back on full stage and says to Homburg: "Die Augen bloß will ich dir wieder öffnen."(PvH, V/11, l. 1849). Even then we do not know from the text, and can only imagine, that the blindfold actually is removed!

Kleist clearly does not mean us to know for certain, only to assume that we know and, in knowing that we merely assume, to experience perplexity--so to perceive through direct sympathy and feeling Homburg's, and man's, and our tragic dilemma. It is as if he were saying: we can only assume that the purpose of life (as in the role of the Elector) and its incomprehensible progress is to stimulate man into awareness of his inner 'divinity'. For if not, then life is nothing more than a distraction, a fruitless delay, impeding the soul's reunion with its 'immortal' source.

However much von Wiese's interpretation of the Elector--as active, personal defender of the State and its "Gesetz"--and however little Fricke's--as agent driven by his awareness of Homburg's "Gefühl"--differ from ours of the Elector as relatively passive, impersonal symbol of environment, the effect of his role is

the same: he is the go-between who provides the necessary reciprocity for Homburg's development.

(b) the closing scene

Von Wiese says of the end: "So versöhnen sich die Extreme."[29] There is much in the end of the play which does imply reconciliation. Homburg is re-united with himself, with Natalie, with the Elector. There is mutuality of respect which is shown, for example, most clearly in the Prince's words to the Elector: ". . . denn du bist 's wert!"(PvH, V/7, l. 1799) which are repeated by Stranz to Homburg: ". . . denn du bist es wert!"(PvH, V/11, l. 1851). There is solidarity and strength in the triumphant shout of the final line:

> ". . . in dem gemeinsamen Rufe, mit dem das Stück schließt, stellt sich die ganze Unüberwindlichkeit eines einigen Volkes dar, das in der Reinheit des allmächtigen Gefühls sich und seine Bestimmung findet."[30]

There is also, however, much in the end of the drama that suggests only partial reconciliation.

What is called the Elector's pardon,[31] or forgiveness,[32] are in our view too active for the relatively passive role that the Elector plays. There is, after all, a difference of emphasis between bestowing life and withholding death--and it is the latter which we see the Elector do--a distinction which matters a great deal

in interpreting the end of the play, especially as it incorporates ambivalence in the meaning of death. Does not the Elector, whether in pardoning or forgiving, withhold the sentence of death merely to pass a sentence of life? And does Homburg, although pardoned, not actually "die", in the sense that his vainglorious ego dies?

It has been said that Prinz Friedrich von Homburg defies synopsis, for Kleist expects and gives no answers. The play, more calmly and maturely stated and more hopefully conceived than any of his others, is a poetic structure set up in order to test certain possibilities: a Prince, both sensitive and intelligent, with the best of intentions, is thrust into a situation so confusing that, even with the help of the kindest, most understanding, most sensitive society possible, he cannot comprehend.

There is a double tragedy in this drama, and there are two units which make up the closing scene: that dealing with the individual isolated within himself, and that dealing with the individual within his society and his fate. The end suggests that the resolution (of both) is partial, and we see only an apparent reconciliation of the whole, between the extremes of Homburg as individual relating to the Elector, and of

Homburg relating as Man to Life.

The Prince, like Kleist's marionette, has achieved life's highest purpose; he has 'made the long journey around the world', and has, through suffering, attained full equilibrium, full antigravity "weil die Kraft, die sie in die Lüfte erhebt, größer ist, als jene, die sie an die Erde fesselt."(Kleist: Werke, vol. 4, p. 137) He has broken free. He has undergone a symbolic death, cast off life's shackles and its earthly values, and stands transfigured:

> "Nun, o Unsterblichkeit, bist du ganz mein!
> Du strahlst mir, durch die Binde meiner Augen,
> Mit Glanz der tausendfachen Sonne zu!
> Es wachsen Flügel mir an beiden Schultern,
> Durch stille Ätherräume schwingt mein Geist;
> Und wie ein Schiff, vom Hauch des Winds entführt,
> Die muntre Hafenstadt versinken sieht,
> So geht mir dämmernd alles Leben unter: . . ."
> (PvH, V/10, 11. 1830/7)[33]

He has come to the end of the journey: the soul's complete and perfect reunion with its source, the one reality which Kleist both in his life, in this play, and later in his own death does not ever seem to doubt. Homburg has found the tranquillity of true reconciliation within himself--one tragedy has been resolved and overcome.

What follows, with the beginning of the second unit of the scene, can only come as shock, as anticlimax, as truly Kleistian though perhaps unconscious irony--and to

see it otherwise is surely to miss Kleist's view of double tragedy already inherent in the play. For the Prince, as far as he himself as an individual is concerned, has long since achieved freedom from mortal law and mortal strife: "Es ist mein unbeugsamer Wille!" (PvH, V/7, l. 1749). Although he has--paradoxically--confirmed this mortal law as fundamental to life by his obedience to it and by his choice of death, he has yet to recognize that in applauding his value as individual he must applaud the value of the society of which he is a part. At this point in the play, however, he has renounced life and made his decision for death--that higher life--and is now denied its fulfilment. Is not now the Elector's reward a doubtful one? Is it not this time truly a sentence of death?

The Prince has heard the drums of the death-march, has made his peace with himself and is reconciled to his imminent execution. Inwardly he has already crossed the threshold to death when the blindfold is suddenly removed. He swoons in shock, and Natalie's words are bitter irony:

"Himmel! Die Freude tötet ihn!"(PvH, V/11, l.1852)

The Prince, revived, then speaks one line only:

"Nein, sagt! Ist es ein Traum?"(PvH, V/11, l.1856)

to which Kottwitz replies:

"Ein Traum, was sonst?"(PvH, V/11, 1. 1857) reminding us of Kleist's basic frustration at the inherent inability of man, however intelligent and sensitive, to know with certainty when "Wahrheit" is "wahrhaft Wahrheit"(Kleist: Werke, vol. 5, p. 204), or when 'Wirklichkeit' is truly real.

The play ends, as it began, in two units of entrancement and intrusion; the promise of the first part of the opening scene ends in ambiguous fulfilment and two-fold revelation, and the intrusion of the call to battle is here a re-introduction to life. The cycle begins again.

In Prinz Friedrich von Homburg, Kleist has shown himself to us as a man who, rising above his own sufferings, pities the whole of mankind. Man must, with each Sisyphean cycle, go through the long journey of pain to regain innocence and truth, for "Das Paradies ist verriegelt . . . wir müssen die Reise um die Welt machen, und sehen, ob es vielleicht von hinten irgendwo wieder offen ist."(Kleist: Werke, vol. 4, p. 137)

The tragedy of Fate is unresolved, for Homburg must now begin again and put into practice vis-a-vis his society the truths which he has painfully discovered for himself as individual; after having successfully struggled to freedom within himself, he is not fully

free; he must re-enter the life he has found meaningless and thus re-invest it with meaning. Kleist gives it to the reader to understand that:

> ". . . es kaum möglich ist, in dem ineinandergreifenden, selbständig weiter wirkenden Gewebe des zeitlichen Geschehens die feine, verborgene Linie zu finden, die Verantwortung, Schuld und Unschuld scheidet, daß unser Wille hinein verflochten wird in die Kausalität der Dinge, in Zusammenhänge, die wir nicht ahnen, die uns mitschuldig werden lassen an Vorgängen, denen wir in freiem Urteil gegenüberzustehen glauben."[34]

*

Romeo und Julia auf dem Dorfe: (a) the role of the Dark Fiddler

(b) the closing scene

(a) The Dark Fiddler does not appear in the first half of the story, except to be mentioned once as the probable heir to the ownerless strip of land which Manz and Marti covet; after the 'bridge' scene he appears in person only four times, and then each time in Sali and Vrenchen's company. Yet Keller so implicates him by association with that which is doom-laden in the story that, while his role is not obviously defined, his influence is subtly interwoven as an essential though hidden strand in the texture of the narrative. Keller stage-manages his few appearances in such a way as to give the impression that he appears out of nowhere and might do so at any time, and that he is omnipresent even when he is not physically seen; in him is represented a force which, although it can be momentarily forgotten, is always to be reckoned with. Magical and sinister at the same time, the Dark Fiddler, like Pan, seems to spring out of the very earth, and Sali and Vrenchen react to him with alarm and dread:

> "Als sie aber einsmals die Augen von den blauen Kornblumen aufschlugen, an denen sie gehaftet, sahen sie plötzlich einen andern dunklen Stern vor sich her gehen, einen schwärzlichen Kerl, von dem sie nicht wußten, woher er so unversehens gekommen. Er mußte im Korne gelegen haben; Vrenchen zuckte zusammen . . ."(RJ, p. 106)

Apart from acting as accompaniment to the growth and final tragedy of Sali and Vrenchen's star-crossed love, the Dark Fiddler is associated with the unowned land between the parallel fields that is the focus first of the men's greed and guilt and later their disastrous feud. Himself homeless, he is kin to all that is lawless, shiftless and antisocial, a symbol of the a-moral force latent in all nature. As the "unvernünftige[r] Schnörkel"(RJ, p. 80) intensifies the fury of Manz and Marti while it activates the plot, it simultaneously throws into high relief the enigma of man, and the irrational propensity within him which menaces ideal harmony and brings about barrenness and disorder.

The land is first the focus of the quarrel, later the rendezvous of the lovers, then the place of meeting between them and the Dark Fiddler (who is seen to leap on to the pyramid of stones with wild energy and easy familiarity), also the place where Marti is struck into idiocy and, finally, the scene of their last hour before death. All revolves around this land with which the Dark Fiddler is identified. He is a composite figure

who suggests 'human guilt so deeply rooted in the mysterious depths of the heart that it seems to reach into the universe itself'.[35] That which is mystifying in him is emphasized by descriptions of him that are apparently contradictory. On one occasion, dark and vengeful, he makes a Mephistophelean impression, strikingly reminiscent in tone as in choice of words to that of Gotthelf's Green Hunter:

> "In der Tat besaß er eine schreckbare Nase, . . . unter dem ein kleines rundes Löchelchen von einem Munde sich seltsam stutzte und zusammenzog, aus dem er unaufhörlich pustete, pfiff und zischte."(RJ, p. 107)

On another, in the 'Paradiesgärtchen', he is described as apparently friendly and well-wishing; and, on all occasions, that which is macabre is counterbalanced by the fact that he is music-loving and has an almost frightening natural energy and zest for life. As Mephistopheles, Tempter, Spirit of Health, Bacchus or Pan (for he is all of these), his always unexpected appearances, however, show a natural but sinister stealth; the more startling for being silent, they suggest ubiquity and menace.

The figure of the Dark Fiddler lurks in the background of the story, and acts as a link between the fortunes of Manz and Marti and of Sali and Vrenchen. Like the Elector in Prinz Friedrich von Homburg, he is

an enigmatic character, for he is the embodiment of life's mystery; but whereas the Elector represents life as general environment, the Dark Fiddler personifies more particularly that aspect of man's nature which is to be feared: the force which drives him, unaware, to deviate from natural harmony and social order into guilt.

The Elector challenges in general and the Dark Fiddler warns in particular, but both act as foils to the main characters to whom they play contrapuntal roles; neither plays a definitive part in the final decision which the main characters are called upon to make. Like the Elector, the Dark Fiddler provides a challenge; but--unlike him--through contrary example. Disdaining it, Sali and Vrenchen act on their intuition for rightness and realize through it their inner strength. So the Dark Fiddler, like the Elector, acts catalytically as the passive agent who helps the central characters to face themselves and the reality of truths they had unconsciously sought to evade.

In Prinz Friedrich von Homburg we have seen that the Prince makes his decision independently and in advance of the Elector's. In Romeo und Julia auf dem Dorfe Sali and Vrenchen have long been dimly aware that fulfilment of their love is impossible within their

community. Even the stone-throwing incident in which Marti is injured only exposes more obviously the previous recognition that "Es wird nie gut kommen."(RJ, p. 104). After this, Vrenchen had said: "Es ist aus, es ist ewig aus, wir können nicht zusammenkommen!"(RJ, p. 114), and again: "Dies würde immer ein schlechter Grundstein unserer Ehe sein."(RJ, p. 118).

The Dark Fiddler acts as a continual reminder of the reality that Sali and Vrenchen seek temporarily to deny. The scene of the 'Paradiesgärtchen', whose decadence and wildness are dominated by the Dark Fiddler, impresses on them their own homelessness and social unreality. In the Dark Fiddler's fecklessness they see mirrored their own. His advice (RJ, p. 146) crystallizes for them the issues at stake and stresses their marginal situation:

> "Sie mochten so gern fröhlich und glücklich sein, aber nur auf einem guten Grund und Boden, und dieser schien ihnen unerreichbar . . ."(RJ, p.145)

They take part, "ganz verwirrt",(RJ, p. 148) in the mock wedding procession which the Dark Fiddler leads, but leave it on the bank of the river. They can no longer escape from themselves, from each other, or from the social realities they must face:

> "Diesen sind wir entflohen, . . . aber wie entfliehen wir uns selbst? Wie meiden wir uns?" (RJ, p. 149)

*

(b) The closing scene

The scene on the bridge, which divides the story into two symmetrical but complementary parts, is simultaneously the climactic end of the first half which deals with the parents' fall, and the beginning of the second which deals predominantly with the children's rise and ends with a climax of quite a different kind. The 'bridge' scene--a vivid statement of man's aspirations and the dark powers that continually militate against the fulfilment of the ideal--begins what might be called a symphony in three movements, in which the main theme becomes ever more spiritual, and the physical world gradually loses its ascendancy. The illumination which breaks through the dark clouds in that scene heralds, with visionary force, the "himmlisches Jerusalem"(RJ, p. 101) of the story's moonlit close; the simultaneity of darkness and light on the bridge anticipates the ambivalence of the story's tragic, yet radiant, end. To this point there is a parallel development, in which are contrasted the everyday world as it exists and a make-believe world as one would wish it to be, which leads to the closing scene and the tragic resolution of the conflict between the two. The duality, however, is so skilfully interwoven that it cannot be

neatly schematized. Keller the monist does not deal with a baroque Either/Or; he recognizes the full scope of experience and in overcoming traditional dichotomies breaks through them, to give a subtle and complex total view of the mystery of man's life which contains simultaneously and irreconcilably both the reality and the dream.

The first 'movement' ends with the accident to Vrenchen's father, the second with their entrance to the 'Paradiesgärtlein', and the third with their silent gliding into death.

The first begins with a picture of destruction and neglect; from the dilapidation of Vrenchen's home emerges the idyll of two beautiful creatures in love, in health and natural blossoming. Of Vrenchen we read:

> "Da lag es nun und zwinkerte in der Sonne mit den Augen; seine Wangen glühten wie Purpur, und sein Mund war halb geöffnet und ließ zwei Reihen weiße Zähne durchschimmern."(RJ, p. 110)

It is a frankly sensuous portrayal, yet the descriptions of natural beauty and health carry undertones of the primitive. Contrasts are casually and effectively introduced throughout which suggest a purity already subtly tainted by guilt, as perhaps two of many examples will suffice to illustrate:

> ". . . aber Vrenchen verschloß plötzlich den roten Mund, richtete sich auf und begann einen Kranz von Mohnrosen zu winden, den es sich auf den Kopf

setzte."(RJ, p. 110)

In spite of the naturalness and appropriateness of the action, so much more than merely explicit meaning is concentrated in the words. For 'Mohnrosen' and 'Kranz' carry anticipatory connotations of blood and death, and there is also a sinister echo of their horrifying 'burial' play, in childhood, with the doll: ". . . eine einsame rote Mohnblume, die da noch blühte, wurde ihr als Haube über den Kopf gezogen."(RJ, p. 74)

A similar, subtle evocation of horror is achieved in the description of the ripe corn into which the young lovers nestle as into a dungeon:

> "Sie schlüpften hinein so geschickt und sachte, daß sie kaum eine Spur zurückließen, und bauten sich einen engen Kerker in den goldenen Ähren, die ihnen hoch über den Kopf ragten, als sie drin saßen, so daß sie nur den tiefblauen Himmel über sich sahen und sonst nichts von der Welt." (RJ, p. 110)

For subtle juxtaposition Keller is surely unrivalled; with the explicit contrasting of golden earth and blue heaven he once again makes delicately implicit man's imprisonment and mystery.

After Marti's accident, although it is allowed to happen--typical of Keller--completely naturally in both its motivation and its execution, it is clear that Sali and Vrenchen's childish innocence is gone, and their adult guilt is firmly established.

The next 'movement' is essentially one of dream sequence, though faithfully realistic in its details. It opens with Vrenchen shutting the door on actuality, on the reality of her bleak, parental home. Her father having been taken to his "lebendigen Begräbnis"(RJ, p. 116), she emerges--now truly homeless and alone in the world except for Sali--from the desolation of her childhood, like the flowers picked from the wilderness:

> "Dies sind die letzten Blumen, die ich noch aufgefunden in dieser Wüstenei. Hier war noch ein Röschen, dort eine Aster, und wie sie nun gebunden sind, würde man es ihnen nicht ansehen, daß sie aus einem Untergange zusammengesucht sind!" (RJ, p. 124)

As if in wish-fulfilment of reality as it might have been, Sali and Vrenchen spend together one last and almost fully perfect day:

> "Denn die armen Leutchen mußten an diesem einen Tage, der ihnen vergönnt war, alle Manieren und Stimmungen der Liebe durchleben und sowohl die verlorenen Tage der zarteren Zeit nachholen, als das leidenschaftliche Ende vorausnehmen mit der Hingabe ihres Lebens."(RJ, p. 133)

Vrenchen's humorous conjuring up of castles in the air, with which she amuses the friendly farmer's wife before she leaves the house, lightly anticipates the dream-reality of the day to come, during which, wherever they go, they receive the perfect treatment due to 'perfect' people:

> ". . . als ob sie nicht aus zank- und elend-

> erfüllten vernichteten Häusern herkämen, sondern guter Leute Kinder wären, welche in lieblicher Hoffnung wandelten."(RJ, p. 131)

Vrenchen, "gerüstet wie eine Prinzeß"(RJ, p. 126), and Sali, "wie ein Bauer, der überlegt, welche Bäume er am vorteilhaftesten fällen soll"(RJ, p. 132), have the natural dignity of nature's aristocrats in a fairy-tale world. They wander as though in limbo, hand-in-hand and homeless, in 'ideal' harmony with each other, with those they meet and with the woods through which they make a leisurely, almost majestic progress. Although Keller in no way neglects the actuality of the day--quite the contrary, for he constantly introduces such playful, human touches as Vrenchen's mischievousness as she exploits the embarrassment of the envious little waitress at the inn--he suggests a perfection (already shown to be impaired) that is too good to be true, and an unreality that cannot last.

This section of the story ingeniously recalls the en-tranced state of Manz and Marti as they are first described in the peace of the original, natural landscape. Equally here, as there, a sense of suspended reality is created--a brittle state of ideal, illusory innocence--which is broken here, as it was there, by a rising to the surface of the primitive forces that undermine its calm. So twice in the story Keller very

pointedly reaffirms its theme: the eternal human crisis, the precarious state of man in attempting to maintain a balance between the real and the ideal from which by nature he cannot help but fall.

In the 'Paradiesgärtchen' scene which begins the third 'movement', Sali and Vrenchen are similarly prey to the temptation of mistaking "Barockes" for "Schönes"[36] and taking that which is illusory for that which is real. The name of this place is itself ironical and deceptive, and its description shows Keller at his best. Again he cleverly interweaves yet strangely contrasts the celestial with the earthly in order to suggest that the 'Paradiesgärtchen' is a tawdry surrogate and represents a cheap imitation of Paradise:

> "Auf dem Gesimse des Daches saßen ringsherum kleine musizierende Engel mit dicken Köpfen und Bäuchen, den Triangel, die Geige, die Flöte, Zimbel und Tamburin spielend . . . Die Decke . . . und das übrige Gemäuer des Hauses waren mit verwaschenen Freskomalereien bedeckt, welche lustige Engelscharen sowie singende und tanzende Heilige darstellten. Aber alles war verwischt und undeutlich wie ein Traum . . ."(RJ, p. 140/1)

In the place itself, the wildness of the hectic scene brings to mind the intoxication, the bewilderment of man who is called upon to distinguish false from true. Sali and Vrenchen, though, are fore-armed by awareness of their guilt; and, unlike Manz and Marti, they are able, at the last, to resist the temptation of the

spurious. Vrenchen's words: "Wo es aber so hergeht, möchte ich nicht sein . . ."(RJ, p. 147), and Sali's words (quoted before) said when they come to their senses after the gipsies' wild wedding march: "Diesen sind wir entflohen, aber wie entfliehen wir uns selbst? Wie meiden wir uns?"(RJ, p. 149) show insight, and recognition of the human fallibility which threatens stability of balance. Having glimpsed the ideal through the natural 'perfection' of their love, they cannot, even though they know they are deprived of its fulfilment, now commit themselves to anything less. Because of this awareness, they are immune to the Dark Fiddler's coaxing; because they know the threat of corruption to be an essential ingredient in human life, and because they fear to expose their love to it, Sali and Vrenchen are now, while most alive and loving, paradoxically ripe for death. Having portrayed Sali and Vrenchen as the most fully, most naturally alive of creatures, and as most nearly approximating the epitome of all the beauty of nature, Keller shows, through them, the natural incompatibility of the ideal with the real. It is the notion in Browning's familiar phrase: "What's come to perfection perishes"[37] which resonates in Kleist's Penthesilea:

"Sie sank, weil sie zu stolz und kräftig blühte!

> Die abgestorbene Eiche steht im Sturm,
> Doch die gesunde stürzt er schmetternd nieder,
> Weil er in ihre Krone greifen kann."
> (Kleist: Werke, vol. 2, Sc. 24, ll. 3040/3)

and it is clearly stated by Keller:

> "grün. Heinr. Über das Reifsein zum Tode. Wer gelebt und seine Bestimmung mehr oder weniger erfüllt und die rechte Grundsätze über das Sterben hat, kann jeden Augenblick sterben ohne Bitterkeit. Selbst der Selbstmörder, wenn er rein nichts mehr anzufangen weiß auf der Erde, aber doch etwas gewesen ist, findet süßen Genuß im Tode. Bei Heinrich ist es eben sein bitter tragisches Geschick, daß er sich zum Tode verdammt sieht in dem Augenblicke, wo sich ihm ein schönes Leben auftut ohne die Möglichkeit, es anzutreten."[38]

In Romeo und Julia auf dem Dorfe, Keller shows that life can be a kind of death--a "lebendiges Begräbnis"--when lived like Manz's and Marti's without insight; and that death can be a kind of glorified life, when lived like that of Sali and Vrenchen with joy and some discernment. Their radiance and the radiance of the closing scene bespeak a purity that has been tested, that is no longer the doubtful purity of unfallen man; having eaten of the tree of knowledge, the lovers' lives have come full circle, and their embrace of death (already foreshadowed in the beginning[39]) becomes a mystical reunion with the origin of life.

Death being in Keller's terms the ultimate expression of finite life and beauty, the lovers, as they are borne away on the river, are borne to a death which

is the more poignant for not containing illusory hope of a Christian after-life, but for being the natural mystery that cannot be explained away. As Sali and Vrenchen hear the sound of the river in their own throbbing pulse, the "besondere Musik"(RJ, p. 130) of their love finally transmutes to the natural music of the spheres:

> "Die Stille der Welt sang und musizierte ihnen durch die Seelen, man hörte nur den Fluß unten sacht und lieblich rauschen im langsamen Ziehen." (RJ, p. 150)

In a suicide as ecstatic as that of Kleist's, they go to their death with the luminosity of marine creatures in a dark sea. The story began with man in magical and tranquil communion with nature; it ends with man returning to it as to his home, his eternal source and inspiration.[40]

In Prinz Friedrich von Homburg, the Prince achieves a reunion with that which is eternal in him through suffering and painfully recognizing that he had previously given allegiance to transitory and spurious values. He undergoes an acute and personal recognition, upon which he then acts by choosing death. In Romeo und Julia auf dem Dorfe, Keller has already convinced us of the inner rightness of Sali and Vrenchen before the moment comes for their decision. When they are

called upon to decide responsibly, they act according to the intuition for rightness that they have already been shown to possess.

Keller has shown them to us as joyous and healthy, which means, according to his view, that they are as nearly-perfect and fulfilled in their unison with nature as any corruptible human beings can be.[41] "Mit unermüdlichem Insistieren stellt Keller gerade die Züge innerer Richtigkeit und Rechtlichkeit der beiden Liebenden heraus. Sie leben beide in völliger seelischer Ordnung."[42] Yet precisely <u>because</u> they are in tune with nature and know its harmony, they have the insight to recognize their guilt and deviation from it. Aware both of the impossibility of continuing their love and of the impossibility of denying it by separation, the only solution to their dilemma is death; and their choice of this solution, which is correct morally, socially and psychologically, reflects as much their inner rightness as acknowledgment of their guilt. Boeschenstein writes:

> "Beispiele für die Reife sind in Kellers Werk da zu finden, wo das Natürliche sich der Brüchigkeit des Daseins erwehrt hat; das bedarf der Zeit und der Vernunft, und schon darum kann Keller die Jugend nicht mit dem Nimbus des Reifseins umgeben."[43]

It would seem that <u>Romeo und Julia auf dem Dorfe</u> is an exception. Keller shows Sali and Vrenchen to evince,

not indeed through 'Vernunft' but through intuition, a natural maturity in advance of their years; an insight which allows them to find in their death, which is unquestionably surrounded by radiance, both expiation and redemption and so a new-found, eternal innocence:

> "Keller hat es für angebracht befunden, dem Tod von Romeo und Julia auf dem Dorfe durch eine erhöhte Naturstimmung, eine irdische Weihe, einen Duft von Reinheit, Keuschheit, Schuldlosigkeit und Natürlichkeit zu verleihen."[44]

One might argue that Sali and Vrenchen are not truly mature and integrated in that they choose death rather than a perhaps more 'realistic' compromise with life, but this brings us to a discussion of the ambivalence of the ending which, as we have seen in Prinz Friedrich von Homburg, curiously equates death with life.

> "Das Ambiguose der Entsagung ist ein Gesichtspunkt, unter dem das Werk Kellers noch nicht erschöpfend erforscht wurde."[45]

Of both Prinz Friedrich von Homburg and Romeo und Julia auf dem Dorfe the contradictoriness of the ending--apart from the 'Zwiespältigkeit' in the authors' lives and their works in general--is much commented upon and variously interpreted. The ambivalences themselves are in the two works curiously alike: the contrariety of despair and hope; the paradoxical radiance and 'rauschhaft' quality of the nevertheless tragic ending; the contrast yet fusion of reality and dream. All

these, when taken together in their complexity, appear to be an exegesis of their authors' basic bewilderment at the paradox of life (of which an ingredient was a more than ordinarily morbid fascination with death and its relationship to the meaning of life) and appear to re-formulate the expression of it in their earlier words; in Kleist's previously quoted:

> "Wir können nicht entscheiden, ob das, was wir Wahrheit nennen, wahrhaft Wahrheit ist, oder ob es uns nur so scheint. Ist das letzte, so ist die Wahrheit, die wir hier sammeln, nach dem Tode nicht mehr-"(Kleist: Werke, vol. 5, p. 204)

and in Keller's:

> "Welches ist Lüge und welches ist Wahrheit,
> Ist es das Leben hier oder der Tod?
> . . .
> Beides ist Wahrheit und beides ist Lüge,[46]
> Je nachdem eines das andre bezwingt!"

Not surprisingly, the most important of the ambivalences in the ending of Romeo und Julia auf dem Dorfe is seen to be that of life and death. It would seem that, so long as one assumes life and death to be polarities in Kleist's and Keller's terms, there will always be controversy; one should perhaps accept that in these authors' views they were not such mutually exclusive concepts, but actualities that exist side by side and simultaneously, and so arrive at a truer, though not necessarily simpler, interpretation of the endings in which may be seen not contradiction so much as

co-existing, two-fold unity. The death of Sali and Vrenchen is a tragic one, "aber die gewonnene Stille und Ruhe ist nicht der Tod, sondern das Leben, das fortblüht und leuchtet."[47]

As life and death are dealt with in Prinz Friedrich von Homburg and Romeo und Julia auf dem Dorfe not as polarities but as a mystical entity, so in both works there is also a tragic--yet hopeful--resolution on each of two planes, the individual and the social, which adds to the richness and texture of the closing scenes. Inner and outer reality are so interwoven that they are seen as indivisible.[48] In Prinz Friedrich von Homburg, the Prince overcomes for himself what must then be newly overcome and tested vis-a-vis his society. As an individual, he has found himself and makes his choice for death--which is both a negation of life in the narrower, personal sense and affirmation of it in the broader, social one; for his decision for death confirms, paradoxically, the 'mortal' law of life. Yet, having found calm for himself in his acceptance of death, he must now relinquish it in order to make his peace with society by continuing to live. Similarly, in Romeo und Julia auf dem Dorfe, the death is both negation of life on one plane and affirmation of it on the other. Sali and Vrenchen, united and

joyous in their love, must yet renounce its permanent fulfilment and choose death, in order to endorse the 'Gesetz' of life--the very 'Gesetz' that denies life to them--as a living, essential law.

Is there not, in any case, this contrariety of despair and hope inherent in tragedy, both as literary tradition and as deepest human experience? Hubristically, man assumes falsely that he can control his fate and attains, through suffering, a clarity of perception that he can not. The insight with which he perceives his arrogance is in itself redeeming; the catharsis brings about, in its transcendence of human limitation, a renewed hope for the nobility of man.

In Prinz Friedrich von Homburg and Romeo und Julia auf dem Dorfe we see given a cycle of development in three stages: the first of primordial but fragile and unproven innocence; the central one of suffering and conflict; and the final one of redemption and true balance. The traditional Christian story of salvation is given in all its mystery, but interpreted in a newly practical, realistic way. The Prince attains peace within himself, learns to obey that which is deepest and truest in the "innern Forderungen"(Kleist: Werke, vol. 5, p. 261) of his "Gefühl". Sali and Vrenchen suffer and arrive at death in final identification with

the eternal in "Natur". Both works show in their closing scenes first personal fulfilment and then ironic reversal in sacrifice to a higher law, which is based on the responsibility of the individual not only to himself but to the society of which, by nature, he is a necessary part; in his self-responsibility he must exercise discernment of this fact. Kleist and Keller show themselves as writers with a serious and truly 'democratic' attitude, who believe that man's individually private actions have a social significance; that society sternly and rightly demands discipline from the individual; that he must acknowledge and transcend his own wilfulness in the recognition that the stability of society is dependent on the achievement of his own. Didactically, but imaginatively and sensitively, Kleist and Keller show that the development of every individual constitutes a painful preparation for the part he must play as contributor to the society whose balance he must at all costs help to maintain.

This is his fate. Non-recognition of it spells loss of home and heaven; for Manz and Marti it meant a 'lebendiges Begräbnis', and for Homburg in III/5 a living death. Man's guilt is seen to be both universal and individual; coming into the world "trailing

clouds of glory . . ./from God, who is our home",[49] he brings with him an unconscious striving for a perfect, natural harmony--the memory of which is submerged as he becomes corruptible man. Abandoning this striving constitutes his guilt, expressed in his all-too-human capacity to substitute that which is transitory and false for that which is eternal and true; correct vision of truth can only be re-achieved consciously, as a result of insight into loss. His lot is doubly tragic for not only, first, is he tragically born to sin but, second, he must painfully achieve his own absolution. The view that every man is sinful is not without religious implications, but the Christian idea of salvation through faith is here replaced by one of redemption through insight. Man cannot expect a "himmlisches Jerusalem"(RJ, p. 101) from above, but must create it here and now and from within. Because there is no hereafter and any other-worldly Paradise is illusion, only in acting self-responsibly can he deify his life and bring about its "Durchgöttlichung".[50]

So man takes on the responsibility of God and confers on himself a degree of immortality: "Nun, o Unsterblichkeit, bist du ganz mein!"(PvH, V/10, l.1830)

With the re-iterated call to battle in the first work and the picture of the ever-flowing river in the

second (the river having been the constant, 'eternal' background to the human crises of the opening scene, the 'bridge' scene and the closing scene), Kleist and Keller show the human cycle--present, past and future--recurring into infinity, and death as merely part of the process of being alive. The end of Prinz Friedrich von Homburg like that of Romeo und Julia auf dem Dorfe is indeed a new beginning.

In both these works guilt is seen--paradoxically--as both universal and therefore chronic, and as individual but curable. As universal proclivity it is seen to be a natural process, as nothing more than that which springs from action as part of being alive. The opening scenes show that in the Prince and in Manz and Marti guilt follows innocence as easily as waking follows sleep. Man is born to sin but can, where the individual is worthy and responds to suffering with insight, (as Homburg and Sali and Vrenchen do, but as Manz and Marti do not) expiate it by acting upon that which is best and soundest in his nature. Sin being disorder--as the first book of Moses tells, and with which Kleist introduces his essay Über das Marionettentheater--only thus can man deny the potentiality for disorder within him, and only in this way can he find the balance between himself and the eternal law which

governs his nature and being, and so bring about his salvation.

There is a natural equation between Kleist's subjective "innere Vorschrift"(Kleist: Werke, vol. 5, p. 259) and Keller's more objective "Natur":

> "Keller's stress on feeling as the portal to the divine is, of course, not too far removed from the nature philosophy of the early German romanticists--his emphasis on the 'feeling of eternity' reminds one of the 'inner unity' of Novalis and the 'universality' of Schleiermacher."[51]

For the precepts of inner and external nature, respectively, guide Homburg and Sali and Vrenchen to the resolution of the conflicts in and between the individual and the social self, and lead them to final tranquillity. When acting from his genuine core--what Kleist calls 'Gefühl' and Keller calls 'Natur'--man is able to attain the balance Kleist writes of in Über das Marionettentheater, the natural "Ruhe" they both sought in their lives and which is equally Keller's ideal:

> "Nur die Ruhe in der Bewegung hält die Welt und macht den Mann; die Welt ist innerlich ruhig und still, und so musz es auch der Mann sein, der sie verstehen und als ein wirkender Teil von ihr sie wiederspiegeln will. Ruhe zieht das Leben an, Unruhe verscheucht es; Gott hält sich mäuschen still, darum bewegt sich die Welt um ihn."[52]

In Prinz Friedrich von Homburg and in Romeo und Julia auf dem Dorfe a compassionate view is given of the

predicament of man who, though weak and born to sin, is yet required to be strong and responsible for the world around him. Individual guilt (that is, acquired guilt), while actual, is muted in several ways by Kleist and Keller: in that it happens unaware; in that the crimes are not heinous but excusable, and occur naturally, as though accidental to life; in that the central characters are not singled out as being especially sinful, for it is made clear in both works that others are equally prone to guilt.

To the question whether the Prince is guilty, we must therefore give a paradoxical, Kleistian answer: Yes, and--No. The dramatic action in the play hangs by a hair--the Prince's indiscipline, his guilt on the social level, is the outward triggering for the inner reaction. Although making it important, therefore, for the dramatic function of the play, Kleist goes out of his way to obscure the issue of individual guilt, and we are made to see the Prince guilty not as much through his actions as through blindness to the inner vision. Let us examine more closely.

The Prince's high-handed, defiant action in battle, his arrogant assumption of authority: "Ich nehm's auf meine Kappe"(PvH, II/2, l. 497), does not end in military disaster, and there is no certainty

that his obedience to battle orders would have resulted in a more complete defeat for the Swedish forces. Then the general confusion in the battle itself, and the subsequent contradictory and therefore unreliable reports of its progress, even of the Elector's death, leave the question of his guilt controversial.

The Prince's impetuosity which leads to his guilt could itself be seen as a mere youthful peccadillo; this is emphasized by "kaum bemerkbar"(PvH, III/1, l. 899), which anyway derives from his defective vision, again emphasized by the word "Brille" in: "Um eines Fehls, der Brille kaum bemerkbar,"(PvH, III/1, l. 899). It is truly a "Ver-sehen":[53] literally, a wrong vision.

Precipitated into life by forces beyond his control, his loss of innocence bears within it potential tragedy, and in his lack of recognition of this loss lies his susceptibility to guilt. Kleist purposely, it seems, distracts us from Homburg's personal guilt by inferences that outside forces conspire against him, and by implying that others around Homburg might be equally culpable. Even the Elector (who in II/9, l.722 is made to appear hopeful that Homburg is not the one he must accuse) is himself accused by Hohenzollern of complicity, and in his only moment of real anger shows himself touched on the raw: "Tor, der du bist, Blöd-

sinniger!"(PvH, V/5, l. 1714). He then reverses the charge to Hohenzollern--and in so doing incidentally changes the magnitude of the "Frevel"(PvH, V/5, l.1626) to a "Versehn": "Der sein Versehn veranlaßt hat, warest du!"(PvH, V/5, l. 1719). Kottwitz, too, says he might have done the same: "Bei Gott, ein Schelm müßt' ich doch sein, wenn ich/Des Prinzen Tat nicht munter wiederholte "(PvH, V/5, l. 1601).

In this way Kleist highlights the incident of Homburg's crime against law and order for the purpose of outward dramatic action, and appears to minimize its gravity--but not perhaps so much for that reason, as to so confuse the reader that he experiences Homburg's bewilderment and in so doing identifies with his own. (It is the 'visceral' technique again, that Artaud applauded and that not only Goethe found distasteful).

This is not, therefore, only an individually conceived guilt, nor merely a moral one in the traditional sense; and Homburg's words, like so many in this play, must not be taken at face value only, for "Wort und Inneres entfernen sich voneinander";[54] neither can they be dismissed outright--this is a measure of the play's complexity, as pointed out earlier. The words: ". . . den verderblichsten/Der Feind' in uns, den Trotz, den

Übermut,"(PvH, V/7, l. 1756) have not only a moral meaning, and an inner 'divine' meaning, but another superimposed: for, though Homburg thinks himself at this point freed from his previous delusion, the truth is that he only thinks himself free; although he is free in himself, he is still unable (he does not know this yet) to control the vagaries of fate within which man is bound. This paradox shows at the end of the play when--after Homburg has triumphed over the enemy within, and appears 'divinely' free--Fate, as the enemy without, is shown to be in final control with the Elector's 'pardon' that ironically and cruelly sets him back on the road of mortal strife.

The immediate cause, then, leading to Homburg's guilt lies in his human frailty; but the weakness of man's cognitive faculties is, too, the fault of an inscrutable higher force which is in operation throughout earthly life, and sets up a barrier between the finite and the infinite in man, and another between the infinite in man and his infinite source.

In Romeo und Julia auf dem Dorfe, Keller shows an equally compassionate concern with the lot of his characters, and leaves the issue of personal guilt deliberately vague. Manz and Marti are shown, in the

opening scene, to slip, like the Prince, almost unconsciously from primaeval innocence into human guilt. They lack the grace of insight and are truly damned; their course henceforth takes the direction of "der träumerischen Qual zweier Verdammten"(RJ, p. 83); they continue less in life than limbo, "ohne leben noch sterben zu können"(RJ, p. 93), but their story is told with so much humour and compassion that they are seen as pitiable, not contemptible. The daemonic is seen as part of the whole process of life, as a strange, dormant element which merely needs awakening and whose menace lies in its unpredictability. It is their tragic misfortune to lack the armour of discernment; being blind to the vision which might have preserved them, they are destroyed; susceptible to the threat of imbalance, they are caught unaware and plunge to the depths of hatred and disorder.

Yet their brutishness is not wholly of their own making, neither is their guilt exclusive to them. The reaction of the villagers, their greed and speculation in their exploitation of the quarrel, show it to be a collective characteristic:

> "Die meisten Menschen sind fähig oder bereit, ein in den Lüften umgehendes Unrecht zu verüben, . . . sowie es aber von einem begangen ist, sind die übrigen froh, daß sie es doch nicht gewesen sind, daß die Versuchung sie nicht betroffen hat, und

> sie machen nun den Auserwählten zu dem Schlechtigkeitsmesser ihrer Eigenschaften und behandeln ihn mit zarter Scheu als einen Ableiter des Übels, der von den Göttern gezeichnet ist . . ."(RJ, p. 79)

As such, however, it arises not from the gods, as the villagers think, or from some illusory source outside man, but from within his own nature.

As unpredictably as the lives of Manz and Marti plummet from order to ruin, so inexplicably do those of Sali and Vrenchen--who are raised in misery and tainted themselves by inherited and acquired guilt--soar from disorder to final calm. In an aestheticized transformation of hatred into love, Keller shows, in the children, a direction towards the natural ideal from which their fathers deviated. The same primitive force that reveals itself as perverse and negative in one generation now expresses itself as positive in the next.

Sali and Vrenchen radiate nature's energy and nature's health, yet there runs, throughout the course of even their near-perfection, the undercurrent of the primitive. Early in the story the possibility--the fearful natural probability--is hinted at, that Sali the boy, who is "für jetzt noch unbeschädigt"(RJ, p. 87) might yet become Manz the man:

> "Er war ziemlich genau so, wie sein Vater in diesem Alter gewesen war, . . ."(RJ, p. 88).

Even in childhood, guilt is upon them; already then

they show "menschliche Grausamkeit"(RJ, p. 76) in their game of burying the doll which causes in them unconscious feelings of horror and guilt:

> "Dann empfanden sie einiges Grauen, da sie etwas Geformtes und Belebtes begraben hatten, und entfernten sich ein gutes Stück von der unheimlichen Stätte."(RJ, p. 76)

Keller clearly does not share the romantic notion of childish innocence, and shows himself a forerunner of post-Freudian practical psychology in his belief that the child is father to the man.

It is significant, and typical of the constant contrasts in the story, that they find each other and begin their mutual ascent at the very point when Manz and Marti's brutality descends to its most daemonic--on the bridge over the river. This scene itself 'bridges' the contradictions in man's nature; hatred and love, guilt and innocence, are strangely interwoven, subtly suggesting the basic paradox of man, the hint of promise even in his despair. It also suggests the menace underlying both that might, at any time, transmute one into the other.

With the stone-throwing scene in which Marti is hurt, an act which is shown as occurring both 'naturally' and 'accidentally', the unconscious is seen to surface. Now, with the mark of Cain clearly upon them, Sali and

Vrenchen (for she is his willing accomplice after the fact) attain full awareness, through their own concrete experience, of universal guilt. It is this awareness which spurs them to their suicide which, though it is tragic, is--given the circumstances--the nearest they can come to reaching the happiness as expressed in Keller's formula: "Wert + Unglück = Bewußtsein = Glück";[55] remembering that in Keller's terms "Glück" is never a romantic, self-centred or self-indulgent state of bliss, but a more realistic state of life-acceptance with its accompanying peace of mind; and that resignation (except where the individual is unaware and submits unworthily) need not be a passive renunciation so much as an active and practical compromise. In his view, life-exposure to corruption is inevitable, but its destructive effects <u>can</u> be prevented in a variety of ways,[56] <u>provided</u> that the individual makes intelligent and serious efforts to regulate his life. It is this proviso that makes Keller's view a somewhat deterministic one;[57] for in <u>Romeo und Julia auf dem Dorfe</u> only some characters (Sali and Vrenchen) are shown worthy and able to reorient their lives; others like Manz and Marti are so constituted that they cannot rise above their fate. There is a realism here and a psychological insight which reminds one of Kleist's equation of 'Schicksal' and

'Gemüth':

> " . . . daß das Schicksal, oder mein Gemüth--und ist das nicht mein Schicksal? eine Kluft wirft zwischen mich und sie." (Kleist: Werke, vol. 5, p. 279--my underlining, L.B.)

In showing that Manz and Marti cannot respond to the challenge of life because they are naturally deficient, Keller shows compassion; but, in sending them to their doom nevertheless because they do not, he shows the moral sternness not of a petty preacher but of one who knows and thoroughly understands the relentlessness of nature's law. It is the harsh view of one who knows that life--like nature--lays down harsh conditions and makes harsh demands. His realism is comparable to the indifference of nature herself and embraces, therefore, both pessimism and optimism. Sali and Vrenchen are fortunate; because they are fully aware of what they have done and show insight into the consequences of their act, they can take steps to 'preserve' that which is best in themselves--although, ironically, they must die in order so to 'live'.

Their death, which they know to be right and inevitable, is--like Homburg's symbolic one--a recognition of the implacability of natural law. The essential impartiality of nature herself--whether she be quixotically cruel or kind--is reflected in the ambivalences of

the ending, which express both the hopelessness of the first half of the story and the hopefulness implicit in the second, and sum up the complexity of a view of life which has been emphasized in the constant contrasts and contradictions up to this point.

In comparison with the essentially pagan hopelessness of Bahnwärter Thiel, the view that Kleist and Keller give in Prinz Friedrich von Homburg and Romeo und Julia auf dem Dorfe, with their "Erörterung der Stellung des Menschen zu Gott und Welt, also des religiösen Problems";[58] is a religious and hopeful one. While both saw life to be as "rätselhaft" as Hauptmann saw it, in these two works they show, with originality and insight, a practical model for life, for the illusions we live by and the disappointments in store. In portraying life as enigmatic they showed courage and independence in breaking away from the view that 'all is for the best in this best of possible worlds'. The forswearing of the Christian and rational supporting structure was not, however, a forswearing of their basic piety and faith. For their model for living is neither a purely pragmatic and narrowly materialistic recipe for life, nor is it an escapist one. That which is 'märchenhaft' in these two works is only superficially 'romantic'. The dream and the idyll are so integrated into their view of

reality that they extend rather than limit its scope; the fairy-tale elements are not isolated or incidental embroidering, but are--given the context in which they appear--in themselves warnings that illusion should be viewed with scepticism and not applause; in pointing up the balance to be tried for between that which is real and that which is only imagined so, they illustrate not an evasion of reality, but a coming to grips with its harsh laws. In this, Kleist and Keller show the attitude of men who, though dis-illusioned, yet show in their realistic approach to the whole of life "eben das Talent der Dichter, welche ebensowenig wie wir in Arkadien leben, aber das Arkadische oder überhaupt Interessante auch an dem Gemeinsten, das uns umgiebt heraus finden können." (Kleist: Werke, vol. 5, p. 137--my underlining, L.B.). Like Keller, Kleist feared the undisciplined imagination and its power to distract; to deceive, and so distort reality. In the following extract from a letter, Kleist's words approximate Keller's dry 'realistic' tone and evince, as Keller's often do, a repudiation of irresponsible fantasy:

> "Ich habe Dir das so trocken hingeschrieben, weil ich Dich durch Deine Phantasie nicht bestechen wollte. . . . Die Romane haben unsern Sinn verdorben. Denn durch sie hat das Heilige aufgehört, heilig zu sein, und das reinste, menschlichste, einfältigste Glück ist zu einer bloßen Träumerei herabgewürdigt worden."(Kleist: Werke, vol. 5, p.262)

It is largely this attitude of Kleist and Keller that makes the 'make-believe' elements important for Prinz Friedrich von Homburg and Romeo und Julia auf dem Dorfe which, in revealing the total shape of life, show the difficulty--and the reward--surrounding the achievement of a fine balance between its unreality and truth.

The dream and the idyll, like the ambivalences of the ending of both Prinz Friedrich von Homburg and Romeo und Julia auf dem Dorfe, are constituent parts of the underlying unity and cannot--indeed must not--be explained away. They are integral to the works which reflect life as cruel and perplexing, and which state that the merest expectation of simplification, as of individual 'happiness' or 'perfection', is delusion. Not in evading, but in facing this truth does man find peace, for 'Ruhe' being the essence of nature and of man as part of it, only insight into this reality can bring enlightenment and balance. Only in this recognition can man be one with the eternal and be truly 'saved'.

Based on the natural and the immediately real, these two works give in other terms a new interpretation of the myth of Christian redemption. With profound

psychological and poetic penetration of that which is natural and mysterious in the everyday, Kleist and Keller--being truly naive and spontaneous writers in the sense that Schiller meant it--have, in Prinz Friedrich von Homburg and Romeo und Julia auf dem Dorfe, expressed more in physical and intuitive than in intellectual terms a grasp of complex totality which is comprehensive in its embrace both of hopefulness and despair.

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[1] Heinz Friedrich, "Heinrich von Kleist und Franz Kafka", p. 443, Berliner Hefte, 4, 2, 1949, pp. 440--448.

[2] It is not suggested that such too-neat labelling is to be taken as valid. Indeed, Fritz Martini in Deutsche Literaturgeschichte, p. 292 f., explores Kleist's relationship to Classicism and Romanticism and finds that he cannot be categorized as belonging to either. He writes (p. 292):

"Jean Paul, Hölderlin und Kleist konnten sich nicht dem klassischen Maß beugen und in der klassischen Harmonie Genüge finden; jeder von ihnen wurde von einer inneren Unendlichkeit bedrängt, die sein Leben zersprengte (Hölderlin, Kleist) oder sein Werk in das Grenzenlose auflöste (Jean Paul). Goethes und Schillers Klassik wurde für sie alle zu einer inneren Entscheidung, die sie schmerzlich durchlitten und über die sie hinauswachsen mußten. Sie stehen der Romantik nahe und lösen sich zugleich von ihr, . . . So hatten sie an dem Klassischen und an dem Romantischen teil, ohne darin aufzugehen; . . ."

See also p. 315:

"Jean Paul, Hölderlin und Kleist sprengten die harmonische Geschlossenheit des klassischen Humanitätsideals mit dem Subjektivismus des Empfindens, durch die mythische Erfahrung göttlicher Mächte, in der dämonisch-tragischen Besessenheit des absoluten Gefühls. Darin liegt ihre Verwandtschaft mit der Romantik, . . . "

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[3] Rudolf Wildbolz, Gottfried Kellers Menschenbild, p. 18, speaks of Keller's "Weg aus romantischen Anfängen zum Realismus."
Herbert Reichert, Basic Concepts in the Philosophy of Gottfried Keller, discusses the romantic-realist approach to Keller criticism in the Appendix, pp. 137--142, but considers that Keller's "Weltanschauung was not characterized by change but by tenacious adherence to early conceptions" (p. 125).

[4] i) to Storm, 21. 9. 1883, Briefe, vol. 3 (1), p. 490:

"Diesen Sommer war der neue Stern Ernst v. Wildenbruch bei mir und hat mir seither 5 Stück Dramen geschickt, die allen Respekt einflößen. Sie machen den Eindruck, als ob sein sel. Mitbürger Heinrich v. Kleist auferstanden wäre und mit gesundem Herzen fortdichtete."

ii) to Wildenbruch, 26. 9. 1883, Briefe, vol. 4, p. 176:

"Es gibt Gemeinplätze, welche man so wenig entbehren kann als die Bemerkungen über Sonnenschein und Regen. So haben Sie die geistreiche Vergleichung mit Ihrem Mitbürger Heinrich von Kleist gewiß schon oft hören müssen, und trotzdem muß ich auch noch kommen und Ihnen sagen, daß ich nach der ersten Lektüre den Eindruck empfand, als ob jener Mann aus dem Grabe entstanden, vielmehr nie gestorben wäre und mit gesundetem Herzen und geklärter Seele in seinen letzten Jahren unter uns

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lebte."

The impression one gets from the general tone of these letters is that Keller is reluctant to commit himself to a criticism of Wildenbruch's works and diplomatically evades direct comment by making use of the current byword. (Carl Helbling's remarks show him to have received the same impression:

"Keller, so liebenswürdig er sich aus gebührender Hochachtung vor dem ihn umwerbenden Epigonen gab, hat den unentbehrlichen Gemeinplatz vom Mitbürger Kleists dennoch nicht verschmäht, um strengerer Kritik die Spitze zu brechen."--Briefe, vol. 4, p. 174).

Keller's letter to his old friend Storm does imply a certain admiration, but his mention of Kleist in this connection does not prove helpful; he does not make it clear whether he finds the platitudinous comparison with Kleist legitimate, or why, if he does. The shortness and casualness of his comments appear to indicate a tepidity of interest in Wildenbruch and, indirectly, in Kleist. Furthermore, Keller's correspondence with Wildenbruch, although Keller considered him a "sehr liebenswürdiger und enthusiasmierter Mensch, dessen

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Dramen sich wohl noch mehr entwickeln werden . . ." (Briefe, vol. 3 (1), p. 498), is limited to two letters each, in spite of the fact that Wildenbruch in his letters is clearly adulatory and would have welcomed its continuation.

[5] Hettner to Keller, Briefe, vol. 1, p. 387.

[6] Keller to Widmann, Briefe, vol. 3 (1), p. 257.

[7] Martini, Deutsche Literaturgeschichte, p. 293.

[8] Herman Meyer, Der Sonderling in der deutschen Dichtung, p. 194, where he quotes Goethe.

[9] Benno von Wiese, Deutsche Dichter der Romantik, p. 248, quoting Goethe: Jub.-Ausgabe, Bd. 38, p. 20 f.

[10] Briefe, vol. 4, p. 176. See Note 4.

[11] Hermann Boeschenstein, Gottfried Keller, p. 107.

[12] Leonard Forster, "Some Echoes", German Life and Letters, 10, 1956/57, pp. 177--182, makes an

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exploration--like the Kleist-Keller study undertaken here, similarly without direct and concrete evidence other than an intuitive appraisal of the works themselves--in which he wonders whether Keller could have known Shelley's Alastor or whether it could have been "present below the surface of his mind" in the same way as Goethe's poems evidently were.

[13] Von Wiese, Die deutsche Tragödie, pp. 275--293, explores particularly the relationship between Schiller and Kleist in his discussion of the traditions to which Kleist fell heir (and from which he deviated), and stresses (p. 276): " . . . die Entwicklung des deutschen Geschichtsdramas von Kleist über Grillparzer bis zu Grabbe, Büchner und Hebbel ist ohne Schiller nicht denkbar."

[14] Goethe to Kleist 1. 2. 1808, Heinrich von Kleist: Briefe 1805--1811, p. 58, in which he speaks of Penthesilea:

"Sie ist aus einem so wunderbaren Geschlecht und bewegt sich in einer so fremden Region daß ich mir Zeit nehmen muß mich in beide zu finden."

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[15] Quoted by A. Schlagdenhauffen, "Die Form des Tragischen", Heinrich von Kleist: Aufsätze und Essays, p. 556.

[16] ibid.

[17] An even more radical break occurred in Holz'and Schlaf's Die Familie Selicke but, as this is in the nature of applied literary theory, we have chosen to cite Hauptmann's Novelle as it is the more truly poetic work.

[18] John Passmore, A Hundred Years of Philosophy, p. 63, quoting Bradley.

[19] Webster's New World Dictionary, 2nd College ed. (Nelson, Foster and Scott Ltd. Toronto, Canada, 1970).

[20] John Passmore, A Hundred Years of Philosophy, p. 50, quoting Lotze:

"Lotze's philosophy is what came to be called an 'Ideal-Realism'--understanding by 'Realism' the view that the way things happen is determined by mechanical conditions, and by 'Idealism' the view that things happen in accordance with a plan, or in order to fulfil an Ideal purpose." (p. 49).

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[21] Reinhard Buchwald, Schiller, vol. 1, p. 18.

[22] Schiller, Über das Erhabene, Werke, vol. 5, p. 794.

[23] Schiller, Über naive und sentimentalische Dichtung, Werke, vol. 5, p. 751.

[24] Schiller, Ästhetische Erziehung, Werke, vol. 5, p. 579.

[25] Schiller, Kabale und Liebe, Werke, vol. 1, p.844, V/3.

[26] Buchwald, Schiller, vol. 2, p. 50, writes of Ferdinand, for example:

". . . denn nur seine Kurzsichtigkeit läßt ihn auf die plumpen Intrigen seiner Gegner hereinfallen und erst recht seine Ahnungslosigkeit von der großen und reinen Natur seiner Geliebten."

[27] In V/5 Ferdinand says:

"Ich reise ab, und in dem Land, wo ich mich zu setzen gedenke, gelten die Stempel nicht" (Werke, vol 1, p. 847/8), and in II/2, in which human life is equated with the pricelessness of precious stones, Milford speaks for Schiller in her horror and condemnation:

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"Weg mir diesen Steinen--sie blitzen Höllenflammen in mein Herz," (Werke, vol. 1, p. 781).

[28] Schiller, Kabale und Liebe, V/7, Werke, vol. 1, p. 853/4.

[29] ibid. I/1, p. 759.

[30] ibid. II/4, p. 790.

[31] ibid. V/1, p. 839.

[32] ibid. V/3, p. 845.

[33] ibid. I/2, p. 762.

[34] ibid. I/1, p. 758.

[35] ibid. V/1, p. 839.

[36] ibid. I/1, p. 758/9.

[37] Buchwald, Schiller, vol. 1, p. 214.

[38] Schiller, Über das Erhabene, Werke, vol. 5, p. 792.

[39] Schiller, Über Anmut und Würde, Werke, vol. 5,

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p. 468, where the following words remind strongly of the perfect balance of the Marionette and the sure grace of the bear described in Kleist's Über das Marionettentheater:

"Alle Bewegungen, die von ihr ausgehen, werden leicht, sanft und dennoch belebt sein. Heiter und frei wird das Auge strahlen, und Empfindung wird in demselben glänzen. Von der Sanftmut des Herzens wird der Mund eine Grazie erhalten, die keine Verstellung erkünsteln kann. Keine Spannung wird in den Mienen, kein Zwang in den willkürlichen Bewegungen zu bemerken sein, denn die Seele weiß von keinem."

[40] Reichert, Basic Concepts, p. 131. In the chapter "Schiller and Keller", pp. 125--136, Reichert discusses the affinity between the two men.

[41] Reichert, p. 127.

[42] ibid. p. 129.

[43] ibid. p. 125.

[44] Ermatinger, "Gottfried Keller an der Scheide zweier Zeitalter", Deutsche Rundschau, 180, 3, 1919, p. 13.

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[45] Emrich, Protest und Verheißung, p. 100.

[46] Schiller, Über das Erhabene, Werke, vol. 5, p. 794.

[47] See Note 45.

[48] Valency, The Flower and the Castle, p. 113.

[49] Arno Holz, Werke, vol. 4, p. 209. Hrsg. von Wilhelm Emrich und Anita Holz. Luchterhand. (No year,etc.)

[50] Artaud, The Theatre and its Double, p. 61.

[51] Schrimpf, Literatur und Gesellschaft vom neunzehnten ins zwanzigste Jahrhundert, quoting Hauptmann, p. 292.

[52] Hauptmann, Die grossen Erzählungen, p. 45:

"Es kam ihm vor, als habe er etwas ihm Wertes zu verteidigen, als versuchte jemand, sein Heiligstes anzutasten, und unwillkürlich spannten sich seine Muskeln in gelindem Krampfe, während ein kurzes, herausforderndes Lachen seinen Lippen entfuhr."

[53] ibid. p. 57:

"Er mußte an den lieben Gott denken, ohne zu wissen, warum. 'Der liebe Gott springt über den Weg, der liebe

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Gott springt über den Weg'. . . . ein Lichtschein fiel in sein Hirn: 'Aber mein Gott, das ist ja Wahnsinn'. . . . Er suchte Ordnung in seine Gedanken zu bringen, vergebens! . . . Es war das Signal zur Raserei."

[54] Seyppel, Gerhart Hauptmann, p. 80.

[55] Hauptmann, Die grossen Erzählungen, p. 41:

"Ihre vollen, halbnackten Brüste blähten sich vor Erregung und drohten das Mieder zu sprengen, . . ."

[56] Schrimpf, Literatur und Gesellschaft, p. 292.

[57] Hauptmann, Die grossen Erzählungen, p. 45.

[58] loc. cit.

[59] Hauptmann, p. 52.

[60] Sontag, Against Interpretation, p. 139.

[61] Hauptmann, Die grossen Erzählungen, p. 47:

"Ein blutiger Schein ging vor ihnen her, der die Regentropfen in seinem Bereich in Blutstropfen verwandelte. Es war, als fiele ein Blutregen vom Himmel."

[62] Boeschenstein, Gottfried Keller, p. 117, writes:

"Es vereinigt in sich die wesentlichen Erfahrungen der

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Epoche, den Glanz der Goetheschen Alterswelt, ein letztes Aufglühen der Romantik, die Teilnahme der Bürger an der staatlichen Erneuerung und an einer Philosophie und Wissenschaft, die das naturalistische und technische Zeitalter einführten." (Boeschenstein is here discussing Thomas Roffler's interpretation).

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[1] This letter is attributed to Marie v. Kleist in Heinrich von Kleist: Briefe 1805--1811, dtv Gesamtausgabe 7, 1964, p. 50, where "der ganze Schmerz und Glanz" is given in its original version "der ganze Schmutz und Glanz"; see note p. 144 there.

[2] To Vieweg, Briefe, vol. 3 (2), p. 15, Keller also wrote:

"Ich habe noch nie etwas produziert, was nicht den Anstoß dazu aus meinem inneren oder äußern Leben empfangen hat, . . . "

[3] Wildbolz, Gottfried Kellers Menschenbild, p. 13, writes: " . . . So ist uns Kellers Dasein wichtig; denn in ihm wurzelt sein Werk.";

and von Wiese, Die deutsche Tragödie, p. 283/3, writes of Kleist:

"Wenn bei Lessing, Schiller und Goethe die Tragödie als eine 'Gattung' verstanden wurde, die die reine tragische Wirkung hervorbringen sollte und hinter der die Persönlichkeit des Dichters ganz verschwand, so beginnt bei Kleist das Tragische schon mit der Existenz des Dichters selbst."

[4] Von Wiese, Die deutsche Tragödie, pp. 334 and 342.

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[5] Von Wiese, Deutsche Dichter der Romantik, p. 243.

[6] Seyppel, Gerhart Hauptmann, p. 80/1.

[7] Heinz Friedrich, "Heinrich von Kleist und Franz Kafka", Berliner Hefte, 4,2,1949, p. 440:

"Kleist war zu bedingungslos der menschlichen Wirklichkeit zugewandt, um sich lange in philosophischen Abstraktionen ergehen zu können."

[8] Fricke, Gefühl und Schicksal, p. 38:

"Seine Grundhaltung wird also erst als religiöse ganz verständlich. Denn erst dann vertieft sich das Problem des Daseins, die Relation von Individuum und Wirklichkeit,--die an sich unzähliger Auslegungen und Gestaltungen fähig ist,--zur existentiellen, wenn sie in ihrer Zeitlichkeit zugleich von einer ewigen Fragestellung lebt: Wenn es von religiöser Bedeutung ist, ob die irdische Bestimmung gefunden oder verfehlt, ob der Sinn der konkreten Stunde erkannt oder versäumt, ob das Ich Gott und damit sich selber in der ihm von seinem Schicksal gestellten Aufgabe treu bleibt oder nicht."

and on p. 40:

"Die Notwendigkeit, er selber, Heinrich Kleist, zu sein und zu werden, die unendliche Verantwortung, die diese gefühlte, heilige Forderung auf sein endliches, bedingtes, hineilendes Dasein legte, das war die Form des Kleistschen Gewissens."

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[9] Heinz Friedrich, "Heinrich von Kleist und Franz Kafka", Berliner Hefte, 4,2,1949, p. 441:

"Die Ratio ist zugunsten des Gefühls aufgegeben . . . Der Intellekt zerstört das Vertrauen, nur das Herz stärkt es."

[10] Benno von Wiese, "Der Tragiker Heinrich von Kleist", Heinrich von Kleist: Aufsätze und Essays, p. 197, discusses the 'pathological' side of Kleist, but goes on to write, p. 199, that of course "Tragische Gebrochenheit ist daher nur die eine Seite des Kleistschen Lebens."

Inversely, Preisendanz, "Gottfried Keller', in Deutsche Dichter der Romantik, lists those (Nietzsche, Hauptmann, et al) who, by emphasizing the sunny qualities which illuminate Keller's work, have contributed to a view of Keller as genial and uncomplicated--a view that Preisendanz considers too one-sided to be altogether acceptable.

[11] ibid. p. 460:

"Man darf den Kontrast zwischen der 'Gramspelunke',

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als die sich der Autor bezeichnet hat, und dem goldenen Überfluß der Welt, der im Werk erscheint, nicht eskamotieren."

[12] Weber, Freundschaften Kellers, p. 15.

[13] Jeziorkowski, Dichter über ihre Dichtungen, p. 580.

[14] ibid. p. 577.

[15] See Note 11.

[16] Jeziorkowski, Dichter über ihre Dichtungen, p. 577:

"Seine Verschlossenheit ist bekannt und muß in seinen Tagen in Zürich sprichwörtlich gewesen sein--was dort vielleicht noch mehr heißen will als andernorts."

p. 577/8:

"Baechtold, von Keller selbst immerhin brieflich zum Nachlaßverwalter eingesetzt, suche insgeheim nach 'Keller-Material' für seine Biographie, er spioniere . . . das waren die harten Vorwürfe des Poeten, die sicher neben anderem ihren auslösenden Anteil an dem Streit zwischen Keller und diesem seinen Biographen im Zürcher Café Orsini hatten, einem Knall und Spektakel, der das literarische Zürich wohl noch eine ganze Weile nachzittern ließ."

Boeschenstein, Gottfried Keller, p. 16 f., discusses the

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views of those critics who have dwelt--perhaps too much--on this darker side of Keller's nature.

[17] Kurt Guggenheim, Gottfried Keller-Gesellschaft, 34, 1965, p. 9.
See also Kaspar Locher, "Gottfried Keller and the Fate of the Epigone", The Germanic Review, 35, 1960, p. 178, who writes of "Keller's characteristic vacillation between resignation and hope" and who discusses the frequency of passages in Keller's work that describe an experience in which life appears as equivocal, ambiguous and indefinable.
See also Kurt Reis, Die zweiheitliche Ordnung im Aufbaustil Gottfried Kellers, Diss. Köln 1957, p. 9:
"Keller formt Gegensätze, um Synthesen formen zu können."

[18] Reichert, Basic Concepts, p. 132, writes that "personal freedom to heed one's moral responsibility within the limits of natural law" was Keller's ideal, and Max Wehrli, Gottfried Kellers Verhältnis zum eigenen Schaffen, p. 11 f., speaks of the polarity that runs

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through the whole of Der Grüne Heinrich, and of Keller's two-fold characters who, although rooted in this world, are at the same time as individuals commanded by an impersonal order, whether one calls this God, duty, responsibility, etc.

[19] Many critics have recognized the autobiographical nature of much of Der Grüne Heinrich, among them Meyer, Der Sonderling in der deutschen Dichtung, p. 192:

"Findet die selbsterlebte Lebensproblematik Kellers in all seinen wesentlichen Gestalten ihren Niederschlag, so liegt sie doch am greifbarsten zutage in seinem autobiographischen Roman Der Grüne Heinrich."

Indeed, Keller's mother writes:

"Diese Bände . . . haben uns beide sehr angesprochen, besonders da der Hauptinhalt meistens Dein Jugendleben, Deine Buben- und Schulgeschichten betrifft, obschon alles in andern Gestaltungen und fremdartigen Umwandlungen dargestellt ist. . . . Mit besonderm Wohlgefallen las ich die Erinnerungen und die Gedenkzeichen Deines teuren, unvergeßlichen Vaters!" (Keller: Briefe, vol. 1, p. 119),

and Keller himself says of it:

"Jedoch ist die eigentliche Kindheit, sogar das Anekdotische darin, so gut wie wahr, hier und da bloß, in einem letzten Anfluge von Nachahmungstrieb, von der konfessionellen Herbigkeit Rousseaus angehaucht, . . ." (Jeziorkowski, Dichter über ihre Dichtung, p. 164)

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[20] Wildbolz, Gottfried Kellers Menschenbild, p. 46, writes:

" 'Der Grüne Heinrich' ist geradezu das Bild des Menschen, der den Weg zur natürlichen und richtigen Lebensbewältigung sucht, ohne ihn übrigens endgültig und völlig zu erreichen."

Throughout his book Wildbolz makes the point that (p.136)

"Gleichgewicht ist denn wohl auch die Idee, welche am ehesten in Gottfried Kellers Zentrum führt."

[21] Boeschenstein, Gottfried Keller, p. 37.

[22] Günther, "Romantisches Fühlen--klassisches Maß", Welt und Wort, 24, 7, 1969, p. 208, makes this point:

"Keller selber sprach, in Briefäußerungen besonders, oftmals abschätzend, von einem in der Jugenddichtung eingenommenen 'subjektiven' Standpunkt . . ."

We know that, of the stories in the first volume of Die Leute von Seldwyla, Keller held Romeo und Julia auf dem Dorfe in lesser esteem: "Für 'Romeo und Julie' war ich am meisten bange und hätte es beinah weggelassen; . . . " (Briefe, vol. 1, p. 428). See also letters: vol. 2, p. 43, vol. 3 (2), p. 186, and vol. 4, p. 162, in which latter he expresses his irritation

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with the misunderstanding that Romeo und Julia auf dem /Dorfe generated, and the "Bigotterie" with which his Novelle was received in some quarters. As late as 1884 Keller was making derogatory remarks of this work, calling it "meine verhängnisvolle Dorfgeschichte, die mir wie ein gestutzter Pudel durch das ganze Leben nachläuft. . . " (Briefe, vol. 3 (1), p. 249).

[23] Feuerbach, to Friedrich Kapp, 1842, quoted by Barth, "Ludwig Feuerbach", Jahresbericht der Gottfried-Kellergesellschaft, 9, 16, 1947, p. 11.

[24] Fritz Redenbacher, "Gottfried Kellers religiös-lyrisches Erlebnis", Deutsche Vierteljahrsschrift, 8, 1930, p. 722.

[25] ibid. p. 731:

"Die Verschmelzung von Gotteserlebnis und Naturerlebnis zur Einheit des in 'Stille der Nacht' gestalteten religiös-lyrischen Erlebnisses vermag viel über das Verhältnis von Gott und Natur in Gottfried Kellers Bewußtsein und Gefühlsleben auszusagen."

[26] Schmid, Brot und Wein, p. 21.

[27] Edith Runge, "Ein kleiner Blick . . . zu Kellers

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'Romeo und Julia auf dem Dorfe', Monatshefte, 52, 1960, p. 250, writes that Keller had found in

"Feuerbach's Lehre die philosophische Formulierung dessen, wonach es ihm längst verlangt hatte: die entschlossene und freudige Bejahung des Diesseits, auf Grund eben der Einmaligkeit und Abgeschlossenheit des irdischen Daseins . . . Es gibt, heißt es nun, nur das Leben hier; dahinter und darum liegt das Dunkle, Unbekannte, bzw, das Nichts. Von nun an legt Keller den Akzent auf das Hier, welches eben durch seine Einmaligkeit bedeutender, wichtiger und leuchtender wird . . ."

See also Schmid, Brot und Wein, pp. 14 and 16.

[28] Wildbolz, Gottfried Kellers Menschenbild, p. 47:

"Kennzeichen gesunder Natur ist nun aber vor allem das Gleichgewicht und damit das Maß . . . Gerade hier wird deutlich, wie unbeirrbar und unvoreingenommen Keller nach den Bedingungen wirklicher Lebensbemeisterung fragt, und damit, wie gesagt, nicht eigentlich moralistisch, sondern eher medizinisch-diagnostisch die Formen der Bedrohtheit als Formen von Gleichgewichtsstörungen entlarvt."

[29] Although 'Materialism' preceded Kleist by some seventy years, he was still in his way ahead of his time. Indeed even Feuerbach in the mid-nineteenth century found an audience resistant to his views, and his lectures, called for on the invitation of enthusi-

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astic students, were refused the hospitality and sponsorship of the university authorities in Heidelberg.

[30] Kleist confesses his high regard for Rousseau in several letters: among others, vol. 5, p. 202, p. 218 and p. 227.
See also Boeschenstein, "Die Transfiguration Rousseaus in der deutschen Dichtung um 1800 . . .", Jahrbuch der Jean-Paul-Gesellschaft, 1, 1966 Bayreuth, and Herzog, "Kleist und Rousseau", in PAN 1, pp. 364--370.
For Rousseau's influence on Keller, see Keller's letter in Note 19, in this section, and Boeschenstein, Gottfried Keller, p. 119/20.

[31] Barth, "Ludwig Feuerbach", Jahresbericht der Gottfried-Keller-Gesellschaft, 9, 16, 1947, pp. 3--13, quoting Feuerbach.

[32] Jeziorkowski, Gottfried Keller: Aufsätze zur Literatur, p. 25.

[33] Wildbolz, Gottfried Kellers Menschenbild, p. 113.

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[34] Wildbolz, Gottfried Kellers Menschenbild, p. 120, writes:

"Was bei Stifter wie bei Kleist fehlt, findet sich nun aber voll ausgeprägt bei Keller. Sein Wille zur Daseinsbewältigung ist intakt, er durchpulst sein ganzes Werk--".

[35] Staiger, "Gottfried Keller und die Romantik", Jahresbericht der Gottfried-Keller-Gesellschaft, 6, 1937, quoting Keller. There is, incidentally, the same tone of moderated optimism with its underlying scepticism in Kleist's:

"--Ich hoffe auf etwas Gutes, doch bin ich auf das Schlimmste gefaßt. Freude giebt es ja doch auf jedem Lebenswege, selbst das Bitterste ist doch auf kurze Augenblicke süß. Wenn nur der Grund recht dunkel ist, so sind auch matte Farben hell. Der helle Sonnenschein des Glücks, der uns verblendet, ist auch nicht einmal für unser schwaches Auge gemacht. Am Tage sehn wir wohl die schöne Erde, doch wenn es Nacht ist, sehn wir in die Sterne-- --" (Werke, vol. 5, p. 238/9)

[36] Although it is not of course a tragedy in the accepted sense, but a Novelle with a tragic ending, it is perhaps the nearest Keller came to the long-planned dramatic work (see letter to Vieweg, Briefe, vol. 3 (2), p. 15), and one whose dramatic quality and structure earns him the title of "Shakespeare der Novelle".(Briefe,

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vol. 3 (1), p. 52).

Silz, Realism and Reality, p. 84, makes this point: "For the plot of Romeo und Julia, within its established premises of character and situation, is flawless, and this simple tale moves to its end with all the inevitableness of high tragedy."

[37] Karl Guthke, "Gottfried Keller und die Romantik", Deutschunterricht, 11, 5, 1959, p. 14 f.

[38] Keller's Novelle has an ordinary, everyday, village setting, while Kleist's drama has an exclusive, courtly one; but Keller's story, in contrast to Kleist's, is not set in a real environment, only in a seemingly real one, whose mythical quality Keller emphasizes in the prologue to Die Leute von Seldwyla (Werke, vol. 3, p. 3).

[39] Jeziorkowski, Gottfried Keller: Aufsätze zur Literatur, p. 25.

[40] loc. cit.

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As, in Section Three, there will be more frequent quotations from Prinz Friedrich von Homburg and Romeo und Julia auf dem Dorfe, the references, unless otherwise identified, will be to one of these works, and, in the interests of brevity, be thus abbreviated: to Prinz Friedrich von Homburg: (PvH, I/1, l. 20) instead of (Kleist: Werke, vol. 3, etc.) and to Romeo und Julia auf dem Dorfe: (RJ, p. 78) instead of (Keller: Werke, vol. 3, p. etc.)

[1] See Fricke, Gefühl und Schicksal, p. 170 f, for a discussion of the various critical approaches to Prinz Friedrich von Homburg.

[2] Stahl, Heinrich von Kleist's Dramas, p. 22.

[3] Müller-Seidel, Versehen und Erkennen, p. 136.

[4] Von Wiese, Die deutsche Tragödie, p. 336.

[5] For corroboration that Kleist's deepest religious views were identified with what he meant by

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"Gefühl", see Fricke's words quoted in Note 8 of Section Two.

For Keller's views identifying "Gott" with "Natur", see Reichert, Basic Concepts, p. 57:

> "Keller had interpreted Feuerbach's statement 'Gott ist Natur' in such a way that his basic piety and faith remained unchanged."

and p. 91:

> "Before as after 1849, the essence of nature was Ruhe, and already in 1845 God seemed identified with the Ruhe in nature."

[6] This statement is intended to give a definition of these 'pairs' in the opening scene only, for as the story progresses one is aware of the children's individual traits developing while their fathers remain 'types'.

[7] Schiller, Über das Erhabene, Werke, vol. 5, p.794.

[8] Reichert, Basic Concepts, p. 24.

[9] ibid. p. 24.

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[10] See Redenbacher, "Gottfried Kellers religiös-lyrisches Erlebnis", Deutsche Vierteljahrsschrift, 8, 1930, p. 744.

[11] See Reichert, Basic Concepts, p. 14, where he discusses Keller's concept of 'Natur'.

[12] ibid. p. 17.

[13] Müller-Seidel, Versehen und Erkennen, p. 134.

[14] Fricke, Gefühl und Schicksal, p. 179.

[15] Müller-Seidel, Versehen und Erkennen, p. 202.

[16] Schlagdenhauffen, "Die Form des Tragischen" in Heinrich von Kleist: Aufsätze und Essays, p. 556, quoting Goethe.

[17] Von Wiese, Die deutsche Tragödie, p. 338.

[18] loc. cit.

[19] Fricke, Gefühl und Schicksal, p. 190.

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[20] Conrady, "Das Moralische in Kleists Erzählungen", in Heinrich von Kleist (hrsg. von W. Müller-Seidel), p. 721.

[21] Wildbolz, Gottfried Kellers Menschenbild, p. 47.

[22] Preisendanz, Humor als dichterische Einbildungskraft, p. 183.

[23] Catholy, "Der preußische Hoftheater-Stil und seine Auswirkungen auf die Bühnen-Rezeption von Kleists Schauspiel 'Prinz Friedrich von Homburg'", in Kleist und die Gesellschaft, p. 78 f, discusses the reasons for, and the effect on the play of, altering this scene in order to make the performance of Prinz Friedrich von Homburg at all possible in 1828. He explains the importance of the scene to the play, and shows how the meaning of the work was radically altered by the reworking of this crucial scene.

[24] Von Wiese, Die deutsche Tragödie, p. 338:

> "Im vierten Auftritt des vierten Aktes geschieht die Wandlung--sie ist eine Wiedergeburt".

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[25] Conrady, in Heinrich von Kleist: Aufsätze und Essays, p. 721.

[26] L. C. Knights, Explorations, in which this is the title of one of the essays.
Chatto & Windus, London 1946.

[27] Catholy, in Kleist und die Gesellschaft, p. 80.

[28] ibid. p. 81.

[29] Von Wiese, Die deutsche Tragödie, p. 344.

[30] Fricke, Gefühl und Schicksal, p. 201.

[31] Von Wiese, Die deutsche Tragödie, p. 343:

> ". . . die Freiheit des Kurfürsten der begnadigt . . . gründet in der Einmaligkeit seiner Person."

[32] Fricke, Gefühl und Schicksal, p. 200:

> "Er vergibt dem Prinzen, . . . Diese letzte Tat 'Begnadigung' nennen, heißt die ganze Dichtung und ihre Auflösung mißverstehen".

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[33] The following poem of Keller's has, incidentally, an interestingly close correspondence to the sentiment and imagery of Prinz Friedrich von Homburg. It is quoted by Ernst Feise, "Von Tod und Leben bei C.F.Meyer und Gottfried Keller", Monatshefte für deutschen Unterricht, 45,1953, p. 187. Feise regrets that it is "leider nicht in seine Gesammelten Gedichte übergangen" (p. 186), but it is very close to the second half of Wetternacht (Keller: Werke, vol. 8, p. 16):

"Und leise schallen hör ich ferne Tritte,
Es naht sich mir mit leichtbeschwingtem Schritte
Durch die geheim erhellte Nacht;
Weiß, wie entstiegen einem frischen Grabe,
So wandelt her ein schöner schlanker Knabe,
Einsamer Bergmann in dem stillen Schacht.

Willkommen, Tod! dir will ich mich vertrauen,
Laß mich in deine treuen Augen schauen
Zum ersten Male fest und klar!
Wie wenn man einen neuen Freund gefunden,
Kaum noch von der Verlassenheit umwunden,
So wird mein Herz von Qual und Sorge bar.

Tief schau ich dir ins Aug, das sternenklare.
Wie stehn dir gut die feuchten, schwarzen Haare,
Wie weiß ist deine kühle Hand!
O lege sie in meine warmen Hände,
Dein heilges Antlitz zu mir nieder wende--
Wohl mir! ich habe endlich dich erkannt!

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Ob mir auch noch beglückte Stunden schlagen,
Ich will dich heimlich tief im Herzen tragen;
Und wo mich einst dein Gruß ereilt:
Im Blütenfeld, im schlachterfüllten Tale,
Ich folge dir getrost und unverweilt!

So wachet auf, ihr hellen Morgenlieder!
Ich aber leg mir um die Stirne wieder
Des Stolzes unfruchtbaren Kranz.
Der Welt mit Weltsinn nun entgegen gehen
Will ich; doch innen blüht mir ungesehen
Der Todesdemut still verborgner Glanz!

[34] Fricke, Gefühl und Schicksal, p. 196.

[35] Forster, "Some Echoes", German Life and Letters, 10, 7, 1956/57, p. 123.

[36] See Note 12.

[37] Robert Browning's Old Pictures in Florence.

[38] Jeziorkowski, Dichter über ihre Dichtung: Gottfried Keller, p. 81.

[39] RJ, p. 77:

"Endlich aber sank das Mädchen ganz auf den kleinen Rechenmeister nieder, und die Kinder schliefen ein in der hellen Mittagssonne."

Also, there is to be noted the contrast

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between the midday sun here and the night with its waning moon at the end of the story.

[40] Reichert, Basic Concepts, p. 33.

[41] Wildbolz, Gottfried Kellers Menschenbild, p. 21:

"Die Grundzüge dessen, was Natur in ihrem echten und maßgebenden Kerne ist, lassen sich am unbefangensten an der außermenschlichen Natur ablesen. In ihr tritt uns die Abweichung, die Unnatur also, seltener entgegen und dann nur in der eindeutigen Form körperlicher Krankheit. Desto kräftiger leuchtet die Natur in ihrer Eigentlichkeit: ihr Dasein bedeutet Kraft, Gesundheit, Folgerichtigkeit, Gleichgewicht, Solidität, Echtheit, das heißt Übereinstimmung von Erscheinung und Gehalt. Dies ist der innerste Kern der Natur, wie sie außerhalb des Menschen besteht."

[42] Wildbolz, p. 64.

[43] Boeschenstein, Gottfried Keller, p. 127.

[44] Bühner, Hermann Hesse und Gottfried Keller, p.38.

[45] Preisendanz, "Die Keller-Forschung der Jahre 1939--1957", Germanisch-Romanische Monatsschrift, Band VIII, 1958, XXXIX. Band der Gesamtreihe, p. 174.

[46] Locher, "Über Wahrheit und Wirklichkeit in Kellers Frühlyrik", Deutsche Vierteljahrsschrift,

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31, 4, 1957, p. 506.

[47] Reichert, Basic Concepts, p. 64, quoting Keller.

[48] Preisendanz, Humor als dichterische Einbildungskraft, p. 152.

[49] Wordsworth's Ode: Intimations of Immortality from Recollections of Early Childhood.

[50] Von Wiese, Deutsche Dichter der Romantik, p.242, writes:

". . . eine solche Annäherung des Menschen an den Gott bis zur Durchgöttlichung des Menschen selbst, ist Heinrich von Kleists utopischer Wunschtraum, . . ."

and Boeschenstein, Gottfried Keller, p. 111, quotes Schmid on Keller:

"Die dichte, warme Welt, die Feuerbach predigte, war für Keller die alte Welt, in der die Liebe eingeschlossen ist . . .Kein Gott ist über sie gesetzt; das Göttliche ist in ihr".

[51] Reichert, Basic Concepts, p. 23, Note 10 there.

[52] ibid. p. 30, quoting Keller.

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[53] Müller-Seidel, Versehen und Erkennen, p. 8.

[54] ibid. p. 140.

[55] Reichert, Basic Concepts, p. 47, quoting Keller.

[56] Boeschenstein, Gottfried Keller, p. 126/27, of Wildbolz, in summary.

[57] Reichert, Basic Concepts, p. 75.

[58] Ermatinger, Krisen und Probleme der neueren deutschen Dichtung, p. 281.

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