5-1980

An Analysis of Heinrich Heine's Dramatic Works: "Almansor" and "William Ratcliff"

Marianne Anderson
Utah State University

AN ANALYSIS OF HEINRICH HEINE'S DRAMATIC WORKS: ALMANSOR AND WILLIAM RATCLIFF

by

Marianne Anderson

A thesis submitted in partial fulfillment
of the requirements for the degree

of

MASTER OF ARTS

in

Theater Arts

Approved:

UTAH STATE UNIVERSITY
Logan, Utah

1980

PREFACE

My thesis is an analysis of the only two plays Heinrich Heine--my favorite 19th century poet, prose writer and political analyst--wrote, Almansor and William Ratcliff. This analysis is based on Heine's personal, cultural, and political background which has never been done before, to my knowledge. It is my belief that these plays can be fully understood only after studying the poet's persona.

For the reader interested in deepening and expanding his knowledge in Heine's life as well as in the world and persons that surrounded and formed him, a translation from German into English of a television screen play Heinrich Heine, by Herbert Knopp, will be available in the Theater Department of Utah State University. This fictional biography was produced by the Bavaria Filmgesellschaft in Munich and broadcast by ZDF/West-Germany in December 1977.

Special and cordial acknowledgments are due to Dr. Colin Johnson, Committee Chairman, who not only helped me with never-ending patience to correct my translation of the television screen play; but who never ceased to encourage and build my confidence through my graduate work. As a foreign student unfamiliar with the American school system, he actually pulled me through the whole program, for which I express my deepest gratitude.

Special thanks also to my committee members Sid Perkes and Dr. John Beyers, who accommodated me to achieve my goal.

I want to thank the students who voluntarily helped me dub the television scene from German into English--Bruce Ackermann, Vosco Call Jr., and Keith Thomas. And thanks to the technicians at the USU Instructional Television Department who helped me finish this work.

For gracious advice and help I am indebted to Henrik Steinberg and Virginia Swenson, who voluntarily edited the thesis.

But I particularly wish to thank my parents-in-law for their love, understanding, and moral support throughout the last months. They never ceased to encourage, help, and support me. Without them, this thesis would have never been finished.

Marianne Anderson

TABLE OF CONTENTS

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

The mass of words written about the German poet and prose writer Heinrich Heine (1797-1856) is intimidating. He is considered to be one of the most controversial and paradoxical authors of the Western literature, an enigmatic figure among German writers, and the only German writer between Goethe and Thomas Mann to achieve during his lifetime a reputation beyond the bounds of German-speaking countries. He has been termed "the pioneer of radical political literature, an eccentric poet." His works became a milestone of German thought.

Interest in him and fascination with his works have never ceased during the last hundred and fifty years, be it in Europe, Russia, Japan, Latin-America, or the USA. His influence reached from Karl Marx and Friedrich Engels, Benjamin Disraeli, George Sand, Balzac, Tolstoy, to Gerhard Hauptmann, Wagner, Nietzsche, Brecht, Tucholsky, and Karl Krause.

Loved and defamed, attacked and defended, Heine was regarded as property of the German mentality--with his immortal songs put into music by Schubert, Schuhmann, Mendelsohn, Liszt, Wagner, Brahms, and Hugo Wolf. But he was also thought of as the wittiest French writer since Voltaire during his twenty-six years of exile in France. On the one

hand, he was a homesick German, writing numerous lachrymose poems about the beauty of his fatherland; on the other, a sharp critic of the German mentality and German politics. He was a political writer without being a writing politician, a torn Romantic, an unmerciful mirror of German conditions and life, an advocate for social equality and women's rights, and a sensuous creator of love poems.

Despite the exhaustive exposition concerning Heine and his works--discussions about his birth date, Jewish origin, love affairs, or the disease that bound him to his bed for his last sixteen years--hardly anything has been written about Heine the playwright.

Heine only wrote two tragedies, Almansor and William Ratcliff, between the ages of twenty-two and twenty-four. Both plays remained closet-dramas despite the fact that Heine never ceased to get both plays successfully produced on stage.

Almansor and William Ratcliff have been spurned, ridiculed, and repudiated by Heine scholars and biographers. The general public, so familiar with Heine's poems, seem unaware of their existence. No one but Heine students feel obliged to read them.

Both plays show some talent, despite their dramatic weaknesses. But more important is that they exhibit the poet persona more clearly and openly than all his other works. All of Heine's works--poems, prose writings, or political articles--are extremely subjective and biographical, but

none as much as Almansor and William Ratcliff. This poses a question: Why did Heine, the master of poetry and prose, choose this particular genre to express himself most intimately--a branch of literature with which he failed to reach a wide audience?

An understanding of the importance of German drama during the time Heine wrote these plays might shed light on this choice. In the late eighteenth and early nineteenth century, dramatic poetry was considered the highest art, not only of literature, but of all art. This notion has been incited by Hegel's aesthetics and definition of his Philosophy of Fine Art and strengthened by other German writers, who, since Lessing, had zealously tried to establish a national theater as a substitute for the apparently unachievable German unity.[1] As a result of this effort, plays seemed to drown the literary market. But most of the plays written in the early nineteenth century did not survive their times.

The plays often gave the author public recognition and aroused interest in their prose or poetry. Goethe and

---

[1] Georg Wilhelm Friedrich Hegel (1770-1831), philosopher and professor who became famous with his first work Phenomenology of Mind in 1807 and later with his Encyclopaedia of the Phylosophical Sciences and Science of Logic. Heine took classes from him in Berlin. Gotthold Ephraim Lessing (1729-1781) elevated German drama criticism to the level of European literature and cleared the way for an original German native drama with Miss Sara Sampson (1755) and Minna of Barnhelm (1767). Later he wrote several dramas in blank verse, of which Nathan the Wise (1779), a clear appeal for Jewish tolerance, bears on the theme of Heine's life.

Schiller, for example, established their fame with their dramatic works, not with their poetry. Drama was also a vehicle to reach a wider populace than with prose and poetry. All these factors may have been in Heine's mind when he put his poet persona on display in Almansor and William Ratcliff.

But both plays suffer from Heine's exhibitionism. He used some dilletantish dramatic techniques. Almansor, the first drama, shows weaknesses not repeated in the second play. Perhaps Heine would have developed dramatic perfection had he continued to write in this genre.

Despite the weaknesses of both Almansor and William Ratcliff, these dramas should not be underrated for they are further evidence of certain themes in German dramatic literature which found its apogee in mid twentieth century drama such as in Rolf Hochhuth's The Deputy and Berthold Brecht's plays.[1] Almansor's theme is an open attack on apostasy among German Jewry, which was high fashion when Heine wrote this play. It mirrors the social situation of the Jews and delivers with chilling accuracy prophesies which Heine, in 1821, could have never anticipated. These prophesies became reality with Hitler's "final solution" for the Jews one hundred twenty years later.

---

[1] Rolf Hochhuth (1931-) won three national prizes with his first play The Deputy, which was first produced by Piscator in 1963.

Hochhuth's The Deputy deals exactly with Heine's foreboding warnings and Hitler's Holocaust. The play is an attack on the incomprehensible complacency of Pope Pius XII regarding the extinction of the Jews in Middle Europe. The protagonist's lines are so similar to Heine's words in Almansor that I felt obliged to demonstrate a short passage of The Deputy in footnotes in the analysis of Almansor's theme.

A striking parallel to Brecht's plays is the effort to press a political message into his drama. Another device that found its perfection in Brechtian plays is Heine's choice of a foreign (thus alienating) background to clarify his message. Almansor is set in Granada, Spain, after the expulsion of the Moors in 1492. William Ratcliff is staged in Scotland during the eighteenth century. The latter includes a message on the inequality of mankind, the division of the world divided into the "satiated" and the "starving." In both plays political and social messages are crushed by Heine's zeal in pressing personal problems.

As mentioned earlier, hardly anything has been written about these two plays, despite their fascinating themes and undeniable influence on present-day drama. Biographers like Lewis Browne, Francois Fejtö, William Sharp, Louis Untermeyer, and Jeffrey Sammons each dedicated from three to six pages to both plays, fervently agreeing on their weaknesses. Most articles are based on, copied from, or biased by

Adolf Strodtmann's elaborate outlining and analysis written in 1884. Strodtmann knew Heine personally, but strongly repudiates both plays. He leaned heavily on Willibald Alexis's analysis, the only one written during Heine's lifetime.[1] Even though Strodtmann's study is still recognized and respected by Heine scholars, it is too obsolete for today's use. Another outstanding analysis was written by Wilhelm Boelsche in 1925. Alexis's, Strodtmann's, and Boelsche's works have not been translated from German into English. The only contemporary analysis available in English is Sammon's five-page essay in his biography of Heine and his fourteen page chapter in Heinrich Heine, the Elusive Poet, published in 1969.

It is not intended in this thesis to reiterate or dwell upon analytical ideas already published, but to point out significant new dramatic insights in Heine's plays and possible reasons for their weaknesses. To accomplish this, Heine's personal background and literary influences are outlined, then the play's themes analyzed separately.

Neither play had been previously translated into English. Therefore, it was necessary for this writer to translate quotations from the plays and letters Heine wrote about

---

[1]Willibald Alexis's analysis was published in 1825 in the Wiener Jahrbücher (Vienna Yearbooks). This analysis is quoted and strongly referred to in Strodtmann's work, Heinrich Heine's Leben und Werke (Hamburg: Hoffmann und Campe, 1884), p. 263.

these plays. If not otherwise indicated, all the translations are this writer's.

Thus, this thesis might enable a student interested in Heine's work to better understand Almansor and William Ratcliff with an insight into Heine's personal background and the literary influences under which both plays were written. Heine's dramas are not self-explanatory, but are a vent for the poet persona to release his inner turmoil, problems, and feelings. To understand Heine's dramatic works requires an understanding of Heine, his life, his Semitic heritage, and his feelings.

This thesis might also encourage others to read Heine's most personal works.

CHAPTER II

ANALYSIS OF ALMANSOR

Almansor is a play in five acts, set in Granada after its conquest by Ferdinand of Aragon and Isabella of Castille in 1492. The plot centers around the love of Almansor and Zuleima and the culmination of events occurring before the play opens. These events involve two friends, honorable Moors named Abdulah and Aly. Their story is revealed partly by Aly and Almansor in Act I and is further explained by a Chorus in Act V.

The Story of the Play

According to these dramatic expositions, Aly's wife died giving birth to a son, Almansor. Aly was so griefstricken that his friend Abdulah took the baby into his house, where his wife had just delivered a baby girl, Zuleima. Time went by, but Aly was still unable to look at his son without such grief and sorrow that he happily agreed to his friend's suggestion to exchange the infants. Abdulah kept Almansor, whereas Aly took Zuleima, raising her as his son's wife-to-be. The children did not know about this trade and grew up loving each other deeply.

When Granada fell to the Christians, the Moors were left with the choice of flight or conversion. Aly became a

Christian--partly because he wanted to stay in the country he loved and partly to be with his "daughter" Zuleima, who had been converted by her Christian nurse.

Abdulah reacted differently. He refused to give up his faith, took his wife and his "son" Almansor and fled to Morocco. He left a message for Aly that he would hate his god's enemy as his own enemy. He did not want to see his own daughter, "the atheist," ever again, but would take Almansor instead to sacrifice him to Allah as an act of revenge.[1] This Abdulah never actualized, but Aly heard rumors that it had been done. As an act of revenge, Aly secretly adopted Zuleima and raised her as his own daughter, never telling her the truth. In fact, Almansor and Zuleima never discover their descent--an effective dramatic irony.

Abdulah's wife died as soon as they entered Morocco, and he joined her in death soon afterwards during a pilgrimage to Mecca. Homesickness for Spain, love for Zuleima, deep-rooted hatred of Christianity, and the promise he gave his "mother" on her deathbed to bring her last kiss to Zuleima, drove Almansor back to Spain.

The play opens with Almansor's soliloquy in Abdulah's deserted castle. He reminisces about the flourishing past

---

[1]Note Heine's scant knowledge of Muslim religion and customs. First of all, Moslems never make human sacrifices. Furthermore, Heine does not suggest the Moor's polygamy, but strongly endorses monogamistic practices among the Moors in Spain.

and deplores his own state of mind until he is found by Hassan, the old servant who fled with other Moslems into the mountains after Granada's fall to fight a guerilla war against the Christians. Despite Hassan's warning, Almansor rushes to Zuleima's castle where a party celebrating her engagement to Don Enrique is in full swing. He is not allowed to enter and waits outside, watching the party through the window.

Inside, Aly reveals Zuleima's history to her fiance, Don Enrique, who does not seem to be too interested in the subject as long as it does not interfere with Zuleima's dowry. The scene following--with guests leaving the party, joking about freshly converted Christians in general and Aly in particular--is a refreshing release of suspense. Furthermore, its biting wit is an invigorating contrast to Almansor's lachrymose declamations.

In leaving, Don Enrique and Diego, his servant, engage in a conversation which exhibits Don Enrique's abhorrent character. Almansor, openly standing around and watching the scene, strangely enough does not hear that these two men are ex-prisoners. With the help of falsified papers and the support of Zuleima's bribed abbot, they are posing as aristocrats, hoping to get to Zuleima's heart and Aly's money.[1]

---

[1]This incident offers a possible "point of attack" for the play, an inciting force to trigger a course of the

Instead, Almansor waits until Zuleima is in her bedroom then starts singing an old love song to her for identification.[1] He speaks about his "parents" and his last years, but when he comes to the point of why he is under Zuleima's window, he asks Abdulah's ghost for help. An apparition, hidden in a cloak, answers that they should elope. Here ends the second act, begging for action.

Act III does not show the couple galloping toward Africa, but Zuleima on her knees praying to a statue of Christ in her garden. Her soliloquy is interrupted by Almansor, and they engage in a deep, mystical dialogue about Christian versus Muslim religion. Zuleima replies to Almansor's exuberant definition of the Islam:

> A more serious, a better home
> Love has chosen to reside on this earth.

The word "love" is the turning point for Almansor, who in a frenzy cries out, "There is only one church of love, the earth." And even Zuleima's correction that "the earth is a great Golgotha" does not cool his ardor. Almansor kisses her, thus fulfilling his promise to his dying "mother." In an instant conversion, he exclaims:

---

action. But Heine neglects this confrontation completely, never referring to it again.

[1]Heine seemed deeply convinced of the value of this nice, but not necessarily impressive, rude copy of Shakespeare's balcony scene in Romeo and Juliet. In a letter to his friend R. Straub, Heine describes how he enacted this scene under the window of his beloved in Hamburg but failed to impress the lady because Almansor's lines were washed out by Hamburg's rain.

Your heaven only, Zuleima's heaven only
Be also Almansor's heaven, and your God
Be also Almansor's refuge, your Christ
Be also Almansor's savior, and I want to pray
In the church where Zuleima prays.

Forgotten are the forces that drove Almansor through the desert back to Spain, forgotten his sufferings and the suffering of others.

But this exuberant conversion is interrupted by church bells, reminding Zuleima of her impending marriage to Don Enrique. Almansor pulls away from her and runs into the woods to commit suicide.

Act IV opens with a surprise--a chorus, startling in its function, as well as in its placement. Its refrain explains the circumstances surrounding Aly's conversion and offers some political anachronisms.[1] Following this interlude, Almansor, tormented by Zuleima's incomprehensible rejection, delivers a beautifully lyrical monologue. Then Hassan, the old servant, jumps into the scene in the nick of time, forcing Almansor to act by dwelling on his deep-rooted hatred for Christianity and the vision of Zuleima soon to be in the arms of a Christian. His prodding is effective, for Almansor jumps up, refreshingly metamorphosed from a moaning and groaning, tiredly reciting and declaiming simpleton to a man of action, beastly in his outcry:

---

[1]These anachronisms are explained below in detail in the analysis of Almansor's theme.

I'm a tiger, hugging her in my claws
And, bellowing lust, lacerate her body!

Act V presents the wedding party at Aly's castle. Toasts are made. A salt shaker falls over--a bad omen, remarked upon by a guest. In the midst of merry music, Pedrillo, a servant, startles the party with his shrill screams of terror: "Allah, have pity on us! Jesus, Maria, Joseph! We are lost! They are coming!" "They" are Almansor and Hassan, leading the guerillas.

A fight ensues. Almansor rushes to the fainted Zuleima, takes her and fights his way back to the mountains. Hassan is killed by Aly, but as he dies he reveals that it is Almansor who is carrying off Zuleima. Don Enrique and Diego creep away. Aly, overjoyed that his son is still alive, departs with his entourage in search of the couple.

In the last scene, Almansor is sitting with Zuleima on top of the highest mountain peak. Zuleima awakes and thinks she is in heaven, an impression that Almansor does not correct. Instead, he discourses about flowers and birds. When he hears the Christians coming, he plunges over a cliff with Zuleima in his arms to death. After the servants find the couple's dead bodies, Aly closes the play with lame and puzzling praise for Jesus Christ and God's will.

Background and Influences in the Play

The main theme of Almansor is a clear and unconcealed attack on apostasy among the Jews in Germany, which became high fashion after the Wars of Liberation in 1813. Heine placed his dramatization in the background of Granada after the expulsion of the Moors. He glorified the Moors who stood by their beliefs and fled the country in contrast to the weaklings left behind who converted to Christianity.[1] This aggression toward the Christian religion in general and Jewish conversion in particular can be traced to Heine's upbringing as a Jew and the increasing number of conversions during the time he wrote the play.

The treatment of the theme and the love story reflect Heine's personal bitterness and frustration, as well as two literary influences dominating in the play: Weimar Classicism and German Neo-Romanticism.

An awareness of Jewish background, Heine's personal situation, and the literary influences of the time are imperative and will be outlined in this section.

The social status of German Jews

In the nineteenth century, the social status of German Jews was deplorable. They were outcasts--subjected to

---

[1]The source for Almansor is Perez Hita's Historia de las Guerras Civiles de Granada, translated into German and published in 1805, and Curieusen Antiquarius, published in 1820.

ghetto life, medieval prejudice, and legal restrictions.[1] When Heine's parents married, the restriction of the so-called Familiantenrecht (Family Right) was still in force throughout Germany. This law was aimed at population control of Jewish communities by requiring a special license for Jewish couples planning marriage. A license could be issued only when vacancies occurred through death or emigration. Heine's parents had to fight for months to obtain a wedding license because his father was from Frankfurt and his mother from Düsseldorf, a city which required a "vacancy" before he could settle there.

The situation changed, however, with the surrender of Prussian troops to Napoleon in 1806. With Napoleon came the removal of privileges of nobility and the establishment of equal rights for everyone, including legal equality for the German Jews. But the obstacles which had to be overcome for the latter were unsurmountable. Actual emancipation was slowed by centuries-old prejudice, deep-rooted conservatism, and a rapid increase in the Jewish population of Prussia. This increase was due, in part, to the partitioning

---

[1] Jews were excluded from guilds and from academic professions, except for medicine and business (Heine's father was a businessman and his mother was the daughter of a physician). In cities such as Bremen and Lübeck, Jewish settlement was entirely prohibited.

of Poland, which brought more orthodox Jews into the principalities.[1]

The actual turning point came with the Edict of Emancipation of the Jews under Hardenberg six years later.[2] This edict was motivated by the pressing need to increase the number of soldiers against Napoleon. But Wilhelm III, the King, had to be persuaded of the military usefulness of the Jews before a favorable decision regarding their civil rights could be reached. In 1813, the Jews rushed to arms, proving their loyalty by helping defeat Napoleon's forces which, ironically enough, had introduced their "freedom" just seven years earlier. But this commitment did not muffle the voices of hostility raised against the Jews.

Since the defeat by Napoleon in 1806 had a devastating effect on German self-esteem, the victory in 1813 heated patriotism and nationalism to a point never known before. Hating Jews became fashionable again.[3] Conversion to

---

[1]In 1808, equal rights were officially granted to Jews in the Kingdom of Westphalia, setting the first example of Jewish equality on German soil. In the USA, equality under law was assured in the Bill of Rights in 1787. France followed in 1791 and soon afterwards Holland, Switzerland, and Italy.

[2]Karl August von Hardenberg (1750-1822) followed Freiherr von Stein as the leading statesman in Prussia. He established the so-called "Stein-Hardenberg'sche Reform" and introduced more liberal laws, such as the Edict of the Emancipation for the Jews in 1812.

[3]As soon as the Germans won victory, scholars, philosophers, and jurists no longer insisted on the duty of Jews to bear arms; rather, every Jew was supposed to wear a

Christianity seemed essential for survival, an idea Wilhelm III strongly endorsed. Jewish economic freedom was curtailed, and cities which had just dropped economic freedom of Jewish residency were encouraged to reinstate it.

Heine's personal situation

Heine's personal situation was dominated by alienation and misunderstanding. When he began working on Almansor in the spring of 1820, he was twenty-two, a student at the University of Bonn.[1] During this time, as Lewis Browne says

> Heine had not lost his almost pathological sensitiveness. He was acutely aware of even veiled hostility, and mercilessly assailed those who did not show him favor. Years of antagonism and frustration had developed in him a scathing wit which he rarely took pains to hold in leash.[2]

"national ribbon," a distinguishing mark like the "yellow badge" of the Middle Ages so that the "Germans could no longer be misled by the German appearance, language, and the general manners of the Jews. Only baptism could lead to their refinement and open to them the doors to all the rights of German citizenship; it alone would bring about real acquisition of the German national character and thus gradually effect the ruin of the Jewish people." In Alfred Low, Jews in the Eyes of the Germans (Philadelphia: A Publication for the Institute for the Studies of Human Issues, 1979), p. 110.

[1]The University of Bonn, founded in 1777, abolished by Napoleon, and reestablished by Prussia in 1818, had an excellent corps of professors, such as August Wilhelm Schlegel, the head of the German Neo-Romantic movement, and thus attracted a large body of intelligent and high-minded students. Heine had registered for law and general science in fall 1819, but devoted most of his time to literary studies and poetry. A. W. Schlegel's influence on setting and language of Almansor is obvious.

[2]Lewis Browne, That Man Heine (New York: The Macmillan Co., 1927), p. 69.

The previous years had not only marked Heine as a Jew among Christians, with all its humiliations, but also as a pauper among millionaires and a poet among businessmen during his apprenticeship at his rich Uncle Salomon's business in Hamburg. Yielding to his family's request, Heine started the education of a businessman, which included his apprenticeship. Wealthy Uncle Salomon played an important part in the social life of Hamburg. Heine wrote poems and published them anonymously in local papers, which not only amused Salomon's circles but embarrassed the family and marked Heine as a "good-for-nothing" and the "black sheep of the family." After his failure as a businessman, his uncle sent Heine to school to become a lawyer.

While in Hamburg, Heine fell in love with his cousin Amalie. Her rejection had such a devastating effect on him that he expressed his feelings and confusion in numerous poems for years and in the clearest form in his second drama, William Ratcliff. This frustration and bitterness also echoes throughout Almansor. Here the truly loving hero, Almansor, is rejected by a passive heroine, Zuleima, who, unable to make a decision, yields to authority and convenience rather than to her feelings. Wilhelm Boelsche goes so far as to say that Zuleima does not reject her lover for

sound dramatic reasons, but because the real-life Amalie had treated Heine in this way.[1]

That Heine was indeed lonely and bitter is shown in the only letter regarding his feelings available at this time. He wrote to his friend Friedrich von Beughem in the summer of 1820:

> You can't imagine how often and fervently I am thinking about you. The more, since I am leading an utterly sad, ailing, and lonely life. To find new friends in my present situation is not working at all and for my old friends I don't seem to be good enough anymore.[2]

This situation did not change when Heine went to Göttingen, a conservative little university town, to continue his studies. His bitterness must have isolated him so much that he did nothing else than devote himself to Almansor, putting all his grief and sorrows in his isolated hero. He concluded in a letter to his friend Friedrich Steinmann in October 1820, "I should have stayed in Bonn!"[3]

He entered a fraternity, but left as soon as anti-Semitic tendencies appeared. At a national convention a decree had been passed not to accept Jews any longer because

---

[1]Wilhelm Boelsche, Heinrich Heine (Leipzig: Verlag von Hermann Düselen, 1888), p. 93.

[2]Heinrich Heine, Briefe, ed. by Friedrich Hirth (Mainz: Florian Kupferberg Verlag, 1950), p. 12.

[3]Ibid., p. 16.

they had no homeland. Finally, Heine joined the Society of Jewish Culture and Science, which might have reinforced his disdain for the fashionable apostasy among German Jewry.[1] This group of young reformed Jews tried to force Jewish social and cultural integration through lectures and publications.

But conversion was actually not the panacea for German Jews. Quite often freshly converted Jews were the target of ridicule and laughter as Heine describes in Almansor. He experienced the German reaction toward converted Jews, too, when, despite his fervent attack against apostasy, he was baptised a Protestant four years after he finished this play. Other of his ideas and prophesies mirrored in Almansor will be explained in detail in the theme's analysis.

While the theme of Almansor is definitely based on Heine's personal experiences and subjective outlook on German Jewry in the early nineteenth century, the form of the play is shaped by the literary movements in Germany before and during the time this play was written. Two movements can

---

[1]Conversion was the fashionable thing to do among wealthy and career-hunting Jews, especially after Schleiermacher (1768-1834; a theologian and philosopher who was influential on the Romantic movement in Germany and outstanding in his campaign against the Jews) published a pamphlet saying that "The Jews, in order to attain equality with other citizens, had no choice but to convert to Christianity." In Low, Jews in the Eyes of the Germans, p. 179.

clearly be seen in Almansor: Weimar Classicism and German Neo-Romanticism.[1]

Weimar Classicism

Weimar Classicism was a movement in dramatic literature that shaped most of the dramas written between 1786-1832. Characterized by search for freedom and truth, it idealized beauty and perfection. Greek antiquity was seen as the model for noble simplicity, and silent greatness and thus, became the gospel for the new direction. Schiller and Goethe were the founders and advocates of this movement which lifted German drama and poetry to a leading position in world literature.

As advocates of the form of Greek drama, they claimed to employ Aristotle and his rules of "unity" as their ideal.

---

[1]The Anglo Saxon terminology and definition of Romanticism in Germany differ sharply from those used in Germany. Anglo Saxons label all the various streams of German literature from the German Enlightenment era in the early eighteenth century up to German Realism in the late nineteenth century as German Romanticism. The Germans, however, classify these different movements as follows:

1. Storm and Stress in the 1770s
2. Weimar Classicism in 1786-1832
3. The period between Weimer Classicism and German Romanticism
4. German Romanticism starting around 1795 and fading out in 1880
5. German Neo-Romanticism, an off-spring of Romanticism starting in the 1810s and fading out in the late nineteenth century.

This writer will lean toward the German terminology to define the literary influences on both Almansor and William Ratcliff more clearly.

These rules, which they applied with some misunderstanding, asked for a drama divided into five acts, action pressed into a twenty-four-hour span, and for not more than four characters speaking in one scene. Heine met these criteria in Almansor.

He describes Almansor in the preface as being plastic in form and romantic in content. He was announcing that he wrote this play truly following the requirements of the Weimar Classicists. Terming the content "romantic" refers to its Neo-Romantic background and treatment of the story, as well as to the presentation of the main character, Almansor.

German Neo-Romanticism

German Neo-Romanticism was an off-spring, an expansion, of German Romanticism. An understanding of Heine's choice to demonstrate it in Almansor may require some outlining of its historical development.

The representatives of the different overlapping movements such as Storm and Stress, Classicism, the period between Classicism and German Romanticism, and Romanticism--all lifted German literature and drama into universal meanings.[1] On the other hand, the understanding of the German

[1]The Storm and Stress movement is the actual harbinger of German Romanticism. It erupted in the 1770s as a reaction to the German Enlightenment of the early eighteenth century and as an answer to Rousseau's and the French revolution's outcry for returning to nature and individualistic freedom. It was fairly isolated in its message and ferocity and thus

people was limited by provincialism, disinterest in unifying forces and goals. This attitude changed, however, with Napoleon's occupation of Germany. The Germans became conscious of themselves, their racial unity, their national homogeneity, and consequently, their right to national independence.

After the German troops defeated Napoleon's forces, all their repressed feelings could finally be released in a national frenzy never known before. The German Romantics and the representatives of the various above-mentioned movements eagerly joined in this wave of emotions and were finally able to reach the populace with their search for universal meaning and their drive to perceive with instinct, rather than with rationality. The Romantics responded to the wave of nationalism with revived interest in Medieval matters for "the spirit of the ancient heroes in our German art and learning must be ours, as long as we continue to be Germans."[1]

---

short-lived. More detail is given in the analysis of William Ratcliff. The period between Classicism and Romanticism is represented by Heinrich von Kleist, Hölderlin, and Jean Paul, who show traces of Classicism (such as Kleist in his dramas) and Neo Romanticism. But their works belong to neither of these classifications.

[1]Friedrich Schlegel quoted in Oskar Walzel, German Romanticism (New York: G. P. Putnam's Son, 1932), p. 107.

Wackenroder became the actual pioneer of patriotic writings.[1] Tieck followed with his studies in early German literature and his revival of German medieval songs, the "Minnelieder".[2] The Middle Ages were, according to him, the period distinguished by a peculiarly intimate, receptive, and comprehensive feeling for poetry. He says that this

> Time was marked by great episodes of war, magnificent courts, princes and emperors who patronized the art of poetry, a triumphant church which cannonized heroes.[3]

This was even strengthened by the Romantic's revival of interest in religion in general and in the Catholic church in particular--a church which in the Middle Ages bore the mark of zealous fanaticism and blind prejudice. The Romantic's anti-Semitism reached down to the common people, in whom anti-Jewish prejudices were still extant from earlier times. This attitude, however was rampant among the intelligentsia, especially students and student organizations.

---

[1]Wilhelm Wackenroder (1773-1798) gave foundation to the basic Romantic ideas. For him Romanticism was the realm of feelings, of quiet meditation and pious anticipation. As influential as his theories might have been, he did not leave much in writing.

[2]Ludwig Tieck (1783-1853), close friend and follower of Wackenroder, went further in perceiving the poetic world as a world directed by demonic powers, horror, lenient depression, and high romantic irony.

[3]Tieck, quoted in Walzel, German Romanticism, p. 109.

Heine, however, ridiculed these tendencies of the Romantics in a statement he made ten years after finishing Almansor.[1]

The announcement and definition of the new movement as well as the interpretation of the Romantics' essential thoughts and feelings came with the "Romantic School" founded by the brothers Friedrich and August Wilhelm Schlegel in 1895.[2]

Poetry became religious oriented, setting up the Catholic Church it was during the Crusades. But the times of the Crusades were also the times which linked the Orient with

---

[1]Heine wrote in his work The Romantic School, 1833: "The political condition of Germany was particularly favorable to the tendencies of the Romantic School, which sought to introduce a national-religious literature similar to that which had prevailed in Germany during the middle ages. 'Need teaches prayers' says the proverb; and truly never was the need greater in Germany. Hence the masses were more than ever inclined to prayers, to religion, to Christianity. No people is more loyally attached to its rulers than are Germans. And more than the sorrowful conditions to which the country was reduced through war and foreign rule . . ." This is quoted in Howard Hugo, The Portable Romantic Reader, New York: The Viking Press, 1957, p. 197.

[2]Friedrich Schlegel (1772-1829) was considered the theoretician of the Romantic movement who outlined its basic ideas in his magazine Anthenaeum and in his essays The Fragments whereas August Wilhelm gained recognition with his translations of Shakespeare's and Calderon's works and finally became the head of the Neo-Romantic movement.

the Occident, and thus oriental legends were mixed with native ones. The slogan of the Romantics, "Volksgeist, Staatengeist, Weltgeist" (Spirit of the People, Spirit of the State, Spirit of the World), found its realization in opening the borders to foreign material. Here is where August Wilhelm Schlegel started combining German medieval sources with oriental fantasies and metaphorics advocating "combination of the elemental sincere heroism of the German North with Christianity--this religious oriental idealism."[1]

By advocating this combination A. W. Schlegel drifted away from the teutonic German in a dreamy, orientally-colored direction. He finally set the characteristics of the new Romantic which German scholars now identify as the Neo-Romantic, as follows:

> Life has become a world of shadows and darkness and the never-ending day of real existence does not dawn except in the world beyond . . . .
> The poetry of the ancients was that of possession, ours is that of yearning. The former stands rooted in the present; the latter always between memory and presentiment.[2]

And in this stance the hero of Heine's play, Almansor, is presented. He is a man of longing and yearning which defy not only reality but also space. He is drifting in a world of possibilities and shadowed dreams. The Neo-Romantic hero will be explained in detail in the theme's analysis.

---

[1] A. W. Schlegel, quoted in Walzel, German Romanticism, p. 109.

[2] Ibid., p. 110.

Literary sources were no longer bound to German roots, but stretched to foreign material. One of the directions they took was toward Spain. After the translation of Cervantes' Don Quixote by Tieck, A. W. Schlegel published the first translation of Calderon's plays in his Spanish Theater and thus introduced the influence of Spanish theater in general and that of Calderon in particular.[1]

Calderon's plays not only reinforced interest in medieval matters but, more importantly, they demonstrated the glorification of the Catholic church during its peak. A. W. Schlegel wrote:

> In Calderon the final burst of glory in the resplendent sunset of the Catholic Middle Ages, that renaissance and Christian transformation of fancy, which indeed characterized the spirit and poetry of Catholic medievalism in general, achieved its greatest glorification.[2]

When Heine wrote Almansor, he was a devoted scholar of A. W. Schlegel, who taught literature at the University of Bonn in the early 1820s. His particular influence is certainly responsible in part for Heine's choice of Almansor's Iberian setting.

---

[1]Pedro Calderon de la Barca (1600-1681) wrote more than one hundred and twenty plays, the most famous of which is Life, a Dream. Almansor is clearly biased by his works. A. W. Schlegel's Spanish Theater was published in 1803-1809.

[2]Quoted in Walzel, p. 111.

The Setting of the Play

If A. W. Schlegel's translation of Calderon's works stimulated Heine's interest in Spain during the Middle Ages, it did not conform in him, unlike Schlegel and his followers, the powerful role of the Catholic Church. Instead, his interest leaned toward a persecuted minority group in medieval Spain--Moors forced to convert or to flee the country. Registrations at the library of the University of Bonn and Gottingen indicate how diligently Heine studied this matter.[1] In diametric opposition to other Neo-Romantics of this period, Heine uses the setting as a vehicle to expose his disdain of the Catholic Church.[2] The brutal conquest

---

[1]Heine borrowed the following books: Fessler, I. A.: Die alten und die neuen Spanier, 1810. Adam, A.: Histoire s'Espagne, desouis la découverte qui en été faite par les Pheniciens jusqu' a la mort de Charles!, 1808. Flechier, E.: Histoire du Cardinal Ximenes, Paris, 1693. Dombay, F.: Geschichte der Mauretanischen Konige, Agram 1794/95. Hita, Perez: Histoire chevaleresque des Maures de Granade, Paris, 1809. Jakob, W.: Travels in the South of Spain, London, 1811. Chenier, L.: Récherches historiques sur les Maures, et historie de l'emoire de Maroc, Paris, 1787. Cramer, H. M. A.: Briefe über Inquisitationsgericht und Ketzerverfolgung in der römischen Kirche, Leipzig, 1785. Bertuch, F. J.: Magazin der Spanischen und Portugisischen Literatur, Weimar, 1782. In A. Kanowsky, "Heine als Benutzer der Bibliotheken in Bonn und Goettingen," Heine Jahrbuch 12 (1973):132.

[2]Heine wrote: "This poetry, . . . developed out of Christianity, . . . was a passion flower which had blossomed from the blood of Christ . . . the melancholy flower which in Germany we call the passion flower . . . . The flower is by all means unsightly, but only spectral; its aspects fill our souls with a dread pleasure, like those convulsive, sweet emotions that arise from grief. In this respect the passion flower would be fittest symbol of Christianity itself, whose

and immoral inquisition directed against the Moors in Southern Spain provided Heine with ample ammunition.

Spanish Islam ruled Southern Spain from 701 to 1236 in Cordova, to 1238 in Valencia, to 1248 in Seville, and to 1492 in Granada, where the harassed Moors had fled because the Sierra Nevada provided some defense. This little kingdom, known for its flourishing commerce, industry, art and scholarship, was a model society. For five centuries Islam led the world in power, order, extent of government, refinement of manners, standard of living, humanitarian legislation, philosophy, and art. Free schools for the poor were established. The universities were second in renown only to Cairo and Bagdad. Schollars and poets were in highest esteem and education was the prime priority. Also deserving of admiration was the educational and the social status for women in Muslim Spain. Girls could attend school just as boys could and Moorish ladies became prominent in literature and art. Furthermore, and especially fascinating to Heine, the Spanish Moors gave freedom of worship to all non-Muslim faiths. The Jews, who had helped the Moors conquer Southern Spain achieved wealth and learning and sometimes

---

most awe-inspiring charm consists in the voluptousness of pain. I refer to that religion whose earliest dogmas contained a condemnation of the flesh and not admitted the supremacy of the spirit of the flesh, but sought to mortify the latter in order thereby to glorify the former." Quoted in Hugo, Romantic Reader, p. 67.

even rose to high government ranks. This level of Jewish emancipation had never before been attained in Europe.

These model conditions must have been the most powerful contrast to medieval Spain that Heine could envision. A letter Heine wrote to his friend Christian Sethe in April 1822 explains Heine's frustration in Germany and his longing for sunny Arabia:

> I move about in a very peculiar mood . . .. Everything German is repulsive to me, and you are, unfortunately German. Everything German raises my gorge. The German language shatters my ears. My own poems nauseate me at times, when I realize that they are written in German. Even the writing of this note sours my stomach, because the German irritates my nerves. I had never believed that these beasts, styled German, could be a race at once so tedious and malicious. As soon as my health is restored, I shall quit Germany and pass my time in Arabia.[1]

The Theme of the Play

Almansor deals with two themes: 1) Heine's subjective outcry against Christianity as a polemic expression of Jewish exasperation and 2) Heine's personal problem, his unrequited love for Cousin Amalie. The first theme mirrors the situation of the German Jews and includes prophetic anticipation of things to come. This prophesy, written in 1821, is chilling today, considering the subsequent anti-Semitism in Germany culminating in the Holocaust. Heine's endeavor to

---

[1]Translated by Hugo Bieber in Heinrich Heine (Philadelphia: The Jewish Publication Society of America, 1956), p. 142.

press his personal love problems into this message-ridden play not only crushes its potential effectiveness, but divides the play in two without offering a unifying dramatic theme. The play remains two-leveled and thus loses the plausibility and the relevance it is asking for.

The protagonist for Heine's message is not Almansor, the main character, but Abdulah's old servant, Hassan. He is an elaborately sketched character and a man who stands by his principles, a refreshing contrast to spineless Almansor. Hassan is the one who actually defines the situation of the German Jews through his descriptions of the Spanish Moors after Granada's fall--defeated, oppressed, forced to apostasy, and helpless in their rage. Thus, Heine portrays the condition of the Jews in Germany as he envisioned it and as it was to become a reality a hundred and twenty years later.

> Not by Aragonian lance,
> Not by the sword of Castilian knighthood,
> Only by Granada herself fell Granada!
> .....
> And when the great of the empire forgetting duty
> Follow the banner of their born enemy without honor:
> Then flee with shame-draped countenances
> The angels that protect the gates of the capital
> And the enemies' hordes enter victoriously.

Through Hassan, Heine accuses the German Jews of digging their own graves by accepting the delusion that betraying their own standards and beliefs is the only way to survive. Their eagerness to adapt and adjust simply ensures their downfall and later extinction. Hassan describes the tragic flaw of the German Jews in the following words:

You, you who with open eyes
Lie there gingerly and sit by, gawking
As they disgracefully crush your brothers.
As Spanish conceit mocks the Moor's best
and most honorable lineages.
As they slyly rob them--with their hands wringing
Naked and helpless--whip them from their homes.
You are not Almansor, or the whimpering
Of the aged and the women would throng to your ears,
The taunting Spanish laughter and the anguished cries
Of the noble martyrs on the burning stakes.

As mentioned in the introduction, these lines say exactly what Hochhuth's protagonist in his play The Deputy cries out as he faces the incomprehensible complacency of the Catholic church in general and that of Pope Pius XII in particular toward Hitler's Holocaust.[1]

Hassan's speculation about the Jewish condition in Germany culminates in another prophesy:

Where books are burnt,
People are burnt as well.

---

[1] . . . to look idly on
when tomorrow morning
our fellow citizens
are loaded aboard cattle carts.
And we stand by
wave our handkerchiefs to them?
.....
And then on Sunday we ring the bells
and celebrate our Mass--so filled with sacred thoughts,
that nothing, surely, tempts us to consider
who at the very moment in Ausschwitz
is being driven naked into gas.
.....
God cannot wish
Your Holiness to ignore it!
Rolf Huchhuth, The Deputy, trans. by R. and C. Winston (New York: Grove Press, 1964), p. 203.

These lines apparently refer to an incident Heine witnessed at the Wartburg Festival four years before he wrote Almansor. A book by a Jewish author was thrown into the fire, while the participating students shouted, "Woe the Jews!" This action started a vehement anti-Semitic movement at German universities. A parallel to this situation started Hitler's Holocaust--the so-called Kristallnacht (Cristal Night) in Berlin when books of Jewish authors, besides other properties, were taken out of Jewish residences and thrown into the fire. Heine's works were among them.

That these warnings do not stand isolated in this play can be seen in Heine's later prose. He exhibited new visions in Concerning the History of Religion:

> I believe, if there were an example for this people [the Jews], one would travel a hundred hours, just to see them and shake their hands--and now we are being avoided! . . . In the end Israel will be compensated for the sacrifices through world recognition, fame, and greatness!

Heine's historical accuracy in this play is questionable and not necessarily applicable to the actual events under the reign of Ferdinand of Aragon and Isabella of Castile. However, Almansor is not a historical play and was never intended to be. What Heine had in mind was to give a message, to inform, to change, and to teach--a device that found its apogee in the plays of Berthold Brecht. As Heine did in Almansor, Brecht transferred his parables to unfamiliar geographical regions to enable the audience to pay more attention to the actual message. But Brecht's plays were

successful and his message recognized because he focused on the message, using all the dramatic techniques possible.

Heine utilizes one device that can be seen in most of Brecht's plays--political anachronism. The Chorus that appears unexpectedly in Act IV reels off the political events which drove the Moors to Southern Spain, their bloom and fall, and their final freedom materializing under Quiroga and Riego. These two men were leading a revolution in Spain during the time Almansor was written.[1]

Unfortunately though, Almansor's theme, as Sammons in Heinrich Heine, the Elusive Poet points out, is treated emotionally rather than critically, statically rather than dramatically. This treatment might be the crucial point. As clear as the message should be to a post World-War-II audience, this was not the case for his contemporary critics. Strodtmann wrote in 1884, for example, that the ruin of the Muslim Kingdom Granada was too much of a swansong to have dramatic impact. He thought the sympathies of the audience were with the oppressed, but that Heine's emphasis on the immoral Christian conquest and the Inquisition gave a sad, but not tragic, character to the play.

This message of what would happen to Jews, besides being treated too emotionally, is crushed and upstaged by the

---

[1]Riego and Quiroga won their revolution and became head of the Spanish government for a short time. They were hanged, however, in 1823, two years after Almansor was finished.

second theme of the play, Heine's love problems. The love story as well as the characters are developed along Neo-Romantic lines.

Characters

Almansor, the main character and undoubtedly the poet persona, is the protagonist for Heine's display of his personal problems. He does not use the clear and open language Hassan uses. Rather, he is a Neo-Romantic hero, who with endless, lyrical metaphors enacts what Heine feels about himself, as well as about his rejection by Amalie. Strodtmann states that Almansor suffers from a sad rather than dramatic character, concluding that you cannot expect anything from a hero who starts the play with the following self-description:

> My face bears the deep furrows of sorrow,
> Beclouded by salty tears is my eye,
> Somnambulistic is my staggering step,
> In shambles as my heart is my voice.

Strodtmann, however, seems not to realize that Almansor is a true product of Neo-Romanticism. One of the most obvious characteristics of a Neo-Romantic is his feeling that every moment is full of possibilities, but that he is unable to choose among them. The notion that the passage of time will make a choice for him leads to a melancholic soul that is paralyzed in its ability to decide. Furthermore, the Neo-Romantic is dominated by longings which defy not only

reality but also space. His drive to achieve a unification between himself and some universal and his inability to compromise prevent him from dealing with obstacles thrown in his way. As a result, he is pushed from one extreme to another, suffers instead of acts, and is incapable of recognizing the obstacle.

All these characteristics apply to Almansor, who is melancholic and obviously without any idea of how to win Zuleima or what to do with her if he does. From the first, his only ambition is to be close to her. He sings his song under her window, identifies himself, and tells her what had happened since they were separated. But when it comes to reasons for his being there, he implores his dead father for help:

> Here, I am standing in front of Zuleima,
> Tell, me Abdulah's ghost, what shall I say?

An apparition clad in a black coat emerges out of the dark and advises confused Almansor to take Zuleima back to Africa immediately.[1] Sammons suggests that this little scene is copied from Shakespeare's Hamlet. The apparition is unexpected, and the incident would make some sense if it were Hassan. Having discouraged Almansor from going to Zuleima, knowing about her wedding, he may have followed Almansor to give him advice.

---

[1]All the critics and biographers except Sammons claim that this apparition is Hassan in disguise. The direction in the book, however, does not indicate this.

Another characteristic of the Neo-Romantic hero is the fusion of feeling and thought. A dichotomy between emotion and intellect is non-existent, and his inability to abstract prevents him from concentrating on a particular objective. His interest in all things at all times allows him to change direction at any moment. An example of this is Almansor's speedy conversion in which he gives up his faith, his heritage, and his identity, just for Zuleima. Her dilemma--being promised to another man--rather than forcing Almansor to act, throws him into despair and self-destruction. This scene is the climax of Almansor's polemic: the Christian versus Islamic religion. But Almansor's conversion undercuts the theme of the polemic in an instant. Here, in dramatic terms, he should have stood by his own beliefs. Instead, as soon as Zuleima mentions love in connection with her Christian beliefs, Almansor falls spinelessly on his knees, ready to give up his identity for the sake of a future with her. The play could end here, presenting an example of how easily and fast a true-believing Moslem can actually be converted to Christianity. But instead, the church bell rings and Zuleima gives the terse explanation:

> Zuleima will be married today
> With a man whose name is not Almansor.

And she turns away from him. One might wonder why Zuleima has so little to say after her clear declaration of love for him. Boelsche proclaims that if she does not have anything

else to say, she ends being a heroine and thus dampens any interest an audience might have had for her and the love story. This might be the case. It would seem the play has elaborately developed until this very scene the enactment of Cousin Amalie's equally direct rejection. From this point on, the play plunges into a confusion of possibilities as how to win Zuleima back. The following action is unbelievable and dramatically ineffective. The climax is crushed under the weight of its incredulity.

The next climactic point, Almansor's "tiger-metaphor," in which Hassan pulls Almansor out of his self-denial and self-pity and directs Almansor's energy into a constructive channel, does not carry out its promise. Instead, after Zuleima's kidnapping the action is undercut by Almansor's romantic discourse on roses, lilies, violet's, hyacinths, robins, rustling wind, little mountain streams, spring, and moonlight. Almansor is the Neo-Romantic again, the advocate of spiritual empathy. Instead of being in dramatic conflict with Zuleima, he engages in a divine unity of spirits with her. This romantic interlude turns Almansor's decision to leap to death rather than surrender to the Christians into a curtain call. Without it, Almansor's decision could have been a logical denouement.

Almansor's presentation is indeed a swansong. The same applies to Zuleima, who outdoes Almansor in passivity and docility. She is best described by Almansor himself when

watching her dance at her engagement party as "only a puppet on a string." She is almost pathologically lethargic when her stepfather Aly asks her if she wants to marry Don Enrique and again when she is confronted with the choice between Almansor and Don Enrique.

Alexis correctly points out there is no reason why Zuleima does not inform Aly about Almansor's return and why she did not tell her abbot about preferring newly converted Almansor to ignominious Don Enrique.[1] This depiction of Zuleima could be parallel to Amalie's yielding to a proper suitor that her family had chosen for her (as Heine saw it), or it could be Heine's interpretation of the Catholic's renunciation ethic.[2] Zuleima remains a tongue-tied, docile, caged bird, trapped by the Catholic Church throughout the play. Even her speech in defense of Christianity is weary and unconvincing. She is unable to make decisions on her

---

[1]Willibald Alexis, quoted in A. Strodtmann, Heinrich Heine's Leben und Werke, p. 236.

[2]Heine's definition of the Catholic Church: "I refer to that religion which, by teaching the renunciation of earthly pleasures, and by inculcating abject humility and angelic patience, became the most effacious support of despotism. Mankind now recognizes the nature of that religion, and will no longer allow itself to be put off with promises of a Heaven thereafter." In On the History of Religion and Philosophy in Germany, trans. by Helen M. Mustard, ed. Heinrich Heine, Selected Works (New York: Vintage Books, 1973), p. 337.

own and thus contradicts Heine's advocacy of women's rights, by which he stood his whole life.

The supporting characters, however, are a refreshing contrast to the lifeless main characters. Outstanding in that respect is the old servant Hassan, the most powerful character Heine offers in this play. His authority is even strengthened while weakening Almansor's position by his usage of the familiar du form when addressing his master. This is remarkable because only nurses or tutors in rare cases were allowed to be so familiar with their master's children--never servants. Hassan is Heine's alter ego in the play, a man who stands by his principles, the one who expresses Heine's perception of the present and the future situation of the German Jews. He is also the most logically developed character.

Another realistic and convincing character is Pedrillo, Aly's newly converted servant. His swearing to Allah and Mohammed before he catches his slip of the tongue is humorous and ironic. His best scene is during the fight between the Moors and the Christians, which begins on stage and progresses off-stage. His monologue could have been delivered by Shakespeare's Falstaff:

> O woe! The beautiful wedding is spoiled!
> O woe! The pretty silken dresses
> Are now torn and ragged
> And bloody as well, and instead of wine
> Blood flows! I didn't run away because of cowardice, no,
> I didn't want to be in anybody's way during the fighting.
> They can cope with it without me.

This beautiful and theatrically effective speech leaves one wishing to see more of Pedrillo.

Don Enrique and Diego are both sly and unscrupulous, an invigorating contrast to honorable Aly and Almansor. Why Heine did not give them more dramatic importance is puzzling. They unfortunately suffocate in Heine's overwhelming emphasis on the two least interesting characters, Almansor and Zuleima.

Another contrast to the stagnant characters of the play are the party guests. Their small-talk is a ping-pong game displaying Heine's biting wit and sarcasm so dominant in his prose works. The guests leaving the engagement party are in fact the ridiculing voices of upper-class Berlin, denigrating the converted Jews. At the wedding party Heine's often-attacked attitude toward marriage is verbalized by a knight. When asked why he is not married, he replies,

> I will never marry, Señora.
> .....
> I might love the myrtle, I delight
> My eye with the fresh green of leaves,
> Refresh my heart with their aroma;
> But I would never cook the myrtle,
> To eat it as a vegetable--bitter,
> Señora, bitter tastes a dish like that.

Aly seems to stand between the lively characters of the servants, Don Enrique, Diego, the party guests, and the lifeless Almansor and Zuleima. He is described by the Chorus and Hassan as a righteous, honorable representative of the

Moors before Granada's fall. But during the play he acts with tongue-tied resignation. Whether Heine wanted to depict him as a victim of conversion per se is unclear. He is a loving father who leaves the decision of marrying Don Enrique to Zuleima. At the wedding party he reacts wearily to insults on Islamic values. He changes the topic by calling in the harp players and buffoons who deliberately provoke sad memories. Instead of reacting to this provocation, Aly lamely suggests playing a merry song. His last lines after the deaths of Almansor and Zuleima seem to be a sad attempt by Heine to realize how far giving up his own identity had gone:

> Now Jesus Christ, now I require your word
> Your grace, your comfort, and your last example.
> I cannot understand the will of God.
> Yet I suggest the lily and the rose
> Will be uprooted from the happy fields
> When God, in his gold chariot of war,
> Rides by in proud, triumphant majesty.[1]

Aly gives a weary tribute to God's action, rather than explicating his inner turmoil and struggles to believe in the God of the New Testament. Thus he contradicts the description of his character as the honorable Moor, leaving the audience in bewilderment to wonder how a father could react so lamely to the death of his children.

The Chorus in Act IV is startling and puzzling. It comes out of nowhere, its dramatic function is not explained,

---

[1]Trans. by Louis Untermeyer in Heinrich Heine, Paradox and Poet (New York: Harcourt Brace and Co., 1937), p. 89.

and it seems totally out of place The explanations they give about Aly's conversion and the historical data could have been given by someone else. Or if a Chorus were to be used at all, it could have been introduced at the very beginning. The lyric is beautiful, but it is a recital rather than a dramatic exposition. The only justification for its function seems to be Heine's eagerness to fit Almansor to the mode of Classicist plays. Sammons suggests "that the chorus is an effort to revive by other means the perspective upon the external world that the main character himself is unable to keep in view."[1] If true, this was an awkward experiment. The same words put into Almansor's mouth might have been powerful.

Form and diction

The form of the play strictly follows the mode of the Weimar Classicists, as outlined in the section "Background and Influences" above. The language is set in iambic pentameter and follows the verse convention which prestigiously dominated German theater from Lessing to Hebbel. During Heine's time verse drama was considered the ideal form of literary expression, purer and more intense than prose. But Heine failed to transfer his poetic abilities to stage-worthy

---

[1]Jeffrey Sammons, Heinrich Heine: The Elusive Poet (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1969), p. 95.

verse drama. It seems he did not realize he was writing for the stage; he tried to express verbally what stage design or acting should have done. Almansor says, for example,

> It rushes and rumbles close and closer,
> As if my fathers ascended their graves,
> To hold out their skeleton hands to welcome me,
> Their white cold lips for a welcome kiss.

This might be acceptable when reading, but is most impossible to deliver on stage without causing comic effect.

The romantic, lyrical treatment of a fascinating theme was undoubtedly Almansor's death sentence for the stage. Heine realized this before he finished this play and did not repeat this mistake in his second play, William Ratcliff.

Conclusion

Almansor is fascinating in its message and in its use of historical background to demonstrate a parable of contemporary Germany. It is informative about the Islamic reign in Southern Spain despite the fact that Heine's knowledge about Muslim customs seems to be vague. The treatment of the historical background incites interest in a time considered the bloom of Andalusia. His presentation of the situation of the Moors in Spain parallel to that of the Jews in Middle Europe is captivating, especially for an audience today.

Despite these enticing ideas and treatments, Almansor fails as a dramatic work. The fusion of epic, lyric, and drama is Almansor's death-sentence. Heine's attempt to unify poetic works and messages and his error in doing so in this play is best illustrated in a letter he wrote to his friend Friedrich Steinmann in February 1821:

> I have worked with all my power [on Almansor] and have spared neither my heart's blood nor the sweat of my brow, and have finished it all but half an act, and find to my horror that the astounding and divine masterpiece is not only not a good tragedy, but is not even worthy of the name of tragedy. Yes; there are charming and fine moments and scenes in it, originality is shown in every word of it, and surprisingly poetic images and thoughts sparkle all through it, so that it shines and glitters as though it were covered with a film of diamonds. Thus speaks the vain author, the poetic enthusiast. But the stern critic, the inexplorable dramatist wears quite a different pair of spectacles altogether, shakes his head, and pronounces it to be--a pretty puppet-show. "A tragedy must be drastic," he murmurs, and that is the death-sentence of mine, . . . I have attempted to unite in the drama the romantic spirit and stern plastic form.[1]

The lyric in Almansor is indeed beautiful, but as Heine says, the characters who deliver the lines present a "pretty puppet-show."

Not only the lyric and the long declamations bring Almansor to a standstill in various places, however. It is Heine's poet-persona, Almansor, and with him Zuleima, who fail to arouse interest. The love story does not offer a universal meaning, nor anything someone can or wants to

---

[1]Trans. by Moses Hadas in Hugo Bieber, Heinrich Heine, p. 98.

relate to or identify with. Almansor's action does not present any solution to the lover's dilemma. He is a passive hero. But unlike other heroes belonging to this category, such as Kleist's Prince of Homburg (1821), Bücherner's Woyzeck (1826), or Camus' Caligula (1938), all of whom were dramatically effective, Almansor's passivity is not caused by the characters and situations around him; neither does he incite actions in others.

The Prince of Homburg, for example, was passive until he stared into his own grave and thus was forced to act and take the responsibility for his actions. Not Almansor. Although the "tiger metaphor" scene in which Hassan confronts him with reality is very similar to Homburg's confrontation with his grave, Almansor's promising actions are crushed by his lyrical discourses after the kidnapping of Zuleima. If he, as a result, had fled with Zuleima or continued fighting the Christians, the kidnapping--and thus the play--would have made some sense. Likewise, his leap from a cliff with Zuleima in his arms does not offer a solution for the religious polemic nor their love dilemma and is a startling and unsatisfying answer to the play's theme.

Woyzeck on the other hand, was forced to passivity by people around him who made him physically and psychologically weak to achieve their own goal. He was unable to defend himself and direct his growing aggression toward the forces

that overpowered him. Instead, he released his frustrations upon his lover and himself. His answer was to kill her and himself. But Almansor was not forced to passivity and driven to aggression by other people, but only by himself. His murder-suicide is not a logical nor convincing solution.

In Caligula's case, the hero shows no character development whatsoever, but his passivity incites actions and character development in the persons surrounding him. Almansor, however, neither incites nor provokes actions or changes. He is stagnant and brings everything around him to a standstill.

The presentation of Almansor destroys the potential material of this play. He is a Neo-Romantic hero, but to such an extreme that he seems more a parody of a hero of this genre than a representative.

Heine lost interest in Almansor shortly after he finished it, as his letter to Steinmann indicates. Evidently, he never mentioned his first drama again. A revision of this play, especially of the character Almansor, might have manifested its fascinating theme and polemic and have garnered the recognition as a playwright for which Heine so desperately longed.

CHAPTER III

ANALYSIS OF WILLIAM RATCLIFF

William Ratcliff is a true opposite of Almansor in its setting, diction, form, and treatment of the plot. The scenery is shifted from the mild and sunny climate of Moorish Spain to the rugged, foggy Highlands of Scotland.

This one-act play is dominated by a pre-story which lingers into and dooms the present. The doom itself is not caused by the main characters, but, as is typical of the genre of German Schicksalstragödien (Fate Tragedies), is set in motion a generation earlier.

In this case, the tragedy is precipitated by the whimsical and nonsensical rejection of Edward Ratcliff by a lady called Schön-Betty. After an unsuccessful courtship, both parties married, then came together later in adulterous yearning. Edward was murdered by Schön-Betty's husband and she died of grief three days later. After this incident, the ghosts of both Edward and Schön-Betty guide their children throughout life until their story is repeated and the families on both sides are extinguished. The fulfillment of the curse takes place where Edward and Schön-Betty tried to meet and Edward was killed.

The Story of the Play

The pre-story is recounted by Schön-Betty's nurse, Margarete, at the end of the play. According to her, Schön-Betty and Edward were in love until Schön-Betty sang the Edward Ballad, a song Margarete had taught her:

> What is thou sword of blood so red?
> Edward, Edward?[1]

"There all of a sudden, dashed in Edward Ratcliff. And continued stubbornly in the same tune," adding some lines on his own:

> I slayed my beloved -
> My beloved was so pretty, oh!

Schön-Betty was so shocked at Edward's lines that she refused to see him again. Instead, she married Laird MacGregor, and Edward in turn married another woman. Within a year Schön-Betty had a baby-girl, Maria. Edward and his wife had a baby boy, William. Later Schön-Betty's and Edward's passion flared again. Edward appeared at Schön-Betty's window, she ran toward him with out-stretched arms. Her husband MacGregor interrupted the scene. The next morning Edward was found dead in front of the castle. Nurse Margarete, a witness to the scene, knew MacGregor had killed

---

[1]The Edward Ballad is a folk song from Scotland, made popular by the folklorist Thomas Percy (1728-1811). The collection of these songs was translated into German by Johann G. Herder (1744-1802) and published in the Volkslieder (Folks Songs) in 1812.

his rival. Afraid to reveal the story, tormented and unable to sleep, she became a half-wit.

William and Maria grow up not knowing about their parents' love story, an effective dramatic irony similarly used by Heine in the case of Almansor and Zuleima. But unlike them, William and Maria are haunted throughout childhood by apparitions who longingly stretch their arms toward each other but cannot touch.

The children do not meet until William, a student at the time, visits MacGregor's castle. He falls immediately in love with Maria, who responds to his feelings as MacGregor describes it:

> He saw Maria and looked into her eyes,
> Looked too deeply, and began to sigh,
> To groan and to moan, until Maria
> Explained to him: he was too tiresome.
> He packed the love into a basket and left.[1]

William saw this situation somewhat differently, as he described it to his servant Lesley:

> With oddly frightened looks
> And close upon abhorrence, she looked at me
> And with a mocking curtsy spoke a frosty no.

Maria's rejection drives William back to London where he tries to forget her in the "whirlpool of the capital." After having squandered his parent's money, William joins the robbers in the woods and leads the life of a criminal.

---

[1]This is the way Heine's uncle Salomon, Amalie's father, supposedly reacted upon Amalie's refusal to marry Heine.

Occasionally he has to return to Scotland "pulled by iron arms," because he "only could sleep close to Maria." A force directed by the apparitions also pulls William back to Scotland in order to kill every man who marries Maria. Before the play opens, William has slain two bridegrooms. After the grisly deeds were done, William brought the wedding rings from the dead bridegrooms to poor Maria on her wedding-nights, with a "delicate bow."

The play opens in medias res with the hasty marriage ceremony of Maria and Douglas, her third bridegroom. After the ceremony is over, Nurse Margarete begins to sing the Edward Ballad, which not only disturbs the ceremony but also MacGregor. He interrupts Margarete violently, whereupon Margarete responds:

> You? You? want to scold me? Wash your hands first,
> Your red hands with which you bloodied
> Little Darling's white wedding dress.

To change the subject, bridegroom Douglas describes his journey to MacGregor's castle, telling about an attack by robbers and his sudden rescue by a noble stranger. Maria faints, recognizing William's threat. This forshadowing requires some explanation, which is accomplished by MacGregor explicating William's violent character and previous murders to his new son-in-law.

This exposition is followed by Douglas's soliloquy about his feelings for Maria:

I do not love Marien, and I am
Not loved by her. Convenience
Betrothed us today.
But I am well disposed towards this gentle maiden
And want to clear her paths of thorns.

He is determined not to be destroyed by William Ratcliff:

He will not pull the ring off my finger
For where my finger is, my hand is too.

At this time, William's servant Lesley delivers a challenge to a duel, which Douglas enthusiastically accepts. Between the acceptance and the actual duel, five scenes in a robber's tavern deep in the woods near MacGregor's castle take place. Here Heine delivers humorous sketches of Shakesperean quality and provides a refreshing and charming release from the suspense.

First, the innkeeper of the tavern, Tom, desperately tries to pound the Lord's prayer into his son Willie's head. With robbers sleeping in the background and a crucifix hanging on the wall, little Willie with tears in his eyes tries to memorize "and lead us not into temptation." Willie is sent to bed and William and Tom engage in a discussion about social inequality. Thirty years later Heine claimed that this particular scene demonstrated the real meaning of the play. This will be explained in detail in the theme analysis.

An interlude follows with Ratcliff giving the story exposition from his point of view to his servant Lesley. He explains his love for Maria, the apparitions that have

been haunting and dominating his life, and the forces driving him to his criminality.

Another scene in the tavern follows. Some of the robbers are ready to go to "work"; they say a little prayer in front of the crucifix before leaving. As soon as they are gone, Tom sneaks in to pick the pockets of the still-sleeping robbers and feels tremendously smart because they cannot testify in court against him.

The climactic scenes begin with William going to the place where the duel is to take place. The Apparitions reveal themselves, giving him strength and power for the fight to come. When Douglas arrives, he recognizes William as the noble stranger who rescued him from the robbers on the road, the first in a series of complications. For the latter William identifies himself, and the duel begins. This time, however, William is unlucky. The ghosts of the previously murdered rivals appear and make William stumble, leaving Douglas the victor. The honorable Douglas spares William, leaving him utterly humiliated. The Apparitions appear again, directing wounded William to go to MacGregor's castle; and so he does.

In the meantime, Maria has been waiting for Douglas, trembling in fear and in anticipation of bad news. Teased and questioned by Nurse Margarete, Maria finally admits that she loved William until she recognized him as one of the Apparitions haunting her throughout her childhood.

But all of a sudden, she saw William "like a ghost, so pale, so stiff, and wildly distorted and bloody." Nurse Margarete, the half-wit, becomes serious and tells Maria about the ill-fated love story of Schön-Betty and Edward Ratcliff. She feels responsible for the tragic development because she taught Betty the fatal song. She became crazy after Edward's death:

> Because I know who slew him
> And because I am not allowed to tell anybody,
> And because I am crazy - Oh!
> I cannot sleep!

After this final explanation, William storms into the room, bleeding and asking for help. Maria, still under the spell of what Nurse Margarete had told her, tenderly takes care of william and confesses her love for him. They kiss.

At this very moment, Margarete begins singing the Edward Ballad again. William turns into a demon, pulls shocked Maria to her bed chamber and kills her. The Apparitions appear in front of the bedchamber during this nonsensical deed but are still unable to touch. Nurse Margarete continues to sing the Edward Ballad. MacGregor rushes into the room, William out of the bedchamber, and they start to fight. MacGregor dies and William comments on this:

> Now I am relieved. The pretaste
> Of rest I can already feel. Maria is mine.
> My deed is done. I'll come, Maria.

With these words he rushes back to the bed-chamber and shoots himself. The Apparitions return and finally embrace.

Douglas and the servants hurry into the room to discover the bodies. Nurse Margarete notes that "they look just like Schön-Betty and Edward."

Thus, the curse is fulfilled and the play is over.

Background and Influences in the Play

William Ratcliff is biased by Heine's personal problems and frustrations more aggressively than Almansor or any of his other works. The means he uses to elucidate his persona and his trouble are clearly shaped by English Romanticism, the German Storm and Stress, and the German Fate Tragedies. These literary influences and his personal situation are outlined in this section.

Heine wrote William Ratcliff within three days in January 1822, convinced he had created a milestone in German drama. In his prologue to the play, Heine describes it as follows:

> Under the limes at Berlin during the last three days of January 1822, when the sun was shining with a certain lukewarm kindliness upon the snow-covered roofs and the sad leafless trees, I wrote it straight off and without even a rough draft. While I was writing, it was as though I heard above my head a rustling like the beating of the wings of a bird. When I told my friends, the young poets in Berlin, about it, they looked at each other in wonderment and one and all assured me that such a thing had never happened to them when they were writing.

From the point of view of literary influences, Sammons found William Ratcliff to be "the most outrageous performance of plagiaristic synthesis anywhere in Heine's work."[1] And it is indeed. William Ratcliff, the main character, is shaped by English Romanticism and shows traces of the heroes in the Storm and Stress dramas. The plot is treated as in German Fate Tragedies, the milieu is copied from Sir Walter Scott's novels, and the leitmotiv is taken out of Zacharias Werner's Der 24. Februar.

English Romanticism

English Romanticism had captured the German Neo-Romantics' interest at the time Heine wrote William Ratcliff. A. W. Schlegel had not only translated Calderon's plays and poetry, but also all the Shakespearean dramas. He thus aroused interest in English drama and poetry in general and in English Romanticism in particular. Since Almansor was shaped by the Neo-Romantics' fascination with the Spanish Middle Ages, William Ratcliff is influenced by English Romanticism, especially by Byron. Heine had studied Byron and his works eagerly for he translated most of Byron's poems into German before and during this play was written.

Byron, the most outstanding English Romantic, created the Byronic hero, the fallen angel expelled from heaven or happiness, the fatal man. He is a victim of uncontrollable

---

[1]Sammons, The Elusive Poet, p. 98.

powers which dash him into ultimate catastrophe. The Fatal Man can be derived from Milton's Satan in Paradise Lost, the influence of which dominated Gothic romance writing in eighteenth century England. According to Mario Praz, Ann Radcliff reduced Milton's Satan into a bandit whose main characteristics are a mysterious bearing, a burnt-out passion, the evocation of a suspicion of a ghastly guilt, and the unleashing of forces of something not of this earth.[1]

All these characteristics apply to William Ratcliff. He, an amiable young student, is rejected by his love, leaves, tries to forget her in the "whirlpool of the capital," joins robbers in the woods after having spent all his money, and leads a criminal life. He is torn by passion and longing for his love and is a mystery to his fellow robbers. William reveals neither his passion nor his murderous deeds even to his close servant until several years have passed. He is the Byronic hero, or Fatal Man, because he cannot be happy anymore, cannot enjoy even the most tempting distractions, feels helplessly dominated by powers which drive him to criminality, and is fully aware of an eventual catastrophe and is willing to yield to it. The way William is presented, however, is also reminiscent of the heroes in Storm and Stress drama.

---

[1]Mario Praz, The Romantic Agony (New York: Meridan Books, 1956), p. 66. Ann Radcliff (1764-1823) was an English novelist who wrote The Sicilian Romance, e.a. She was married to a William Radcliff which suggests an influence on Heine's play title.

German Storm and Stress

The German Storm and Stress movement has to be understood as a radical reaction to the strict rules of the Enlightenment period of early eighteenth century Germany.[1] Incited by Rousseau's outcry for freedom, for tearing down limits and rules, and for a life directed by instinct rather than reason, Johann Georg Hamann began expressing these dogmas in German drama in the 1770s. He called for originality, breaking the rules, exceeding of limits, and ignoring social behavior structure--for anarchy, unlimited passion, and uncontrolled feelings. His followers included R. Lenz and Johann G. Herder, but most outstanding were Johann Wolfgang Goethe and Friedrich Schiller. This movement, called Storm and Stress, was fairly isolated in its message and ferocity--and thus short-lived. But it opened the doors to expression of feelings in German literature and to the Romantic movement to come.

The traces of the heroes in Storm and Stress dramas in Heine's portrait of William can be seen in his bravery and carelessness of life, for he does not murder his rivals, but

---

[1]The German Enlightenment of the eighteenth century was the first step out of provincialism and the isolation in family units of a nation that was not only divided in numerous principalities but also a nation lacking any unity be it in thought, ideals, or goals. The answer for the minds of the Enlightenmentalists was to place reason above everything in their search for truth and meaning of life. The representatives of this era were Friedrich G. Klopstock (1724-1803); Lessing, and Christoph Martin Wieland (1733-1813).

fights them in equal combat, and in his chivalry when he risks his life to save that of unknown, troubled Douglas on the road. A direct comparison to one of the most famous Storm and Stress heroes--Karl, in Schiller's The Robbers--will be demonstrated in the theme analysis below.

Heine's personal problems

The personal problems and frustrations Heine dramatizes in William Ratcliff stem from the fact that his cousin Amalie rejected him. Five months before he wrote this play, she was married. He obviously found it difficult to believe that Amalie did not want him. Explanations and reasons for her lack of response can be found in numerous poems, in Almansor, in his prose works such as The Book Le Grand, and again in William Ratcliff.[1]

But none of Heine's works show so much violent hatred and masochism in his projected persona as this one. The explanation here is that she (Maria=Amalie) had falsely shown him (William=Heine) signs of love and then scornfully turned him down out of pure malice. Maria's father's account is that Maria found William tiresome and sent him home. This calls to mind Uncle Salomon's relief over Heine's rejection, for he had a different future in mind for Amalie.

---

[1] The Book Le Grand was written in 1827. Here Heine had enough emotional distance from Amalie that he could write: "She is amiable and he loved her; but he was not amiable and she did not love him."

Heine was outraged and in agony for years.

German Fate Tragedies

The German Fate Tragedies dwell extensively on the Romantics' agony. It might be understandable that Heine chose this genre in order to release himself from direct responsibility for being totally uncontrolled and dangerous and to sublimate his rage.

The German Fate Tragedies were in their bloom and dominated German stages between 1815 and 1825. The plays that caught the public fancy and set the fasion were Zacharias Werner's Der 24. Februar (The 24th of February) in 1810, followed by A. G. A. Müllner's Der 29. Februar (The 29th of February) in 1812, Grillparzer's Die Ahnfrau (The Ancestress) in 1817, and Ch. E. Freiherr von Houwaldt's Der Leuchtturm (The Lighthouse) in 1819. Characteristically, the action of these plays are condensed into one act and the language is that of the lower classes. Grillparzer's The Ancestress was an exception. Written in five acts and set in a castle, it used formal language. The content of Fate Tragedies usually deals with an unknown sin, committed a generation earlier, which lingers as a curse from the past into the action of the play and which is finally punished. The sin itself is marked by forbidden desires, incestuous or adulterous.

The German Fate Tragedies "tend to be silly as well as dehumanized," as Sammons says, "because the mechanistic operation of fate serving as a substitute for a principle of dramatic form." Sammons goes even so far as to say that Werner's The 24th of February and Grillparzer's The Ancestress are exceptions and "barely respectable" for their qualities of atmosphere, language, and believable psychology.[1]

William Ratcliff is written in one act. The main characters are forced for no obvious reason to play roles destined by their parents and to submit to the fate directed by the ghosts of their parents. What Heine achieves through the dramatic technique of the Fate Tragedies is a release from having to make sense of the actions and motives of the characters. However, one technique of the Fate Tragedies Heine does not use is the language of the lower class. Instead, he uses a harsh versification which stands in contrast to the lush lyrics of Almansor. The leitmotiv of the play, the Edward Ballad, appeared earlier in Werner's The 24th of February and was very popular during the time Heine wrote William Ratcliff.

The Setting of the Play

As befits the gloomy plot and the ever-present Apparitions, William Ratcliff is staged in the foggy, rugged

---

[1]Sammons, The Elusive Poet, p. 98.

Highlands in Scotland. The setting is undoubtedly copied from Sir Walter Scott's novels, which were high fashion in Berlin during the time this play was written. Heine describes a landscape he had never seen before; nevertheless, he boasted in articles about his journey to England ten years later that he gave a true picture of the country. The critic William Sharp, a Scot himself, ridicules not only the plot but also the setting, saying that Heine's "knowledge of British life and of the properties of nomenclature are very, very vague."[1]

Unlike Almansor, William Ratcliff does not give precise clues as to when the action took place. Heine's description of the castle, the tavern in the forest, and the capital city (as given by Douglas in the first scene) points to late eighteenth century England. This is strengthened by Douglas' description of the contemporary fashion:

> Above all, the uncomfortable suit is tormenting:
> The tight-waisted vests, the stiff collar,
> And even the top hat is a tower of Babel.

Furthermore, he mentions Vauxhall and Routs, which were recreation gardens in London during the seventeenth and eighteenth century. In contradiction to these meager clues, is the fact that William shoots himself. As the duels were

---

[1]William Sharp, Life of Heinrich Heine (London: Walter Scott, 1888), p. 59.

conducted with swords in this play, how did William get possession of a pistol? Perhaps Heine tried to speed up the action.

The Theme of the Play

William Ratcliff represents improvement in dramatic structure and diction over Almansor. Its weakness, however, lies in the theme and how it is developed. It neither offers a message nor interesting historical information.

Heine thought differently, though. He published William Ratcliff unchanged, but with an additional preface, thirty years later in 1851. The new preface stresses the socialistic values and futuristic import imposing post facto interpretation on the real meaning of the play with the following words:

> I will give a place to this tragedy or dramatic ballad among the collection of my New Poems for the good reason that it is an important reference to my poetical life; it summarizes my 'Storm and Stress' period which is only incompletely and nebulously reflected in Youthful Sorrows and the Books of Songs. There the young author lulls with heavy, untrained tongue only dreamy cries of nature, but here in Ratcliff uses an alert and mature language and speaks his final word with perfect frankness. This word has become a watchword since the outcry of which the pale faces of misery flame up like purple and the florid cheeked sons of fortune grow pale as chalk. On the hearth of honorable Tom in Ratcliff the great soup question of mankind is bubbling, stirred by a thousand bad cooks, and boiling over with increasing foam every day.

Heine's division of mankind into two worlds, the "satiated and the starving," anticipates the formulation of two unlike

observers of the English scene more than twenty years after this play was written, Friedrich Engels and Benjamin Disraeli.[1] But in the play the brief treatment of this off-handed observation disputes whatever Heine might have wanted to read into it thirty years later.

The scene Heine refers to as stating the real meaning of the play is a short dialogue between Tom, the innkeeper of the robber's tavern, and William Ratcliff. William justifies the criminal actions of the robbers with the following words:

> ... Outrage must shake a man
> Who sees the penny-souls that own the world,
> Lolling in silks and satins, eating oysters,
> Bathed in champagne, taking their ease
> In Doctor's Grahame's most luxurious beds,
> Rattling along the streets in gilded chaises,
> Glancing contemptuously at the starving wretches
> Who, with their shirt bundled in thin arms,
> Stumble, despairingly, down to the pawnshop.[2]

Whereupon Tom responds sagely that the "world is divided into two nations: the satiated and the starving." Although this is a statement of Heine's views during the last two decades of his life, a social message can hardly be extracted from the play as a whole. Heine only became involved in socialistic issues years after he wrote William Ratcliff.

---

[1]Friedrich Engels wrote Die Lage der arbeitenden Klasse in England (The Situation of the Working Class in England) and Benjamin Disraeli Sybil or the Two Nations, both published in 1845.

[2]Quotation translated by Louis Untermeyer in Heinrich Heine, p. 91.

His outcries against the inequality of mankind in his political writings would later influence such figures as Karl Marx and Friedrich Engels. Heine's poem The Song of Weavers, for example, written in the early thirties, dealt with the exploition of weavers in Silesia and stimulated Marx to write an exposé on this theme and, later, Gerhard Hauptmann to write the revolutionary play The Weavers (1893).

But neither Heine's presentation of this play, his letters, nor his lifestyle indicate that he was interested in any conditions others than his own. When writing William Ratcliff, in 1822, Heine was undoubtedly swimming in the whirlpool of Berlin, the capital of music and the Neo-Romantic movement. He was a dandy who spent most of his time at the opera and in literary circles. A poem he wrote for his friend Friedrich Merkel when sending him a copy of William Ratcliff might explain the actual force behind his drama:

> I sought in vain for gentle love,
> The bitterest hate alone I found.
> Full deep I sighed, full loud I cursed,
> While bleeding fast from many a wound.
>
> Many a day and night have I
> Roamed with blackguards through the town;
> The fruits of all these studies here
> You see in Ratcliff written down.[1]

---

[1]Gustav Karpeles, Heinrich Heine's Life, Told in his Own Words, trans. by Arthur Dexter (New York: Henry Holt and Co. 1893), p. 119.

This is not the voice of a socialist remonstrating about the social status of mankind, but the Byronic hero who, rejected by his love, becomes the fallen angel. Expelled from happiness and his dreams, the fallen angel masochistically throws himself into the gutter, desperately waiting for a final catastrophe to deliver the last blow. According to Sammons, "Amalie had challenged him (Heine) to write something in this mode."[1] But Strodtmann points out that a rejection can be painful, cause anger, sadness, or desperation, but is not worth dramatizing. He feels that William does not arouse pity, but disgust. He goes so far as to say that a tragic hero should not be made of such weak material and that he changes his whole life because of the whimsical mood of a lday. Yet William fails as the protagonist not because of his illogical reaction to Marie's rejection, as Strodtmann would have one believe, but because the playwright failed to develop William into a character capable of eliciting an emotional reaction from the audience.

The significance of character development may be seen by comparing William Ratcliff with Schiller's Storm and Stress drama The Robbers. Here Karl, the protagonist, reacts to his father's rejection the same way as William. He becomes a robber and leads a criminal life. Unlike William,

---

[1]Jeffrey Sammons, Heinrich Heine: A Modern Biography (New Jersey: Princeton University Press, 1979), p. 69.

Karl's reaction grows into a believable and convincing choice because of his character development. According to the Storm and Stress movement, as well as the Romantics, self-desctruction was a justifiable antidote for rejection.

William also parallels Karl in bravery, chivalry, and a touch of style. William's bravery is exhibited in his eagerness to fight, his unconcern for his own safety, and the respect the robbers pay him. He does not murder his rivals: he fights them in an equal combat. When his servant Lesley says:

> Upon my word, tell me what does that mean?
> You look for danger which does not help you;
> Come back to London; there you'll be secure.
> You should avoid this terrifying place
> Where everyone knows that you have croaked
> MacDonald and Duncan.

William answers with "stubborn dignity":

> Not croaked! In combat
> Felled MacDonald and Duncan. Honestly I fought;
> And I will fight in combat with Douglas.

William does not shun his persecutors and his daring borders on stupidity even though to defy death was considered a manly virtue in those days. William's chivalry is presented when he risks his life to rescue unknown Douglas from the robber's attack. It indicates that William would help anybody in need whether a beleaguered man or a helpless woman. His touch of style can be seen in his sadistic way of telling Maria that her bridegrooms are dead. In both cases he presented her, his hands still red with blood, the bridegroom's wedding rings with a delicate bow.

The notion that criminal action can be justified by knowing the cause has been dwelt upon by the followers of the Storm and Stress movement as well as the Romantics. But Heine's presentation of the outcasts of society is naive, lacks explanation, and is consequently not convincing. Tom is an exception to this because he explains why he settled down as an innkeeper:

> Of course, I am now
> A tame animal and tap beer, an innkeeper.
> .....
> Yes, once I was moonshining too and swarmed
> Into other people's houses and other people's pockets
> But never have I done it as wildly as these ones here.

In William's case Heine does not settle down with the Storm and Stress nobleman gone to shambles nor the Byronic hero. Instead, he uses techniques of the German Fate Tragedies to demonstrate a man who does not act according to his own choice but rather is forced to his actions by the ghosts of his father and Schön Betty. He plays a role prefigured by Edward, submits a fate, and is thus totally released from any responsibilities whatsoever. His actions do not have to be explained, logically developed, or justified. William explains the forces behind his actions to his servant Lesley:

> Don't think I am a soft moonlight hero,
> A picture hunter, who by his own blood hound
> And fantasy is chased through night and hell.
> .....

But I confess . . .
There are terrifying alien forces
Which possess me; there are dark powers
Which guide my will, which chase
Me to every deed, which rule my arms,
And which have haunted me since childhood.

The reason why Edward Ratcliff and Schön-Betty separated is actually (despite Nurse Margarete's explanation) incomprehensible. Despite their intentional separation, Edward and Schön-Betty loved each other until their deaths. But the rollercoaster of their love does not end there and that is the tragic turning point. Their unstilled desire and yearning is transferred to their children. Not knowing about their parent's love story, William and Maria grow up with Edward's and Schön-Betty's ghosts who escort them through the same jungle of love, rejection, revenge, and the final reunion that leads to their death. Why William and Maria have to relive their parent's fate can neither be justified with Edward's murder nor the circumstances that led to the separation of Edward and Schön-Betty. Boelsche remarks that this kind of mutually inherited feeling is from the psychological point of view pure nonsense and, according to genetic knowledge, an impossibility. Furthermore, Boelsche argues the probability of accepting the repetitive love story if Edward and Schön-Betty's fate had played a secondary role in the actual emotional development of Maria and William. But it did not. Instead, the pre-story is nothing but an overture to an accelerating horror story.

Maria and William act and perform like puppets on strings having to fall in love, separate, and die despite their own will.

Here, the poet persona demonstrates his personal conflicts and develops his own fantasies instead of unfolding a story with dramatic significance. The only one who can possibly identify with the main character is Heine himself. Amalie rejected him before he went to the University of Bonn. Five months before Heine wrote William Ratcliff, she married a man her family approved of. Heine's endeavor to find a reason for her rejection, to push the responsibility of this decision off her shoulders as well as off his character, has never been displayed as clearly and strongly as in this play.

Characters

Unlike Almansor, William is throughout the play the poet persona in action. But here love is caused by a curse, rejection by uncontrollable forces. Heine did not offer a polemic.

Maria, like Zuleima in Almansor, is a caged bird. She is unable to make decisions on her own. She rejects William because the Appparitions took power over her, marries Douglas because he happened to propose to her, and reveals her love to William because Margarete's revelation obsesses her. Her passivity can partly be excused with the grisly

incidents that happened to her. But Heine was, as mentioned in the Almansor analysis above, an advocate of women's rights and emancipation. This needs emphasizing because the Romantics tended to portray women as the mild, protective all-forgiving, all-understanding "Holy Mary" figure--the rescue and haven for the wild, confused, emotional Romantic hero. It leaves the question open: Would Heine have chosen strongheaded heroines if Amalie had accepted his proposal? Or would he have written the play at all? But his heroines are stupid, frosty, and incomprehensible in their reaction to openly declared love, as both Maria's as well as Zuleima's case proves. Sammons remarks on the female characters in Heine's love poems that

> . . . one wonders if there had ever before been a body of love poetry in which so much accusation is directed toward the beloved, her stupid treachery.[1]

This tendency contradicts the most prominent feature of Romantic poetry as well as Romantic drama which shows love as the unifying force, a metonymy for the longed-for reintegration of man and the universe. For Heine, however, love is a catastrophe, almost a vice.

Nurse Margarete, the other female character, contrasts lifeless Maria. Her feelings of guilt for having taught Schön-Betty the fatal Edward Ballad and for knowing about

---

[1]Sammons, A Modern Biography, p. 61.

MacGregor's murder, which drove her to madness, is convincing and credible. She is the key figure of the action, the tool for the actualization of the curse. Her character is dramatically effective in providing suspense for the play.

MacGregor, Maria's father, suffers with the same neglect of character development as Aly in Almansor. The parallel to Zuleima's stepfather indicates that Heine is describing Amalie's father Salomon. MacGregor describes Maria's refusal to marry William the way Uncle Salomon might have done when referring to Heine's rejection. But MacGregor, like Aly in Almansor, is mostly described by others, a description he does not underline with his actions. This is the case, for example, in the final confrontation of MacGregor and William. The man who is thought of as being hot-tempered and violent lamely calls William a "disturber of my rest" just before he is slain by him.

Douglas, the only bridegroom and main character surviving William's revenge, is the only honorable man displaying all the virtues a Romantic could possibly imagine. He stands by his principles, is loyal and chivalric to Maria, enthusiastically welcomes the challenge from William, and spares William's life after the combat, in gratitude for the latter's assistance during the robber's attack. Douglas is manly, masterful, and rises above agonized yearing and passion. Like Hassan in Almansor, he is the direct opposite of the poet-persona. In control of any situation, he

might suggest qualities toward which the poet-persona was leaning.

The supporting characters show, as in Almansor, more life and more sense than the leads. They are believable, refreshing, charming, and convincing. It leaves open to question why Heine did create dramatically better supporting characters than main characters.

Outstanding in their nonsensical existence are the Apparitions. They conduct their silly displays not only before William's eyes, but to the eyes of the spectator as well. They try to embrace, but cannot until William has killed Maria, MacGregor, and himself. Strodtmann emphasizes that even German Fate Tragedies did not use fatalistic apparitions stretching the limits of reason as Heine did in this play. Unlike the Romantics who saw dreams as the openings to higher transcendental unity, Heine's dreams are nightmares. They allegorize defeat and frustration, the suffering of the self as seen in his poems and prose.

Diction

The diction of William Ratcliff is kept in pentameter but contrasting the lyrical declamations in Almansor, in a harsh and tense tone. It is, as might be expected from Heine's dissatisfaction with Almansor, a substantial improvement. Instead of lachrymose descriptions and explanations there are precise and down to the point explications as

shown in MacGregor's report of Maria's refusal:

> . . . Maria
> Explained to him: he was too tiresome.
> He packed the love into a basket and left.

Thus Heine employs a dramatic device not only to speed up the action in the play but to stress the action leaving his endeavor to combine poetry with drama far behind. The usage of the brisk language condenses the play into half of Almansor's length. It is dramatically more effective, but even this improvement cannot catapult the play's plot into a stage-worthy vehicle.

Conclusion

Though Heine renounced Almansor after a fervent initial enthusiasm, he remained incomprehensibly loyal to William Ratcliff until the end of his life.[1] He put Almansor aside after a short disappointment about its failure on stage but never ceased trying to get William Ratcliff successfully produced. According to Heine, William Ratcliff is the work in which he "speaks his final word with perfect frankness." He wrote to his friend Karl Immermann in May 1822:

---

[1]Heine wrote to his influential friend Baron F. de la Motte in June 1823 about Almansor: "It finds more praise, much more than my Ratcliff. I don't know why but this bright, mild poem is almost frightening to me now, whereas I think with delight about my gloomy, fierce Ratcliff." In Heine, Briefe, p. 81.

> I am convinced of the value of this poem (hark! hark!), for it is true, or myself a lie; everything else I have written, and shall write, may perish and will perish.[1]

In his preface to William Ratcliff, Heine exclaims "While I and my name will perish, This song will exist eternally." That this was not the case is obvious. It does express Heine's conviction of having set his poet persona in this particular drama more clearly then in his other works.

But William Ratcliff found even less appreciation than Almansor. It was never put on stage during Heine's lifetime, partly due to Almansor's failure on opening night, partly due to its content. Letters indicate that Heine spared neither pains nor expense to find willing readers and willing directors.[2] Proudly he sent copies of this play to numerous friends and sponsors, even to Goethe who never

---

[1] H. G. Atkins, Heine (New York: E. P. Dutton and Co., 1929), p. 53.

[2] Heine wrote to the publisher of the magazine The Companion, Friedrich Gubitz in August 1823: "I can't assure you often enough that everything you will do for distributing and supporting my tragedies will be compensated in heaven." He wrote to his friend Moses Moser in November 1823: "For goodness sake, is it true that the Ratcliff should be put on stage? Give me assurance. It would mean all the happiness to me if it would be accepted." To his friend Joseph Lehmann in June 1823: "I still haven't given up the hope to see William Ratcliff on stage, even though I haven't cajoled any actors nor caressed any actresses and don't have any idea how to smuggle something successfully on stage. I think the writings and talkings about it will get it on stage." In Heine, Briefe, pp. 112, 126, 96, respectively.

responded to it. But the critiques remained negative and the interest of the public low. To his brother-in-law, Moritz von Embden, Heine wrote in 1823:

> I'll send you a copy of my tragedies following your request . . . I hope this book will meet positive reaction and be recognized in its ethical basic ideas. You will read in it how people and families perish and how this ruin is caused by a higher force and used for greater reasons through fate. The real poet does not portray the history of his time but the history of all times. Therefore, a real poem is a mirror of any present time.[1]

But this is exactly what Almansor does not fulfill and William Ratcliff totally avoids in its subjectivity and personal material. Almansor's message and historical information is interesting and fascinating in its prophecies; William Ratcliff, however, does not offer anything with which any reader or audience could identify or be informed about. Instead, this play strongly contradicts what Heine refers to in his letter as to what he had in mind.

Despite the dramatically effective diction and skillfully done theatrical effects, the play lacks a message and a universal meaning. In fact, it does not mirror anything but Heine's unrequited love, dreams, and wild fantasy.

The love story in William Ratcliff expresses exactly Heine's interpretation of love presented in his love poems. Sammons describes it as follows:

---

[1]Heine, Briefe, p. 114.

> It lures and excites, holding out promises it does not keep, ripping up the fabric of the self. Yet the desire for love is inextinguishable; the longing that it might somehow actually be what it feels like remains. . . . The wounded feelings acquire a cutting edge, the broken heart strikes back.[1]

This interpretation can be found not only in William Ratcliff and Heine's loved poems, but also in Byron's play Manfred. Here, Manfred says about his beloved Astarte "I loved and I destroyed her."

Despite Heine's fervent defense of William Ratcliff and his emphasis on its socialistic value, the play remains a Fate Tragedy--a genre that should have been beyond Heine's dignity to employ. It should be recognized, though, as Heine's most personal work and his strongest attempt to exhibit his feelings in drama.

---

[1]Sammons, A Modern Biography, p. 61.

CHAPTER IV

EPILOGUE

Almansor was first published in fragments in numbers 179-86 of the periodical Der Gesellschafter (The Companion), by the publisher Gubitz, in 1821 with the title "Almansor, Fragments of a Dramatic Poem."

Despite Heine's influential friends, the public response was lukewarm. In January of 1823, Heine applied for publication of both tragedies and a collection of poems at the (Berlin) publishing house of Dümmler with the following words:

> Mutual friends have highly recommended your work and your loyalty . . . For I respect these qualities to the highest degree . . . I'll offer you a book written by me for publication. This includes
> 1. A short tragedy . . ., the basic idea of which is the surrogate of general fate and which should attract the readers to no small degree.
> 2. A longer dramatic poem, called Almansor, the the material of which is a religious polemic and deals with present interests. . . .
> 3. The Lyrical Intermezzo . . .
>
> The name of the tragedy which I wrote for the stage and which will be surely put on stage, I will let you know as soon as I find you not disinclined to take the offer. I do not want anybody to know about it before it has been printed.[1]

Dümmler published all three as Tragödien nebst einem Lyrischen Intermezzo (Tragedies with a Lyrical Intermezzo)

---

[1]Heine, Briefe, p. 145.

in April 1823. The book became a success for its poems. The plays, however, were hardly ever mentioned or if so, negatively reacted upon. Heine anticipated this from the very beginning, in a letter to Friedrich Steinmann he wrote in April 1823:

> My tragedies have been released by the press recently. I know they will be torn apart. But I will tell you in confidence: they are very good, better than my poetry which is not worth a shot of powder![1]

Heine did not expect a friendly reception of these plays, for his feelings of persecution were still strong in him.

He sent copies of his publications to the greatest poets then living in Germany--Goethe, Wilhelm Müller, Uhland, and Tieck. None of them even acknowledged the receipt of the volume. Two unknown poets alone wrote to congratulate him, but their words hardly made up for the silence of the others. In Hamburg some journals published favorable reviews of the tragedies, which were done out of respect for the wealthy and influential Uncle Salomon, to whom Heine had dedicated the book. Heine realized the purpose of these friendly reviews and therefore did not take them seriously.

Even his immediate family did not seem to show any interest in Heine's dramatic ambition as shown in his letter written to Moses Moser in May 1823 about his family's reaction to the plays:

---

[1] Ibid., p. 145.

> Referring to my tragedies, I found my fears here confirmed insofar as my mother read the plays and the poetry but not really digested them; my sister merely tolerates them, my brothers do not understand them, and my father hasn't read them yet.[1]

His friends, such as Immermann and Rousseau, were not inclined to write favorable reviews about Heine's plays. Heine mentions in a letter to his friend Moses Moser that Immermann had written to him he would publish a sharp critique of the tragedies and planned to make some painful statements. Rousseaus' reaction is described in a letter Heine wrote to his friend Joseph Lehmann in June 1823:

> What you suggest in reference to Rousseau seems justified. I have been three months and longer without a letter from him and have evidence that he is collecting mud to throw at me. I have long known that he is again allied with my angry enemies, the old Germans; and the displeasure which the tendentiousness of my Almansor had aroused on the Rhine, a tendentiousness to the eruption which he can now himself realize, must have contributed to the eruption of his anger against me.[2]

Despite public refusal, August Klingemann, director of the Court Theater in Braunschweig, had the courage to put Almansor on stage. Klingemann had an excellent reputation for making this theater the example of German theatrical art. He tried to introduce works of the new German generation to the public and was the first to put Goethe's Faust, Part I on stage. Klingemann's endeavor to fit Almansor to

---

[1] Ibid., p. 77.

[2] Trans. by Bieber in Heinrich Heine, p. 148.

the stage included condensing the long lyrical scenes and leaving out the Chorus.

The play was produced in August 1823, but it did not survive opening night and was never staged again. The cast consisted of the best German actors available, the direction was superb, and the audience applauded enthusiastically the poetic dialogues. The production seemed to be a success until a drunkard stumbled in during the last scene when Almansor was discoursing about flowers and robins on top of the mountain peak with Zuleima in his lap. He made some rude comments on the scene and finally asked who the playwright was. Someone whispered to him "The Jew Heine" whereupon the intruder, thinking of a Jewish and unpopular banker in Braunschweig with the same name, called out "What? We have to listen to the garbage of this ridiculous Jew? We don't want to take this! Let's boo this piece down!" Then he began to trample and to hiss and the house joined in. Every attempt of the more sophisticated group among the audience to pacify the shouters was in vain. The actress portraying Zuleima thought this was a comment on her acting and became hysterical. The actor portraying Almansor cut the scene, threw himself with Zuleima off the mountain peak, and thus gave the signal for the curtain. Klingemann was

humiliated and did not dare to stage William Ratcliff after this incident.[1]

Heine was beside himself, especially over the later rejection of William Ratcliff which he so desperately wanted to see produced. Of Almansor he wrote to Moses Moser in September 1823:

> I hear the piece was hissed out; have you heard any particulars? The Jews of Braunschweig have spread the report throughout Israel, and in Hamburg I have received formal condolences. The story is catastrophic for me and it harms my position. I do not know how to repair it.[2]

After a temporary disappointment, Heine never tried to get Almansor staged again, realizing its dramatic weakness. And indeed, Almansor's opening night remains the only stage production of the play to this day.

Heine's loyalty to William Ratcliff, however, differed from that to Almansor. He never gave up the hope of seeing William Ratcliff produced. He translated it into French and published the play as William et Marie in the Revue de Paris in 1842. The French reaction seemed to be as indifferent as the German twenty years earlier. Even Heine's second publication in Germany (1851) with the additional preface stressing its socialistic value did not entice any director to put

---

[1]The description was given by Eduard Schütz who portrayed Almansor that night and became the successor of Klingemann, quoted in Strodtmann, Heinrich Heine's Leben und Werke, p. 272.

[2]Heine, Briefe, p. 158.

it on stage. Heine never saw his favorite drama produced. But William Ratcliff had a comeback in 1895, as an opera! Mascagni produced it in Stuttgart, Vavrinesc in Prague, Dopper in Weimar, and Cui in Milano. Further information on these productions was not available to this writer, even with extensive research.

Both Almansor and William Ratcliff remained closet-dramas, despite the author's will.

BIBLIOGRAPHY

Abrams, M. H. Natural Supernaturalism: Tradition and Revolution in Romantic Literature. New York: The Norton Library, 1971.

Atkins, H. G. Heine. New York: E. P. Dutton and Co., 1929.

Bartels, Adolf. Heinrich Heine: Auch ein Denkmal. Dresden und Leipzig: C. A. Kochs Verlagsbuchhandlung, 1906.

Bieber, Hugo, ed. Heinrich Heine: A Biographical Anthology. Translated by Moses Hadas. Philadelphia: The Jewish Publication Society of America, 1956.

Boelsche, Wilhelm. Heinrich Heine. Leipzig: Verlag von Hermann Düselen, 1888.

Borries, Mechthild. Ein Angriff auf Heinrich Heine. Stuttgart, Gerlin, Koeln, Mainz: Verlag W. Kohlhammer, 1971.

Browne, Lewis. That Man Heine: A Biography. New York: The MacMillan Company, 1927.

Brunschwig, Henry. Enlightenment and Romanticism. Translated by Frank Jellinck. Chicago and London: The University of Chicago Press, 1974.

Byron, George Gordon. Manfred. In Modern English Drama, p. 403. New York: P. F. Collier and Sons, 1890.

Elster, Ernst, ed. Heinrich Heine: Saemtliche Werke. Vol. 5. Leipzig und Wien: Bibliographisches Institut, 1893.

Eulenberg, Herbert, ed. Heinrich Heine: Memoiren. Berlin: Rembrandt Verlag.

Fairlley Barker. Heinrich Heine: An Interpretation. Oxford: At the Clarendon Press, 1954.

Fejtoe, Francois. Heine: A Biography. Translated by Mervin Savill. London: Allan Wingate, 1946.

German Plays of the Nineteenth Century. Edited with Introduction and Notes by Thomas Moody Campbell. New York: Appleton Century Crofts Inc., 1958.

Grillparzer, Franz. Grillparzer's Dramatische Meisterwerke. Stuttgart: J. G. Cotta'sche Buchhandlung, 1850.

Heine, Heinrich. Briefe. Edited by Friedrich Hirth. Vol. 1. Mainz: Florian Kupferberg Verlag, 1950.

_____. Briefwechsel. Edited by Friedrich Hirth. Muenchen und Berlin: Georg Mueller, 1914.

_____. Heine's Poems. Selected, edited, and translated by Carl Edgar Eggert. Boston, New York, Chicago, London: Grim and Co., 1906.

_____. Saemtliche Werke. Edited by Oskar Walzel e. a. Leipzig: Deutsche Verlagsanstalt, 1870.

_____. The Poems of Heinrich Heine. Translated by Edgar Alfred Bowring. London: George Bell and Sons, 1884.

_____. The Poetry and Prose of Heinrich Heine. Selected and edited by Frederic Ewen. The poetry translated by Louis Untermeyer e.a. The prose translated by Aaron Kramer and Frederic Ewen. New York: The Citadel Press, 1948.

_____. Heines Werke: Tragoedien, Novelistische Fragmente. Vol. 4. With an introduction by Reinhold Orthmann. Berlin: A. Weichart, 1880.

Karpeles, Gustav. Heinrich Heine's Life Told in His Own Words. Translated by Arthur Dexter. New York: Henry Holt and Co., 1893.

Hochhuth Rolf. The Deputy. Translated by Richard and Clara Winston. New York: Grove Press, 1964.

Houwaldt, Ch. E. Der Leuchtturm. In Das Schicksalsdrama, p. 463. Berlin und Stuttgart: Verlag von Spemann, 1870.

Hugo, Howard. The Portable Romantic Reader. New York: The Viking Press, 1957.

Krell, Leo and Fiedler, Leonhard. Deutsche Literaturgeschichte. Bamber: C. C. Buchners Verlag, 1963.

Low, Alfred. Jews in the Eyes of the Germans. Philadelphia: A Publication of the Institute for the Study of Human Issues, 1979.

Mann, Golo. "Who owns Heine?" Encounter 40 (June 1973): 31-36.

Marcuse, Ludwig. Heinrich Heine. Reinbeck: Rohwolt Taschenbuch Verlag GmbH, 1960.

Mason, Eudo. Deutsche und Englische Romantik. Goettingen: Vandenhoeck und Ruprecht, 1959.

Moeller, Dierk. Heinrich Heine: Episodik und Werkeinheit. Wiesbaden und Frankfurt: Humanitas Verlag, 1973.

Muellner, Amandus. Der 24 Februar. In Das Schicksalsdrama, p. 303. Berlin und Stuttgart: Verlag von W. Spemann, 1870.

Mustard, Helen M. Edited and Translated. Heinrich Heine: Selected Works. New York: Vintage Books, 1973.

Peacock, Ronald. The Poet in the Theater. New York: Hill and Wang, 1960.

Praz, Mario. The Romantic Agony. Translated by Angus Davidson. New York: Meridan Books, 1956.

Sammons, Jeffrey. Heinrich Heine: A Modern Biography. New Jersey: Princeton University Press, 1979.

_____. Heinrich Heine: The Elusive Poet. New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 1969.

Sharp, William. Life of Heinrich Heine. London: Walter Scott, 24 Warwick Lane, 1888.

Strodtmann, Adolf. Heinrich Heine's Leben und Werke. Vol. 3. Hamburg: Hoffmann und Campe, 1884.

_____. Immortellen Heinrich Heines. Berlin: Verlag von R. Lesser, 1871.

Untermeyer, Louis. Heinrich Heine, Paradox and Poet: The Life. Vol. 1. Heinrich Heine, Paradox and Poet: The Poet. Vol. 2. New York: Harcourt, Brace and Co., 1937.

_____. ed. and with a Preface. Heinrich Heine: Works and Prose. With translations by E. B. Ashton. New York: L. B. Fisher, 1943.

Veit, Philip. "Heine's Birth: Illegitimate or Legitimate?" German Review 33 (1959):276-284.

Walzel, Oskar. German Romanticism. Translated by Alma Elise Lussky. New York: G. P. Putnam's Sons, 1932.

Werner, Alfred, ed. The Sword and the Flame Selections from Heinrich Heine's Prose. New York and London: Thomas Yoselof, 1960.

Werner, Zacharias. Der 24 Februar. In Das Schicksaldrama, p. 239. Berlin und Stuttgart: Verlag von W. Spemann, 1870.