

GRILLPARZER'S "SAPPHO."

A CRITICAL STUDY OF THE PLAY, WITH NOTES ON THE TEXT.

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## I. LIFE OF GRILLPARZER

Franz Grillparzer was born in Vienna, on January 15, 1791. The beautiful Austrian capital, with its precious tradition of legend, of music and song, impressed him with its spirit. He loved his home passionately; the Austrian people were his people, and he knew them intimately. He remained Viennese to the end of his days, and a few months before his death he said: "Ich bin kein Deutscher, sondern ein Österreicher, ja ein Nordösterreicher, und vor allem ein Wiener."

Grillparzer's parents, like those of Goethe, were widely dissimilar in character. His father was an advocat, a stern, reserved figure, very earnest, but with little practical sense. He paid almost no attention to the education of his four children, although he encouraged them to read the ghost stories and horror tales of which he was morbidly fond. From him Franz inherited his serious and upright nature and his critical faculty of mind.

The poet's mother was a member of the noted Sonnleithner family. Her father's home was a rendez-vous for all the musicians of Vienna, and Haydn and Mozart were honored guests there. In such a household it was not to be wondered at, that all the children should develop a passionate love of music.

Grillparzer received from his mother this musical talent, and artistic temperament. He was given piano lessons but was never satisfied with his own interpretations. He felt restrained by rules, and longed for free artistic expression.

Unfortunately for her children, Marianne Grillparzer transmitted to them the darker side of her character also -- a brooding melancholy which in her own case ended tragically in suicide. Franz alone of the four brothers struggled successfully against this common morbid tendency. The others all went down before it. Karl became a soldier, and later received a position in the customs. For some reason, he accused himself of murder, and it was only with great difficulty that he was rescued by Franz from the consequences of his act. He remained dependent on his brother for the rest of his life. Kamillo held a subordinate clerk's position in the government, but was never successful. Adolf committed suicide in 1817, at the age of seventeen.

During Grillparzer's early youth the family lived in a large house in the old part of Vienna. The father took little interest in social life, and preferred to live in retirement. The poet spent his childhood in this gloomy old house with huge dark rooms which his lively imagination peopled with all manner of ghosts, goblins, and robbers.

The elder Grillparzer was opposed to public schools, and the boys were put under a private tutor, from whom they learned practically nothing. As their father paid no attention to them, they grew up under very lax discipline, a state of affairs which continued until it was time for Franz to take the examination for the Gymnasium. Then there was a rude awakening, and an immediate change. Another tutor was engaged, and by dint

of much serious application, Franz was admitted, in 1801, to the St. Anna Gymnasium in Vienna.

Here he remained for three years, but was a most unsatisfactory student. He had no interest whatever in his studies, and spent the greater part of his time reading history, especially the lives of the saints, in whose sufferings and martyrdom he took a deep, and somewhat morbid interest.

In 1804 Grillparzer left the Gymnasium and entered upon a course in literature and philosophy at the University of Vienna. He was no better in his studies than before and the chief importance of this part of his life lies in the friendships which he made. He and two other young students, Ignas Joseph Mailler and Georg Altmutter, formed a 'Society for Mutual Culture' which met once a week. Political and religious topics were banned, but they discussed art and literature with great warmth and enthusiasm. Grillparzer had already formulated plans for his first play, "Blanka von Kastilien." He now completed the tragedy and attempted to get it published, but it was refused.

At the wish of his father the young poet now began the study of law. Here again he had no interest in his course, but forced himself to concentrate upon it, in accordance with the desire of his father, who, at this time, was very ill.

The condition of the elder Grillparzer soon became very serious. He was deeply moved by the chaotic war period of 1809. The entrance of the French into Vienna, and the Peace of Pressburg were the events which hastened his death. He died

on November 10, 1809, leaving his widow and four children almost penniless. On Franz fell the burden of providing for the family. He managed by tutoring to earn enough to keep them, and also to scrape together the necessary money to finish his law course.

In 1813 he entered the household of the Count von Seillern as private tutor to the count's nephew. The old nobleman was coarse and unintellectual, and Grillparzer found his work very uncongenial, but he managed to read a great deal, in secret, from the count's extensive library. It was here that he received his first introduction to English literature.

In the spring of the following year Grillparzer became seriously ill, after a severe cold. The heartless count returned to town, leaving the poor young man on the estate, under the care of the village physician. For some time his life was despaired of, but thanks to his strong constitution, he finally recovered and returned to Vienna.

Soon after this he took an unpaid position in the court library, where he spent his days in devouring the works of the ancient Greek dramatists, and also became interested in Spanish literature. He translated Calderon's "La Vida es Sueño" (Life is a Dream,) and through this made a friendship which was to be of great importance in his life. Hebenstreit, the editor of the "Modezeitung" saw Grillparzer's translation, and thought it so excellent that he published it side by side with a similar translation by the critic and dramaturgist Schreyvogel-- to the obvious detriment of the latter. Schreyvogel, who was acquainted with the Grillparzer family, was at first very angry, thinking

the young poet had purposely tried to embarrass him. Later, when he discovered the truth of the matter, he took a great interest in Grillparzer, and became one of his most intimate friends.

Schreyvogel encouraged Grillparzer in the writing of his first important play "Die Ahnfrau." Grillparzer had told the noted critic of his somewhat vague and fantastic plans for this tragedy. Schreyvogel saw great promise in them, and insisted that Grillparzer write his play immediately. The first version was strongly romantic in style. It is the story of the ruin of a house due to the sin of the ancestress. She is doomed to watch the members of the family perish, one by one, and is powerless to avert their fate. Schreyvogel suggested changes in the play which made it practically a Fate Tragedy (1), although Grillparzer denied even its resemblance to that form of drama. It was largely because of his annoyance at this designation that he decided on the classical story of Sappho for the theme of his next play. He wanted a subject entirely different from that of "Die Ahnfrau."

"Sappho" was first performed April 12, 1818. It created a great sensation, and Grillparzer was offered a position in the government service, on the condition that all his future dramas were to go to the Burg theater.

He had begun to prepare the plot of his "Medea" tragedy, when the suicide of his mother, January 24, 1819, shocked

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(1) Fate Tragedy:- a type of play belonging to the Romantic School. A further discussion of this dramatic form will be found in the discussion of the origin of the play "Sappho."

him beyond measure. He was crushed by this tragedy, and decided to make a journey to Italy, in order to recover from the effects of his loss. He applied for a passport, but as this was delayed he started off without it, and through the efforts of a friend he managed to join the suite of the Empress, who was making the same journey. The young man with whom Grillparzer was travelling became ill in Naples, and the poet remained with him until he recovered, thereby overstaying his leave-of-absence. For this he was severely criticized by other workers in his department.

On his return from Italy Grillparzer published a poem, "Die Ruinen des Campo Vaccino," deploring the fact that the symbols of Christianity were to be seen above the ruins of the ancient Colosseum. This poem was taken as a direct insult to the Church and to the Emperor and a great scandal ensued. These unhappy experiences following so closely upon his bereavement were more than enough to offset any good impressions which the Italian journey might have made on him.

Grillparzer now began work again on "Das goldene Vliess." He planned a trilogy, and had already written the first part, "Der Gastfreund," before he left for Italy. He soon finished the second and third parts, "Die Argonauten," and "Medea." In the tragedy he shows the development of Medea's character. She belongs to the barbaric country of Colchis, and her nature is the exact antithesis of the sunny, cultured world of Greece, to which Jason belongs. Like "Sappho" it is a tragedy of conflicting natures and forces.

Medea, like Phaon and Melitta, is a child of nature. She has been brought up in unrestrained freedom, and chafes against the fetters of civilized Greek society. Jason is intellectually her superior. He is a cultured aristocrat. Their temperaments and their heritages are entirely dissimilar, and it is this difference which motivates the tragedy.

The play was first produced in March, 1821, but it was not a great success at the time, although some later critics consider it his best work.

"König Ottokar's Glück und Ende," a drama based on the fall of the king of Bohemia, and the rise of the Hapsburg dynasty, was completed in 1823, but was not produced until two years later, on account of unfavorable censorship.

The years during which he wrote "König Ottokar" were the happiest of Grillparzer's life. At an evening party, in 1821, he met Katherina Fröhlich, the youngest of four sisters, a strikingly beautiful girl, with whom he fell passionately in love. It is interesting to note that in almost every one of his plays, Grillparzer depicts this sudden initial impulse of affection. This was neither the first nor the only love affair of his life, but it was by far the deepest. They became engaged, but they were too much alike in temperament ever to be happy together. Both were intensely individual, and neither would yield. The engagement was broken off, but their friendship continued throughout their lives. Grillparzer was a welcome guest at the house of the Fröhlich sisters, and spent many hours in their company.

In 1826 Grillparzer visited Germany where he met many of the literary celebrities of the time, including the Romanticists Tieck, Fouqué and Chamisso. But his goal was Weimar--and Goethe. Grillparzer regarded Goethe with something akin to blind hero-worship, and looked forward to his meeting with the great author with awe, and no little trepidation. He was invited to an evening entertainment at Goethe's house, and there he met his idol for the first time. But he was sadly disappointed. Goethe seemed to him stiff and ceremonious. He had an air of cold condescension almost like that of a monarch, and Grillparzer looked in vain for the gifted poet of "Iphigenia" and "Tasso."

Their next meetings were no more propitious, although Grillparzer found Goethe warm-hearted and friendly. They discussed "Sappho" and Goethe praised it highly, and encouraged Grillparzer in his writing. But the younger poet was not at his ease. He was overawed, and felt that his own works were unimportant beside those of Goethe, while the latter did not understand the sensitiveness and timidity of Grillparzer's nature. Thus the visit to Weimar, which, like the Italian journey, might have meant so much in Grillparzer's life, proved unfruitful, although his regard for Goethe was in no way diminished.

After his return to Vienna Grillparzer continued to produce plays, but was constantly vexed by the arbitrary censorship of the Metternich regime. Also his own affairs were not progressing favorable. He was moved from one minor position

to another without the slightest regard for his wishes, and his life was embittered by criticism and persecution.

For his next play Grillparzer selected a subject more likely to meet with the approval of the censor. "Ein treuer Diener seines Herrn" was written for the occasion of the coronation of the Queen of Hungary. It was performed on February 28, 1828, and was enthusiastically received.

In "Des Meeres und der Liebe Wellen" (1831) Grillparzer again turned to classical antiquity for his theme. He used the old legend of Hero and Leander, with which he had been familiar for many years. This drama is perhaps the most beautiful love-tragedy in German, and has been compared to "Romeo and Juliet" in English literature.

In 1834 "Der Traum ein Leben" appeared. The idea of this play probably went back to his early studies of Spanish literature, and it was no doubt suggested by Calderon's "La Vida es Sueno." It was produced with great success, and is still one of his most popular plays.

Grillparzer visited Paris and London in 1836, and made the acquaintance of many of his contemporaries in the literary world. After his return, "Weh dem der lügt," his only comedy, was finished, and produced in 1838. It was a complete failure, and Grillparzer was so hurt by its reception, that, during his lifetime, he allowed no more of his plays to be given to the public. With the exception of the fragment "Esther," his other dramas were not even published until after his death. These plays are: "Libussa," a fantastic and symbolic legendary

play; "Ein Bruderzwist in Hapsburg," a historical drama; and "Die Jüdin von Toledo," a tragedy of illicit love.

In 1832 Grillparzer was made Direktor of Hofkammerarchiv, and he retained this position until he was pensioned in 1856. During this latter part of his life he busied himself with his later dramas and also undertook a journey to Greece, and another visit to Germany.

Now he was hailed by Austria as its foremost poet and dramatist, and showered with honors. In 1849 he was presented with the Order of Leopold by Francis Joseph I, and in 1861 he was appointed member of the council of the Empire. But he could never forgive the slights and insults which he had received earlier in life. As he grew older the melancholy tendency became stronger and at last he refused to go out in society. In 1849 he moved into the house of the Fröhlich sisters, and they cared for him until his death in 1872.

One of the most notable traits of Grillparzer's character, and one which had a deep influence on a great many of his literary works, was his intense patriotism. He was essentially an Austrian and was definitely opposed to any union between his country and Germany. He objected particularly to the Prussian methods of government, and protested against the domineering spirit of that country, but he understood the weaknesses of Austria, and recognized the need for forcefulness and decisive action.

He was almost narrow-minded in his national feeling, and even declined the offer of a German firm to publish his works, although by this means his plays would have been given a much wider circle of readers.

He was politically a conservative, and was strongly opposed to any form of revolution. His reaction to the trying period of 1848 was one of extreme distress, and he went away for a time, to escape from what seemed to him absolute chaos. At this time he wrote his charming short story, "Der arme Spielmann," in which he expresses his love for the Viennese people, and his intimate connection with them.

Grillparzer reinstated Austria in its true place in German literature. Since the time of Walther von der Vogelweide, (1) poetry had been practically dead, and had given place to music, in the lives of the Austrian people. The drama had been flourishing at the Burgtheater, largely because of the excellence of the actors, but none of the plays they produced were by Austrian dramatists. All were 'imported' from Germany and foreign countries. Grillparzer gave them plays written by an Austrian, for the Austrian public, and so great was his genius that his plays have now come to be known and admired, not only by his own people, but by the whole world.

Grillparzer belongs to no distinct school of literature. He is in turn romanticist, classicist, and realist. But in his romanticism he is always a master of form. His romantic dramas are free from that looseness of structure which is a weakness of so many others of that class. In his

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(1) Walther von der Vogelweide was the greatest of the early German Minnesingers. He led a roving life, but Austria was his native land. His literary career began about 1190.

historical plays he is often idealistic, but his realism is neither brutal nor stark. It is always veiled in beauty. His classical tragedies are excellent in form, and style, and because of their themes, possess an universal appeal. This latter group of plays is more widely known outside his own country, than are the others, a fact which is due, in part, to the familiar legendary subjects.

## II. ORIGIN AND SOURCES OF "SAPPHO"

### A. Origin

On July 29, 1817, Grillparzer was walking alone along the bank of the Danube. At the entrance to the Prater, that famous and beautiful park of Vienna, he encountered a friend, Dr. Felix Joel. The two began chatting, and the discussion soon turned to a new opera by the composer Kapellmeister Weigl. Joel asked Grillparzer if he would consent to write the libretto, but the poet answered he had no appropriate subject in mind. His friend at once replied that he had already hit on such a theme -- the legend of the poetess Sappho. "Na--ist das ein Operntext?" he asked triumphantly, but Grillparzer cried in reply, "Eine Tragödie ist's!"

Joel protested; there were too few events, the plot could not be made dramatic enough. But Grillparzer had suddenly seen the possibilities of the subject, and his viewpoint could not be shaken. The two friends soon parted, Joel returning to the city, while Grillparzer strolled farther into the park, alone with his thoughts, his brain filled with this new plan.

Since the appearance of "Die Ahnfrau," Grillparzer had been much annoyed by the criticisms which that play had called forth. It was spoken of as a "Fate Tragedy," and indeed it does possess the essential characteristics of that type of play.

The Fate Tragedy was a literary class very popular among the Romantic dramatists. All plays of this type have similar themes, and in all, the atmosphere, which is one of horror and terror, is built up by means of the same devices. There is usually a storm

cloud hovering over the scene, symbolic of the approaching doom. The night is dark, and the setting of the action is a lonely spot. Owls hoot dismally, and bats flit eerily about. The tragedy is often connected with a definite date or place, or with some material object, such as a dagger or knife. Unnatural love is a common theme, and it often brings about the murder of relatives. The characters seem to feel the overhanging doom, and the element of heredity is often connected with this.

It is easily seen with what apparent justice "Die Ahnfrau" was grouped with these plays. The whole atmosphere of mystery and the supernatural, is similar. A fatal dagger plays an important part in the action. The young lovers are discovered to be brother and sister. The hero kills his own father, without being aware of his identity. The spirit of the ancestress is symbolic of the brooding spirit of fate, overhanging the characters.

Nevertheless Grillparzer strongly objected to this classification, and contended that he had no such idea of 'fate' in mind when he wrote the play. For months he searched for a subject for his next work. He wanted some simple direct theme, which would allow him to exhibit his real poetic genius, and show that he was not dependent on ghosts, robbers, and other sensationalism for the production of a successful play.

At last he had discovered such a theme. The story of Sappho was simple in the extreme, and there would be plenty of opportunity for free imagination.

By the time Grillparzer returned to his home, late that

evening, the play had taken shape in his mind.

The next morning he went to the library and pored over the fragments of Sappho's poetry. One of the two longer odes struck him as being particularly appropriate, and he translated it at once.

On the following day he set to work on the composition of his tragedy, and applied himself so diligently that it was completed in the remarkable short period of three weeks. He later revised it slightly, the most important change being the elaboration of the character Rhamnes, who was called merely "Diener" in the first version.

The first performance was given on April 21, 1818, at the Burgtheater. It was a great success, and the critics were, on the whole, favorable, with one notable exception. Grillparzer had sent the original manuscript to Müller, one of the foremost contemporary critics, who had praised the work, but advised certain changes. These changes Grillparzer refused to make, giving his reason in the matter. Müller was highly incensed at what he considered a gross insult, and, in consequence, when the play was produced, he was scathing in his criticism.

#### B. Sources

Grillparzer's main source was, of course, the story of the ancient Greek poetess, Sappho, but so little is known of the events of her life, that he was able to let his poetic imagination have full rein.

According to tradition, Sappho was born in Mitylene, on the island of Lesbos. She was the greatest of the ancient poetesses and flourished between 630 and 570 B. C. It is thought that she left Lesbos for Sicily, on account of political turmoil, but she later returned to Mitylene where she became the centre of a female coterie, and founded a school of poetry. She was the author of a large number of poems, but only two complete pieces, "To Aphrodite," and "To a Maiden," together with some fragments, have come down to us. These display intense feeling, and glowing imagination. The ode "To Aphrodite" was used almost in entirety by Grillparzer in Act I, scene 6, of the play.

The remaining facts of Sappho's life are purely legendary, as is the figure of Phaon, who was known in Greek mythology as a boatman at Mitylene. He is said to have been originally an ugly old man, but having carried Aphrodite across the sea without accepting payment, he received from her the gift of youth and beauty. After this, Sappho fell in love with him and when he slighted her, leaped from the Leucadian rock.

In the later Greek comedies the figure of Sappho was always a ridiculous one. She was represented as an aged spinster who pursued Phaon, a young and handsome youth. He spurned her advances, and in her excess of passion, she leaped from the rock into the sea. The plunge having effectually cooled her ardor, she was picked up by a boat, and conveyed unharmed to the shore.

This story was the kernel of the play, but it was so vague, and above all, so brief, that Grillparzer was able to make use of other materials and motifs which impressed him.

Zacharias Werner's "Wanda" had some influence on him at this time, although its similarity to "Das Goldene Vliess" is more marked.

Another work of more importance in connection with "Sappho," is Mme. de Staël's "Corinne." Grillparzer had been strongly impressed by this novel, and had written his opinion of it in his "Studien zur französischen Literatur." (1816). It is the story of the poetess Corinne's love for an inferior man, Lord Nevil. They meet under much the same circumstances as do Sappho and Phaon. Corinne is riding in triumph to Rome, where she is to be crowned poetess of Italy. Just as Sappho drops her lyre, so she lets fall her wreath, and it is returned to her by the young man, who is awed by her fame and beauty. She is impressed by his appearance, and feels herself attracted to him. Both she and Sappho feel the awakening of love at the moment when they are at the height of their fame.

Still another work had a tremendous influence on Grillparzer, and its effect is seen not only in this play, but, in a great many of his other writings. This was a French work—"Télémaque" by Fénelon. While still a boy, Grillparzer had become acquainted with this poem through his tutor, Gartner, and later it became one of his favorite works. The points of similarity between it and Sappho are very marked, even the scenery and the names of characters showing Fenelon's influence. A brief sketch of the plot will serve to illustrate its resemblance to Grillparzer's tragedy.

The goddess Kalypso has been deserted by Odysseus, and lives on a beautiful island, surrounded by her maidens. Telemachus, Odysseus' son, comes in search of his father. He has been through many dangers and tribulations, and is grateful to have reached, at last, a peaceful spot. Kalypso persuades him to stay, and takes him to her grotto in the hillside, where a feast is prepared in his honor. Telemachus does not feel happy. He is discontented, and longs for his father. His mood at this time recalls Phaon's melancholy yearning for his home.

Kalypso falls in love with the young man; but he looks upon her with honor and respect, as a divine being. In one of her maidens, Eucharis by name, he finds a sympathetic companion. Eucharis is the counterpart of Melitta, a young and innocent maiden in contrast to the more mature figure of the heroine.

Kalypso becomes enraged, just as Sappho does, but like Sappho, she later becomes aware of her own folly. Telemachus escapes from the island on a ship, while Kalypso sadly returns alone to her grotto.

Grillparzer was not the first dramatist to use the story of Sappho for the plot of a tragedy. Franz von Kleist's "Sappho" appeared about the time of Grillparzer's birth, and exhibits quite a number of the same elements as the greater work of Grillparzer. It has been suggested (1) that Grillparzer was familiar with this earlier drama. A. Sauer (2), however, denies the fact that Kleist's play was one of Grillparzer's sources. At any rate, the play of our poet is, in every way, superior to the earlier work, and shows a much deeper artistic sense, as well as finer form and characterization.

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(1) J. Schwering, "Franz Grillparzer's hellenische Trauerspiele," Paderborn, 1891, P. 14.

(2) Review of Schwering's book in "Anzeiger für deutsches Altertum" 19, 308-338.

### III. Critical Analysis of "Sappho."

#### (a) Theme and Characters.

In "Die Ahnfrau," there is little or no character development. The play is of the romantic type, and the external action is important. In "Sappho," Grillparzer turned to an entirely new field, that of the psychological drama. A study of this play becomes a study of the psychological development of the three principal characters. In the main, the action is internal, and what little external action there is, takes place as a direct result of the mental changes undergone by the characters.

The main theme of the play is the conflict between art and life. The true artist can never live a normal, social life. He must always stand aloof, and, as it were, watch life from a distance. It is when he tries to draw near, and share in the joys and sorrows of this life that catastrophe inevitably overtakes him.

Grillparzer was by no means the only poet to recognize this fact. This same theme in literature can be traced from Goethe, through Grillparzer, up to the present, where we find it expressed particularly strongly in the works of Thomas Mann. (1).

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- (1) Thomas Mann is one of the foremost contemporary novelists of Germany. In all his works, the important problem is the continuous conflict of the soul torn between the contemplative world, and the world of actuality. His short story "Tonio Kröger" expresses this conflict perhaps the best of all his works.

This doctrine of artistic conflict is the subject of Goethe's play, "Torquato Tasso," with which Grillparzer was familiar. Here, too, we see the same conflict, between the two views of life, the two natures, so diametrically opposed. On the one hand we have Tasso, the great Italian poet, a man above the world, lost in his own creations. On the other hand is Antonio, the strong, vigorous, efficient man of the world. Tasso feels that he has lost touch with life, and seeks to establish contact with it, through love. But he succumbs in this encounter with real life, and returns, chastened by the experience, to his poetry.

There is no tragic catastrophe in this play, as there is in "Sappho," and it is possible that this is at least one reason for the storm of criticism aroused by Sappho's suicide. But the development of the problem is entirely different in the two plays. Sappho is overwhelmed almost immediately, while Tasso discovers his folly only after a long series of minor clashes with life. Also there is a difference in the natures of the chief characters. Sappho is a woman, highly strung, and extremely sensitive. She feels keenly the slight put upon her, and at the same time she is under a strong emotional strain. The events of this one day are too much for her. Her deeply sensitive, and passionately emotional nature is shaken by this blow. For her there is no retreat; she finds peace only in death.

Tasso is also a sensitive nature, but he is a man; therein lies the great difference between the two characters. He is not so emotionally tense as Sappho, and his catastrophe therefore, is not so devastating. He can return to his poetic world, broadened by life's experience.

Grillparzer constructed his play around the figure of Sappho. She is the **nucleus** of the action, and her character is finely drawn, and beautifully interpreted. Grillparzer knew well how to do this, as he himself was of the same type--the artist who longs to taste the delights of this mundane existence, along with the raptures of a higher sphere.

The Lesbian poetess has long been idolized by the people of Greece. From Phaon we learn with what reverence, and even adoration, she is looked upon by everyone. She is almost a divine figure, a goddess. But she is also a woman, an intensely human and passionate woman, who feels that there must be more to life than what she experiences on the lofty heights of poetry. There comes a time when mere respect, and awed worship are not enough. Sappho is anxious for love. She realizes that youth is slipping from her, and feels that she has never really lived. She has always been above her fellow-men; now she longs for companionship and love. She wants to leave the lonely mountain tops of art, and descend into the warm, sunny valleys of life.

Racked by such a mood of longing and discontent, she meets Phaon. She is at once attracted to him, although he is much younger than she is, and also is her inferior intellectually, and spiritually. She endows him with all those virtues which he does not, in reality, possess; she loves what she thinks he is. She blinds herself to his shortcomings, and in her passionate longing to be loved, she forces herself to believe in his affection for her.

Through her union with Phaon, Sappho seeks to bridge the gulf between poetry and life. She cries:-

"Lass uns denn trachten, mein geliebter Freund,  
 "Uns beider Kränze um die Stirn zu flechten,  
 Das Leben aus der Künste Taumelkelch,  
 Die Kunst zu schlürfen aus der Hand des Lebens." (1).

She attempts this in vain. Through her search for earthly happiness, she falls to ruin. She sees her mistake too late, and can only lament her folly.

"Der Menschen und der Überird'schen Los,  
 "Es mischt sich nimmer in demselben Becher.  
 Von beiden Welten e i n e musst du wählen,  
 Hast du gewählt, dann ist kein Rücktritt mehr;" (2).

At first, indignation is her only emotion. She is furious at Phaon for his slight, in preferring Melitta to herself; she is wounded by Melitta's seeming ingratitude for past kindness; and she is angry at herself for having placed herself in such a situation. She determines to be revenged on the lovers, and to make them as unhappy as they have made her.

Then, when she sees them before her, her anger cools. She knows that she herself was to blame for all that has happened. She has attempted the impossible, and failed. Now she sees clearly what she has done. No longer can she return to the heights of poetry, nor is there any longer any happiness for her in earthly pleasures. The only release for her is death.

(1) Act I, Scene 3, l. 218 ff.

(2) Act III, Scene 2, l. 951 ff.

There has been much discussion over the matter of Sappho's tragic guilt. Why must she die? Is there any real motivation for such an act? Perhaps a stronger character could have faced life with its unhappiness. But Sappho's whole life has been her poetry; she felt dedicated to it, as a priestess to religion. By her love for Phaon she has desecrated her art, and her death is, as it were, an atonement for her guilt. The necessity for her death is subjective rather than objective, but nevertheless, the spirit of the play, and, above all, the character of Sappho make her suicide in perfect harmony with the rest of the action. In the words of Rhamnes:-

-- Es war auf Erden ihre Heimat nicht. Sie ist zurückgekehret  
" zu den Ihren." (1).

Phaon is not a strong character. Many of Grillparzer's men show the same weaknesses; they are weiblich. Brought up as a simple peasant, Phaon is uneducated and uncultured. Sappho's songs were familiar to him, as they were to hundreds of others throughout Greece. Like them he looked on the poetess as a half-divine figure, the inhabitant of another sphere.

When, at Olympia, the favor of his idol rests upon him, he cannot credit his senses. His feeling for her is one of awe and adoration, of respect, but it is not love. Phaon does not realize this. Carried away by her ardor, he allows himself to be taken to Lesbos with her, and even believes himself in love with

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(1) Act V, Scene 6, l. 2041-2.

her. Once his first excitement has worn off, however, he feels uneasy. He is conscious of a longing for his home and parents, for the familiar scenes of his own country. He is strange, and ill-at-ease in his surroundings, and cannot understand his own confused state of mind.

In Melitta, he finds a sympathetic, and understanding companion. She is his own age, his own type, a true child of nature, and she awakens in him that love which Sappho hoped for, but was powerless to arouse. He understands at last the difference between adoration for an idealized being, and true love for a person whose thoughts and emotions are the same as his own.

"Gleich und gleich gesellt sich gern;" the two young unsophisticated natures find in each other that happiness which was denied to the highly-cultured, and more mature Sappho.

The awakening of love has a very definite effect on Phaon's character. From a shy, and almost melancholy dreamer, he becomes suddenly the man of action. It is he who takes the initiative in their attempted flight from Lesbos, and when they are captured and brought back, he is not afraid to face Sappho and accuse her of wrongdoing. The feeling which he had for her has turned to hate, and he looks on her now with contempt, not as his ideal, but as a jealous woman, the enemy of his beloved Melitta.

This beautiful young girl is Grillparzer's own contribution to the story. She and Hero ("Des Meeres und der Liebe Wellen") represent his ideal of womanly beauty and grace, and he

has sketched them lovingly, in clear, glowing colors. Melitta is Sappho's favorite maiden. She is young and ingenuous, and endowed with charm and innocence. Torn from her parents at an early age, she has known only Sappho's care and love, and looks on her benefactress with the deepest devotion. This is shown in the first scene when Rhamnes points out to her the wreath which Sappho wears. Melitta cares nothing for this symbol of victory; she sees only her beloved mistress, home once more.

Melitta's longing for her native land, like Phaon's, is really only a desire for love and companionship. When Phaon speaks with her, she is comforted, and like a child, she feels happy once more, forgetting her sadness.

The love of this naive young maiden for Phaon is purely instinctive. She does not even recognize its first stirrings, but, once awakened, it transforms her in a moment, from a child to a woman. She first becomes conscious of her love, when Sappho demands from her, Phaon's rose. Then, perhaps for the first time, she dares to defy her mistress. As soon as she sees the depths of misery into which Sappho is plunged, remorse and tenderness overcome her other feelings. She is torn between her gratitude and devotion to Sappho, and her love for Phaon.

It is interesting to notice the means by which Grillparzer sketches his characters for us with a few deft touches. They reveal their real personalities not only in their speeches, but also through their actions. Therefore, in Grillparzer's dramas, the stage-directions play an important part in the development of the plot.

In this play, Melitta's shyness and timidity are shown by her downcast eyes, (1) her tears, (2) and her silence. (3) Sappho's despair and anger are reflected as much in her long silences (4) as in her furious speeches, while her mood of renunciation at the end of the play is made more clear through, the stage-directions. (5).

(b) Structure

The excellent structure of this play shows us that Grillparzer was a master of dramatic technique. All the unities are strictly observed, there not being even a sub-plot to complicate the action.

The whole drama takes place in front of Sappho's grotto, the same setting being used during the entire play. The events all take place within the space of twenty-four hours, a fact which makes Sappho's tragedy all the more moving, when we consider that the catastrophe which overtook her, was so sudden in its onslaught. At the height of her fame and glory, she is plunged, in a moment, into the depths of despair and misery, and finally goes to her death.

The action is classically simple; not one irrelevant

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- (1) Act II, Scene 2, l. 537.  
Act II, Scene 4, Stage-direction after l. 604.
  - (2) Act II, Scene 2, l. 556.  
Act II, Scene 4, Stage-direction after l. 616.
  - (3) Act II, Scene 4, Stage-direction after l. 623.
  - (4) Act III, Scene 4, Stage-direction at first of scene.  
Act III, Scene 5, Stage-direction after l. 1020.
  - (5) Act V, Scene 6, Stage-direction at first of scene,  
also after l. 1950, 1972, etc.

motif is introduced. Events lead directly to the climax, and from there, they move swiftly to the catastrophe. The various steps in the development of the plot are:

1. At Olympia Sappho falls in love with Phaon, and brings him to Lesbos with her. (Act I).
2. During the banquet in his honor, Phaon becomes aware of Melitta. (Act II, Scenes 1 and 2).
3. Phaon meets Melitta among the roses, and their conversation leads to the kiss. (Act II, Scene 4).
4. Phaon dreams of Melitta, and utters her name in his sleep. Sappho overhears, and realizes that her fears are now fully justified. (Act III, Scene 1).
5. In her rage Sappho draws her dagger on Melitta, but Phaon, now fully conscious of his love, comes to the rescue of his beloved. This scene is the climax of the action. (Act III, Scenes 5 and 6).
6. Phaon and Melitta escape together, but are captured and brought back. (Act IV, Act V, Scenes 1 and 2).
7. They are brought before Sappho. Phaon hotly accuses her of jealousy, and desire for vengeance. (Act V, Scene 3).
8. Sappho realizes her own folly, and resolves to atone for her guilt by death. (Act V, Scene 6).

(c) Treatment of the Greek Theme

To a reader of "Sappho" it will be evident that, while in outward form and appearance the play is a Greek tragedy, in spirit it is something quite different. The setting for the

drama is Greek, but the ideas expressed are modern in their appeal. Grillparzer was criticized on this account, but his reply was, that he did not write his play for ancient Greeks, but for modern Germans. The characters wear Greek dress, but in every other respect they are modern people, and their problem is one which belongs to any age, the present as well as the past of antiquity. Our interest in the play lies, not in the historical background, or in the geographical location, but in the psychological development of the characters. Sappho, Phaon, and Melitta arouse our interest and sympathy, not as types of ancient Greeks, but as real, living personalities. Grillparzer intended that we see them as such, and therefore constructed his classical dramas around legendary, rather than historical subjects.

The atmosphere of the Greek background is created by various means, such as classical allusions, descriptions of settings, and of dress and customs of the characters.

In Sappho we find, on almost every page, allusions to Greek mythology, to persons and places well known in ancient times. In the first scene, Sappho is described as returning from Olympia, where the Greek games are known to have been held. In the same scene, Melitta likens Phaon to Apollo, the Greek sun-god. Later in the first act, Phaon enumerates some of the games which were played at Olympia, such as chariot racing, and discus throwing. He speaks of Alcaeus and Anacreon, well known poets of the time.

The setting is definitely Greek. Sappho's grotto in the hillside is covered with ivy. Close by the bank is an altar to Aphrodite, the Greek goddess of love and beauty. Phaon describes for us the scene of his home, a typical peasant household. (Act I, Scene 3, l. 165 ff.) It is also through his lips that we have a description of the banquet in his honor. (Act II, Scene 1, l. 450 ff.)

In his treatment of the classical theme, Grillparzer was indebted to Goethe. The influence of "Iphigenie" and "Torquato Tasso" on "Sappho" is very marked. We find in Grillparzer the same background of classical antiquity used to set off problems that are ageless and universal; the same simplicity and dignity of classical diction; the same clear and direct unfolding of action with which we are familiar in the works of Goethe.

If we examine the literary style of "Sappho" in comparison with that of "Die Ahnfrau," we find a marked contrast between the two. The earlier drama was written largely under the influence of the Spanish writers, and of Schiller's early works. In its euphuistic phraseology, its extravagant metaphors, the language of "Die Ahnfrau" bears a strong resemblance to that of Schiller's "Don Carlos," and "Die Braut von Messina." The play is in verse, the form being trochaic tetrameter, for the use of which Grillparzer was indebted to Calderon.

In "Sappho," Grillparzer turned from the more romantic forms of Schiller and Calderon, to the classicism of the ancient Greek dramatists, and of their modern exponent, Goethe.

Gone is the diffuseness, the redundancy of "Die Ahnfrau;" the language of "Sappho" is Attic in its simplicity, and unaffected grace. It possesses glowing vigor, and elegance of diction, which betray a careful study of the classical models. The metre is the iambic pentameter, blank verse, which is the traditional form for classical tragedy, and which was introduced into Germany by Lessing, in his "Nathan der Weise." (1779).

The main difference in style between "Sappho" and Goethe's "Iphigenie," is that Grillparzer carefully chose his language in accordance with the characters whose thought it expressed. For example, in "Sappho," Melitta and Phaon do not speak in the same poetic and sublime phrases, which come from the lips of Sappho herself. Their speeches, at times, lapse into colloquial phrases, (1) a stylistic device used in the Greek dramas to denote that the character is of the lower class. In "Iphigenie," Goethe makes all the characters speak the same pure, poetic diction, the barbarian, Thoas, as well as the cultured priestess, Iphigenie. Therefore, in Grillparzer's play the minor characters appear more natural and lifelike than they do in the classical tragedy of Goethe.

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(1) Act II, Scene 6, l. 729, 739, 752.

Act IV, Scene 5, l. 1391, 1426.

IV. Notes on the Text.Act I

Eppich = 'ivy'. The more common term is Epheu.

Rasenbank = A grassy seat, or raised bank, probably in the shape of a couch.

Scene 1

2. dass doch nur.... Supply wie schade ist es, or some similar expression.

3. Supply ist after Fuss and lebendig.

5. trifft:- "refer to."

der.....der:            he.....who.....

10. fragt:- instead of fragt. A much less common construction, but occasionally used.

11. Olympia:- A plain in Elis, where the Olympic games were celebrated, every four years. Song and poetry contests had no part in these games, and Grillparzer is confusing Olympia with other places, such as Pythia and Nemea, where such competitions did take place.

14. Zeugen:- here in apposition to Griechenlands.

20 ff. "which first taught her to call forth the speech of the lyre, to bind the unrestrained freedom of (her) song with the sweet fetter(s) of harmony."

24. Rhamnes, the teacher, sees with pride the symbol of victory, which Sappho bears. Melitta disregards this, thinking only of her joy at her mistress' return.
26. Was soll.....:- sollen here means "to be of use," "to have import." Translate: "Of what use to her is the worthless tribute of your joy?"
26. schlect:- an old form of schlicht, meaning "simple," "plain."
32. der Leier und des Bogens Gott:- Apollo, the Greek Sun-god, to whom various powers were attributed. He was known as the god of music, whence follows his connection with the lyre, and as the god of punishment, and sudden death, wherefore he is represented as bearing a bow and arrows. Melitta pays high tribute to Phaon's personal appearance, by likening him to the beautiful god of the sun.
33. ihr geht! The present indicative is here used as an emphatic imperative.
36. dass euch Freude Pflicht:- supply 'ist'. Literally: "to you gladness is duty." Translate: "It is your duty to be glad."

## Scene 2

44. Landsgenossen: A poetic term for "Landsleute."
46. Sappho means that she values the wreath only because it brings honor on her town.
50. Wahnsinniggluhnde Lust:- "fervidly-glowing joy."
51. mit eins:- "auf einmal."
- trunkne:- l. e. with joy, or emotion.

52. Zypressen:- Among the ancients, the cypress tree was commonly associated with death and funerals.
55. sich erfreut:- Supply 'hat'.
58. frevle:- Used instead of the more common 'frevelhaft' -- "audacious," "bold," i. e. in that it seemed beyond her deserts. Translate: "Here, for the first time, this decoration, the acceptance of which formerly seemed to me audacious, becomes a true adornment."
61. The subject of the sentence is, "ihr Wort."
63. ff. The names of the countrymen are purely fictitious. Grillparzer introduced them here to show Sappho's interest in her people.
66. The meaning is that her eyes repay tears for the tears of the people, even as her heart responds to their hearts.
73. sich stellen zu:- "take his place among."
74. Notice here the reference to Phaon's youth.
75. so.....als:- Common usage has "sowohl als."
81. hätt' ich:- This is virtually indirect discourse, "do you mean to say I have--" Translate: "How could I have--"
85. "You only secure for yourself the more surely, that which you disclaim."
87. Mögt ihr's immer wissen: Literally: "You are welcome to know it." Translate: "I would not keep it from you."
89. ff. With Phaon's help Sappho seeks to unite the two worlds of poetry and life.
95. Lorbeer:- The laurel, or bay, of the poet.  
Myrte:- Myrtle was sacred to Aphrodite, and was the symbol of wedded life.

Scene 3

108. ff. She longs for love, not mere friendliness.

109. So ward mirs:- "This was my lot."

Wechseltausch:- Translate: "barter". The two words mean practically the same.

115. Geschwister:- Sappho is thought to have had two brothers, but very little is known of them.

118. sie:- Refers back to 'die Geschwister', because the object is separated so far from the verb.

Acheron:- The name of one of the rivers in the infernal regions. "Acheron" is often used, as here, to designate the whole of the lower world.

123. Notice the strong dramatic irony in this passage.

126. Unermesslichkeit:- "immeasurable depths" i. e. of feeling.

132. doch:- "really."

beginnen:- Here means merely "do".

145-154. The construction is slightly confusing. The main sentence is, "Und bist du wirklich denn die hohe Frau die..... der Ruf mit Jubel zu den Sternen hebt?"

146. Pelops=Insel:- Peloponneses, or the "island of Pelops," is said to have derived its name from the mythical Pelops, son of Tantalus, and grandson of Zeus. This peninsula was the southern extremity of Greece, and was connected with Hellas proper by the isthmus of Corinth.

147. Thrakers:- "Thracians." Thrace was, in early times, a vast space of country in the northern section of the Grecian mainland. Its native tribes were noted for their savagery and

cruelty, but were brave warriors.

150. Kronions Hand:- Kronus, called Saturnus by the Romans was the father of a number of the gods and goddesses, including Zeus. "Kronion" means "son of Kronus," and refers to Zeus, who, according to ancient tradition, flung the islands far out to sea.
151. An Asiens reicher, sonnenheller Küste:- This refers to the numerous Greek colonies along the coast of Asia Minor.
153. Die heitre Göttersprache:- The Greeks recognized only one language, their own, and naturally they supposed that the gods spoke in the same tongue.
- 158-159. Phaon likens himself to Sappho's lyre, which is famous only because of its association with the poetess.
160. schlechtgestimmten:- "out of tune."
167. Theano:- A purely fictitious character.
168. Die Rolle:- i. e. of manuscript, "scroll."  
Simse:- "shelf." 'Gesims' is more common.
173. ff. The reference is to a fragment of an ode "To Adonis."  
Adonis was beloved by Aphrodite, but he died of a wound which he received from a boar during the chase. The grief of the goddess was so great that the gods of the lower world allowed him to spend six months of every year with Aphrodite.
- 176-177. Andromedens, Atthis:- These names occur in some very short fragments of Sappho's poetry, but it is not known to whom they refer.
178. schwellte:- "caused to swell."
189. Pallas:- Pallas Athena was a goddess in whom power and wis-

dom were harmoniously blended.

Hera:- The wife of Zeus. She was usually represented as a majestic woman, of grave and beautiful expression.

190. reizdurchwirkten Gürtel:- Aphrodite possessed a magic girdle which had the power of making its wearer the object of love.

"reizdurchwirkten" = "interwoven with charm."

196. Flockenschnee:- "light, fleecy." -- best translated by an adjective.

205. Wagenlaufes Streit:- "chariot race."

207. um...Krone:- Placed before "in diesem Kampfe" for the sake of the rythm.

213. des Diskus frohes Spiel:- This was a favorite game at Olympia. Other contests were held in wrestling, running, jumping, chariot and horse racing.

216. doch:- Explanatory, "since I had."

219. Alkaos:- A poet contemporary with Sappho. Like her, he came from Lesbos, and flourished about 611 B. C. Alcaeus wrote a number of warlike odes, but not many of these have come down to us in entirety.

Anakreon:- A celebrated lyric poet, born at Teos, a city in Asia Minor. He belongs to the same school of poetry as Alcaeus and Sappho, but actually lived several years later. His most famous poems sing the praises of love and wine.

220. "they could not free my spirit from its bonds."

226. lichtversagten:- "denied the light." i. e. "hidden."

227. The mantel covered her figure like a brook flowing over flowery hillsides. --a very strained simile.

240. nun:- "then."

245. blöde:- "awkward," "clumsy."

schamentgeistert:- "robbed of his wits through bashfulness."

262-263. "These are strong supports, to which existence may bind its easily-torn threads."

267. dem, was ist:- "that which exists."

271. Musen Chor:- The muses were the inspiring goddesses of song.

275. steht sich's:- A passive construction corresponding to "man steht." Translate. "It is uneasy standing on the heights of human greatness."

282. Taumelkelch:- "intoxicating chalice."

285. den Fluren, die die Lethe küsst:- The Elysian fields were a part of the lower world, and the abode of the spirits of the Blessed. Through this valley flowed Lethe, the river of oblivion. Whoever drank of its waters was granted forgetfulness of the past.

293-294. "Only when you use it, does the possession (of what is mine) bring me joy."

#### Scene 4

313. des Gastrechts heilig Amt:- For the Greeks, hospitality was a sacred duty.

320. harre Dein:- "dein" is a poetic form of the genitive "deiner." "Harren" is now commonly followed by 'auf' and the accusative.

#### Scene 5

328. der ihnen sich entpresst:- "which forces itself from them."

330. Sappho calls Melitta's attention to Phaon, little dreaming of the tragic consequences which result.
336. in Fremder Gegenwart:- "in der Gegenwart von Fremden."
341. Mädchen:- "girl."  
Jungfrau:- "young woman."
342. ff. Sappho's tenderness to Melitta in this scene, forms a sharp contrast to her infuriated actions later.
353. Schoss der Fluten:- "bosom of the waves," i. e. the Aegean Sea.
362. gleichgepaart:- "equal." Literally, "evenly-matched."
366. "as men call that good, which (is) not bad."
367. hohen Lohn:- i. e. Phaon's love.
380. ff. Sappho longs for her youth. This passage shows that she recognizes the difference in age between Phaon and herself.
382. tiefgetretne Spur:- "deep-worn trace."
387. schweren:- "troubled."
394. ff. This is Sappho's first presentiment of disaster.
419. Seinem Reichtum:- i. e. Phaon's treasure of youth and handsome appearance.

#### Scene 6

This ode is a beautiful, poetic rendering of the longest fragment of Sappho's poetry. Grillparzer changed the poem slightly, in order to make it refer to Phaon.

429. listenersinnende:- "artfully contriving."
454. Supply 'das' before 'erringen'.
455. lieblichen:- "of love."

Act IIScene 1

458. losgelassnen:- "unrestrained."  
lautes Regen:- "loud signs."  
 460. "as though afraid of disturbing."  
 461. laden:- More usually "einladen."  
 468. es:- Refers loosely to "verworrener Empfindung."  
 475. mir:- "for me."  
 477. der erst geschiednen:- "that which is just past."  
 483. ja sagt mir alles:- Order is "alles sagt mir ja."  
 488. schlechtgetroffnes:- "badly drawn."  
 491. 'Für' in the previous line also governs "ein gut'ges Wort."

Scene 2

515. Haufen Blumen:- "heaps of flowers."  
 518. tut:- "add."  
 525. This may mean either "will holen," or "will nichts."  
 527. ff. The scene at the banquet served to draw Phaon's attention directly to Melitta.  
 533. des oft versehenen Dienstes:- "of the service so often performed."  
dich:- The object of 'sah', and the subject of "vergessen," which here takes the genitive.  
 542. Nichts da!:- "not at all." "by no means."  
 543. bekannt:- The past participle is sometimes used with imperative force.  
 546-547. "If you often act thus, then I will get angry."  
 548. alle:- "all gone."

Scene 3

Melitta is moved by vague longings for sympathy and love.

She is not thinking of Phaon, nor does she realize the true reason for her discontent. (Cf. Grillparzer, 'Zum eigenen Schaffen' Werke XVIII. P. 177.)

552. es geht nicht:- "It's no use!"

556. This is not true. Melitta is not treated as a slave. In her mood she exaggerates her hardships.

562. "beats for me." i. e. in response to mine.

572. Supply 'ist' after "überflossen."

Scene 4

597. des Einen Kummer:- "Kummer des Einen."

603. Es:- Anticipates the real subject, "der Unfall." This impersonal construction is quite common. Cf. l. 613.

607. lass:- Some such word as "gehen" must be supplied.

624. Supply "tun" after "gewiss."

630-631. Order is:- "Das Gedächtnis hat-----behalten."

650. ff. Notice the change to the present tense. This heightens the dramatic intensity of the description.

653. This line is a good example of alliteration. Note also line 655.

656. fand mich:- "wieder" should be taken with the verb.

657. pfeilschnell:- "swift as an arrow."

662. Monden:- Monaten.

680. "draws back the golden veil from my bright home far in the distance."

683. wie auf fleiscentblösste Fibern:- "as on fibers stripped of flesh." i. e. an open wound.
696. Was hätte ich:- See note on l. 81. "What could I have of my own?"
705. ich reiche nicht:- "ich es kann nicht erreichen."

#### Scene 5

712. Literally:- "you make yourself be looked for." Translate:  
"Must I look for thee?"

#### Scene 6

724. rauschend:- "noisy," "murmuring."
727. Gewühl:- "tumult," "bustle."
731. das:- "such people."
734. Willst du?:- "do you wish it?"
737. mit Überwindung:- "with reluctance."
744. ff. "So ist es nur-----um jene-----zu entziehen.  
The clause, "da die Natur uns süßre versagt," is parenthetical.

#### Act III

#### Scene 1

792. Sappho likens her thoughts to bees.
804. wohl:- "perhaps."
806. launenvolles:- "wayward," "capricious."
821. Translate:- "if he finds love-----."
823. freut sich sein:- Impersonal construction. Translate:-  
"is pleased."



832. hüten:- "to keep to," as in the phrase "das Bett hüten."  
 "to be confined to bed." Translate here, "remain near."
882. den Herrn des Tages:- Helios, the sun-god. Originally he was quite distinct from Apollo, but later their identities became confused. Helios was described by Homer, as rising in the East, out of the ocean, and travelling across the heavens to the west. He drove a chariot drawn by four beautiful, spirited horses.
888. She almost forgets her anger, in listening to his tender speeches.
890. der Fiebertaumel:- "fever of excitement."
918. Pallas:- See note on l. 189.

#### Scene 2

929. schwurvergessen:- "perjured."
930. schamentblößen:- Cf. l. 245.
942. Aganippe:- A fountain at the foot of Mt. Helicon, in Boetia. It was sacred to the Muses, and was believed to inspire those who drank of it.
943. Sternenklang:- Refers to the theory of Pythagoras, which asserted that the spheres, whirling in their courses, gave forth music. This reference is an anachronism, since Pythagoras was not born until 540 B. C. Cf. l. 1632,
955. Proserpinens Granatenkernen:- Persephone, called Proserpina by the Romans, was the daughter of Zeus and Demeter (Ceres). She was captured by Pluto, and carried to the

underworld. While a captive she refused to partake of food, but was finally tempted by the wily Pluto to take one bite of a pomegranate. Six seeds remained in her mouth, and for each of these she was compelled to spend one month in the lower regions.

958. "However lovely life may appear to you."

### Scene 3

982. kurz nur erst:- "only just now."

992. keines Lauschers:- "of no eavesdropper."

1000. Diana:- A roman divinity, identified with the Greek Artemis. As a female deity she represented the same ideas as did Apollo as a male divinity. She was also the goddess of nymphs.

1010. emsig:- "busily," "assiduously."

### Scene 5

1021. Buhlen:- "lover." This word is used now in a good sense only in poetry.

1043. Leicht mag es so sein:- "That may easily be so."

1070. nicht so! Melitta is in a suppliant position, probably at Sappho's feet.

1118. i. e. like the rose they too are so soon vanished.

### Scene 6

1146. Melittion:- A Greek diminutive of endearment.

1147. mitbezahlt:- "paid for these also."

1174. Circe:- A sorceress who dwelt in the island of Aeaea, upon which Ulysses was cast. His companions tasted the magic cup which Circe offered them, and were changed into swine. Ulysses received from Hermes a root which protected him against the enchantment. He then compelled Circe to restore his friends to their former shape.

1184. mit aufgelöster Stimme:- "brokenly."

1188. verhallend:- "her voice dying away."

#### Act IV

#### Scene 1

1189. bin.....ist:- "live," "exist."

1201. Translate as an Optative Subjunctive.

"Would that I could sleep....."

1209. Hyder:- The Hydra, a terrible monster which ravaged the country of Lerna. It had nine heads, the centre one being immortal. Hercules fought with the monster, and tried to strike off its heads with his club; but for every head he cut off, two more grew in its place. Finally he burned away the mortal heads of the Hydra, and buried the immortal one under a huge boulder.

1210. des Abgrunds Flammenpfuhl:- The region of Tartarus, said to be as far below Hades, as Heaven is above the earth. The idea of the "fiery pit" was not known in Greek mythology; it is a Biblical reference.

1237. Chios:- One of the largest islands of the Aegean Sea.

Scene 2

1243. gebeutst:- Old form of 'gebietest.'
1254. "growing on the same stem as reality."
1306. das wohl nicht:- "perhaps not."
1311. noch vom Vater her:- i. e. he was a friend of her father's.
- Gastfreund:- A friend with whom hospitality is exchanged.
1318. gebeut:- See note on l. 1244.
1319. Sappho rufe sie:- Indirect discourse, "say that....."

Scene 3

1332. noch:- "wait!" Her love for Melitta almost forces her to relent again, as above in l. 1328.

Scene 4

1341. erst vor Kurzem:- See note on l. 983.
1350. freiblickend:- "looking boldly," "with a straightforward glance."
1351. Supply some such word as "scheinst," or "bist," after "angstlich."
1354. Notice the use of the modal auxiliary, without a dependent infinitive. Cf. l. 1356, 1359, 1362.
1358. Mach fort:- "Come at once!"
- Was hast du vor:- "What do you intend?"

1361. Was fällt dir ein:- "What are you thinking of?"
1368. Lass dich erbitten:- "Be moved by my entreaties."
1370. Es muss doch einmal sein:- "Still it must be done."
1371. Lass dich erflehn:- Cf. l. 1368.

### Scene 5

1378. leisespähnden:- "secretly spying."
1387. mir und ihr:- Both are held in bondage by Sappho.
1388. fremder Bosheit:- "evil designs of another."
1389. du siehst bleich:- Supply 'aus'.
1406. Eisen:- "dagger."
1422. Refers to Plato's doctrine that man was originally a being with four arms and legs, and two faces. He was cut in two by Zeus, and now each half is drawn to the other by what we term "love." Grillparzer uses this idea in "Die Argonauten," Act III.
1428. Medusenhaupt:- Medusa, one of the Gorgons, frightful maidens, who instead of hair, had their heads covered with horrible serpents. Medusa was so dreadful that whoever looked upon her, was turned to stone. Perseus, a famous hero of Greek mythology, cut off her head by looking at the reflexion of her figure in a mirror.
- 1433-1434. "Remember what you wanted to do, (and also) that you are in my power."
1444. Supply "sind" after "Sicherheit."
1449. fahre hin:- "die."

1469. Amphitrite:- The wife of Poseidon, and goddess of the sea.

1470. Es gilt dein Leben:- "Your life is at stake."

#### Scene 6

1471. Mir war:- "it seemed to me."

#### Scene 7

1490. abscheuwurd'ge:- "abhorrent."

1495. "and takes upon itself the duty of Care, the banisher of sleep.

1502. Supply "war" after "bereitet."

1519. Supply "war" after "wert."

1529. "That my eyes may pierce deep into his."

1536. beflugeln:- "give wings to."

#### Act V Scene 1

1545. doch:- "perhaps."

1546. noch nichts:- "nothing yet."

1552. Lass dich erbitten:- See note on l. 1368.

1555. Mir deucht:- Less common than "dunk."

#### Scene 2

1575. nun und nimmer:- "never at all."

1579. um ihn lenken:- for "ihn umlenken."

1582. He fears Sappho is about to swoon.

Scene 3

1595. wenn auch gleich:- "even if," "although."
1631. Krösus' Schätze:- Croesus, the last king of Lydia, a very wealthy and powerful monarch. A reference to him, in this play, is an anachronism, as he was not born until some time after Sappho's death.
1633. Rache:- In the dative case.
1634. Order: "dass---ihr---leiht."
1635. Wechsellaunen:- "wayward fancies."
1640. Literally:- "that you respect her tongue as much as the tongue (or needle) on the balance of justice." The figure is strained in English. Translate: "that you respect her word as law."
1643. umspinnen:- "woven a spell around."
1649. liegt hingegossen:- "lying prone."
1659. ungewohnten Waffen:- i. e. because they were peaceful country-folk.
1665. Circe:- See note on l. 1175.
1672. steuern:- "come to my aid."
1683. entmenscht:- "inhuman."
1687. verwirkt:- "forfeited."
1698. makellos:- "spotless," "immaculate."
1710. die Winde tragen's hin:- "may the winds bear it away."
1736. "Which I in sleep believed, but which really never were."
1741. die Besinnung:- "reflection," "consideration."
1766. störrisch-~~rau~~h:- "harsh and unyielding."
1767. war' es auch:- "even if it were."

Scene 4

1791. Ungestalt:- "imperfection."  
 1800. was:- "warum."  
 1816. blödsicht'ger:- "purblind."  
 1818. Supply 'ist' after 'Auge.'  
 1834. ei doch:- "Indeed." An example of colloquial speech.  
 1839. morschen Hüllen:- "decaying husks," i. e. their bodies.  
 1882. vogelfrei:- "outlawed."  
 1888. Eumenide:- The Furies, or Avenging Deities. They are represented as three frightful maidens who dwelt in Tarturus, whence they arose to avenge wrongs.

Scene 5

1913. "A quiver went through her whole body."  
 1919. mit eins:- "auf einmal."  
 1936. "glowing" i. e. rosy.  
 1941. "with the light of transfiguration shed about her."  
 Compare Eucharis' description of Sappho with Phaon's, in L. 223 ff.

Scene 6

1953. beraten:- "endowed."  
 1975. gebeugt:- "when bent."  
 2008. gebt - zu:- "suffer it not."  
 2016. die Flamme:- i. e. on the altar.

2023. verklärt:- "glorified," "transfigured."
2025. Phaon used these words, l. 1782.
2030. mit Melitten beschäftigt:- Melitta has fallen swoon-  
ing.
2033. trägt sie:- i. e. "ihr Götter trägt sie."

The text used as a basis for these notes is that of August Sauer, in his edition of Grillparzer's works, published in Vienna, 1909.

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