

GRYPHIUS: THE MARTYR DRAMAS OF ANDREAS GRYPHIUS

THE MARTYR DRAMAS OF ANDREAS GRYPHIUS

A Study by

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SCOPE AND CONTENTS: This study presents an examination, in chronological order, of the martyr dramas of Andreas Gryphius, the German poet and dramatist. The dominant themes of 'Eitelkeit' and the 'Beständigkeit' of the martyr figures, are traced through the dramas, and an attempt is made to evaluate Gryphius' contribution to this genre.

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INTRODUCTION

Gryphius' Drama ist der heroische Versuch des am tiefsten ringenden, grübelnden Dichters des Jahrhunderts zur Überwindung von Unbeständigkeit und Vergänglichkeit, von Not und Tod.¹

In this study we shall examine the ways in which the heroic figures of Andreas Gryphius overcome their fear of the instability and impermanence of life. Through these figures Gryphius gives dramatic expression to questions that aroused his interest: how to come to grips with the fact of God and how to reconcile God with the misery of life on earth; how to lead a life pleasing to God and to oneself, and how to achieve heaven. We shall examine the ways in which these problems are worked out in the various dramas and the nature of the answers that Gryphius offers. This introduction will discuss how he was led to find in the martyr drama a suitable vehicle for the expression of these problems.

Gryphius, a native of Silesia, was writing within the framework of the Silesian "Kunstdrama"²; as we shall have recourse later in this paper to discuss specific features of form

¹E. Lunding, Das schlesische Kunstdrama, (Copenhagen: Haase & Sons, 1940) p.10.

²cf. W. Flemming, Das schlesische Kunstdrama, (Reihe Barock, Barockdrama; of series Barock und Rokoko in Europa; Literarischer Kunst- und Kulturwissenschaftlicher Sonderausgaben; Leipzig: Reclam, 1930), I, 10-51.

and content that are typical of this genre, we shall confine our remarks at this point to its general features.

Silesia was the centre of a cultural region which may be called "ostmitteldeutsch";³ it was an area containing countless small principalities held by territorial princes exercising little economic or political influence outside their borders but who were granted absolute power and authority within them; they were solid, thrifty and religiously active. The beginning, in 1617, of the "fruchtbringende Gesellschaften", whose members came from the educated aristocracy and the "Beamtenschaft", encouraged the growth of a new culture and the development of its literature; the court officials were usually university graduates, widely travelled men acquainted with the aristocracy, who constituted an educated public for the theatre.

The writer and his public shared an interest in the sources of German and classical antiquity, in historical and contemporary tales of variety and colour, and in exotic peoples and places; Flemming states that the new literature was, "keine abstruse Gelehrsamkeitsmache, noch isolierte Spielerei weniger Wissender, sondern ausgesprochene Bildungsliteratur".⁴

³Ibid., p.10.

⁴Ibid., p.12

The common theme of this literature was the reality of fall, decay and death. The quick changes of fortune of the Thirty Years War encouraged a pessimistic view of life. In his poem "Tränen des Vaterlandes / anno 1636" Gryphius tells of the horrors of the war, and the resulting social chaos:

Die thürme stehn in glut, die Kirch ist umgekehret,
Das rathhaus liegt im graus, die starcken sind zerhaun,
Die jungfern sind geschänd't, und wo wir hin nur schaun,
Ist feuer, pest und tod, der hertz und geist durchfähret.⁵

All things were subject to change and the justification for these sudden turns of fortune was a mystery; it was considered tragic that an important ruler could fall from his lofty position, and doubly so if it were seemingly without reason. Gryphius grappled with this problem as will become evident in this study.

This social structure within which he lived and worked and the growth within it of a definite literature contributed to the form and content of his dramas and led to the development of a 'Weltauffassung',⁶ an examination of which will help understand why the particular genre of the martyr drama should have attracted him.

⁵Andreas Gryphius, Werke, ed. H. Palm (Hildesheim: Georg Olm, 1961), III, 113.

⁶cf. A. Strutz, Andreas Gryphius: Die Weltanschauung eines deutschen Barockdichters (Wort zur Dichtung; XI.; Horgen/Zürich: Münster Presse, 1931).

In the seventeenth century a tension existed between the still widespread mediaeval conception of earthly existence as essentially a preparation for life after death and a more modern affirmation of life here on earth; Catharina von Georgien, for example, illustrates the conflict of heavenly love, in the person of the heroine Catharina, and worldly love, in the person of the tyrant Abas. Gryphius supports emphatically Catharina's 'Weltverachtung' and in the presentation of his heroine offers an answer to the question of how one should act on earth to gain a place in heaven. This hope of a reward of heavenly love existed side by side with a fear of God's judgement, an awareness of mortal guilt and a consciousness of affirmative and consequently punishable thoughts about life.

Gryphius was by nature subject to introspective brooding; he was more concerned with observations and analysis than with positive action; the following lines from the sonnet "Einsamkeit" testify to this feature:

Hier, fern von dem pallast, weit von des pöbels lüsten,
 Betracht ich, wie der mensch in eitelkeit vergeh',
 Wie auf nicht festem grund' all unser hoffen steh',
 Wie die vor abend schmäh'n, die vor dem tag uns grüssten.⁷

⁷Andreas Gryphius, Werke, III, op. cit., p.133.

His poem "Menschliches elende" shows him again in a melancholy mood, bordering on hopeless pessimism:

Was sind wir menschen doch! ein wohnhaus grimmer schmerzen,
 Ein ball des falschen glücks, ein irrlicht dieser zeit,
 Ein schauplatz herber angst, besetzt mit scharffem leid,
 Ein bald verschmeltzter schnee und abgebrannte kertzen.⁸

Gryphius believed in the unalterable necessity of a personal fate; in order to gain heaven one had to lead a life pleasing to God, and it was exactly the troubling question of how life should be lived ideally that Gryphius illustrates in his dramas; Gryphius' God seems to be the law-maker and judge. This dependence for salvation upon a life pleasing to God places great responsibility on the shoulders of the individual. The ideal attitude to life, he seems to suggest, should not consist of activity and creativity, but rather a submissive forbearance of the sorrows God may send; troubles are present to try man's virtue and to turn him to God. Gryphius' writings reflect his own continual struggle to achieve strength of belief in reliance upon God's will; his beliefs were not of sufficient strength to allow him to accept the Protestant creed naively and without doubt, but they were still stronger than his questioning intellect.⁹

⁸Ibid., p. 103.

⁹Strutz, op. cit., pp. 32-4.

Therefore, Gryphius strongly rejected the world and his experience of human bondage and imperfection, and looked to a transcendental freedom and perfection. These lines from the poem "Ewige freude der auserwählten" illustrate this point:

Welt, ade! glück zu, mein trost! gute nacht tod, angst und schmerz!
 Ich find alles, alles lern ich, alles schau ich herr! in dir.
 Ich zuschmeltz in lauter wonne, Jesu! Jesu, meine zier!¹⁰

In life Gryphius sees no sense of creation, only eternal change and the law of decay. For Gryphius God does not seem to be creative, but rather eternally at rest and unconditionally immutable, whereas man's fortunes are in a continual state of flux. Gryphius is acutely aware of the suddenness of change, as consideration of the following lines from his poem "Es ist alles eitel" reveal:

Due siehst, wohin du siehst, nur eitelkeit auf erden.
 Was dieser heute baut, reißt jener morgen ein;
 Wo ietzundt städte stehn, wird eine wiese seyn, ¹¹
 auf der ein schäfers-kind wird spielen mit den herden.

Certainly in his dramas he focuses attention upon moments of fall and sudden death, and as will be indicated in this consideration of the martyr drama, Gryphius continually emphasises the 'vanitas' image, the emptiness behind appearance.

¹⁰ Andreas Gryphius, Werke, III, op. cit., p. 157.

¹¹ Ibid., p.102.

The idea of the development of mankind and the optimistic belief in human progress, characteristic of the "Aufklärung", seem alien to Gryphius. His pessimistic views of life on earth find their expression, as indicated above, in poems of despair, but he never loses his faith in God, as consideration of the "Ewige freude der auserwählten" and the last few lines of the above-mentioned poem show:

Ach, was ist alles diß, was wir vor köstlich achten,
 Als schlechte nichtigkeit, als schatten, staub und wind,
 Als eine wiesen-blum, die man nicht wieder find't!
 Noch wil, was ewig ist, kein einig mensch betrachten.¹²

Much of this paper will be devoted to a consideration of the values Gryphius advocated and whose adoption he recommends through his heroic martyr figures, who symbolize a preparation for eternal life; life becomes a prologue of ascetic existence before death, which is the precondition of perfection. The immense spiritual potentiality of man is acknowledged in one of his poems, "Über die himmels-kugel":

Schau hier des himmels bild! Diß hat ein mensch erdacht,
 Der doch auf erden sass. O übergrosse sinnen,
 Die mehr, denn iemand schaut, durch forschen nur gewinnen!
 Soll diß nicht himmlisch seyn, was selber himmel macht!¹³

¹²Ibid.

¹³Ibid., p.415

These ideas of Gryphius', such as "Eitelkeit der Welt", and the attitude that the only true reality is in God and in life after death, corresponded to those which found expression in the traditional martyr drama: as shall be indicated, Gryphius found in the martyr figure a suitable vehicle for the illustration of those ideas he thought necessary for man to be assured of eternal life. It is therefore relevant at this point to consider the background of the martyr drama,¹⁴ and especially the Latin "Jesuitendramen", which were themselves usually of this genre.

The Dorotheen-Spiele of the middle of the fourteenth century demonstrate the naked framework of the form of the martyr drama; in them the supernatural forces of good and evil, in shapes comprehensible to the imagination of the audience, vie with each other; evil gains a physical victory, and good the all-important spiritual conquest; the two ideas of good and evil are represented by a good and a bad person who incorporate 'the good' and 'the evil' in their most pronounced form; evil attempts to conquer good as if its victory lay in the natural order of things and in order to inflict pain; death, however, is welcome to the good as it ensures spiritual victory. The Katherinen-Spiel, of roughly the same date, is an early martyr drama, concise in form and grave in mood.

¹⁴Lunding, op. cit. - source for much of this information.

The St. Georg-Spiel of the fifteenth century is descended from the Georgslied, in which the martyr theme assumed the form of an epic; this "Lied" was probably composed for the dedication of the "Georgskirche" on the island of Reichenau on Lake Constance in the year 896 and is thought to be the oldest German "Legendendichtung"; it is a hymn of praise to St. George. It shows George's virtues - courage and steadfastness - and the physical victory of evil over good only after repeated attempts; the later "Spiel" features the dragon motif much more prominently than in the earlier "Lied", and is crude and brutal.

In the drama of the Baroque age more elements of realism are introduced; there are also often more martyrs in one drama, four in Hallman's Sophia and eight in Caussin's Felicitas, for example; it is not possible to distinguish the 'good' characters from each other as they are manifestations of the idea of 'the good', but, as Lunding points out,¹⁵ in Baroque drama a certain secularisation takes place and the 'evil' characters, whose role is of secondary importance, become more differentiated and there are often contrasting groups of 'evil' characters within the one play; by this process of secularisation, "Fremdkörper" are

¹⁵Ibid., p.17.

introduced into the martyr drama, such as the 'Liebe' motif, which presents the feelings of the human heart, or the 'Staatsmotif', which, as rulers and princes were the subjects of these dramas, could be fitted into the original framework without any undue strain becoming apparent. To balance this increasing interest in the dramatic possibilities of creating more interesting 'evil' characters, a group of 'good' but less striking characters, reinforcing the martyr theme, are introduced, either as converts, or cowards (by way of contrast to the martyr figures) or, in the form of spirits, as verbal supporters of the ideal. The representational function of the evil characters, and the use of contrasting figures supporting the ideal are features present in Gryphius' martyr dramas, as will be pointed out: Papinianus' family, for example, with the exception of his son, bring Papinianus' virtues into relief by their own all too understandable human cowardice; Laetus and Bassianus, in Papinianus, are very different 'evil' characters; the various spirits in Carolus Stuardus speak in support of the king.

The martyr drama had considerable appeal for the Baroque dramatist; Haugwitz's Maria Stuart is a martyr drama; Hallmann's Sophia, Liberata and Paulina, of which the last two are lost, can also be placed side by side with Gryphius' contribution to the genre.

The Baroque dramatist brought to the mediaeval form a piety leading to escapism, a renewed transcendentalism, and an attempt at an anthropomorphic concept of 'the eternal'. It was difficult to reconcile the traditional humanism of the literature of the Renaissance with this dramatic genre. Although, for example, since the beginning of the seventeenth century, hundreds of martyr dramas had been written, the Jesuit instructional books on poetics were still recommending that the so-called Aristotelian concept of human guilt should be present in the hero, whereas in fact the martyr figures were endowed with superhuman greatness, integrity and purity. Tarquino Galluzzi in his Comentarii tres de tragoedia et comoedia, written in 1621, states that the hero must bear some element of guilt; Alexandrus Donatus in his Ars Poetica of 1633 is the first to permit an innocent hero. The two conflicting points of view are represented in the martyr drama; as Lunding says: "... deshalb tritt das mittelalterliche Spiel in der Verkleidung des humanistisch-gelehrten Dramas auf."¹⁶ The martyr drama, to take another example, assumes the five act form, for which there is certainly no inner necessity as the focus is on the one all-important scene, the actual martyrdom.

¹⁶Ibid., p.24.

We have so far considered Gryphius' own "Weltanschauung", his social and cultural background, and the tradition of the martyr drama as various factors which contributed to his finding the martyr drama a suitable vehicle for dramatic expression of his personal ideas and problems. Gryphius' extensive reading and travels also helped in this direction; therefore, one should consider the influence of the Latin "Jesuiten-drama" on his own composition.

Several of the youthful works of Gryphius point to an acquaintance with and interest in the martyr dramas which constitute the majority of works of the Jesuit dramatists. His two early Herod epics, Herodis Furiae, et Rachelis lachrymae (1633/4) and Dei Vindictis Imperatus et Herodis Interitus (1634/5) are both learned Latin compositions which use a favourite material of the seventeenth century for which there are models in the Jesuit dramas. Between 1634 and 1637 Gryphius had translated the martyr drama Heylige Felicitas by the Jesuit Nicholas Caussin, which was written in 1620; and in Leyden, between 1637 and 1638, he wrote a Latin poem in epic form, Olivetum, in which Judas and Christ oppose each other; Christ becomes a martyr of heroic stature, and heaven and hell are contrasted at its conclusion; it is pertinent to a discussion of Gryphius' martyr dramas to note, as Newald states,

that in this work "... der strahlende und triumphierende Himmel wird erst richtig erkannt, wenn man ihm die Schrecken der Hölle entgegensetzt."¹⁷

It is evident then that Gryphius was familiar with the Latin "Jesuitendrama".¹⁸ His own martyr dramas may be regarded as Protestant "Gegenstücke", written in German. Gryphius' choice of material for his dramas introduced new lines of development into German drama; in the sixteenth century German dramatists had confined themselves to mainly biblical material, but Gryphius, following the example of the Jesuit dramatists, chose his material from both ancient and modern history. Jesuit dramatists had used the "Felicitas" and "Leo Armenius" material several times, and the historical source works of such authors as Cedrenus and Zonaras, the Byzantine historians, and Baronius and Cambden, were used by the Jesuit dramatists and Gryphius.¹⁹ I think that Harring takes perhaps to excess the influence of the Jesuit dramatists upon the works of Gryphius: it is true, as Harring proves, that the use of epilogue and prologue, allegorical figures, chorus, the didactic tendency, the 'Vergänglichkeit' motif, and the passivity of the hero, are all features which both share, but Gryphius was

¹⁷R. Newald, Geschichte der deutschen Literatur von den Anfängen bis zur Gegenwart, ed. de Boor, Newald (5th ed.; München: Beck, 1951), V, p.282.

¹⁸cf. W. Harring, Andreas Gryphius und das Drama der Jesuiten, in Hermaea, (Halle, 1907), V.

¹⁹Ibid., pp.14 - 17.

no plagiarist and he fashioned his own drama, characterised, as we shall see, by, for example, striking use of the German language, increasing dramatic tension and art of presentation, forceful heroes and clearly defined villains, and a keen interest in the affairs of state. I think some influence must be admitted, but this is understandable as both were writing martyr dramas within a framework that followed established form and, by its very nature, allowed little variation: it would be most unexpected if Gryphius were not familiar with the works of the Jesuit dramatists, but he was conscious of his independence; if his form of dramatic expression corresponded to that of the "Jesuitentheater", it was because he also wanted to focus attention on the transcendental and found the martyr drama as they had used it before him suitable for its expression. Perhaps also, as Harring suggests,²⁰ Gryphius chose material in this tradition so as not to incur the displeasure of the local Catholic administration; he certainly never portrays an obviously German Protestant martyr figure, although Catharina's Christianity is of a definitely Protestant nature, as we shall see.

Having considered Gryphius' familiarity with the Latin "Jesuitendrama" of both native and foreign writers, it is now

²⁰Ibid., p.27

important to assess the impact of foreign literature upon Germany in the seventeenth century, and upon Gryphius in particular, especially as so many critics have pointed to the influence of the Dutch dramatist Vondel upon Gryphius' dramas.²¹

Pott²² suggests that the disastrous conditions resulting from the Thirty Years War had made it impossible for participation in the appreciation of native culture to be any longer feasible; the German writers had lost contact with the native tradition so necessary for normal development, and for models, out of necessity, they had to look abroad. In neighbouring Holland, according to Flemming, "fanden sie reges, selbständiges geistiges Leben, ein Nationaltheater und eine bedeutende dramatische Literatur."²³ At this time Holland was enjoying a great era of prosperity and had become the European center of learning and free thinking; Germany was particularly open to Dutch influence as the two countries had a common racial and linguistic background, Dutch literature held an intermediary position between the classical heritage and Germany, and Holland enjoyed a popular native tradition.

²¹Harring, *op cit.*

R. A. Kollewijn, Über den Einfluss des holländischen Dramas auf Andreas Gryphius (Heilbronn, 1887: Leipzig, 1880).

P. Stachel, "Seneca und das deutsche Renaissancedrama im 16. und 17. Jahrhundert", Paläestra, XLVI (1906).

W. Flemming, "Vondel's Einfluss auf die Trauerspiele des Andreas Gryphius", Neuphilologus, XIV (1929) 107 ff.

²²C. K. Pott, "Holland-German Literary Relations of the 17th Century: Vondel and Gryphius", JLSP, XLVII (1948), 127-138.

²³W. Flemming, Das schlesische Kunstdrama, p. 21.

The German man of letters travelled to Holland, often to the University of Leyden, to study, and so the influence of Dutch literature was considerable; the "Sprachgesellschaften" which were formed in Germany in order to purify the language were indebted to that type of society flourishing in Holland; Opitz pointed to the Dutch to demonstrate the poetic powers of a German tongue and his theoretical works derive in part from such Dutch scholars as Scaliger and Heinsius.²⁴ The intellectual climate of Holland was similar to that of Germany and German writers were at that time conversant with Dutch literature. In this respect the "Holländische Komödianten" may be mentioned;²⁵ these troupes were very influential in Germany about the middle of the century and they performed works of a generally higher artistic level than the "Englische Komödianten"; many of the plays they presented were written in verse, they were the first troupes to employ actresses, the Dutch language was similar to Low German and therefore comprehensible at least in part to the audiences; their repertoire was very wide and included works by Vondel. Gryphius may have been familiar with Dutch literature before he went to Holland, but there is no doubt that he encountered the works of Vondel during his visits to Holland.

²⁴Ibid., pp. 55-6.

²⁵cf. Pott, loc. cit.

Vondel had created a new classical tradition in Holland, with the dramas of Seneca as its backbone. He combined this enthusiasm for the ancient classical form with a Germanic spirit; Renaissance hope and confidence in man's potentialities were tempered by a realization of ultimate limitations; for example, Vondel's Lucifer (1654) illustrates the tragic discordance between pride and humility and affords a realization that human potentialities are ultimately finite; Vondel believed in ultimate redemption, but also, like Gryphius, held a predominantly tragic view of life.

Gryphius, as noted already, had a typical Baroque inclination to melancholy; his affirmation of God followed upon a stoical abandonment of happiness for this life on earth. His means of dramatic expression, however, were limited by the lack of the form and language of a developed standard of literature; he had few German models to follow, and it would seem that Vondel and he shared a similar spiritual outlook; he was attracted by what Vondel could give him. He travelled in Holland, studied in Leyden and saw performances of Vondel's works, e.g. Gijsbrecht van Amstel, in Amsterdam.

Critics have stressed the influence of Vondel upon Gryphius' work. Kollewijn (1880) was the first to 'discover' this influence and point to parallel scenes and verbal correspondences in the works of the two dramatists. Stachel (1907) examines

Gryphius' background and his growth as an independent artist, noting that he and Vondel are at different stages of development; he weaves a mosaic of Dutch, French and classical 'influences' into Gryphius' dramas. Harring (1908) takes the parallels to excess, as if Gryphius had built up all his dramas by plagiarising from all the previous martyr dramas ever written. Flemming (1928) disagrees with Stachel and outlines a development in Gryphius' dramatic composition; he allows that in Leo Armenius and Catharina von Georgien Gryphius has 'borrowed' and 'arranged' elements from Vondel, but contends that the two later dramas, Carolus Stuardus and Papinianus, show an increasing independence and indicate the birth of a new, original art form. Flemming draws parallels between Vondel's Maeghden and Maria Stuart and Gryphius' Catharina von Georgien, for example.²⁶ He notes that there is no acknowledgement of Vondel in the "Vorrede" or the "Kurtze anmerkungen" to Catharina von Georgien; he points out that, although the theme in both Maeghden and Catharina von Georgien is the conflict between divine love the worldly desire and although both tyrants are changed by their love, there is a marked difference in the psychological treatment of the two tyrants; Vondel's Attila loses the power to act decisively and becomes the "Spielball"

²⁶Flemming, Das schlesische Kunstdrama, pp. 118-19, 112-13.

of his advisors, whereas Gryphius' Abas does act decisively.²⁷ I think, however, Flemming perhaps takes the parallelism a little too far with his comparison of the leave-taking scenes and the final acts of Catharina von Georgien and Vondel's Maria Stuart; similarities do exist, but both dramas are martyr dramas, written in a rigid form, and both relate the martyrdom of noble queens dying in a foreign country. Schiller's Maria Stuart comforts her ladies-in-waiting in much the same way as Vondel's Maria and Gryphius' Catharina comfort their ladies before they go to their death, but it would be wrong to suggest that Schiller borrowed the scene from Vondel or Gryphius.

It must be admitted, however, that Gryphius was very much aware of the great Dutch dramatist. He began his own translation and adaptation of the Gibeoniter material as he was dissatisfied with Vondel's treatment. Despite the similarities in spiritual outlook, there were differences in experience which manifested themselves in the treatment of the material. Vondel was attracted by its picturesque quality, whereas Gryphius was an "Ideendichter", and Vondel's dramas are less exuberant in expression than Gryphius'

²⁷Ibid., p.113.

works, which have a monumental quality. Vondel lived in a country at peace, his life was less problematic and he could trust in God more readily than Gryphius who lived in a country split asunder by warring armies and religious factions. These differences become apparent in the different mood of the works of the two dramatists.

Gryphius had also taken the figure of Bartel in his comedy Die geliebte Dornrose from Vondel's De Leeunwendalers,²⁸ but I think it is true to say that the influence of Vondel on Gryphius and the extent of his borrowings has been overplayed and that there is no evidence of general plagiarism, even in the two early dramas, Leo Armenius and Catharina von Georgien. The use of spectacular scenes and the Gryphian hero's stoical attitude to life may be traced to Seneca's influence, and the Alexandrine verse form and the observation of the three unities to the influence of French classical drama, particularly Corneille (whose dramas Gryphius may have seen during his stay in Paris), but in this regard Gryphius' own words at the conclusion of the "Vorrede" to his first drama, Leo Armenius, are quite significant:

Das haus ist zwar nicht gross, doch kenn't es mich allein;
Es kostet fremde nichts, es ist nur rein und mein. 29

It is this first drama of Gryphius to which we shall now turn.

²⁸Lunding, op. cit., p.50.

²⁹Andreas Gryphius, Werke, ed. H. Palm (Hildesheim: Georg Olm, 1961), II, 16.

CHAPTER I

After completion of his studies at Leyden and two years of travel in Holland, France and Italy, Gryphius returned in 1646 to Strassburg, where he began his first drama, Leo Armenius oder Fürsten-Mord. It was very probably inspired by a performance of a drama of the same title that the author saw in Rome and which was written by the English Jesuit Joseph Simon.¹ The first publication of Gryphius' drama was in the year 1650, as is indicated in the poem of dedication² to Wilhelm Schlegel, the father of one of Gryphius' travelling companions.

Although in the 'Vorrede' Gryphius acknowledges no classical models for his drama and claims it as an original work ("...Leo... da er nicht von dem Sophocles oder dem Seneca aufgesetzt, doch unser ist.")³, he does reveal in this 'Vorrede', in the 'Erklärung etlicher dunckeln Örter' at the end of the drama, and in the 'Inhalt des trauerspiels' that he is indebted for his

¹cf. W. Flemming, Andreas Gryphius und die Bühne (Halle: 1921) p.287. ff.

²Andreas Gryphius, Werke, ed. H. Palm (Hildesheim: Georg Olm, 1961), II, 13.

³Ibid., p.16.

source material to the works of the historians Joannes Zonaras and Georgios Cedrenus on the history of the Byzantine Emperors.⁴

Gryphius' first drama may, because of certain features, be called the first of his martyr dramas; these features, falling as they do within the scope of this paper, will be discussed in this chapter.

Gryphius' ideas on dramatic writing are stated for the first time in the 'Vorrede' to Leo Armenius, and it is important to consider the views outlined which appear relevant to Gryphius' conception of the intent and scope of dramatic writing in general, and his own composition in particular. The tragic principle which Gryphius announces is contrary to that of the ancients; he will not present the fatal consequences of acts committed in passion and ignorance of these consequences, but, more generally, the 'Eitelkeit der Welt' as reflected in the fate of his heroes. As one critic says: "das Bild der Unbeständigkeit der menschlichen Dinge in einer Person, die uns ähnlich ist, zu zeigen, das ist sein tragisches Prinzip."⁵ The first sentence of the 'Vorrede' announces Gryphius' intention:

Grossgünstiger Leser.
Indem unser gantzes vaterland sich nunmehr in seine eigene aschen verscharret und in einen schauplatz der eitelkeit verwandelt bin ich geflissen, dir die vergänglichkeit menschlicher sachen in gegenwertigen und etlich folgenden trauerspielen vorzustellen.⁶

⁴Ibid., pp. 14. 17. 129.ff.

⁵Manning, op. cit., p.10.

⁶Andreas Gryphius, Werke, II, op. cit., p.14.

So the bleakness of Germany's circumstances and the displays of vanity around him compel him to present in his dramas the transience of all things mortal.

Gryphius goes on to say that he does have more pleasant material in mind to offer the reader, but he will not present such material for the following reason: "...weil mir noch dieses mahl etwas anders vorzubringen so wenig geliebet als erlaubt."⁷ This would seem to indicate that the grave conditions in Germany demanded a serious treatment in Gryphius' opinion, and would also seem to contain an acknowledgement of the dramatic conventions of the age which demanded the presentation of dramas of high seriousness. That tragedy involved high personages in violent actions was one of the current ideas, dating from the Renaissance, which had been taken over by Opitz from, for instance, Scaliger, the Dutch critic, and issued in his Buch von der deutschen Poetery (1624). It was also almost impossible in the seventeenth century to publish anything not in theological terms; theological writers were opposed, for example, to fiction, which they considered blasphemous, and the way around these objections was for the writers of fiction to teach moral lessons in their works. As we shall see, the dramatic impulse of Gryphius' dramas is the

⁷Ibid., p.14.

Christian moral, which is given visible form. The last word of the above quote ("...erlaubet..") surely signifies a moral obligation which Gryphius felt towards his public.

The instructional effect of drama is valued by Gryphius; he takes his example from the preference of the ancients for writing tragedies for purifying effect:

Die alten gleichwol haben diese art zu schreiben nicht so gar geringe gehalten, sondern als ein bequemes mittel menschliche gemüther von allerhand unartigen und schädlichen neigungen zu säubern, gerühmet,...⁸

This is a clear acknowledgement of the authority of the ancients in drama, and shows Gryphius still under the influence of the Greek and Roman traditions; the report of Armenius' murder, for example, is in true classical fashion. To reinforce the moral-didactic intention, the very title of the drama, Leo Armenius oder Fürsten-Mord, suggests the message and also points to the representational function of the hero. In his dramas Gryphius is not content simply to present characters and allow the readers or audience to form their own conclusions; he wishes to instruct and correct, and his own viewpoint is very much in evidence.

The drama illustrates then the "Unbeständigkeit der menschlichen Dinge", the rise and fall of human fortune, which

⁸ Ibid.

is an ever-recurring theme in all his dramas; but, as already mentioned, only part of his concept of tragedy is announced in Leo Armenius. As Gryphius states in the introduction to his next tragedy, Catharina von Georgien, the heroine is an outstanding example of resoluteness, of "unaussprechlicher beständigkeit".⁹ As we shall see, Armenius lacks the strength and firmness of character of the later martyr figures and so does not fall into the usual pattern. Only at the very end, faced by death, does he show a nobility and courage lacking upto then. This steadfastness in the face of death is a feature which will be examined in subsequent chapters.

At this point it is interesting to note that for Gryphius the hero would seem to be not necessarily the character standing at the centre of whatever action there is, but, rather, he is the character who suffers, the suffering hero, after whom the drama is titled. This is borne out in this and subsequent dramas; Armenius, and not the plotter and usurper Balbus, is "die leidende Person"¹⁰ who faces a horrible death with courage, and is, therefore, the figure of most importance to Gryphius; consequently the drama bears his name. Palm, I would suggest, has a false conception of Gryphius' dramatic principles when

⁹Ibid., p.143.

¹⁰Harring, op. cit., p.11.

he asserts that the drama should really be titled "Michael Balbus" on the grounds that Armenius, the titular hero, bears no tragic guilt, as neither passion nor vigorous action cause his downfall, but rather his own weak (but perfectly understandable) acquiescence to his wife's wishes.¹¹ This certainly constitutes no reason for Gryphius to retitl the drama, especially when he attaches so much importance to the passive sufferer.

Before turning to the question of Armenius' character, let us first consider briefly the plot. The army General Michael Balbus, who had helped his youthful friend and companion Leo Armenius ascend to the throne of the Byzantine Empire, believes that Armenius has not rewarded him enough and that he feels no longer grateful; he is ambitious for the throne himself. His intrigues have come to the notice of Armenius, who seeks to admonish him through his counsellor, Exaboliu. Michael will not be warned and is unexpectedly arrested, protesting his innocence and cursing imperial ingratitude. He is condemned to death by his old friend, because of the threat to the throne. Because it is Christmas Eve, Armenius' wife Theodosia intervenes and protests that Leo cannot possibly receive the holy sacrament

¹¹ Andreas Gryphius, Werke, II, op. cit., p.11.

next day with the blood of Balbus still fresh on his hands.

At this, Armenius defers the final decision, but with an uneasy feeling that danger threatens.

Balbus looks for ways of escape. The Emperor, distraught with fear and misgivings, visits Balbus' cell at night. Balbus threatens his co-plotters, through the medium of his jailer, that he will reveal to Armenius the names of them all if he is not rescued. They disguise themselves as choristers, conceal weapons under their gowns and mingle with the priests entering the church where Armenius is to take the sacrament. They butcher him as he is kneeling before the altar, and release Balbus, who is declared Emperor.

The plot follows historical sources closely except in two respects. The historical Leo V (the Armenian), A.D. 813-20, was a good, able, firm ruler, against whom rebellion was inexcusable; Balbus' rebellion was simply a result of his personal ambition. This hesitation to execute Balbus at Christmas was the fatal mistake of Armenius' reign, and it is significant that Gryphius takes the action at this critical point and depicts a man who is hesitant and indecisive. Secondly, Armenius was a firm iconoclast, a pious Christian, who, in this instance, allowed religious considerations and respect for his wife's beliefs to come

before the dictates of the affairs of state, and suffered for it. The conflict between the demands of the state and personal considerations here has fatal consequences; what is worthy of note, however, is that, although Armenius is a Christian and dies courageously at the foot of the cross on the church altar, the Christian message of the two next dramas by Gryphius is brought out hardly at all in this one. We see then Gryphius at an early stage of development, before he has come to offer his Christian hope of salvation as the answer to the problems of earthly existence.

The question of Armenius' character, one which should be discussed in some detail, now arises, in order to decide whether, as Schulz-Burkhardt maintains,¹² Armenius is a martyr in a special sense, a martyr to his own weakness, and not in the Christian sense, as in the later dramas. Leo Armenius has as its plot the "Hofintrige" of Balbus; because of the political motives involved in this "Staatsaktion", one must first consider the political views of the author, as manifested in this drama, especially those on statecraft, the position of the ruler towards his subjects, and the problem of regicide. These and similar questions will be discussed in greater detail later, particularly

¹²D. Schulz-Burkhardt, Das Bild des Herrschers in der deutschen Tragödie von Barock bis zur Zeit des Irrationalismus (Diss., München, 1951).

in the chapter on Carolus Stuardus, but it is interesting to note Gryphius' attitudes early in his career as revealed in this drama.

It is no surprise that Gryphius should be an advocate of monarchistic absolutism. In his youth he lodged for some years in the house of Georg von Schönborn, whose work Politicorum libri septem (1610) defended the divine right of kings and their absolute power in the state. Gryphius read deeply in Schönborn's library and formed a lasting connection with his house. At Leyden he knew well the lawyer Claudius Salmasius, another defender of absolutism and a fanatical opponent of the sovereignty of the people. Gryphius followed the events of the revolution of 1642 in England from across the Channel, and this first drama, on one level, is concerned with the problem of the 'Widerstandsrecht' of the people. In Paris, in 1644, he was living in an absolutist state; he saw Charles I at Angers and recorded the experience in a sonnet; he was also able to study in Richelieu's library. In Strassburg, where he began this present drama, he counted amongst his closest friends the lawyer Gregor Biccus and the historian Bücler, both bitter opponents of the sovereignty of the people, and advocates of a 'Fürstenabsolutismus'.¹³ This sort of background would lead one to expect that the usurper Balbus would be

¹³cf. M. Szyrocki, Der Junge Gryphius (Neue Beiträge zur Literaturwissenschaft, IX; Berlin: Reichen & Lening, 1959).

L. Hildebrandt, Die Staatsauffassung der schlesischen Barockdramatiker im Rahmen ihrer Zeit (Diss., Rostock, 1939).

seen in a more unfavourable light than the Emperor, and this is the case.

An aura of godliness surrounds the monarch, as is illustrated at the beginning of the drama; Exaboliuss says to Balbus in Act I: "Der himmel selber wacht vor die gekrönten haare / Und steht dem scepter bey."¹⁴ and as expressed in "Die Reihen" a little later: "Gott hält ob den, die er selbst götter nennt."¹⁵ Because of his privileged position between God and the rest of mankind, a ruler is quite justified in sweeping aside all those with plans contrary to his own. He must always be confident and believe in his own power; as Armenius says in a monologue in Act II: "So donnert, wenn man euch nach cron und scepter steht, / Ihr, die ihr unter gott, doch über menschen geht!"¹⁶ Even if the monarch's decisions are blatantly wrong, his subjects can have no authority over him, for only God has the right to depose a ruler. In the last act this is the accusation that Armenius' wife Theodosia levels at the conspirators: "Ein fürst fällt dem allein, der in den wolcken wacht. / Der in den thron uns setzt, kann aus dem thron uns bannen."¹⁷ Gryphius himself became

¹⁴Leo Armenius, I, 343-4.

¹⁵Ibid., III, 53.

¹⁶Ibid., II, 421-2.

¹⁷Ibid., V, 287-8.

deeply involved in the whole question of regicide, and his later tragedy, Carolus Stuardus, was written expressly to outline his own position with regard to the execution of Charles I of England, an action that had sparked off controversy all over Europe.

To return to the position of the monarch in Gryphius' drama, it would seem that the circumstances surrounding the Byzantine Emperor, as they are illustrated by Gryphius, corresponded, generally speaking, to those of the ruler of his own time. The past presented on the stage was imagined to be as tragic in essence as the wretched present time, and comparisons were drawn. The following extract from the 'Vorrede' to Leo Armenius is relevant to this point:

in der neuen welt ist diese pest so wenig als bey uns neue,
unter dem schein des gottesdienstes (wie Michael und seine
bundgenossen) ungeheure mord und bubenstück ins werk zu
richten.¹⁸

This would indicate that Gryphius felt there were parallels between this "Hofintrige" at the court of Leo Armenius in Constantinople in 820 and the sort of intrigue practised in the small courts

¹⁸ Andreas Gryphius, Werke, II, op. cit. p.5.

in his own time. It would, however, be incorrect to assume that Gryphius definitely had an actual contemporary incident in mind.

The figure of the monarch becomes potentially tragic in so far as he is a man, fitted with all the outer attributes of a God, and yet of course a mortal being, in his humanity basically no different from the subjects who worship him. He has to bear the burden of being both man and God, and it is not surprising that Armenius in this play, and Bassianus in Papinianus, for example, display a marked melancholia. In Baroque drama there develop two types of ruler, two extremes so characteristic of baroque style and thought: there is on the one hand the tyrant, who accepts no bounds to his control and absolute authority, and who attempts to master his nobler, more human feelings to preserve this power, Chach Abas in Catharina von Georgien, for example, or Hugo Peter and Cromwell in Carolus Stuardus, who, although not of royal birth, are as devoted to the maintenance of personal power as Abas; on the other hand there is the ruler who finds the burden of kingship hard to bear and who succumbs through his own weakness, Armenius for example. Bassianus in Papinianus is a truly melancholic figure, who manages with difficulty to maintain his control, but at the price of a guilty conscience.

With reference to Armenius' position, Schulz-Burckhardt has this to say:

der Monarch aber, der nicht im Stande ist, die unumschränkte Gewalt im Sinne des Absolutismus zu nützen, vermag sich in seiner hohen Stellung nicht zu behaupten. Er wird der passive Held des Drame, der "Märtyrer", der unter dem Druck einer Aufgabe leidet, die zu schwer für seine Schultern ist. Das bedeutet aber für einen Monarchen der Zeit den sicheren Untergang, da er für seine Person gerade einer wesentlichen Forderung, den Schein seiner Macht zu wahren, nicht gerecht wird. 19

Armenius dies then because he cannot meet the essential need of the monarch of the time to preserve his authority at all costs. The heroes of the dramas to be discussed later also lose their worldly authority and power, but the circumstances, as we shall see, are very different.

At this time works such as "Il Principe" of Machiavelli and those of Jean Bodin and Thomas Hobbes were influencing the political thought of Gryphius' age. According to their political doctrine of expediency, the absolute ruler should place less emphasis upon the duties and responsibilities of ruling and more upon its privileges and rights; ruling was a 'Machtfrage', and Machiavelli's theory had no place for moral or human values; it

¹⁹Schulz-Burckhardt, op. cit., p.18

was concerned with actual power and the maintenance of authority; the monarch must at all costs also give his subjects no cause to wish to depose him. A good example of this sort of political thinking comes in Gryphius' last drama, Papinianus, by which time, as we shall see, he had become a bitter opponent of political expediency; the Emperor Bassianus has his advisor Laetus executed in order to prevent his own name from being blackened in connection with his murder of his brother and co-regent Geta; the murder was an action which Laetus had suggested but which the Emperor himself had committed. Bassianus realizes his own guilt and yet defends his actions on the grounds of expediency; the means justify the end, which is the maintenance of his control:

...die hohe seel hat ein viel weiter ziel.
 Sie weiss wol, was das recht bey schlechtem pöbel wil.
 Sie weiss, dass der, dem land und reich zu dienste stehen,
 Nicht stets könn auf der bahn gemeiner bräuche gehen. 20

He even allows his most trusted advisor Papinianus to go to his death rather than permit his hold on the throne to be weakened. He reveals himself as a tyrant, but he retains the throne and the power, and this in Bassianus' eyes, is the prime consideration.

²⁰Papinianus, IV, 21-4.

Armenius, in a similar position, also desires the death of an enemy, Michael Balbus, but his lack of ruthlessness, his understandable sympathy with his wife's request, and his fear of Balbus' supporters undermine his determination to have Balbus killed straightway. His hesitation and fear of possible social unrest are evident from replies he makes to his counsellor's advice to have Balbus executed immediately: "Sein anhang ist zu gross."; "Wir würden vieler hass und feindschaft auf uns laden."; "Der grosse, wüste wald wird durch den schlag bewegt."²¹ Armenius hesitates and his indecision costs him his life and the throne. Yet even in these few remarks it is noticeable that Armenius does not hesitate to kill on moral grounds. On the contrary, he hesitates for fear that the consequences of such an act may affect his own popularity in an adverse fashion.

Armenius can be said to be a martyr to his own weakness, a fatal flaw that brings him low, but in this respect he is very different from the figures of the later dramas. They are 'leidende Personen', but do not possess any fatal flaw, except that their values are more idealistic than those of people around them.

²¹Leo Armenius, I, 178; 180; 186.

They choose their own death (even Stuardus makes his death his own), and they, unlike Armenius, go to their death with moral and essentially religious convictions to give them strength. Their certainty of eternal glory allows them to suffer their fate patiently and steadfastly, and for their pains they are rewarded with peace and happiness in eternity.

Gryphius' Armenius is weaker than the historical figure so as to emphasise the 'Vergänglichkeit' and 'Fallhöhe' themes. He moans that the burdens of kingship are too heavy to carry and compares his lot with that of the common man:

O kummer -reiches leben!
Wer wird mit hüttern mehr, wir oder er umgeben?
Er bebt vor seiner noth, wir selbst vor unserm schwerdt.
Ist dieses scepter gold wohl solcher sorgen werth? 22

He trusts others too easily; in return Balbus uses his influence to undermine Armenius' position and to plot against him. As an Emperor in a position of great authority and hence the object of considerable envy, he should not permit his weaknesses to show. Also, of course, as Emperor he is especially subject to the

²²Ibid., III, 7-10.

'Wechsel der dinge'; the "Reihen der höflinge" express this thought at the end of Act II in lines of great beauty:

Ewig wanckelbares glücke!
Siehst du keine zepter an?
Ist denn nichts, das deinem stricke
Auf der welt entgehen kan! 23

The ruler, even while feeling relatively secure, cannot escape this dread of the fall from the throne; this consideration would seem to determine his actions to a considerable degree. Armenius, certainly, is painfully aware of the torments and uncertainties of his own position as Emperor:

Was ist ein printz doch mehr als ein gekrönter knecht,
Den ieden augenblick was hoch, was tieff was schlecht,
Was mächtig, trotz und hönt, den stets von beyden seiten
Neid, untreu, argwohn, hass, schmerz, angst und furcht bestreiten?24

Farther on, Exaboliuſ observes: "Der fürst kan nichts vermeiden; /
Er fühlt die gantze last."²⁵ Yet, despite the burdens of high office, the monarch would still not willingly abdicate from a position which gave him such liberty and unbridled power over others.

²³Ibid., II, 625-8.

²⁴Ibid., I, 153-6.

²⁵Ibid., I, 380-1.

Balbus expresses this sentiment in Act I: "Man schätzt die scepter schwer, doch legt sie, der es klagt, / Nicht ungezwungen hin."²⁶

A condemnation of the murder of Armenius is apparent, and the expression of Gryphius' views on kingship and regicide is particularly clear. In subsequent chapters it will be demonstrated that Gryphius' martyr figures adhere to values which they prize much higher than the maintenance of personal power, and in this respect they are very different from Armenius. His courageous facing of death, also that of Balbus, points to the way the characters will develop in the later dramas. Armenius, is, however, no unmitigated tyrant; he lacks the necessary single-mindedness and self-confidence and displays a very human feeling for his wife Theodosia. But in the figure of Balbus we can see the potential tyrant comparable to Abas, or the villain equal to Hugo Peter and Laetus.

The circumstances of Armenius' death also present an interesting parallel to the later martyr dramas. We have already remarked that the possibilities of Christian martyrdom in this drama are not brought out by Gryphius, and the piety of Armenius

²⁶Ibid., I, 418-9.

and his wife is hardly mentioned. The whole work leaves an impression of gloom unrelieved by the Christian message of salvation, and, as we shall see, 'Fortuna' is here the divine force controlling man's destiny. The Christ analogy presented here in the report of Armenius' death will be discussed more fully later, but, as this is the first instance, it is relevant to note that Gryphius introduced into Leo Armenius a theme which he had found in his sources, the works of Cedrenus and Zonaras. As the conspirators attack Armenius, he is taking the holy sacrament in church; they stab him, and as he falls his own blood falls onto a replica of the Cross which Jesus had stained with his own blood. He calls upon the conspirators not to violate the sanctity of the high altar, and as he dies he kisses the cross. His piety and humility are brought out in the words he addresses to his murderers:

Denckt, rufft er, an das leben,
 Das sich für eurer seel an dieser last gegeben!
 Befleckt des herren blut, das diesen stamm gefärbt,
 Mit sündler-blut doch nicht! 27

The messenger's report of his death suggests a noble and courageous end, reminiscent of the true martyr figures in the later dramas.

²⁷Ibid., V, 147-50.

The messenger reports as follows:

Ich hab es selbst gesehn, wie er das creutze küsste,
Auf das sein körper sanck, und mit dem kuss verschied,
Wie man die leich umriess, wie man durch iedes glied
Die stumpffen dolchen zwang, wie Jesus letzte gaben,
Sein theures fleisch und blut, so matte seele laben,
Die ein verschmactend hertz in letzter angst erfrischt,
Mit käyserlichem blut, (o greuel!) sind vermischet. 28

The fact of his innocence of great injustice, his holding and kissing the cross as he dies, and his lack of fear suggest the death of a Christian martyr, and point towards the fuller development of a very definite Christ analogy, particularly in Carolus Stuardus. Armenius dies as a Christian, courageous and pure, but there is no explicit parallel to the death of Christ. The purity of his death does, however, indicate Gryphius' feelings on the sanctity of the ruler by divine right, and it brands regicide as a monstrous, unnatural crime. A noble death compensates for a weak life, and Armenius asserts himself in death.

Apart from the form of the drama and the nobility of the hero's death, there are occasional indications elsewhere in this early work that Gryphius was familiar already with martyr dramas of other writers, Corneille, for example. In the 'Vorrede',

²⁸Ibid., V, 164-70.

defending his belief that serious drama can be effective "sonder liebe und bulerey"²⁹, he states, referring, it would seem to

Corneille's Polyeucte:

... dass wir diese den alten unbekandte meynung noch nicht zu glauben gesonnen und desselben werck schlechten ruhms würdig achten, welcher unlängst einen heiligen marterer zu dem kampf geführt und demselben wider den grund der wahrheit eine ehefrau zugeordnet, welche schier mehr mit ihrem bulen, als der gefangene mit dem richter zu tun findet und durchmitwürckung ihres vatern eher braut als wittbe wird. 30

These lines again acknowledge the authority of the ancients and speak against a love-intrigue in a serious drama. So as not to lose the favour of his readers and audience, he will, however, include some love interest in the next drama, Catharina von Georgien, the theme of which he announces already, that of "bewehrten beständigkeit".³¹ His scathing remarks upon love in serious drama make it clear why his love-drama Cardenio und Celine (1649) falls out of the scope of this paper.

Already facets of Gryphius' martyr figures are present in the characters in Leo Armenius. Armenius is not the only one to face death with courage; at the time of his arrest, Balbus, never doubting that right is on his side, asserts his spiritual freedom

²⁹Andreas Gryphius, Werke, II, op. cit., p.15.

³⁰Ibid., p. 15-6.

³¹Ibid., p.16.

and innocence in words reminiscent of the heroes of Gryphius'

later works:

Schlagt! bindet! ich bin frey. Druckt! martert! renckt und reisst!
 Ich wil diss (stünd ich gleich in lichtigem schwefel) melden:
 Dass diss der tugend lohn und letzte danck der helden. 32

Also, in Act II, as the judges are considering possible results if Balbus does not confess his treason under torture, the "VIII richter" imagines Balbus could behave very much like a Catharina or a Stuardus:

Wie? wenn er allen grimm der marter überwünde
 Und steiff und unverzagt auf trotzdem schweigen stünde?
 Denckt, was das auf sich hab! 33

These ideas of courage and steadfastness in the face of imminent death will come into prominence in the later works.

Before proceeding to discuss the first of these, it is important to remark upon the 'Weltanschauung' that Leo Armenius reflects. It is of course impossible to prove conclusively to what extent Gryphius selected and arranged source material to accord with a pre-conceived point of view or whether the source

³²Leo Armenius, I, 506-8.

³³Ibid., II, 315-7.

material (to which a Baroque dramatist would adhere quite strictly for the sake of the highly-valued historical authenticity) imposed its own pattern upon the dramatist. To answer this question would entail a study beyond the scope of this paper, but a comparison between sources and drama would show in this case that Gryphius arranged and invented very little, and the tale would seem to have attracted Gryphius in itself. Proceeding from this, I think it is fair to say that there is a difference in the 'Weltanschauung' of Leo Armenius and of the later dramas, and also, to a lesser degree, between these dramas themselves. The differences will emerge in the course of this paper.

The presence of the 'Vanitas' theme in Leo Armenius has already been noted, but the allegorical figures of the later dramas are not to be found. Armenius, the central figure, does not represent the stoical-Christian attitude to life as do the later heroes. Christian hope of salvation is absent, the atmosphere of the drama is oppressive and gloomy, in fact 'Fortuna' would seem to control the destinies of the protagonists. Lunding has claimed for the drama the title "... vielmehr nicht nur das erste, sondern auch das schönste, tiefste, reinste Schicksaldrama der deutschen Literatur."³⁴ One certainly gains the impression

³⁴Lunding, op. cit., p. 78.

that the characters have little control of events, actions and their consequences. The many premonitions and warnings of events to come again reveal the influence of the ancients on Gryphius' early drama. Theodosia may be said to bear some element of guilt for the fatal turn of events in so far as she plays on Armenius' love for her to persuade him, against his own better judgement, to postpone Balbus' execution. She also points to the power of 'Fortuna' after her husband has been murdered; to Balbus she states that the cycle of 'Fortuna' cannot be halted, and the wheel may turn full circle:

Erheb die neben dich, so unser blut gefärbet,
 Die grösser ehr und glück durch unsern fall geerbet!
 Erheb, was meynend mehr als redligkeit geliebt!
 Was sich in fürsten-mord so meisterlich geübt!
 Was mächtig, kirch und hof und kercker zu erbrechen!
 Und wetz ein schwerdt, das dir noch wird die brust durchstechen! 35

Armenius' fall would seem to be almost inevitable, given his weakness of character which is fatal in his position as absolute ruler, and so doubly vulnerable to the workings of 'Fortuna'. It is cruelly ironical that Armenius is murdered on the very night on which he himself wanted to shed no blood, but only worship. There is no light or gleam of hope in this depressing atmosphere - suffering on earth, the 'Vanitas' theme, the power of a fickle 'Fortuna' are

³⁵Leo Armenius, V, 387-92.

all worked out and stressed in this drama. The suffering of the heroes in the other dramas can be borne as they actively desire a quick death and can foresee their elevation to eternal peace and happiness. For the characters in Leo Armenius there is no such hope, and life is purposeless. We shall see how this mood of pessimism is replaced by a more positive and affirmative mood in the next drama, Catharina von Georgien.

CHAPTER II

Grossgünstiger Leser.

Die von mir Öffters begehrte Catharine tritt nunmehr auf den schauplatz unsers vaterlandes und stellet dir dar in ihrem leib' und leiden ein in dieser zeit kaum erhöbetes beyspiel unaussprechlicher beständigkeit. 1

These first lines of Gryphius' introduction to Catharina von Georgien indicate that the heroine of his second drama will be an example of the highest virtues and a person of exceptional stature; it is important for an understanding of Gryphius' intentions in the composition of this drama to discuss briefly his own observations as stated in this 'Vorrede'.

Gryphius lists the temptations Catharina will face and the suffering she will endure and outlines the course and results of a struggle which will be wholly internal:

die ehre, tod und liebe ringen in ihrem herzten um den preiss, welchen die liebe, nicht zwar die irdische und nichtige, sondern die heilige, ewige erhält, der tod aber darreichet und versichert. 2

¹Andreas Gryphius, Werke, II, op. cit., p. 143.

²Ibid.

The reward is that of salvation; worldly love is as nothing (nichtige) set against the love of God; death can offer and assure this eternal love. Gryphius' next words indicate his belief in the presence of God's love within man and point to the nature of Catharina's sacrifice, which for Gryphius symbolizes the glory of God on this earth: "So kräftig ist der in dem schwächsten werkzeuge, dessen ehre diese königin mit ihrem blutausstreicht".³ He feels he lacks the skill to handle such an exalted theme:

Diss einige beklage ich, dass meine feder zu schwach, so hohe gedult, so hertzhaffte beständigkeit, so fertigen schluss, das ewige dem vergänglichen vorzuziehen nach würden heraus-zustreichen. ⁴

These lines also indicate that Catharina will be a character very different from the hero of his first drama; patience, steadfastness and power of decision indicate a strength of character which was lacking in Armenius. The reference to her readiness to die for God reveals her as a woman of great faith; the heroine announced here by Gryphius may be expected to reveal a character with a set of Christian values more marked than those of Armenius.

³Ibid.

⁴Ibid.

After some discussion of the dates of composition and publication, Gryphius reveals, in an aside, that he views Catharina's execution not as a tragic occurrence but as an affirmation of the glory of God: "...diese, die Christus gottheit mit ihrem sterben ehret,...)"⁵. Finally, he acknowledges the imperfection of the work, asks the reader to pardon him this introduction and to turn away with him now from the world of impermanence to contemplate that of eternity: "...und wende dein gesicht mit mir von dem, was vergänglich, auf die ewigherrschende EWIGKEIT!"⁶ The introduction makes it clear that Gryphius' intention is to preach a return of God; his dramas, therefore, become sermons which admonish and encourage; in Catharina von Georgien piety, patriotism and chastity will be glorified; in this connection the major themes of 'Vergänglichkeit' and 'Beständigkeit' are announced in the introduction and again forcefully repeated in the prologue to Act I; these two themes will be the subject of discussion later in this chapter.

The themes presented in this introduction are developed in the course of the play; the spectacle presents the horrible fate of the just woman, unrewarded on earth, whose immovable faith

⁵ Ibid., p.144

⁶ Ibid.

and determination win her rewards in heaven and divine revenge upon her tormenter. The victory is essentially a spiritual victory over the forces of this world. Catharina von Georgien is the only martyr drama by Gryphius in which the heroine dies as a Christian martyr, strictly for her faith; in a broader sense, as will be indicated in subsequent chapters, both Papinianus and Carolus Stuardus are also martyr figures - even in defeat and death they remain proud and victorious, whereas the villains, victors in appearance only, suffer eventual defeat. One critic, Heselhaus, notes this spiritual victory and sees its roots in this emphasis on eternal values:

der barocke Märtyrer ist nicht nur der Blutzeuge des Himmels, sondern mehr noch der Zeuge für die Standhaftigkeit des menschlichen Gemütes, wenn es einmal vom Ewigen, Unvergänglichen und Göttlichen ergriffen ist." ⁷

Catharina is a telling example of the 'Blutzeuge des Himmels', whereas Papinianus and Stuardus are examples of witnesses 'für die Standhaftigkeit des menschlichen Gemütes'; the non-Christian Papinianus dies for his belief in righteousness, and Stuardus dies as a martyr to his concept of God-willed kings.

Leo Armenius had illustrated the course of history, the "Vergänglichkeit der Welt" at work at the court of a Byzantine

⁷C. Heselhaus, "Andreas Gryphius: Catharina von Georgien", in Das deutsche Drama, ed. von Wiese (Düsseldorf: Bagel, 1958) I (pp. 55-60), 36.

Emperor; Catharina von Georgien positively demonstrates the strength of faith and reason in an almost contemporary setting. Another difference worthy of note for this study is that whereas Leo Armenius had been in a position to act positively and energetically, but had allowed his hold on the throne to slip through indecision, Catharina cannot and will not take active steps to defend herself; the struggle between Abas and herself is very much a conflict of values and ideas within and between themselves. Catharina reveals no real weakness or hesitation when confronted by the persuasive guile of both Abas and his advisor Imanculi, and she is not constructed in the mould of Armenius; he was both tyrant and martyr, whereas she is only the martyr figure, a noble princess imprisoned. Before discussing in some detail the important features of the construction of this, his first full martyr drama, I should first like to examine briefly Gryphius' sources for Catharina von Georgien, and note the distinctive use he made of them.

Gryphius selected the material for his dramas from both ancient and modern history, and even from contemporary times in the case of Carolus Stuardus. In this respect he had no predecessor among the German writers of his day. Catharina von Georgien has as its subject an incident almost of the present

time, for the Catharina of history was executed in 1624. Gryphius himself mentions no sources, neither in the 'Vorrede' nor in the 'Kurtze anmerckungen'. Palm⁸ talks of a French source, "des ritters Chardin persian und ostindische reisebeschreibung", but on further consideration it seems impossible that Gryphius could have been familiar with Chardin's travelogue: Chardin was born in 1643, made two trips to the East, one in 1666-7 and the second in 1673-7⁹, and his travelogue was not translated into German until 1697;¹⁰ Gryphius completed Catharina von Georgien in 1650 and it was first published in 1657,¹¹ so he could not possibly have read Chardin. Heselhaus¹² suggests that Gryphius knew the material from the "Histoires tragiques de notre temps" of Sieur des S. Lazare (Paris, 1635). Kappler¹³ mentions yet another source; he states that in 1628, four years after Catharina's execution, there appeared in Venice a monograph on Chach Abas by Pietro della Delle: in 1627 this same author had published an article on political conditions in Georgia. Kappler suggests

⁸ Andreas Gryphius, Werke, II, op. cit., p.138.

⁹ H. Kappler, Der barocke Geschichtsbegriff bei Andreas Gryphius (Frankfurter Quellen und Forschungen zur germanischen und romanischen Philologie, XIII; Frankfurt/Main: Diesterweg, 1936), pp.40-1.

¹⁰ Andreas Gryphius, Werke, II, op. cit., p. 138.

¹¹ Ibid., p.139.

¹² Heselhaus, op. cit., p.38.

¹³ Kappler, op. cit., p.40.

that Gryphius had read both these articles while he was in Rome, where della Dalle died in 1652. He also maintains that in della Dalle's papers purely political considerations motivate Abas' decision to execute Catharina, and that no love intrigue is mentioned. Kappler believes there is another source and states that Chardin mentions one also. Certainly the evidence suggests that Gryphius' source material told a story of a purely political nature. A short consideration of the plot of Catharina von Georgien will illustrate how Gryphius has added to this basis.

Gryphius shifts the emphasis from a political motivation for Catharina's death to the 'Sinnengier' of Abas, the Shah of Persia, who is holding Catharina, Princess of Georgia, prisoner at his court; political considerations on Abas' part cry for her release, but Abas is desperately in love with Catharina and his attempts to persuade her to become his Queen constitute a test of the Princess' firm decision not to betray her country, her dead husband, and, more important, her God; her martyr-like attitude becomes increasingly apparent in Act IV when Abas sends her an ultimatum: the choice is between marriage and death. Neighbouring Russia would like Catharina to be free to rule her own country so that the balance of power between Turkey, Russia

and Persia may be maintained; Abas agrees initially to the request of the Russian ambassador in order to pacify the Czar and keep the peace. Later he changes his mind and in the course of a decisive monologue (Act III, scene II) political considerations are forgotten and he is overwhelmed by his passion for the Princess; from this point on the true martyr tragedy takes its course. Imanculi presents Catharina with the 'Heiratsantrag' in Act IV; she outlines to him her faith and belief in a divine order; in the following prayer she thanks God and asks for his support in her coming trials. Her death follows at the start of Act V, and the Russian ambassador departs, threatening Persia with war. Abas is wracked by remorse and tormented by a love now impossible to win. Finally, he is threatened by the vengeance of God and his doom is forecast. Here then is a brief outline of the action of Catharina von Georgien. Let us now look at the nature of the "Liebe" theme and examine how it is worked out in the structure of the drama.

Gryphius, as already noted above, carefully avoids making Catharina's death the necessary result of political expediency. Abas' passionate feelings for Catharina produce a dramatic conflict between worldly love and the divine love that Catharina experiences. Catharina's love of God, her country and her dead

husband is unshakable, and rather than betray them she gladly suffers martyrdom. Her choice is made from the start and there is little internal conflict as in the struggle within Abas, who is faced with two courses of action: he can either follow the voice of his desire for Catharina and hence incur the anger of the Czar, or he can hold to his word and lose Catharina. The nobility of her character touches him, yet the thought of life without her makes him despair. Like Leo Armenius, Abas is an absolute ruler, accustomed to blind obedience from his subjects; Catharina obeys a divine master and he cannot therefore bend her will. As Armenius was subject to human weakness, so the tyrant Abas is susceptible to human love; as indicated previously, his love is an essential element for working out the martyr theme.

One can best see how Gryphius develops this theme by examining the structure of the play. The martyr drama proper would seem to extend from Abas' ultimatum in Act III to the execution at the beginning of Act V. Heselhaus states that elements of the "Staatstragödie" (Maria Stuart theme) and the "Tugendtrögodie" (Virginia theme) are present in the drama in so far as Catharina is presented not only as a bride of Christ (certainly the most important aspect in Gryphius' eyes, for this

theme has the fullest treatment), but also as a Queen dying for her country and a mother dying for her son.¹⁴ She is a martyr to chastity and patriotism as well as belief; her beliefs give her the strength to defend her virtue against the persuasions of Abas. Up to the third act the aspect of the drama that receives the main emphasis is the growth of Abas' love for Catharina into a power capable of destroying both. As his feelings become more desperate, a "Befreiungsaktion" running parallel to this "Leidenschaftsdrama" forces upon him the crisis that occurs at the end of Act III and the start of Act IV.

Gryphius maintains a balance between these two opposing actions; both progress equally until the crisis is reached, as will be shown. In Act I Demetrius and Procopius, secret ambassadors from Georgia, reveal to Catharina the plight of their country and assure her of an imminent release. Demetrius' last words to the Princess, as Salome enters to warn them of Abas' visit, herald the "Staatsaktion": "Doch Reussen springt uns bey / Und wil auf diesen tag euch langer schmerzen frey / Und ungekerckert sehn..."¹⁵ These words anticipate the intervention of the Russian

¹⁴Heselhaus, op. cit., p. 39.

¹⁵Catharina von Georgien, I, 719-21.

ambassador. Abas now enters the Princess' rooms and attempts to persuade her to become his wife, but she is quite unmoved by the force of his feelings.

In Act II Abas confesses his love to an advisor, Seinelcan, and reveals the conflict within him between the opposing forces of love and "Staatsraison". He is touched by her nobility and strangely impressed that she should resist his pleadings and prefer to suffer physical discomfort. These words of Abas, at this point, anticipate the events to come: "Sie wünscht eh flammen, pfahl und höchste noth zu leiden, / Als dass sie wolt ein haar von ihrer ehr' abschneiden."¹⁶ The success of the intervention of the Russian ambassador seems to indicate that Catharina will be released soon, but immediately after the ambassador's departure to tell Catharina the good news, Abas begins to regret a decision he now thinks was perhaps hasty: "Geredet, eh bedacht und in der eil gesprochen."¹⁷ His love for Catharina and conflicting political considerations fight for supremacy within him, and as the act ends, he is still undecided what action to take: his

¹⁶Ibid., II, 109-10.

¹⁷Ibid., II, 329.

last words hint at a decision soon to be made: "Doch lass uns etwas ruh! Uns fällt was sonders ein."¹⁸

The third act increases this tension caused by the antagonism of two conflicting actions. The Russian ambassador visits Catharina and assures her she will soon be free. Meanwhile Abas, tortured by the conflicting emotions of passionate love and personal honour, decides to offer Catharina marriage or death. The act closes with the Princess' ladies-in-waiting making preparations for the journey home.

At the start of Act IV Catharina is ready to depart, but she experiences a mood of melancholia and gloomily predicts misfortune. Imanculi approaches and informs her of the Shah's ultimatum, and with her decision not to accept Abas as husband, the stage is set for her martyrdom. To this point balance had been maintained in each act between the growing strength of Abas' love for Catharina and the retarding element of the "Staatsaktion". Abas' rejection of this political consideration brings out forcefully the extent of his passion, and Catharina's brave acceptance of her trials after her hopes of returning home had been raised underlines her courage and strength of character. As Heselhaus

¹⁸Ibid., II, 356.

states, the two "Aktionen" are necessary for her martyrdom: they contribute to the "Steigerung der Standhaftigkeit der Märtyrin".¹⁹

Although it seems apparent that the true martyr tragedy begins only at the end of Act III, it is also evident that Catharina has shown herself prepared from the very beginning for the possibility of death. In Act I she proudly explains to Demetrius that she has never failed her duties as princess and mother, and during her long imprisonment has become resigned to possible death: "Sol uns der tod hier finden, / Der tod, der stündlich uns durch lange marter plagt / Und vor dem sterben kränckt, hier sind wir, seine magd!"²⁰ At the end of the same act, this exchange between Catharina and Abas demonstrates her defiance and acceptance of death:

Chach Abas: Die nach dem Tode sieht, entsetzt sich, wenn er rufft.
 Catharina: Nicht diese, die entsatz sucht in der todtengruft.
 Abas: Wie? Messer über uns?
 Cath.: Nein! Über diese brüste.
 Abas: Zäumt euren tollen grimm!
 Cath.: Zäumt eure böse lüste!
 Abas: Wir haben vor den trotz wol mittel an der hand.
 Cath.: Brauch flamme, pfahl und stahl!
 Abas: Man bricht wohl diamant.²¹

¹⁹ Heselhaus, *op. cit.*, p. 41.

²⁰ Catharina von Georgien, I, 458-60.

²¹ Ibid., I, 825-30.

And in Act IV, just before Imanculi arrives to inform her of the ultimatum, she feels that some disaster is about to befall her: ignorant of the form it will take, she nevertheless declares herself ready to die if it be God's will: "Hab ich für kirch und land denn nicht genug gewagt / Und willst due meine leich, hier bin ich, deine magd!"²² After hearing the Shah's ultimatum and listening to Imanculi's attempts to overcome her objections to marriage with Abas, it would seem from these words that death is welcome, almost intended:

Imanculi: Princessin! sie verzeih! ich thu diss werck gezwungen.
Catharina: Wir merckens. Es kommt an, wonach wir stets gerungen. ²³

and a few lines later:

Imanculi: Sie kan den tod auffschieben,
Sie trägt ihr leben, heil und sterben in der hand.
Catharina: O tod! gewünschter tod! o angenehmes pfand! ²⁴

In these last instances I think a hint of pride in her suffering may be detected. Martyrdom entails complete submission to the

²²Ibid., IV, 67-8.

²³Ibid., IV, 229-30.

²⁴Ibid., IV, 234-6.

will of God, and although Catharina believes that God is directing her destiny, she certainly possesses none of the humility of the martyr figures of popular belief such as Christ, but rather displays a flamboyance and self-assertion in keeping with the manner of Baroque drama. Stuardus' humility is a noticeable characteristic, for the analogy with Christ is, as we shall see, emphasised more in Carolus Stuardus than in the other martyr dramas, but the very articulate, self-conscious expression of the "Ichsteigerung" of Catharina and Papinianus, Catharina especially, points to a deviation from traditional martyr figures.

In connection with Catharina's readiness to die or suffer any fate God has decided, it is important to mention the 'dream' motif, traditional in the Renaissance drama, with which Gryphius was familiar.²⁵ The supernatural in the form of ghosts, prophetic dreams or premonitions of impending misfortunes were usual ingredients in Renaissance tragedy. Catharina's premonition that Abas will not release her has already been mentioned:

Chach wird die freyheit uns so wolfeil nicht verkauffen.
 Wie dass die thränen uns von beyden wangen lauffen?
 Welch' eine fremde burd, ach! fällt auf diese brust!
 Was drückt den trüben geist und dämpfft die neue lust?
 Die wehmuth ist gewiss ein vorspiel neuer schmerzten. 26

²⁵ c.f. M. B. Evans, "The Attitude of Andreas Gryphius towards The Supernatural", Neophilologus, 1929, 23, 1-10, in Language and Literature, XXII (Wiesbaden, 1951), 17-20.

²⁶ Catharina von Georgien, IV, 73-7.

The dream that Catharina has at the start of the play is very pertinent to this point, as it gives in symbolic outline the course of the entire tragedy and links the expected freedom from prison with the spiritual freedom she will achieve in martyrdom. Salome, her attendant, brings her a rose, in itself a symbol of the "Vergänglichkeit der Welt", as Catharina knows: "Die edlen rosen leben / So kurtze zeit und sind mit dornen doch umgeben!"²⁷ She compares the fate of the fading rose with her own position as a ruler: "So, wie die rose liegt, musst auch mein scepter brechen; / Die dornen fühl ich noch, die unauffhörlich stechen."²⁸ She is reminded of a dream she had the previous night; she had dreamt that she was returning home and about to ascend the throne when suddenly all the finery disappeared; the crown pressed hard upon her head, and when she reached to touch it, she found it was a crown of thorns; the dream would seem to prophesy her hopes of release, her martyrdom and her exchange of her earthly crown for the martyr's crown. The Christ analogy will seem apparent:

... und (wie mich dünckt) ich fühlte,
 Dass die besteinte cron, die mich vor diesem schmückte,
 Diss mein geängstet haupt mehr als gewöhnlich drückte,
 Biss mir das klare blut von beyden schläffen lieff
 Und ich anstatt der cron nur rosen-äst ergriff,
 Verdorrte rosen-äst, die als ein kranz gewunden,
 Fest um die stirn gedrückt auf meinen haaren stunden. 29

²⁷Ibid., I, 305-6.

²⁸Ibid., I, 317-8.

²⁹Ibid., I, 332-8.

Some people had attempted to assist her, others to torment her, until one man particularly abused her. Her fear vanished and she found herself happier and in a more elevated position than ever before:

Doch als die furcht vergangen,
Fand ich mich, Salome! o mit was lust umbfangen!
Weit schöner, als wenn ich in höchster zierath gieng,
Weit höher, als da ich Gurgistans cron empfieng. 30

Abas was lying at her feet in fear, indicating his subsequent defeat; the martyr dies and gains an invaluable spiritual victory, whereas Abas, the tyrant, still lives but is spiritually defeated.

Catharina does not interpret the dream at the time and it is not until the end of Act IV that she remembers the dream and sees a partial explanation; the full meaning is only clear later when she returns to torment Abas. The dream links the "Leidenschaftsdrama" of the first three acts and the true "Märtyrertragödie" in so far as it demonstrates that abandonment of earthly love is necessary to win the love of God and the reward of eternal salvation.

³⁰Ibid., I, 345-8.

This then shows how carefully Gryphius considered the structure of the play. As will become evident, the play is constructed in such a way as to emphasise two dominant themes; the "Vergänglichlichkeit" theme and the "Beständigkeit" of Gryphius' martyr heroine. Let us now examine the first of these themes.

For seventeenth century man 'Fortuna' was a hostile and capricious force, and perhaps the rise of political absolutism at this time may reflect an attempt to create order out of the political and social chaos. The court symbolized the realm of 'Fortuna', yet, as shown in Leo Armenius, all men were at her mercy; Gryphius deals in his dramas with precisely this problem of human beings helpless before incalculable forces. For seventeenth century man time was split up into a series of 'occasionen' in each of which the power of 'Fortuna' is apparent and in each of which man must act and decide between good and evil.³¹ For Gryphius, Eternity with God is the only true reality, as he makes clear in the 'Vorrede' to this drama with his reference to "die ewigherrschende EWIGKEIT."³² The prologue to the drama, in which the figure of 'Ewigkeit' speaks of the virtues of a heroine intent on winning the glories of the next world, and of

³¹cf. L. Forster, The Tempter of 17th Century German Literature (London: Lewis & Co., 1951).

³²Andreas Gryphius, Werke, II, op. cit., p. 144.

vanities of this one, makes quite clear Gryphius' didactic intention. As eternity is the only true and lasting reality, attempts to live solely by worldly values are doomed, open to the workings of capricious chance. In considering the 'Vanitas' theme it is necessary at this juncture to look at the prologue in some detail.

The stage directions themselves indicate that the action will be exalted and bloody and also that the spectator will witness a struggle between good and evil:

Der schauplatz liegt voll leichen, bilder, cronen, scepter, schwerdter u.s.w. Über dem schauplatz öffnet sich der himmel, unter dem schauplatz die hölle. Die ewigkeit kommet von dem himmel und bleibet auff dem schauplatz stehen. 33

The play on the stage bears some relation to everyday life: it is short and full of incident, but illusory and unimportant; death is the decisive moment, but eternity is the supreme and timeless 'occasio'. The figure of 'Ewigkeit' states man's efforts are dreams and deceptions:

Ihr blinden! Ach! wo denckt ihr mich zu finden?
Die ihr vor mich, was brechen muss und schwinden,
Die ihr vor wahrheit nichts als falsche träum erwischt
Und bey den pfützen euch an statt der quell erfrischt! 34

³³Ibid., p. 149.

³⁴Catharina von Georcken, I, 5-8.

Thrones are unsteady; even the victor may fall:

Dem überwinder auch wurd offft sein lober-krantz
Verwandelt in cypressen äste;
Er zog in seinem freuden feste
Mit des triumphs gepränge zu dem todten-tantz.³⁵

Palaces crumble and fall, literary reputé cannot buy eternal fame,
men's efforts to achieve power and riches are deceptive and point-
less in the light of eternity, and man has not discovered the real
and eternal truths on earth:

Doch glaubt diss auch darbey,
Dass auch diss, was ihr besitzet, euch noch recht bekant nicht sey,
Dass ihr, was ewig ist, hier noch nicht habt gefunden,
Dass euch nur eitelkeit und wahnwitz angebunden! ³⁶

Life on earth is a "thrämental" and "folterhaus", and the next
few lines explain the stage as a symbol of life, suspended between
heaven and hell. The Protestant Gryphius believes the spectator
has the free will to make a choice between good and evil:

Hier über euch ist diss, was ewig lacht;
Hier unter euch, was ewig brennt und kracht.
Diss ist mein reich. Wehlt, was ihr wünschet zu besitzen!
Wer allhier fehlt, dem wird nichts auf der erden nützen. ³⁷

³⁵Ibid., I, 23-6.

³⁶Ibid., I, 61-4.

³⁷Ibid., I, 71-4.

The exemplary nature of the heroine is emphasised, and the reader is encouraged to imitate her. It is interesting to note that Gryphius considers Catharina a model of behaviour not only because she upholds her beliefs and affirms the glory of God; she is also a champion of her people; her piety and her patriotism run parallel, and she dies for her people as well as for the glory of God:

Die werthe fürstin folget mir, die schon ein höher reich erblicket,
 Die in den banden frey, nicht irdisch auf der erd,
 Die stritt und litt für kirch und thron und heerd.
 Ihr, wo nach gleicher ehr der hohe sinn euch steht,
 Verlacht mit ihr, was hier vergeht!
 Lasst so wie sie das werthe blut zu pfand
 Und lebt und sterbt getrost für gott und ehr und land! 38

Her dying for her people is also analogous to Christ; as is evident already, this analogy does receive some emphasis in this play, but not in the same direct way as in Carolus Stuardus, as we shall see.

The prologue announces that the only true values are the eternal and the good, and that this tragedy will represent the transience and vanity of human life. Catharina lives and dies

³⁸Ibid., I, 82-8.

according to the high standards advocated by Gryphius in the prologue. Heselhaus summarises her view of life succinctly: such a life "...heisst, wie der Märtyrer das Glück nicht in der vergänglichen Welt, die Freiheit nur in sich, und die Wahrheit nur im Glauben zu suchen."³⁹

The "Vergänglichkeit" and "Vanitas" themes re-echo throughout the drama, in the reports of past events and the incidents that occur in the course of the drama. To start at the beginning, Salome's joy, for example, and her hopes that her Queen will soon be released are replaced by feelings of misery and fear as Catharina suffers the pains of martyrdom. After her praises as princess and as a patient prisoner have been sung by the Russian ambassador and Salome, Catharina reveals that her life has been "eine endlose Unglückskette", a story of murder, war and treachery. At the end of Act I the "Reihe der gefangenen jungfrauen" announces that comfort may only be found in God, and that in contrast, the world is of little importance;

Ein gott-verlobter geist verleurt nichts, wenn die welt
Gleich über hauffen fällt.
Er hat sein reich in sich und herrschet, wenn die crone
Von dem besteinten haar gerissen. 40

³⁹Heselhaus, *op. cit.*, p. 44.

⁴⁰*Ibid.*, I, 865-70.

The "Staatsaktion" of the Russian ambassador works for Catharina's release and so allows no opportunity for the introduction of the "Vergänglichkeit" theme at this juncture. Yet at the end of Act II the words of the "Reyhe der von chach Abas erwürgeten fürsten" prevent the spectator from falling into a state of foolish optimism:

Die leichte hand voll jahr,
 Die uns des himmels licht auf dieser erden schenket,
 Rennt nach der schwartzen bahr,
 Diss leben wird in angst und thränen ganz erträncket. ⁴¹

At the beginning of Act III Catharina's account of the fate of Gurgistan is very much a repetition of the "Vorgeschichte" which had already been related at great length in Act I, but this second account reinforces the idea of this world as a "folterhaus". The last two acts present an actual catastrophe: the "Staatsaktion" is thwarted, Catharina is executed, innocent of any crime, and Abas is wracked with despair and fear.

Gryphius' tragic view of life does not manifest itself only in narration and event; it is also developed through the structure of the play. There is less actual movement and direct

⁴¹Ibid., II, 357-60.

stage action than in Leo Armenius; reports and characters' reactions to events befalling them are presented, yet the whole is arranged to create dramatic situations with sudden changes of direction. At the beginning, hopes are bright: the Georgian ambassadors report Gurgistan liberated and Catharina's son Tamaras safely on the throne, and the Russian ambassador arrives to effect Catharina's release; on the reverse side, Abas' passion is mounting, and his attempts to persuade Catharina to marry him are becoming desperate. A turn of fortune in one direction is balanced by a following turn in the opposite direction; the Georgian ambassadors predict release, Abas' love becomes more intense, the Russian ambassador obtains Catharina's release, Imanculi issues Abas' ultimatum to Catharina and hopes of saving her are finally dashed; Abas has his triumph, yet he breaks down and Catharina is the spiritual victor. Such an action reveals the transience of all plans, hopes and wishes on this earth. In Leo Armenius blind fate had been seen to rule the characters; in Catharina von Georgien "Fortuna" and "das ewig wandelbare Glück" wreak havoc with the fortunes of countries and individuals; but, whereas in his first drama there had been no hope of salvation and Gryphius had merely hinted in the circumstances of Armenius' death at a possible means of compensation and reward for the

sufferings of life on earth, the second drama offers a definite reward for earthly misery through the promise of eternal life; here is reward for an attitude of mind that values a good life and puts its trust in God.

Gryphius' martyr heroes possess a firm, given character, a purpose of soul upon which all external events have no effect. For these characters, the action is all internal; the passions from within and the pressure from outside shock the individual into activity in self-defence, to maintain his ego. They are the embodiment of a rationally conditioned passivity and emotional activity. In the consideration of the "Beständigkeit" theme we shall have cause to refer to Gryphius' problem in presenting dramatically what is essentially an attitude of mind and to the solution at which he arrived.

Gryphius himself acknowledges the difficulties of his task in the "Vorrede" and wonders whether his theme is too demanding; in itself it would seem inimical to dramatic portrayal, and certainly Catharina's quality of mind is easier to comprehend as it is mirrored in the long reports of Acts I and II. Martyrdom is also an extreme test of "Beständigkeit"; to make Catharina's character clear, a test has to be designed to make the potential martyr reconsider; in this respect Abas' courtship and her

refusal are introduced partly as a dramatic means of demonstrating Catharina's steadfastness; the refusal is in keeping with the true constancy of a Christian martyr, as it is based primarily on religious grounds in so far as she will not abandon her Christian beliefs. Gryphius' solution to the problem is to give an account of the nature of the desired "Beständigkeit" in the "Reyhen" at the end of each act; the monologues and the scenes of verbal conflict between Catharina and Abas and Imanculi also reveal it in dramatic fashion.

At this point one may briefly consider the historical foundation and development of the concept of "beständigkeit", its importance in the writing of German drama and its particular attraction for Gryphius as reflected in his martyr figures.⁴² "Beständigkeit" has its roots in the ethics of Stoicism of the Caesars and is reflected in the tragedies of Seneca, with which Gryphius was familiar; Seneca praised an attitude of mind apathetic to physical suffering and free from obsessive passions weakening the 'logos'; that is, worldly considerations were valueless, and internal harmony was the ideal state. Connections can be drawn between Christianity and Stoicism, and Boethius, in

⁴²cf. W. Welzig, "Constantia und barocke Beständigkeit", DVS, XXXV (1961), 426-52.

his De Consolatione Philosophiae, like Seneca, asserted that everything man suffered contributed to his "Heil". There are obvious differences between the two philosophies: the Christian has hope of a future life, the Stoic none; the Christian welcomes trials, the Stoic despises them. A very influential work by Lipsius, De constantia, written in 1583 and translated in 1599, recommended a right and immovable strength of mind, neither lifted up nor pressed down by external or casual incidents, essentially as a relief in the chaotic social conditions of the day. "Beständigkeit" was a concept based on patience and regulated by "Das rechte Recht", an acceptance of God's ordinances, resignation to the divine will and a mastery of self. The domination of "Fortuna" was broken in this way, and the strength to overcome problems came from within the individual. Gryphius' last martyr figure, Papinianus, is a fine example of this attitude of mind. Opitz also advised his readers to achieve self-knowledge, insight into the illusory nature of the world and rejection of temporal things.⁴³ The product of this influential philosophical trend is, in Baroque drama, a hero without a tragic flaw, whose downfall is caused by the general condition of mankind; he

⁴³ M. Opitz, Trostgedichte, IV, 57. ff.

objectively defends lofty and generally acknowledged ideals and seems almost inhuman in his strength and constancy; the spirit is defiant and independent of his physical state; he has "sein reich in sich". Catharina suffers her tragic fate quite willingly and dies because of her moral purity; innocent of any crime herself, she pays with her death for human passions out of control of the "logos"; a metaphysical aura surrounds her death, as if, like Christ, she were paying with her purity for the sins of those who are tainted. It is for these reasons that I prefer to call Gryphius' plays under discussion dramas rather than tragedies.

She is herself a "Spiel der Zeit", yet her downfall brings out in her the heroic spirit so necessary in Gryphius' eyes to combat the trials of life. This strength she possesses has two sources - reason and belief. She is confident that God is just and never doubts that he has some plan for her, nor that her martyrdom is the will of God. She also never questions the fact that a just order, directed by God, may be discerned in a world seemingly under the control of implacable fate. Her "beständigkeit" rests in what she believes to be God's will, and she dies willingly for her faith, honour and country; in her mind

the general good is indistinguishable from the majesty of God. Wentzlaff-Eggebert expresses succinctly the nature of the struggle between God and man: "Es geht um die Wahrung des göttlichen Rechtes in den Staatsordnungen der Welt."⁴⁴ Not only has the earthly concept of justice been hurt by the broken promise of the non-Christian absolute ruler, but a higher plan has also been disturbed.

In the previous chapter on Leo Armenius Gryphius' concept of the position of the monarch in relation to his subjects and to God was discussed at some length; it is relevant at this juncture, in connection with the "Beständigkeit" theme in Catharina von Georgien, to re-consider this concept. In this way one may see how Abas abuses his position and how, in comparison, Catharina's bearing is praised. In Catharina von Georgien Gryphius recognizes the formal power of the monarch, but implicitly stresses the monarch's need for self-discipline and his duty to recognize the subjects' right, willed by God, to hold personal beliefs. God stands above the prince, who has his power from Him, and through Him he becomes the "Sonne" to his subjects. God is "der herren herr"⁴⁵

⁴⁴F-W. Wentzlaff-Eggebert, "Die deutsche Barocktragödie: Zur Funktion von 'Glaube' und 'Vernunft' im Drama des 17. Jahrhunderts". in Formkräfte der deutschen Dichtung vom Barock bis zur Gegenwart (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1965), 5-19: p.8.

⁴⁵Catharina von Georgien, IV, 330.

and "aller fürsten fürst".⁴⁶ The prince must not fail to hear the voice of his own conscience, and it is only with great difficulty that Abas can force himself to send Catharina the ultimatum. Catharina herself acknowledges the role of conscience when she refuses Abas' offer of marriage in Act IV:

Man nennt' uns königin. Das sind wir ja vorhin
Und dörffen, dass man uns solt' eine cron' auffsetzen,
Nicht des gewissens recht, nicht gottes huld verletzen.⁴⁷

In the same way, in the last martyr drama, Papinianus, the conscience of the martyr hero Papinianus will not allow him to commit an act contrary to its dictates, and the tyrant Bassianus is plagued by his conscience for a wrong act. Conscience is seen as a divine instrument of correction, the feeling inside man for what is right and what is wrong. Abas is a criminal ruler who fashions laws according to his whim: as he says to Catharina in Act I when he is attempting to overcome her resistance to his offers: "Was Abas schafft, muss recht, dafern es unrecht, werden."⁴⁸ His lack of respect for the cosmic laws occasions the revenge of heaven. Catharina recognizes this

⁴⁶Ibid., I, 185.

⁴⁷Ibid., IV, 148-50.

⁴⁸Ibid., I, 784.

higher order, and for Gryphius she exemplifies the "bewehrte beständigkeit" of a noble character acknowledging the supremacy of God's order over the whim of a tyrant.

Catharina demonstrates great patience and courage in facing death; she incorporates, as Wentzlaff-Eggebert states of Gryphius' heroes, "ein geschlossenes einiges Sein ihrer Seele".⁴⁹ Her belief in Christ, truth and justice is a source of great strength, and she is an example of the highest Christian virtues; these values are announced by the "Reyhen" to heighten the "Liedensvorgänge"; the "Reyhe" at the end of Act I defines the nature of "Beständigkeit" and announces that the realm of the spirit is not subject to the same destruction as that of the body; the "Reyhe" at the end of Act III praises Catharina's firmness, her conquest of fear, her spiritual freedom and her confidence in the power of her mind to overcome physical pain; the "Reyhen" of Act IV encourage "beständigkeit" in martyrdom, and solve the conflict between love and death:

Tod: Der liebt ohn alles falsch, wer biss zum tode liebt.
 Liebe: Wer liebend stirbet, wird nicht durch den tod betrübt. 50

⁴⁹Wentzlaff-Eggebert, op. cit., p.13.

⁵⁰Catharina von Georgien, IV, 525-6.

Her bearing towards the sufferings of her life has a religious basis, as is clear in the words of the "Reyhe": "Ein gott-verlobter geist...hat sein reich in sich."⁵¹ She stoutly maintains her right to her freedom of will, and her martyrdom is itself the ultimate test of her beliefs and an escape from the world to the kingdom of God, as she joyfully explains to Salome:

Wir, Salome, sind frey! der höchste reisst die bande
Des langen kerckers auf und führt uns aus dem lande,
Da tod und marter herrscht, in das gewünschte reich
Der ewig-steten lust. 52

Catharina appears as a Protestant martyr, representing the Lutheran concept of inward freedom. Her monologue in Act IV reveals her to be not merely stoical, but definitely Christian; she prays to God and repeats her readiness to suffer martyrdom; these are thoughts also in the prayer she utters after the revelation of the punishment awaiting her from the hands of Abas:

(Ach heyland!...)
Beut du mir selbst die faust und hilff mir Überwinden!
Alleine bin ich viel zu schwach,
Mit dir wil ich durch angst und ach
Den sieg, das licht, den weg zu dir, erlöser! finden.⁵³

⁵¹Ibid., I, 886-8.

⁵²Ibid., IV, 305-8.

⁵³Ibid., IV, 293-6.

Her behaviour in the "Abschiedsszene", confronted with the tears of her attendants, is a touching example of her "beständigkeit" and of how death may be faced, made strong by trust in God. This impression is further fortified by the report of her courageous bearing under the brutal torture she undergoes prior to her execution. Her torments are analogous to those of Christ, and this parallel - martyr figure and Christ - is evident in Catharina von Georgien, as it was in Leo Armenius: the emphasis is greater in the present tragedy with its very definitely Christian martyr. Christ the martyr is as important to Gryphius as Christ the saviour. This 'imitatio Christi', although not as forcefully stressed as in the next drama, Carolus Stuardus, is apparent from the make-up of Catharina's character and the nature of her death. God is working through her, and the resulting unity of heroine and saint would seem to be essential to Gryphius' concept of the martyr figure. Catharina is welcoming the mystical union with Christ when she says to Salome that her death will be no cause for despair: "Es ist nicht winselns zeit; glaubt, es ist jauchzens werth, / Dass unser bräut'gam uns die marter-cron beschert!"⁵⁴ The manner of her death is similar to

⁵⁴Ibid., IV, 335-6.

that of Christ, and one of her ladies does draw the analogy:

Serena: Man hiess die zarten händ' und füß' in fessel schliessen
 Und zwang arm, leib und knie mit ketten an den pfahl.
 Jungfrau: Ihr könig schied am holtz aus diesem jammerthal. 55

She asks God to stay by her in her hour of need, and as she dies she proclaims her victory: "Wir haben überwunden. / Wir haben durch den tod das leben selbst gefunden. / Ach Jesu komm!"⁵⁶

A constant feature of Gryphius' martyr dramas is the contrast between the firm decision of the martyrs and the hesitancy and inconstancy of the figures surrounding them. Catharina's firmness is very different from the indecision of Abas as to what action to take, and the constancy of her heavenly love contrasts with the marked changes in his affections for Catharina, oscillating as they do between love and hatred. Abas is not the weak tyrant in the mould of Leo Armenius; in fact he rivals Catharina's strength of mind with an obstinacy made desperate by his unrewarded love. His love is very different from the sort of love which Catharina experiences, and to conclude this section on "beständigkeit" one should examine the figure of the Shah, with whom Catharina stands in such contrast, in order to ascertain what

⁵⁵Ibid., V, 66-8.

⁵⁶Ibid., V, 121-3.

vices and attitudes Gryphius was intending to condemn and what effect the contrast with Catharina produces.

In Act III, prior to Abas' decision to issue Catharina the ultimatum, the inconstancy of his passionate love is made clear, as his feelings alternate between violent love and hatred; the voices of honour, reason and humanity speak in vain and he is incapable of reasonable consideration; he glories in his power and position, and yet paradoxically is much more a prisoner of his fate than is Catharina, as he is unable to control his intense emotions; he is a desperate figure who seeks happiness in forcing a woman to love him. The situation itself is paradoxical; Catharina is a prisoner and defenceless, yet exercises her will to make a free decision, and her death demonstrates the freedom of will she enjoys. Abas, on the other hand, is tormented by despair and regret; he confesses that Catharina was stronger than he and becomes a tragic figure, a proud, absolute ruler humbled by the strength of his love; the true love he felt turns against him, and his impatient, masculine passion is defeated: "Doch ist wol herber rach' und die mehr kan betrüben, / Als dass, wir, feindin! dich auch todt stets müssen lieben?".⁵⁷ Kierkegaard's observation on the difference

⁵⁷Ibid., V, 447-8.

between the tyrant and martyr figure is very pertinent in this regard:

Der Tyrann, selbst herrschsüchtig, zwingt durch die Macht, der Märtyrer, selbst Gott unbedingt gehorsam, zwingt durch eigene Leiden. So stirbt der Tyrann und seine Herrschaft ist vorbei, so stirbt der Märtyrer und seine Herrschaft beginnt. 58

The reader may be struck by the interesting parallels between this drama and Hebbel's Herodes und Mariamne, written about 200 years later. Both Abas and Herodes are absolute monarchs in savage countries where little value is put on individual life; both are pagan rulers, obsessed by their love for women who defy them; Mariamne is prepared to love Herodes, but both tyrants are guilty of abusing the women's demanded right of free will and free choice; both use women as things, as objects possessed, but not respected; the absolute obedience they demand as omniscient rulers is opposed and oppressed by the absolute of free choice; both victims die, confident that their example will edify others and that their beliefs are right and will triumph one day; in both instances the tyrants suffer complete breakdowns and

⁵⁸S. Kierkegaard, Tagebuecher, II, p.216.

their doom is forecast; both men are sympathetic figures, more prone to 'human' love than the idealistic women.

Whereas Mariamne seeks no punishment for Herodes except his own remorse and conscience, Catharina (and Gryphius through her) has no intention of allowing Abas to go unpunished for such a crime. This point leads us to a discussion of the conclusion of the drama, which does not end with Catharina's death, as would seem appropriate for a martyr drama. The conclusion shows first the fate of one who, by evil action, makes a martyr's death a necessity for her; second, it gives another example of the "Vergänglichkeit" and "Vanitas" themes, and finally, it contrasts, by implication, the firmness of Catharina with the worldliness of Abas.

The spirit of revenge which comes to torment Abas does not appear to be very Christian, nor does it fit in with Catharina's mood of restraint. Abas has already been punished by his strong feelings of remorse and the threats of the Russian ambassador to nullify the peace treaty. Catharina's spirit does not appear as a heavenly apparition, but first of all as the product of his own terrified soul; the figure of revenge is already present in his mind and is

a natural explanation of the later 'real' appearance. The reasons for her appearance at all are dramatic and didactic; it increases in the spectator the terror which the drama is aimed at producing, and it also drives home the didactic message.

There have already been echoes of the "Rache" motif throughout the drama; the most striking example occurs in the "Reyhe der von chach Abas erwürgeten fürsten", who ask God how long he will allow Abas' tyranny to go unpunished:

Gehn so vieler tausend schmertzen,
 Richter! dir nicht mehr zu hertzen?
 Lässest du auf eines wincken
 Gantze reich im blut ertrincken?
 Ernster richter! übe rache!
 Wache! grosser gott! erwache!
 Wache! wache! wache! wache!
 Rache! rache! rache! rache! 59

In a world where political motivations and passionate feelings play such a prominent role, revenge is a necessary corollary to the abuse of law and justice. It is evident also that God's justice includes revenge upon those who have wronged the innocent; Catharina's spirit is sent by a God who allows no

⁵⁹Catharina von Georgien, II, 409-16.

mockery. Revenge appears as a result of Abas' general abuse of his position as legislator and judge, and also as punishment from God for his treatment of Catharina. Gryphius shows himself as a man who looks first to God and the truth, and then tries to circumscribe the state on the basis of their dictates; he was unable to recognize "Staatsraison" and "Staatsethos" as values in their own right. Catharina's spirit forecasts that Abas will die, but that before his death he will witness the ruin of his kingdom and the extinction of all hope of glory; her spirit predicts:

Tyrann! der himmel ists, der dein verderben sucht.
Gott lässt unschuldig blut nicht ruffen sonder frucht.

Doch eh'r due wirst vergehn,
Musst du dein Persen sehn in Krieges-flammen stehn,
Dein haus durch schwartze gifft der zweytracht angestecket,
Biss du durch kinder-mord und nechstes blut beflecket,
Feind, freunden und dir selbst untrüglich wirst das leben
Nach grauser seuchen angst dem richter übergeben. 60

The prophesy and prefiguration of revenge for the martyr figure's executioner is a standard feature of Gryphius' martyr dramas. Abas' doom is forecast, and, as we shall see, revenge is also

⁶⁰Ibid., V, 431-2. 435-40.

forecast for Cromwell and Hugo Peter in Carolus Stuardus, and for Bassianus in Papinianus. Abas the tyrant is justly punished, but his deep and very genuine love for Catharina, combined with the impossibility of it being returned, makes him somewhat sympathetic; the presentation of his love has great power. This love is his tragic flaw which leads him to destruction by his inability to discipline it in a situation where he has no chance of success. In Catharina von Georgien not only the titular heroine suffers; as indicated earlier in this chapter, there is a development in the growing passion of the Shah which becomes essentially tragic. The last words of Abas echo the prologue that introduced the drama; the "Vergänglichkeit" theme is invoked by the one character who until then had spoken only the praise of the values of this world, of power and worldly splendour, and they are thus doubly effective:

Recht so! Prinzessin! recht! greiff unsern siegkrantz an!
 Bekriege Persens ruh! Reiss, was uns schützen kan,
 Mit starcker faust hinweg! Lass, nun du schon erblichen,
 Den wackern hochmuth aus, dem Abas oft gewichen. 61

In conclusion, it is necessary to add that Gryphius may have wished some patriotic interpretation of the themes of

⁶¹Ibid., V, 441-4.

Catharina von Georgien. Following the usual pattern of the Silesian writers of drama, Gryphius looked abroad for his material,⁶² and none of his martyr dramas has a German hero. But Gryphius was a genuine patriot who loved his home and his country and who felt much sadness at the fate of his land and the Empire. Catharina von Georgien could be intended by Gryphius to signify an episode from the Thirty Years War, reflecting in the miseries of Georgia those of his native Germany; Catharina may be viewed as the representative of a defenceless Germany, upholding her spiritual freedom against the shows of force of her enemies, perhaps the Jesuits who at that time were embarking upon a Counter-Reformation in many parts of Germany with the sanction of the Habsburg Emperor, a Catholic. Gryphius himself states nothing to substantiate such a view, and so there is no real evidence to prove such a patriotic intention on his part. What is evident is that Gryphius, in this Christian martyr drama, is advocating a faith in God, a "Standhaftigkeit" and "Gerechtigkeitssinn" so necessary in his mind to overcome the sufferings of life on earth and for the living of a virtuous life, pleasing to God and man; in

⁶²Flemming, Das schlesische Kunstdrama, op. cit., p.12.

contrast, the spectacle of the fate of the tyrant who does not possess the demanded virtues must be intended, as already stated, to cause terror in the reader or spectator.

The following chapter of this paper will be devoted to a discussion of Gryphius' next martyr drama, Carolus Stuardus, commenting on the rather special position it holds in the martyr dramas of the author. Catharina is Gryphius' first Christian martyr and truly allegorical figure. As already noted, the drama is introduced by the allegorical figure 'Ewigkeit' and the audience and reader are asked to see the fate of the Christian martyr in its wider context; Armenius' fate was the tragedy of an individual, Catharina's that of one person, but of all humanity also. Gryphius is advocating "bewhrte beständigkeit" as a virtue all should seek to achieve, for it is the key to the salvation of not only Catharina, but of all mankind. The words "Ermordete Majestät" introduce the next drama, Carolus Stuardus, and, as we shall see, the Christian martyr drama is used by Gryphius in this drama to express definite political views on a specific contemporary event, thus enlarging the scope of the martyr drama. The elaboration of the Christ-analogy and its fusion with political views will emerge in the course of the next chapter.

CHAPTER III

Only a few days after the first reports of the trial and execution of King Charles I of England were received, Gryphius began work on a new drama,¹ and the first draft was soon complete. The title of the drama, "Ermordete Majestät oder Carolus Stuardus, König von Grosz Britanien", is in itself a guide to Gryphius' feelings: no tyrant has been killed, but 'majesty' has been murdered, with the title of the ruler of the kingdom of "Grosz Britanien" not merely of England. The first draft was finished in March 1650, but did not appear in print until seven years later. A sonnet² written in early March 1650 would seem to indicate that the drama was presented, or intended to be presented, to some important military person; the title of the sonnet is "An einen höchstberühmten Feldherrn bey
"Überreichung des Carl Stuards"; it is a call to ruling princes to avenge the death of Charles, which was an insult to God Himself. The last three lines, for example, demonstrate

¹Andreas Gryphius, Werke, II, op. cit., p.353.

²Andreas Gryphius, Werke, III, op. cit., p.185.

Gryphius' belief in Charles' innocence and in the justice of his own demand for revenge; the last few words are a definite call to arms:

Die unschuld, die den geist in solchem hohn auffgiebt,
Erfordert, was gerecht und rechte waffen liebt,
Zu rächen diesen fall. Heer! schwerdter aus der scheiden!³

This poem offers evidence of the vehemence of Gryphius' views on the execution; why this event should have such a disturbing effect upon a German contemporary will come under discussion later.

It is not clear exactly why Gryphius withheld publication of his Carolus Stuardus until 1657; he informs the reader in the preface to the fourth Book of Odes, written in 1652, that he purposely withheld the manuscript: "... das unlängst mein Carolus, den ich iederzeit an mich zu halten beghret,⁴ wider mein vermuthen in vieler ja auch fürstlicher und vortreflicher personen hände gerathen..."⁵. Powell⁶ suggests that he may have withheld it because he was conscious of its limitations as

³Ibid., ll. 12-14.

⁴My underlining - J.S.B.

⁵Andreas Gryphius, Werke, III, op. cit., p. 285.

⁶H. Powell, Andreas Gryphius: Carolus Stuardus (2nd ed.; Leicester: Phoenix Press, 1955), p. 12.

a drama, or perhaps because he thought that the distancing effect of several years would allow less controversy to be caused by his own strong Royalist views and his interpretation of Charles as a martyr. Gryphius himself offers no evidence to prove or disprove such theories.

He did, however, come to revise the drama in 1661-3, and the second edition, published in 1663, is very different in many respects from the first version. Tittmann⁷ has the first version in his selection of Gryphius' dramas, but Palm prints the second version in his "Werke", and this is the edition to which we shall refer in this chapter. The many changes will be discussed, also the theories put forward to explain Gryphius' rewriting. However, prior to any interpretation of Carolus Stuardus, a brief account of the action of the drama in its revised form is necessary. All the action occurs within a fifteen hour period.⁸

At the start of Act I Stuardus has already been sentenced and his execution is to take place that very day. General Fairfax' wife is determined to prevent this, and to this

⁷Dramatische Dichtungen von Andreas Gryphius, ed. J. Tittmann (Deutsche Dichter des 17. Jahrhunderts, IV, 1870).

⁸Andreas Gryphius, Werke, II, op. cit., p. 360.

end she enlists, in the first scene, the aid of her cautious husband. This "Befreiungsaktion" contrasts with the next scene, in which the plotters' determination to execute the King is in evidence. Hugo Peter, the calculating priest, and a Captain Axtel persuade Hewlett to be the King's executioner. The "Chor der ermordeten engelländischen Könige" see the trial and the execution as a challenge to the divine right of kings and to God Himself.

In the first scene of Act II the ghosts of Strafford and Laud protest the enormity of the crime and predict disaster to a country intent on destroying its ruler, God's representative on earth. In the following scene the ghost of Maria Stuart appears to the sleeping King; she lists the kings of the realm who have also met a violent death and curses a people about to commit a terrible crime. The King awakens and reveals, in conversation with Juxton, the Bishop of London, his readiness to die and his feelings of forgiveness towards his murderers; he reflects upon the precariousness of earthly existence, and, as if to emphasize his determination to die, even the presence of his children and the memory of his dear wife cannot alter his decision. The chorus of Sirens, with the gift of universal

knowledge, prophesy the end of the world and the vengeance of God upon the guilty.

The third act develops the intrigue which had been announced in Act I. Fairfax seems confident he has the way to effect the King's release. To counterbalance these hopes, Hewlett announces in the next scene that he has now received the full power of Parliament to carry out the execution. The intrigue develops further in the next scene when two captains discuss a plan to free Stuardus, but when Fairfax appears, he seems to be quite undecided and hurriedly breaks off the conversation with the words: "so sterb er dann! Fahrt wol!"⁹ In conversation with Cromwell in the next scene he hotly pleads the King's cause, but without success, and is threatened quite pointedly: "Wer viel von Carlen schwetzt, soll Carles gänge gehn!"¹⁰ Hugo Peter reports that the Prince of Wales has gained the support of the Dutch, and advises that the sudden shock of the King's death will allow Parliament to dispense with the aristocracy, the House of Lords, lawyers and priests. Fairfax, alone, reveals Peter's hypocrisy and his own feelings that he is now being watched with suspicion. His ineffectuality becomes

⁹Carolus Stuardus, III, 150.

¹⁰Ibid., III, 240.

manifest, as he decides he can now do nothing except resign his post.

The next scenes contain discussions for and against the death sentence, and its possible consequences in England and on the Continent, first by the Dutch ambassador and the Palatine Envoy, then by two English counts, and finally between Cromwell and the Scottish ambassador. Hugo Peter appears to report to Cromwell that all is ready for the execution: the scene is now set. The "Chor der engelländischen frauen und jungfrauen" reveal that the common folk also deplore the King's fate, which they see as closely bound with their own.

At the start of Act IV Stuardus is inwardly preparing himself for death. He will not open a letter his son has sent him from Holland, as he does not wish to disturb his own peace of mind; he expresses his regret at the deaths of Strafford and Laud, and acknowledges his own guilt, which Juxton and Thomblinson seek to alleviate. He is troubled by the fate of his people and hopes that they will recognize the falseness of the new rulers. Hacker leads him off to the scaffold, and Hugo Peter expresses his great delight at the prospect of the King's death. In the next scene Fairfax' wife appears, in

despair, and, expresses her dismay at her husband's indecisiveness and ineffectuality; a faithful captain promises to do all he can to release the King, but nothing more is heard, and the "Gegenaktion" disappears without trace. Act IV marks the final collapse of the rescue attempts and the triumph of the conspirators. The "Chor der religionen und der ketzer", an allegorical interlude assuming the didactic function of the chorus, exposes the hypocrisy of those factions which had asserted that the King was an enemy of religion.

Act V begins with a discussion of events between one of the English counts and the Palatine Envoy: all attempts to prevent the execution have failed. The unidentified figure of Poleh appears; he would appear to be one of the King's judges, whom remorse at his deed has turned mad. He vividly imagines the retribution awaiting Hugo Peter, Hewlett, Cromwell and other plotters, and foresees the future coronation of Charles II. The spirits of Strafford and Laud re-appear to terrify the madman. Finally the events leading up to the execution are presented: the mob is assembled around the scaffold. The King protests his innocence in a long farewell speech and prepares himself for death. There is a general outcry as the fatal blow is struck.

An epilogue follows this last act: "Die geister der ermordeten könnige" call for vengeance until the figure "Die rache" appears on the scene: it describes the terrible retribution that Britain must now suffer. This chorus stands as a climax to the others; it protests once more the enormity of the crime and brings the certainty of divine revenge:

Ich schwere noch einmal bey aller printzen könnig
Und der entseelten leich, dass Albion zu wenig,
Zu dämpffen meine gluth, dass Albion ersäufft,
Wo es sich reuend nicht in thränen gantz verteufft. 11

After portraying a feminine martyr in Catharina von Georgien, Gryphius, in this present drama, uses a masculine figure as his hero. As in Leo Armenius, a main theme is the fall of a mighty ruler, but with a different emphasis. In Leo Armenius Gryphius protests the deposition of the lawful ruler by regicide; such is the case in Carolus Stuardus also, but whereas Balbus, although a tyrant, will maintain a rule of princely absolutism (or, really, despotism, which is displeasing to Gryphius), Cromwell, Peter and their associates are threatening to destroy the whole order of the state, and at the very time at which Gryphius is

¹¹Ibid., V, 541-4.

writing. Gryphius' own feelings of horror were shared by many of his own countrymen, Protestants and Catholic alike. Pamphlets, orations, songs and dramas supporting the Royalist cause poured forth;¹² Gryphius was not alone in seeing Charles as a martyr. Most of the accounts which Gryphius' contemporaries read were inspired by the political theory of the divine right of kings and the sacredness of the king's person;¹³ works in verse often claimed to be the King's own death chant;¹⁴ these works usually put into the mouth of the King their authors' own thoughts on the event and the occurrences leading up to it. There even appeared a German dialogue between Charles and Cromwell,¹⁵ which showed the fullest sympathy for the Royalist cause.

¹²cf. R. Priebisch, "German Pamphlets in Prose and Verse on the Trial and Death of Charles I", in A Miscellany; presented to J. M. Mackay (Liverpool: University of Liverpool Press, 1914), pp. 181-98.

¹³e. g.: Idea Anglicana oder Politische Erklärung unverwandter Gemüthsgedanken über des Königs Caroli Stuardi Hinrichtung. Gedruckt im Jahr 1657.

Gespräch zwischen dem Englischen Pickelherring und Frantzösischen Jan Potagche über das Schändliche Hinrichten Königlicher Mayestät in Engeland, Schott - und Irland.

¹⁴e. g.: Ihrer königl. Majestät von England Caroli Klag - oder Sterb-Lied aus dem Englischen in Holländisch ins Teutsch versetzt.

¹⁵Königlicher Discours und Gespräch zwischen Th. Kön. Mayest. Carol Stuart und Herrn Protectoren Cromwell in England sampt einem traurigen Lied über den Seligen und Todtlichen Hinscheid Gustavi Adolphi Königs in Schweden sel. Andenkens. (1663?).

Gryphius had considerable contemporary material at his disposal, and as the copious "Kurtze anmerckungen über Carolum" to the 1663 edition prove, he also drew on standard works of English history, for example, the works of Camden,¹⁶ Polydor Vergil¹⁷ and Buchanan,¹⁸ in order to provide a wide historical panorama. Schönle¹⁹ has made a study of the sources Gryphius employed, and recourse will be made to his work in the discussion of the changes between the first and second editions.

To determine how Gryphius has expanded the martyr theme and developed the Christ analogy in Carolus Stuardus, it is important to look at the sources Gryphius used for the two versions. For the first edition in 1650 and published in 1657, the main sources of historical information on the event would seem to be the following three works: Engelländisch Memorial,²⁰ published in

¹⁶W. Camden, The true and Royall History of ... Elizabeth Queen of England ..., 1625-9.

¹⁷P. Vergil, Anglicae Historiae libri, XXVI, 1534.

¹⁸G. Buchanan, De Maria Scotorum Regina totaque ejus contra Regem conjuratione ... historia, 1571.

¹⁹G. Schönle, Das Trauerspiel 'Carolus Stuardus' des Andreas Gryphius: Quellen und Gestaltung des Stoffes, (Bonn/Würzburg, 1933).

²⁰Vollständiges Englisches Memorial/Zu ewiger Gedächtniss. Erzehlende die Processen / Declarationen / Beschuldigungen / Defensionen / Urtheile / Letzte Worte und executionen / von / (a list of the victims follows with the date of their executions. J.S.B.)... Allerhöchster sonderbahren Fleiss / nach der Copey von London In das Hochteutsche zu jedermans Nachricht übergesetzt / und mit Kupfferstücken nach dem Leben gezieret. M.DC.XLVIII. (sic).

Holland in Dutch and German, which contains an account of the legal proceedings leading to the execution of Laud, Strafford, Charles and various Royalist nobles; second, Imago Regis Caroli, translated in 1649 into German, the authorship of which (Charles himself or Bishop Gauden) has never been established; (in connection with the theme of this study, it is worthy of note that the frontpiece is an engraving of the King on his knees, praying, in the act of exchanging his earthly crown for a crown of thorns, with his eyes fixed upon a crown in heaven); third, the Clamor Sanguinis Regii,²¹ a tract reflecting the horror felt by its Royalist author, Petrus Molineaus, at the treatment Charles had received at the hands of Parliament.

In the course of the next few years new source material became accessible to Gryphius. In 1661 there appeared in Amsterdam a tract by Philipp von Zesen, who had visited England and was the author of several works supporting the Royalist cause. This tract, Die verschmähetete / doch wieder erhöhete Majestät,²² includes many details which were incorporated in the second version. Bisaccioni's history of the Civil War in England²³ was the source

²¹Regii Sanguinis Clamor ad Coelum adversus Parricidas Anglicanos (Hague, 1652).

²²P. von Zesen, Die verschmähetete / doch wieder erhöhete Majestät, (Amsterdam, 1661).

²³M. Bisaccioni, Historia delle Guerre Civili de nostri ultimi Tempi, (Venice, 1655).

of the intrigue to rescue the King which was completely absent from the earlier edition. The Restoration of the monarchy in England in 1660 allowed Gryphius to insert premonitions of events, which had just recently taken place, into the new version.

Historical fact is faithfully reproduced by frequent use of this source material, but Carolus Stuardus is not merely a dramatic reproduction of contemporary history, a mere political drama. Like Catharina's martyrdom, Gryphius sees the fate of Charles in a wider context, not only as a personal tragedy but as an expression of the fate of mankind in general. This drama offers another example of the allegorical form common to Gryphius' dramas. The chorus, for example, at the end of Act I cries out to God for an explanation of sin and suffering:

Herr, der du fürsten selbst an deine statt gesetzt,
Wie lange siehst du zu?
Wird nicht durch unsern fall dein heilig recht verletzt?
Wie lange schlummerst du? 24

The answer Gryphius gives is that the pains we suffer are God's punishment for our sins; yet to cause evil in the world is sinful, and so England, by allowing the King to be murdered, has offended the divine order of kingship and made herself guilty of a crime that will assuredly be avenged upon her.

²⁴Carolus Stuardus, I, 321-4.

At intervals, Gryphius summarizes through the chorus all the impressions the action makes upon him and should also be making upon the audience. Chorus and play are welded together, as in Catharina von Georgien. In the 1663 edition the first chorus, which in the 1657 version came at the end of Act I, now precedes it, as it comes at the end of a new Act I. The second chorus now also precedes the act which it originally followed, and the position of the two remaining choruses remains unaltered. I would disagree with Powell²⁵ that the whole unity of the structure was undermined by this revision, but I think that he is right in asserting that the scene between the ghosts of Strafford and Laud, essentially a part of the exposition, is rather out of place in the new Act II.²⁶

The first version had been written under the direct emotional impact of the event, with a definite moral issue in mind; therefore, the plot had been neglected. The opinions of the various speakers are of paramount interest to Gryphius; he may have added the Fairfax intrigue partly to create dramatic

²⁵Powell, op. cit., p. lxxxv. ff.

²⁶Ibid., p. xc.

tension, after realizing that the political actuality of the events and the passionate interest he brought to the subject were insufficient to keep the drama alive, for Carolus Stuardus is primarily a "Parteischrift", a diatribe against the crime of regicide. But, as Catharina von Georgien was more than a personal view of a suffering princess, so Carolus Stuardus goes beyond a tendentious presentation of historical fact bent towards a personal view of one king. The engraving in the Imago Regis Caroli²⁷ presents a picture and bears inscriptions which warrant attention for an understanding of the theme of this drama. At Charles' feet lies "Vanitas", the kingly crown, "Splendidam at Gravem"; in his hand he holds "Gratia", the crown of thorns, "Asperam at Levem"; on a table before him lies a paper with the inscription, "Christi Tracto", and open in front of him is a book, with the words "In Tuo Verbo Spes Mea"; Charles has his foot firmly planted on the words "Mundi Calco", and his gaze is intent upon heaven ("Cali Specto") where there awaits him the crown of glory, "Gloria, Beatam at Aeternam". The tenor of the book is that Charles has recognised the vanity of earthly

²⁷The engraving is reproduced in the Powell edition of Carolus Stuardus opposite the title page to the drama. J.S.B.

existence and is anxious to begin his eternal life in heaven. In the drama by Gryphius the King goes to the scaffold because he refuses to betray his divine mission; he is a political martyr for a definite concept of kingship, and as such, as we shall see, is different from Catharina; Abas abuses his authority as absolute ruler by attempting to impose his will and his beliefs on Catharina, whereas Cromwell and Peter represent the political doctrines of expediency and the sovereignty of the people, to which Gryphius is diametrically opposed. Stuardus' bearing is Christ-like, as was Catharina's, and he turns his back on the world and looks to heaven where eternal life awaits him.

The vanity theme of the two preceding dramas is restated here, through the choruses and through the presentation of the fall of a mighty king, who is himself inflexible in his decision to renounce earthly existence. The "Eitelkeit" and "Vergänglichkeit" themes are driven home powerfully when the victims of "Fortuna" are noble and admirable human beings as well as mighty rulers; hence Gryphius' concern with a fuller treatment of these themes in Catharina von Georgien and Carolus Stuardus than in Leo Armenius. Hugo Peter and Axtel decide to have a low execution block to remind the King of the height of his fall:

Peter: Der richt-block mag wohl auch was mehr denn niedrig seyn,
Axtel: Um ihm, wie tief er sey gefallen, vorzustellen. 28

²⁸
Carolus Stuardus, I, 300-1.

The political history of the seventeenth century indeed offers many examples of the death of highly-placed personalities - Gustavus Adolphus, Wallenstein, for example, and of course Charles I of England. Fate rules above the court, the rise and fall of political personalities is particularly rapid, and Gryphius' application of the Unity of Time forces events upon each other prior to expectation. Stuardus, like Catharina, knows that earthly splendour is a great illusion. His first words indicate his weariness with life ("Wir sind des lebens sat...²⁹") and in the same scene he exhorts his children not to lay stock by the things of this world: "Der erden pracht ist dunst."³⁰ Stuardus does not regret the loss of his royal crown; he is physically defeated by Cromwell and Peter, but, like Catharina, his spiritual victory is assured, and he values the gaining of the eternal crown of glory:

Schaut, wie ich überwinde,
Indem mein scepter bricht! Die erden stinckt uns an,
Der himmel rufft uns ein. Wer also scheiden kan,
Verhöhnt den blassen tod und trotzt den zwang der zeiten ..³¹

²⁹Ibid., II, 259.

³⁰Ibid., II, 423.

³¹Ibid., IV, 10-13.

Stuardus asserts the "Vanitas" theme throughout the drama. True to the antithetical form of Gryphius' dramas, he is opposed by men who live by very different values, revolutionaries whose thoughts are fixed upon changing the order of the state. The possibilities of development with the 'evil' characters was discussed in the Introduction;³² in Catharina von Georgien Gryphius had created in Abas a figure torn between his love for Catharina and his duty as Shah; hence he is dramatically interesting. In Carolus Stuardus, Cromwell never really comes to life, but the figure of Hugo Peter, the cool, calculating priest and fanatic, is finely drawn, and Gryphius has created interesting cameos in the figures of the minor conspirators, Hacker, Hewlett and Axtel. More individualisation is evident in these sketches; they are no mere representations of evil, but clearly defined characters. More points concerning the development of the minor characters will be dealt with later in the chapter.

First, let us return to the "Vergänglichkeit" theme. The crown symbol evident in one of Gryphius' source works³³

³²cf. Introduction, p.10.

³³cf. Imago Regis Caroli; vide ante., p101.

is worked out extensively throughout the drama; the "Fürstenkrone" is mentioned many times, and the crown symbol overshadows the catastrophe; as Stuardus is led to the scaffold, the martyr's crown is mentioned by a member of the mob and the vanity of earthly existence is stressed again:

III Jungfrau: Diss ist die letzte cron. Wohin verfällt die pracht!
 Wohin der erden ruhm! Wohin der throne macht! 34

The third and final crown of glory is the reward for the firmness and strength of his belief; it is a present from Christ, the final "Ehrencron". For Stuardus it is God who gives and takes away the crowns. Thus the crown of life is a "Vanitas" symbol; it leads to a vision of eternal glory. The image of the three crowns is closely bound with Gryphius' presentation of the path his hero follows, and the "Kronensymbol" becomes an image that gives structure to the whole play. Stuardus treads the path from prince to martyr to saint, from "Vanitas" through "Gratia" to "Gloria", and as the drama moves on towards the martyrdom the crown of glory is mentioned more and more frequently, as is the crown of thorns; the royal crown is referred to less frequently. Catharina's dream in the previous drama had already presented in

³⁴ Carolus Stuardus, V, 419-20.

symbolic form her progression from princely crown to the crown of glory, but in Carolus Stuardus the motif is worked out more extensively. According to Schöne, who discusses the "Kronensymbol" in the present drama at some length,³⁵ it is an original image and he can find no usage of it on such a scale in the "Jesuitendrama", or in Vondel's Maria Stuart of gemartelde Majesteit (1646).

Gryphius' views on the position of the ruler towards his people and towards God were considered in the Chapter on Leo Armenius, where Gryphius emerged as an opponent of regicide, as a firm believer in absolute rule and the divine right of kings.³⁶ Gryphius' involvement with political issues is much more apparent in this drama, and, in anticipation of the extensive use of the Christ analogy in this martyr drama, it is now necessary to sketch the expression in Carolus Stuardus of those views which made the author see Stuardus as a political martyr.

³⁵A Schöne, "Figurala Gestaltung: Andreas Gryphius", in Säkularisation als Sprachbildende Kraft: Studien zur Dichtung deutscher Pfarrersöhne (Palaestra, CCXXVI; Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1958).

³⁶vide ante, pp. 32-8.

Germany was during and immediately after the Thirty Years War a country of growing princely absolutism. The religious basis of the power of the ruler, as God's representative, had not been broken since the Reformation and it was strengthened even further by the Peace of Westphalia in 1648. Hildebrandt informs us that "die Reichsgewalt war aus dem Gesichtskreis der Untertanen gewichen, und die Herrscher der Einzelstaaten wurden die Erben des Staatgedankens."³⁷ Subjects of small principalities were submissive to their rulers, also loyal and respectful. Luther had also emphasised the divine right of princely power. All of Gryphius' dramas touch on the subjects of the sovereignty of the ruler and the power of the state. While composing Leo Armenius in Strassburg in 1646, Gryphius was aware of the conflict of the ideas of the sovereignty of the people and the divine right of the king, which was then a burning issue in Holland. In Leo Armenius and Carolus Stuardus he is not dealing with legal premises, but with the dangerous consequences which had become political reality. Gryphius knew of the struggle between Crown and Parliament in England prior to Charles' execution and he watched the progress of events with interest.³⁸ Whereas

³⁷H. Hildebrandt, Die Staatsauffassung der schlesischen Barockdramatiker in Rahmen ihrer Zeit (Diss., Rostock, 1939), p.41.

³⁸cf. Ibid., pp. 65-71.

in Leo Armenius we witness an intrigue, within the secret circles of the court, to depose a monarch who is no ideal ruler, the subject of Carolus Stuardus is the revolution of a whole people, intent on killing a brave and noble King. There is an extensive presentation of the doctrine of the sovereignty of the people, from whom the King receives his right to rule, but this is counterbalanced by a faction which maintains that Stuardus is not subject to the will of the people, parliament or judiciary, as he receives his mandate to rule from God alone. Catharina von Georgien had also contained many thoughts on similar questions,³⁹ but Carolus Stuardus receives the fullest treatment of all of Gryphius' political views.

The complaints against the King and arguments that justify his execution are expressed with as much vigour and as extensively as the King's own defence. Cromwell and Hugo Peter, his two main opponents, claim that he has disregarded the welfare of his country and the binding laws of Parliament, broken his oath and therefore forfeited the right to expect obedience from his people; he has waged war on his own land and threatened God's

³⁹vide ante., pp. 38-40.

law; the trial and the verdict are in accordance with the customs and the "Grundgesetze" of the country.

Fairfax' wife, a strong Royalist supporter, admits that Stuardus has made mistakes, but for her the execution of the King is a criminal act:

Er hat der l nder heil, der h user recht versehrt,
 Er hat der Britten ruh durch grimmen krieg verst rt,
 Er ist nicht werth das schwerdt und reichs-stab mehr zu f hren.
 Es sey! ich steh es zu. Er soll den hals verlieren,
 Mein hertz! das ist zu viel, hier, hier .. 40

The conspirators maintain that justice and God support their cause; hence Hugo Peter's comments on the order of execution from Parliament:

Diss ist des herren wort! Hier, hier ist gottes finger.
 Er strafft nach heiligem recht den recht-und land-bezwinger.
 Diss ist der grosse schluss, der in der w chter schar
 Einhellig abgefasst und ausgesprochen war. 41

The King's supporters assert that even Parliament has no right to judge and execute a king who rules through God; the army had broken its oath of allegiance and because the country had

⁴⁰Carolus Stuardus, I, 135-9.

⁴¹Ibid., III, 69-72.

resisted its rightful king, civil war has come to cause endless misery. The Palatine Envoy expresses the view of the divine nature of a ruler's position in his conversation with the Dutch ambassador in Act III: "Nein! seine macht verfiel, als man das heilige schwerdt, / Das gott den printzen gibt, ihm aus der faust gedrungen;"⁴² Stuardus' own words answer the accusations levelled against him:

Er weiss, wer athem zeucht, und was nach uns wird wandeln,
 Er weiss, der alles weiss, der well und welt bewegt,
 Und der schon über mich ein grösser urtheil hegt,
 Dass wir zum ersten nicht das grimme schwerdt erwischet,
 Dass auf die freyheit uns kein eyver angefrischet.
 Der parlamente macht ist nie durch uns verletzt,
 Sie haben sich vorher uns grimmig widersetzt.
 Sie suchten aus der faust das kriegsrecht uns zu winden,
 Die sich doch überzeugt durch ihr gewissen finden,
 Dass es das meine war. Gilt unser wort nicht hier,
 So red an Carlen statt so mein, als ihr papier. ⁴³

For the Stuardus faction brute force has overcome law and justice; the verdict is contrary to English law and custom, and the name of the revolution is concealing criminal intent and deceiving the people; the murder of the King is disrespectful to God, who can be the only judge; to kill a king is to reverse the order of the world, and God will be avenged. Stuardus denounces the hypocrisy

⁴²Ibid., III, 468-9. My underlining J.S.B.

⁴³Ibid., V, 294-304.

of his accusers in conversation with Juxton in Act II:

So weiss wir angethan vom lüger uns erheben,
 So sauber wird der geist vor gottes richt-stuhl schweben
 Und zeugen wider die, die mit geschmincktem schein
 Auf ihres königs hals selbst part und richter seyn. 44

The opposing viewpoints clash in the third act in the tremendous verbal duel between Cromwell and Fairfax; Gryphius' usage of stichomythia at this point is very effective:

Fairfax: Auch kommt der Britten recht nicht mit uns Überein.
 Cromwell: Der Britten recht mag recht für schlechte Britten seyn.
 Fairfax: Der völker recht verbeut erb-könige zu tödten.
 Cromwell: Man hört die rechte nicht bey drommeln und trompeten. 45

Fairfax is particularly hostile towards Hugo Peter, the militant priest, whose hypocrisy he condemns:

Scheinheilger bub! Ich beb, ich feur, ich schau mit schrecken,
 Wie sich die bosheit könn ins kirchen-kleid verstecken,
 Was vor ein feur sie im heiligen schein auffblas,
 Wie übergrimmig sie in solchem schmucke raas,
 Der, der neu Albion zu lehren ausgesendet,
 Het sein vertrautes amt ohn scheu und scham geschändet. 46

It is "der insel art"⁴⁷ to kill its kings, but this execution will bring eternal shame upon the country. The ghost

⁴⁴Ibid., II, 281-4.

⁴⁵Ibid., III, 203-6.

⁴⁶Ibid., III, 385-90.

⁴⁷Ibid., II, 196.

of Mary Stuart appears to Stuardus to inform him of the events that will befall the country, and of the precedents to this royal murder:

(Das immer frische blut ...)
 ... treufft milder auf das land
 Des rasenden gebrüts, das die entweihte hand
 Gewohnt, in fürsten-blut ohn unterlass zu baden
 Und königs-leich auf leich und mord auf mord zu laden. 48

Bondage, not freedom, will follow this unnatural crime, and Poleh's ravings foresee the deaths of Stuardus' enemies and the coronation of his son as Charles II of England; God will gain the final victory.

The Reformation had been a hindrance for the emancipation of political thinking, for Luther himself had preached the absolute power of the territorial princes and the divine right of kings, and the effect of Machiavellian political theories in Germany had been slight; the German princes had ruled by religious rules, and Machiavelli, as an atheist, was attacked by the Jesuits, for example. But the religious viewpoint had retreated somewhat with the Thirty Years War, and the ideas of political "Machtwille" began to assume larger proportions in Germany.⁴⁹ The reflection

⁴⁸ Ibid., II, 163-6.

⁴⁹ Hildebrandt, op. cit., pp. 92-5.

of this new political thought occurs in Gryphius' dramas, particularly in the last two, in the figure of Hugo Peter in Carolus Stuardus, and, even more emphatically, in Laetus in Papinianus. They represent a "Staatsklugheit" that Gryphius found hard to accept. Hugo Peter and Cromwell wish to destroy the basis of the old state and build up a completely new one, and for them, all means, force, deception, murder, justify the end. Both men are fanatics, bent on power and ruthless in their desire to achieve it. Cromwell says to Fairfax in Act III: "S' kommt auf zwey, drey nicht an, wenn man den statt versetzt,"⁵⁰ and a few lines further on declares his fanaticism:

Ich schwere bey der macht, die mich so hoch erhaben,
 Wenn auch mein nechstes blut, ja meiner heyrath gaben
 Im wege wolten stehen, sie solten für mir seyn
 Als der geringste kopff der wütenden gemein. 51

Hugo Peter, in conversation with Fairfax and Cromwell in the same act, asserts his belief that completely different foundations will have to be laid for the new secular state:

⁵⁰Carolus Stuardus, III, 246.

⁵¹Ibid., III, 257-60.

Der feldherr glaub es fest, es wird nicht besser stehn,
 Bis rechtsgelehrter nam und stand wird untergehn.
 Wir haben krafft des siegs macht, satzungen zu stifften;
 Drum weg mit dem, was stets fusst auff vefaulte schrifften!
 Der kirchen macht ist tod. 52

Dramatists at this time seldom assumed a critical standpoint on political issues, but the choruses point to Gryphius' views of the events: Gryphius condemns the execution, and Laud's words in Act II indicate Gryphius' own thoughts:

Ich schau in Engelland nur wilde thiere wohnen.
 Der mit der insel schertzt, wird nicht der crone schonen.
 Des fürsten heilig blut treufft auf den greuel-sand ,
 Und sein gesalbtes haubt ist in des henckers hand. 53

The figure of "Die rache" appears in the epilogue to predict all manner of torment, plague, famine and war: "Ich komme tod und mord zu rächen / Und zieh diss schwerdt auf euch, ihr hencker und eur haus."⁵⁴ Gryphius is condemning regicide and upholding the doctrine of the divine right of kings. The words of the I Graf reflect Gryphius' own view of Charles' death:

Mit ihm stirbt unser glück. Bedencke den gewinn,
 Wenn uns nach seinem fall wird tödten und verbannen
 An eines printzen statt ein gantzes heer tyrannen! 55

⁵²Ibid., III, 359-63.

⁵³Ibid., II, 117-20.

⁵⁴Ibid., V, 515-6.

⁵⁵Ibid., III, 644-6.

In Leo Armenius the division between tyrant and martyr was hazy and undefined, but in Carolus Stuardus Gryphius portrays a royal martyr almost without a blemish in his character. If the charges brought against Stuardus had been well-founded, there would have been an excuse for the execution, but Gryphius demonstrates in the chorus of Act IV how religion has been made a pretext for political motives, and he takes a firm stand against a militant church.

The question of the King's guilt is therefore of some importance. Temptation and even guilt in the execution of Strafford and Laud were apparent in the sources; Stuardus confesses his guilt in the execution of Strafford in his last speech, yet at the beginning of Act II the ghosts of Strafford and Laud forgive him and absolve him, so that for Gryphius his innocence can be established and his death viewed as a travesty of justice. Stuardus is presented as a victim of vicious powers, a man who sacrifices his life for his people and the cause of right and order, a martyr to his kindly vocation.

In this connection, Schönle has some interesting views. Stuardus' own weakness does not cause him downfall, as is the case with Leo Armenius, but he is martyr in a slightly different

sense from Catharina, and also, as will be demonstrated in the next chapter, from Papinianus:

Catharina stirbt, weil sie ihre Keuschheit, ihren Glauben nicht verlieren will, also für die Grundlage ihres Seins. Stirbt aber Karl nicht für eine Form der Betätigung, für ein Amt? 56

In accordance with his views, he insists on his regal position and his divine rights; like Catharina, he is inflexible and immovable, but he dies more for an earthly interest, for the divine right of kings on earth. As Schönle states: "Catharina von Georgien und Papinianus leiden für etwas, für eine Tugend, Carolus Stuardus als etwas, als rechtmässiger Monarch von Gottes Gnaden."⁵⁷

Catharina always had the possibility of avoiding death if she so chose, but she preferred to sacrifice herself freely rather than betray her principles. Stuardus lacks this freedom of choice, another aspect of his martyrdom different from Catharina's. He has been brought to trial by men who now have themselves complete control of the state and who are determined that he shall die. He is no tyrant in the mould of Abas, or Bassianus in Papinianus, whose downfall would seem to be God's punishment for a sinful abuse of power; Stuardus' tragic

⁵⁶Schönle, op. cit., pp. 30-1.

⁵⁷Ibid., p. 31. - my underlinings, J.S.B.

fate calls for another explanation: God graces those he loves by this ultimate trial. He believes that, under the circumstances, his death is unavoidable and he sees it as a protest against the egoistical intentions of the revolutionaries. There is no simple way out for Stuardus, but he does not protest at his fate, rather he accepts it quietly. Stuardus is much more resigned than Catharina; he has no hope from the start, and his very first words reveal that he is ready, in fact quite determined, to die.

He displays the "constantia" already familiar in the figure of Catharina. Like her, he feels the duty of responsibility for his own honour and for his suffering country. He possesses the heroism in suffering and the courage to overcome his fate, and maintains this steadfastness of purpose from first to last. He dies composed, at peace, even joyfully. His belief in Christ and the justness of his cause are, as they were for Catharina, the sources of the inner strength with which he accepts his fate. In this way he proves his worth and gains eternal bliss. His innocence is finally demonstrated in his own confession before his death; he asserts "... dass ich sey ein man ohn arge list, / Dass ich ein guter printz und unverfälschter christ."⁵⁸ The confession is particularly credible as it is

⁵⁸Carolus Stuardus, V, 291-2.

made, as Gryphius himself says in the "Kurtze anmerckungen",
 "...in dem anblick des todes, da alle schmincke und gleissnerey
 ein ende nimet und als dunst verschwindet."⁵⁹ Narrative,
 not action, presents the King's character.

As Schönle demonstrates,⁶⁰ Gryphius has stylized the
 Stuardus he found in the Imago Regis Caroli to conform to his
 concept of the martyr hero. He has played down the guilt of the
 Stuardus of the source work and turned his repentance of his
 crime against Stafford into an act illustrating his Christian
 humility. The desire for revenge, present at some points in
 the source work, is also toned down; Gryphius' Stuardus knows
 God will punish his enemies and he does not desire their death.
 The King in the Imago Regis Caroli is pompous, vainglorious
 and proud, desirous of an assured place in history; Gryphius
 has fashioned a figure illustrating Christian humility.
 Schönle has this to say about Gryphius' Stuardus:

Der König im Trauerspiel hat keine ungeläuterten Naturelemente,
 er ist in höherem Grade durchgeistigt. Aber doch nicht so
 weitgehend, dass er sich zur blutlosen Idee wie Catharina von
 Georgien und Papinianus verflüchtigt. 61.

⁵⁹Andreas Gryphius, Werke, II, op. cit., p. 439- note to l. 285.

⁶⁰Schönle, op. cit., pp. 31-4.

⁶¹Ibid., p. 34.

Carolus Stuardus is acutely aware, as was Catharina, of his duty to God, to the state and to himself; he has selected a course of action, and, with the determination characteristic of Gryphius' martyr figures, never falters. But he does not have Catharina's freedom of choice and he does not have to continually assert his firmness. He has become resigned to death. The availability of detailed historical evidence permitted Gryphius to present a much more human figure, but, as already indicated, Gryphius was not always true to his source material, as he wished to idealize to some degree his martyr hero: Charles appears with his family, for instance, as a devoted father and husband.

The writer transmits a very real sense of the King's nobility through the moving language in which he speaks. In the three single instances where he appears, his words, his bearing, and above all, his steadfast refusal to let himself become involved in any form of active resistance, offer proof of the tranquillity with which he has accepted his fate, of his inner dignity and his spirit of forgiveness. True humility, love, even for his enemies, repentance and rejection of the world's pleasures for the sake of eternal life - all these are Christian

virtues which Gryphius carefully depicts in his hero. Catharina's stubbornness and rigidity seem admirable, as the circumstances of her imprisonment are different; yet, in comparison, she appears colder and more inhuman. The simplicity and sincerity of Stuardus' farewell words to his children, the beauty of the lyrical passages in which he expresses his deep love for his wife, the simple precision of his confession and the few symbolic gestures and commands on the scaffold communicate, in a way not evident in Catharina von Georgien, Gryphius' own conviction of the nobility of the martyr figure.

But it is not Gryphius' intention to give a realistic portrait - it is in accordance with the whole tendency of the period, the martyr dramas included, to see tragic characters not as individuals but as types, stressing and symbolizing one characteristic. To underline his own idea of the King's acceptance of suffering, Gryphius models Charles on the prototype of all martyrs - Christ. The development of the Christ analogy in Gryphius' dramas has been mentioned in the two preceding chapters as one of the features of Gryphius' martyr dramas: in Carolus Stuardus the analogy finds its fullest expression; it reflects Gryphius' deep involvement in the problem of regicide

and his desire to present Stuardus in as favourable a light as possible. The "Kronensymbol" has already been demonstrated to be a feature giving unity to the play; with regard to the related and often connected Christ analogy there are points at which Stuardus assumes the role of the suffering son of God, and yet without harming the desired historical credibility.

Stuardus' bearing and behaviour are reminiscent of Christ. In the scene in Act II in which he takes leave of his children, he expresses a fear of death that Catharina never experienced; characteristic of the difference between the two, this fear adds to Stuardus' humanity and is true to the Christ model. Like Christ, he has no chance of escape, but his "Todesentschlossenheit" and determination to be a sacrifice for his people make him reject the rescue attempts; these attempts ensure no release, but this is irrelevant as he desires none. Like Catharina, he goes to his death physically bound, but spiritually free. A member of the mob spits in his face but this gesture does not anger him as he remembers Christ had to endure a similar indignity. The English count reports the event:

Ich schreck, ein toller bub spie in sein angesicht
Und blärrt ihn grimmig an. Er schwieg und acht es nicht,
Ja schätzt es ihm vor ruhm, dem fürsten gleich zu werden,
Der nichts denn spott und creutz und speichel fand auf orden. 62

⁶²Carolus Stuardus, V, 55-8.

Stuardus is intent on going the way of Christ, as numerous examples in the text of his preparation for death indicate. There are parallels with the Passion of Christ in the chorus of weeping women, Stuardus' forgiveness of his executioners and his last words asking to be welcomed into the Kingdom of Heaven. Stuardus' death is also seen as a cosmic event, as the "chor der engelländischen frauen und jungfrauen", Poleh's visions and the "chor der Syrenen", for example, testify; the end of the world is near and the vengeance of God is about to fall on the guilty:

Himmel! ist das ziel der dinge, das des höchsten hand gesetzt,
 Durch das schnelle rad der zeiten zu dem letzten zweck gerückt,
 Da der weite bau der erden, durch die strenge glut verletzt,
 Wird in asch' und nichts verfallen? Macht der richter sich geschickt,
 Die grosse schuld zu rechnen
 Und alles einzubrechen? 63

In his first few words Stuardus himself draws the parallel between the circumstances of his death and that of Christ:

Wir sind des lebens sat
 Und schaun den könig an, der selbst ein creutz betrat,
 Verhasst von seinem volck, verlacht von seinen scharen,
 Verkennt von ländern, die auf ihn vertröstet waren;
 Den freund wie uns verkaufft, den feind wie uns verklagt
 Und kränckt um fremde schuld und bis zum tode plagt. 64

⁶³Ibid., II, 533-8.

⁶⁴Ibid., II, 259-64.

On the morning of the King's execution Bishop Juxton reads to him the Passion of Christ, the passage designated for that day, and Stuardus gains comfort and determination for a noble death from the reading. This particular event was incorporated into the 1663 edition from an account included in Karls leben und regierung,⁶⁵ a work of whose title Gryphius is uncertain, or which he will not reveal, as it appears variously titled in the "Kurtze anmerckungen". As will be mentioned later, Schönle⁶⁶ doubted that there was only one publication. Powell⁶⁷ believes that the article in question may be one of a series of articles on Germany and neighbouring countries⁶⁸.

The "Nebenfiguren" add to the Christ analogy: the conspirators are paralleled with the high priests who demanded Jesus' death, and at one point Hewlett states this explicitly: "Ich schätz es hoch, dass ich vor reich, kirch und gemein/

⁶⁵Andreas Gryphius, Werke, II, op. cit., p. 491 - note to l. 100.

⁶⁶Schönle, op. cit., p. 41.

⁶⁷Powell, op. cit., p. cxxxvi.

⁶⁸i.e. Ausführliche Erzählung des Lebens und Tods König Carl Stuarts dess Erstens ... (Frankfurt / Main, 1660).

Bey dem schuld-opfer soll der hohe priester seyn."⁶⁹ The figure of Poleh is difficult to identify as Gryphius' own note reveals no name: "Wer dieser sey, ist vielen unverborgen. Ich schone noch des eigenen namens; er hat bereit sich selbst abgestrafft und seine richter erlitten."⁷⁰ This strange figure has been interpreted as one of the King's judges, appearing under a pseudonym to hide his identity, suffering acute pangs of remorse at having executed an innocent man and being driven to suicide. This scene is also new in the 1663 edition. A parallel with the figure of Judas Iscariot suggests itself.

The Fairfax plot, whose addition in the 1663 edition occasioned massive re-writing (a new Act I, the movement of the old Act I into the new Act II, the combining of the old Acts II and III into a new Act III, and new scenes in Acts III and IV) introduces a rescue attempt into the existing action, where before none had been evident. The attempts of Fairfax and his wife to effect Stuardus' release would seem to correspond to the efforts Pontius Pilate and his wife made to free Christ from prison. In the 1663 version Cromwell exchanges roles

⁶⁹Carolus Stuardus, I, 267-8.

⁷⁰Andreas Gryphius, Werke, II, op. cit., p. 492 - note to l. 157.

with Fairfax, who is now the figure demanding mildness and clemency, as Pilate did before the Jews. Fairfax, like Pilate, does what he can; his monologue in Act III reflects Pilate's symbolic washing of his hands as he outlines his own position with regard to Cromwell and Hugo Peter:

Ich war und wär, ach! stünd es nur in meiner macht,
 Sein haubt von stock und beil zu retten noch bedacht;
 Und doch wird mir, was mir zu wider, hier betrieben,
 Ja dieser mord-schlag selbst von meisten zugeschrieben.
 War nah diss unheil sieht, wer fern diss traurspiel hört,
 Glaubts, dass ich selbst mein ehr auff's giftigste versehrt,
 Und legt mir dieses zu, was ich doch höchst verfluche. 71

These additions are a result of papers which became accessible only after the publication of the first version in 1657, and full reference is made to them in the copious notes. For example: Gryphius found Stuardus' rejection of the offer of escape in von Zesen's tract;⁷² Peter's and Cromwell's discussion on how to bring Charles to trial in the indictment brought against Peter; the Fairfax intrigue in Bisaccioni's history.⁷³ The Poleh episode seems to be Gryphius' own invention.

⁷¹Carolus Stuardus, III, 423-9.

⁷²vide ante., p. 98.

⁷³Ibid. p.99.

Schönle suggests⁷⁴ that the new sources occasioned the re-writing of 1661-3 in order to add to historical authenticity, but consideration of the use of Gryphius put them to and the following lines at the start of the "Kurtze anmerckungen" suggest that Gryphius employed a principle of selection:

Weiter zu gehen und weitläufftige auslegungen zu schreiben ist nicht meines thuns, nicht vorhabens, nicht der nothdurfft. Ein ieder siehet, dass ich, wenn mir derogleichen beliebet, bey diesem reichen zeuge sehr viel und mehr denn viel hätte zusammenschreiben können. 75

Flemming suggests that Gryphius took advantage of the new sources in order to increase the dramatic effect; for example, the Fairfax episode became "die Anregung zu dem notwendigsten Mittel dramatischer Ökonomie: zur Intrigue."⁷⁶ Gryphius himself says nothing to support Fleming's view, but it certainly is true that the addition of this intrigue introduces an element of dramatic tension into the drama, although it is not maintained to the very end, for Gryphius, in writing a martyr drama, has no intention of saving the King; the figures in this intrigue are Royalists,

⁷⁴Schönle, op. cit., p. 38 ff.

⁷⁵Andreas Gryphius, Werke, II, op. cit., p. 471.

⁷⁶W. Fleming, Andreas Gryphius und die Bühne (Halle, 1921), p. 236.

who contribute to Gryphius' defence and add to the elaboration of the Christ analogy; dramatic tension is not of prime importance. Schöne's thesis⁷⁷ is that the new sources provided material to substantiate "die übergeschichtlichnormativ orientierte Wahrheit der Geschichte Karls I".⁷⁸ Many features of the Christ analogy were present in the 1657 version, and the new sources offered so much to confirm Gryphius' basic idea of the Christ analogy that a revision became necessary. Acknowledgement and lengthy quotations from the sources in the notes are Gryphius' defence against those who doubted the reliability of the historical facts presented in the first version.⁷⁹ Some notes⁸⁰ make reference to the Passion of Christ in more explicit terms than the text itself and Schöne suggests⁸¹ that some of Gryphius' quotations may be fictitious, inserted in order to add historical authenticity to the events he describes. There is, in particular, the variously titled work

⁷⁷Schöne, op. cit., p. 61.

⁷⁸Ibid.

⁷⁹Andreas Gryphius, Werke, II, op. cit., p. 471.

⁸⁰Ibid., p. 490 - note to l. 55.
p. 491 - note to l. 100.

⁸¹Schöne, op. cit., p. 63.

already mentioned⁸² whose pagination as Gryphius gives it does not correspond to that in the article⁸³ assumed by Powell to be the one he used. Certainly it is true to say that to verify the extension of the Christ analogy so important for him in the presentation of his martyr hero, Gryphius quoted at length from his new sources, and even perhaps from a fictitious one.

The characters are divided into two factions, those supporting Stuardus, and those opposing him. There is a repetition of the alternation of scenes between the two parties, as in Catharina von Georgien, but not on the same scale. Some tension is produced in Acts I and III by the contrast of scenes in which Fairfax and his wife work for a release and Hugo Peter and Cromwell force the action to a quick end. But Act II is taken up with a presentation of the bloody history of the kings of England and the attitude of mind of the King; the action does not advance, nor in Act III does it appear that Fairfax will take positive steps to prevent the King's death; the weak counter-plot falls away as the execution approaches;

⁸²vide ante., p. 123.

⁸³Ibid., footnote 68.

the King is determined to die, Cromwell and Hugo Peter are equally determined that he shall not escape now, Fairfax' lack of power becomes more apparent, and little reliance is put upon the threats of the ambassadors from abroad. There is little development of action, and therefore little dramatic tension. Gryphius is more concerned with the presentation of the steady progression of an invincible and just figure towards an inescapable death and his preparation for eternal glory. Interest lies in the antitheses of character and construction.

The conspirators believe that the death of the King is justified as the will of God. There is ample evidence to indicate that Gryphius portrayed Stuardus as a Christian figure. True to the antithetical nature of his dramas, Gryphius makes the plotters see Stuardus as a "Gegenbild", as a Barabbas figure. Peter states this explicitly to Hacker in Act III:

Hacker: Der priester schaar macht uns das volck nicht wenig irr.

Peter: Man zeige mir, was nicht der priester schaar verwirrt!

Hacker: Sie schätzt vor schuld und fluch, auff's königs blut zu wüthen.

Peter: Wie? sucht sie abermals Barrabas los zu bitten? 84

⁸⁴ Carolus Stuardus, III, 43-6.

A few lines later Peter refers to Stuardus as "den abgott"⁸⁵ and the note for this line is significant for my point: "Diesen namen, abogtt und Barabbas, hat Hugo oft dem könige zu geben pflegen. Besiehe den 10 klagpunct wider Hugo Petern."⁸⁶ Peter especially is convinced of the justness of his cause and has a sense of mission:

Der Barrabas verfählt und muss, die schuld zu blüssen,
Durch den verfluchten tod sein grausam leben schliessen.
Dein allmacht, spür ich, herr! würckt itzt zu unserm heil
Und waffnet straff und rach mit dem gerechten beil. 87

It is the plotters who force the action; the King suffers passively, as does Catharina. The tension is purely rhetorical as Gryphius reveals through his suffering hero his Christian-stoical "Weltauffassung", and debates the problematic reality of the absolute state. Opposing views are stated in scene after scene until in Act III the crucial scene witnesses a tremendous clash of opinion between Fairfax and Cromwell over the rights and wrongs of the King's execution, similar to the great verbal duel between Imanculi and Catharina in the previous

⁸⁵Ibid., III, 53.

⁸⁶Andreas Gryphius, Werke, II, op. cit., p. 484 - note to l. 53.

⁸⁷Carolus Stuardus, IV, 229-32.

drama. In both dramas the conflict reaches a climax at this stage and from then on the hero is doomed. In Catharina von Georgien, as already noted, Gryphius uses the principle of contrasting scenes, the action progresses and the result is more dramatic movement than in Carolus Stuardus, where the secondary action of the Fairfax intrigue is not as prominent as the "Befreiungsaktion" is in Catharina von Georgien, where, in the various scenes, the characters' arguments clash; in Carolus Stuardus the scenes themselves do not contrast and the resulting drama is more static than dramatic. In Carolus Stuardus, in fact, the whole of the third Act is taken up by arguments between two or three characters, and the underlying question of guilt or innocence is carefully scrutinized. Gryphius unfolds the pros and cons of the case in dialectic form. The stylistic use of stichomythia heightens the intellectual tension of the discussion scenes as thrust follows thrust and God opposes God:

Gesandter: Lässt gott, der printzen gott, so grimme blut-spiel zu?

Cromwell: Der unterdruckten gott schafft durch diss spiel uns ruh.

Gesandter: Der himmel wacht ja selbst für diese, die er krönet.

Cromwell: Und bricht den thron entwey, der rechtes recht verhönet. 88

⁸⁸Ibid., III, 755-8.

Intellectual conflict is an important element in this drama, where the moral problem of the justness of regicide links the scenes. Whereas Schiller in his drama on Charles' grandmother, Maria Stuart, introduced intrigue and counterplot to sustain dramatic tension, and concentrated on the psychological development of the two main characters, Gryphius neglects plot and counterplot and portrays an exemplary hero, representative of all the best Christian virtues. In this drama he is very much interested in arguing his moral case fully and conclusively. The speakers in Carolus Stuardus are pegs on which to hang certain political and religious views, which, taken together, constitute a view of the issue in its entirety. The general tendency in seventeenth century drama was not to invent but to retell, but some characters, as mentioned already, do have more than a representational function, Fairfax, for example, dominated by his wife, cautious until it is too late, a weak man caught up in a chain of events beyond his powers to deal with, and Hugo Peter, the zealot, cruel and fanatical, who stands out against the rest of the villains. The group of figures surrounding the martyr Stuardus add to the presentation of suffering and to the praise of the sufferer. As Lunding says,

when discussing the richness of Carolus Stuardus in "Foliefiguren":

Diese Reihe von Beispielen möge genügen, um zu zeigen, wie selbst das scheinbar Nebensächliche im Märtyrerdrama tief in seiner Strukturform begründet ist, wie es sich um die tragende Mitte, die leuchtende Idee organisch aufbaut. 89

The "Bildungstendenz" is then apparent in these figures.

As a drama, according to modern standards, Carolus Stuardus is a weak play, indeed weaker than Catharina von Georgien. The passivity of the hero, the lack of development and action and hence dramatic conflict, the numerous ghosts, the preponderance of narrative and reflective elements over dramatic ones, and the rhetorical style, all detract from its effect. But Gryphius' aims and intentions were different from those of today. He selects and reflects and uses various means to express his own intentions. The "Reyhen" epitomize the undramatic character of his dramas, which are of an essentially meditative type. Their revelation of the inner meaning behind outward incident, the principle of contrasting scenes and the effective use of stichomythia are the fitting forms he found for the intellectual, argumentative character of his dramas.

⁸⁹Lunding, op. cit., p.21.

As has been demonstrated already, dramatic tension is unnecessary in the portrayal of a hero who has decided on a course of action from the start and remains inflexible throughout the drama. Perhaps because of this reason, Leo Armenius, Gryphius' first experiment with a martyr figure, is more dramatic than Catharina von Georgien and much more so than Carolus Stuardus, where the action is virtually non-existent and the various characters participate in an endless debate. Yet there is evidence in other directions of a development in Gryphius' dramatic technique, not merely towards a more intellectual drama. The excellent use of stichomythia, the "Reyhen", the principle of contrasting scenes has already been mentioned: to these may be added a slow development of characterisation, particularly among the minor figures, from representation of simply 'good' or 'evil' figures towards a more individual and ultimately more interesting treatment. With each succeeding drama the spectacular scene, so characteristic of the Baroque age, is used more frequently: in Leo Armenius the execution is reported in true classical fashion; in Catharina von Georgien the heroine's tortures are reported, but her burning is performed in full view of the audience in Carolus Stuardus the King has no torture

to which to submit, and his progress to the scaffold is reported, but the lengthy scaffold scene takes place on the stage; the Poleh episode represents the fulfilment of the revenge and retribution usually presented in a prophecy. Papinianus, as will be brought out in the next chapter, represents a further stage in Gryphius' dramatic technique. There would also seem to be evidence of a development towards a freer interpretation of the Unity of Place; Catharina von Georgien is enacted in "die königlichehoffhaltung zu Schiras in Persen",⁹⁰ Leo Armenius in "Constantinopel und vornehmlich die kaiserliche burg".⁹¹ In Catharina von Georgien the place varies from act to act, Carolus Stuardus is played in "Londen und den königlichen hoff"⁹², and Papinianus is enacted in two different places: "Der schauplatz bildet ab die kaiserliche burg und Papiniani wohnung".⁹³ The number and frequency of stage directions also increase with each succeeding drama. With a discussion of

⁹⁰ Andreas Gryphius, Werke, II, op. cit., p. 148.

⁹¹ Ibid., p. 17.

⁹² Ibid., p. 360.

⁹³ Ibid., p. 511.

Papinianus we now turn to the last of Gryphius' works, to measure the full achievement of his martyr drama. With Stuardus, the Christian martyr gains its fullest expression in Gryphius' dramas. Gryphius' last martyr drama, Papinianus, to which we now turn, is perhaps his finest drama considered with a view to successful staging, and it also points, as we shall see, to a secularisation of the martyr drama, in both form and content.

CHAPTER IV

Grossmüthiger Rechts-gelehrter, oder Sterbender Aemilius Paulus Papinianus was written in 1659, ten years after the previous drama Carolus Stuardus; Leo Armenius, Catharina von Georgien and Carolus Stuardus had all been written within a three year period, although publication had not been until later, 1650 for Leo Armenius, 1657 for both Catharina von Georgien and the first version of Carolus Stuardus, and 1663 for the last mentioned drama's second version. Palm suggests¹ that Gryphius took up his pen to write a serious drama again as a result of the encouraging applause several performances of his works had received on the school stages of Breslau, and that the dedication of this last play to the town council of Breslau may result from a feeling of gratitude for their encouragement and approval of his dramatic works. The dedication indicates some degree of gratitude and what also may be a show of flattery to the elders of the town,

¹Andreas Gryphius, Werke, II, op. cit., p. 497.

but there is no explanation offered by Gryphius for the breaking of a ten year silence; perhaps no suitable material had offered itself before, or he simply had had no inclination for dramatic writing, or perhaps no time. But this is merely conjecture; what is apparent, however, as the Entwürfe of the rector Arletius relate, is that Papinianus was staged seven times in Breslau immediately after its completion, and with huge success².

Palm suggests³ a connection between Gryphius' drama and Vondel's Palamedes of Vermoorde Onnozelheid, written in 1625; he notes several common features, e.g. the innocence of the hero, the envy of the tyrant; Palm does, however, admit that the course of action in the two dramas is quite different; he refers the reader to his own contemporary Kolloewijn's study of the influence of Dutch drama upon Gryphius previously mentioned in this paper⁴, a study now generally held to be unreliable in its conclusions.

²Arletius, Entwürfe über die verdienste der evangelischen gymnasiorum zu Breslau um die deutsche schaubühne, 1762.

³Andreas Gryphius, Werke, II, op. cit., p. 498.

⁴vide ante., pp. 17-20.

For this last completed drama Gryphius has turned back from the field of contemporary history to the field of Roman history where his dramas began, to an even earlier date than his Byzantine drama, Leo Armenius. For the first time in his serious dramas (for the purposes of this study we can discount Cardenio und Celine from this category) his hero is not the familiar royal figure, but a man standing next to the throne, the trusted statesman, lawyer and general, Papinianus; this choice of hero marks another step in which Gryphius frees himself gradually from the dramatic conventions of the time. Perhaps, as Palm suggests, Gryphius found the choice of material and hero suitable for a drama dedicated to a town council, "dessen standhaftigkeit und weisheit die berühmte hauptstadt Schlesiens bei dem ruine des gesammten deutschen vaterlandes unversehrt erhalten hatte."⁵

Gryphius found the historical sources of his drama primarily in the works of three authors: Herodian, a Syrian, who wrote, in Greek, a history of the Roman Empire from the death of Marcus Aurelius to A.D. 28; Dio Cassius, the author of a Roman history in Greek, in eighty books, of which Books 36-60 and Book 79 survive, and of which Book 56 is the source of

⁵Andreas Gryphius, Werke, II, op. cit., p. 498.

Gryphius' information; finally Spartianus, one of the authors of the collection of biographies with the general title of Vitae diversorum principum et tyranorum a divo Hadriano usque ad Numerianum a diversis compositae, and who had written the biographies of Geta and Caracalla. From Spartianus' biography Gryphius obtained the information that Caracalla had ordered Papinianus to publicly condone his murder of his own brother Geta and that Papinianus had refused. The "Kurtze anmerckungen" make constant reference to these three principal sources for historical authenticity, and also to an amazing range of works for general information on Roman customs, a tribute to the erudition of the older Gryphius. His ironical remarks towards the end of the notes indicate that his knowledge may by no means be exhausted: "Und so viel vor diesesmal. Warum aber so viel? Gelehreten wird dieses umsonst geschrieben, ungelehrten ist es noch zu wenig."⁶

The historical setting is the rule of the Emperor Caracalla (A.D. 211-217.), who murdered his brother and co-regent Geta in

⁶Ibid., p. 635.

order to have sole authority in the Empire. To protect himself against possible revenge he had many of Geta's friends put to death, amongst them the famous soldier and lawyer Papinianus, whose involvement in the affairs of state is given extensive coverage by Spartianus.

Gryphius' drama was first printed in 1659 in Breslau. The Latin dedication was preceded by two brief quotations from Roman authors, i.e. two strophes of an ode by Horace, and a few lines from the end of the last book of the Annals of Tacitus.⁷ Their general meaning is that times are bad and that it may be useful to fortify the mind with examples of firmness; they would seem to be chosen to encourage the reader to face present misfortunes with equanimity and to point to the fine example of the hero to be depicted.

Before sketching the outline of the plot of the play, one should note that the dedication reveals⁸ that Gryphius' dramas had been staged; the more extensive use of stage directions, the detailed information on the location of each scene,⁹ the express mention in this dedication, plus the existence of a print from

⁷Ibid., p. 501.

⁸Ibid., p. 503. cf. note 2.

⁹Ibid., pp. 635-6.

the year 1681,¹⁰ indicate that this drama at least, was intended for stage performance. The words of the dedication are the only evidence that Leo Armenius and Catharina von Georgien were staged, but there is ample evidence, as Palm notes,¹¹ that Gryphius' Felicitas, die Gibeoniter, Cardenio und Celinde and Papinianus had been successfully staged. From the above we may deduce that Papinianus will probably be more dramatic than its predecessor; a consideration of this point will come later in this chapter.

The very title of the drama and the author's own summary of the action in the initial "Inhalt des trauer-spiels" reveal, before the outline of the bare plot act by act, Gryphius' opinion of the drama's protagonist, and immediately incline the reader towards Gryphius' viewpoint; the murder of Geta is "diese hochschändliche unthat";¹² Papinianus will forfeit worldly honour and rank magnanimously - "... selbst grossmüthig verwidert, ..."¹³ - and will meet his death; "... und sein wolverdientes haupt mit bestürtzung des gantzen hofes und der welt dem verfluchten richt-beil zu unterwerffen gezwungen ...".¹⁴

¹⁰Der sterbende Aemilius Paulus Papinianus, Trauerspiel, Von einer Jungen Bürgerschaft der Statt St. Gallen etliche mahl auff öffentlichem Schauplatz gehalten ... St. Gallen, Gedrückt durch Jacob Redinger, 1681.

¹¹Andreas Gryphius, Werke, II, op. cit., 503. note. 2.

¹²Ibid., p. 506.

¹³Ibid.

¹⁴Ibid.

However, prior to any discussion of the hero of the drama, let us briefly consider the action of the play. Act I is devoted to a depiction of the circumstances of Papinianus' life and the virtue of his character. The first scene is a monologue by Papinianus revealing much expository material on the integrity of his character and the standards of conduct he exemplifies, also the slanderous opinions levelled against him. He denies favouring Geta before Bassianus and assures the Empress Julia of his impartiality towards the two brothers. His wife Plautia stresses her husband's righteousness and the difference between him and the slanderers at court who are defaming him. Papinianus warns his wife to be ready for a change of fortune and a possible disgrace. The act is concluded by a chorus of his servants, who revile life at court and praise Papinianus' virtues.

Act II introduces the very different world of the court. Laetus, a courtier, incites the Emperor Bassianus against his brother, who, it is suddenly reported, has refused to sign an edict Bassianus had sent for his signature. Julia attempts unsuccessfully to reconcile the brothers, but, goaded on by Laetus, Bassianus fatally stabs his brother. A chorus of

of ladies-in-waiting join Julia in mid-act to bewail Geta's death. Julia is set upon revenge, but Thrasullus, Julia's astrologer, persuades her to hide her grief and desire for quick revenge in order to avoid death and eventually win the throne for herself. To Cleander, a courtier come to collect the corpse and note Julia's behavior for Bassianus, she appears composed. The figure of Themis, the goddess of law and justice, gives Bassianus over to the Furies, and Papinianus is exhorted to be strong.

The scene of the action now alternates between the court and Papinianus' home. At the start of Act III Bassianus is already regretting his hasty deed and decides to condemn Laetus, the instigator of the crime, to death. As Cleander informs him of Julia's accusations against Laetus, he decides to give the treacherous courtier over to her for revenge. Meanwhile Laetus is now planning to topple Bassianus from his throne; he is taken by the Captains and brought before Julia. Papinianus, in the meantime, cannot be persuaded by Cleander to publicly condone the murder of Geta. In the next scene Julia avenges the death of her son by killing Laetus, who dies unafraid and

defiant. A chorus of courtiers declare that crimes may escape punishment on earth, but will surely be avenged in eternity.

At the beginning of Act IV Cleander reports to Bassianus Papinianus' refusal to excuse the murder, at which Bassianus suspects that Papinianus may be considering treachery. He demands obedience but Papinianus will not be moved and Bassianus suspects treason. Plautia bewails the probable disaster but is comforted by her husband and their son, who gives his father full support. The insignia of Papinianus' office are taken from him and his son is called to attend the Emperor. Two army captains vainly exhort Papinianus to lead the dissatisfied armies against the tyrant. A chorus of Furies and the spirit of Severus, Bassianus' father, appear to the sleeping Emperor; they prophesy his death and the triumph of justice.

Act V begins with a scene in which Papinianus is informed that Julia is ready to offer him marriage and the throne if he will join with her to depose the Emperor. His parents also attempt to dissuade him from his lofty idealism, but both attempts are in vain. Papinianus is summoned before Bassianus, but still remains stubborn, and, for his stubbornness, has to bear the death of his own son. Even this will not break his spirit,

and so he too dies. As predicted, Bassianus is tormented by his conscience, in the form of the Furies. The last scene is devoted to a singing of the praises of Papinianus by his parents, servants and chorus, as the corpses of father and son are displayed before the weeping, silent Plautia. The final words are that justice cannot be obtained on earth, only in eternity.

The hero of Gryphius' last drama is, then, also a martyr figure; as Catharina had died for her faith, and Stuardus for his concept of kingship, so Papinianus suffers and dies for his ideal concept of justice, which will not allow him to excuse a criminal act under any circumstances. This last drama contains elements of content familiar from the earlier plays: from Leo Armenius the involved palace intrigue; from Catharina von Georgien the strength of mind and resistance to temptations; from Carolus Stuardus the presentation of innocent, dignified death. Gryphius' depiction of the courtly personages demonstrates, as shall be discussed later, an increasing curiosity in such characters, perhaps suggesting an actual experience of such people in his own life, particularly in connection with his position as syndicate in Glogau.

The period of history in which the drama occurs is the time of the Roman Empire before the wide-spread adoption of Christianity.

Papinianus is a heathen hero and consequently without the faith in God and the hopes of salvation of the two Christian martyrs. We concluded in the chapter on Leo Armenius¹⁵ that Leo Armenius was a martyr figure in a very limited sense, as he lacks the exemplary virtues, high idealism and trust in God of both Catharina von Georgien and Carolus Stuardus. Despite Papinianus' stoical and non-Christian viewpoint, he does die very definitely as a martyr figure, for his own integrity, and his belief in eternal truth and justice; he is, as will be indicated, a very different character from the weak, indecisive Leo Armenius, and, despite his lack of Christian faith, much more like the Christian martyrs in mental make-up. Papinianus is also an exemplary hero, pointing to a way of life and a standard of values that all should seek to adopt. Without a belief in ultimate salvation, Papinianus' sacrifice would seem to be more difficult than that of Catharina and Stuardus, but in this drama Gryphius has developed the quasi-stoical outlook already present in the two Christian martyrs in their acceptance of the misery of life, and particularly appropriate in this Roman setting; Papinianus is also glad to leave the vain world behind him. He does, however, believe in powers beyond

¹⁵vide ante., p. 35-8.

life, not in a Christian God, but in the power of the ancient Gods to avenge the evils that go unpunished on earth. It is difficult to decide whether Gryphius himself had moved away from Christian beliefs since his last drama, or whether the Roman tale simply did not allow a Christian treatment; it would seem that the latter is the case, as the Gods and the figure of Themis often seem to be the familiar Christian God thinly disguised. Certainly, however, this drama is of another order from the two previous ones; in place of "pietas victrix" we are presented with the spectacle of "magnanimitas victrix", and this drama prepares the way for the secularisation of the drama by Lohenstein. As Heckman observes:

Der gute Wille, befreit von eigenmächtigen Absichten, ganz auf das Gute selbst beschränkt, kennzeichnet den grossmütigen Helden und verleiht seinem Handeln jene Ausschliesslichkeit, für die auch ein himmlischer Lohn keinen Impuls mehr schafft. 16

Without hope of heaven, there can be no ulterior motives for desiring death; Papinianus, as well as Laetus, maintains a fidelity to himself, and has one cardinal principle - to be steadfast in his

¹⁶H. Heckmann, Elemente des Barocken Trauerspiels (am Beispiel des 'Papinian' von Andreas Gryphius), Darmstadt: Gentner, 1959, p. 84.

fidelity to the code of values to which he ascribes.

As the content indicates now a certain secularisation of the martyr figure, so the form also indicates an increasing freedom from conventional restraint. The secondary action is more extensive than in the previous dramas, the traditional messenger's report of events occurring offstage almost disappears, and violence appears on the stage more than in the preceding martyr drama. This trend towards a presentation of the spectacular, already noted in the previous chapter,¹⁷ would seem to reflect the public's delight in the spectacle of horror. The locale of the scenes changes from act to act, and also within the acts, from scene to scene, much more than in the two previous dramas; Gryphius is concerned to explain exactly where each scene takes place:

Diss einige wil ich noch erinnern, das zu besserer bestellung des schauplatzes in acht zu nehmen, dass in der I abhandlung durch und durch die auffzüge oder scenae in Papiniani gemach vorgehen, der reyhen aber in dessen vorhof oder lust-garten vorgestellet werde. 18

The quick changes between the two very different environments, the world of the court and Papinianus' home, underline the differences

¹⁷vide ante., p. 134-5.

¹⁸Andreas Gryphius, Werke, II, op. cit., pp. 635-6.

between two opposed standards of values. We have met the principle of contrasting scenes already in our discussion of the previous dramas; the different locations of the contrasting scenes emphasize the different standards even more clearly. The presentation of the world of Papinianus alone in Act I, and of the court alone in Act II, and thereafter the meeting of the two, the rapidly changing scenes from one to the other and the quick turn of events serve three purposes: first, they provide a lengthy introduction and exposition, and second, they evoke thoughts on the familiar "Eitelkeit" and "Vergänglichkeit" themes, and third, they build up the dramatic tension.

Act I takes place at Papinianus' home - the hero appears in every scene, first by himself, then in conversation with a servant and his wife Plautia. The "Eingangsmonolog" of fully 156 lines introduces a paragon of virtues, proud and self-assertive in the Baroque mould, a man who has already reached the heights of worldly honour and power - "Was ists, Papinian! dass du die spitz erreicht, ..." ¹⁹ - whose fortunes are now at a crisis, ready for a fall. In Catharina von Georgien and Carolus Stuardus the heroes are already imprisoned as the action

¹⁹Papinianus, I, 21.

starts; here Papinianus is still free, but prepared for the worst. The initial situation is then tense and potentially dramatic. In conversation with the servant and his wife, who is timid, understandably afraid for her husband and family, and not in the heroic mould of her husband, Papinianus also reveals indirectly something of the life at court with its very different atmosphere of intrigue and collusion.

As Act I presents the virtuous Papinianus, a strong believer in eternal truths, so in Act II, by way of contrast, the scene switches to the court of the Emperor. The characters of Bassianus, Laetus, Julia and Cleander exist on a very different level; their world is circumscribed by the temporal concepts of the ego, power over one's fellows, vanity and greed. They are at odds with each other and live in an atmosphere of jealousy and hatred. None have, at this point, the resoluteness and peace of mind of Papinianus, and this contrast is very marked. Laetus, the cunning opportunist, incites Bassianus against his brother Geta so as to win the Emperor's crown for himself; his persuasiveness and Geta's stabbing start the action that leads to Papinianus' martyrdom. Without Laetus' ambitions, Papinianus would not have been placed in a position where he has to choose between life and death. Thus, it is

apparent that dramatic movement and art of presentation are more pronounced in this last drama; Laetus' "Staatsintrigue" leads to a "Staatsaktion" which itself leads to Papinianus' death. Julia's cry for vengeance and the words of the Furies at the end of the act hint at subsequent action and look forward to Papinianus' martyrdom.

Act I had been mainly expository, and the Laetus intrigue and Geta's murder in Act II had advanced the action; in Act III the conflict ensues between the two sets of values as Papinianus is called upon to condone the murder. Papinianus himself appears only once in Act III, but at a particularly significant place, as will be discussed below; there is mention in other scenes of his situation and he is not lost from sight. The major part of Act III, however, is taken up by the "Gegenhandlung", i.e., the conclusion of the Laetus intrigue, which parallels Papinianus' own subsequent fate. These parallels are not expressly drawn, but in Laetus' sudden change of fortune, his triumph and death within the course of an act, the "Fallhöhe" and "Vergänglichkeit menschlicher Sachen" themes are carefully sketched out. His fortunes do parallel those of Papinianus on a minor scale, without his possessing Papinianus'

worthiness of character however. His fate is an example of the transient nature of the world and the unpredictability of human fortune. The structure of this third act helps to underline the superiority of Papinianus' ethical standards. At the beginning of Act II, Laetus' control over Bassianus seems assured, his success imminent. At the start of Act III he is thinking of the throne and hoping to enlist the aid of Julia, Papinianus and the army to overthrow an Emperor now seemingly unfit to rule. A grave miscalculation of Bassianus' character costs him his chance of success, and in the very next scene he is offered noble suicide or a violent death. Two scenes later his heart is torn from his still living body.

The Laetus intrigue also indicates the rash, violent character of the Emperor, i.e. in his stabbing of his brother, his sudden turn from dependence on Laetus to hatred of him, his intolerance of opposition to his own authority. Death is the fate of those who cross an absolute ruler of Bassianus' nervous character, so prone to violence. We can now only wonder how Bassianus will react to a refusal by Papinianus to excuse Geta's murder, for such a refusal seems possible, given Papinianus' righteousness and integrity as revealed in Act I.

As Bassianus sends Cleander to ask Papinianus to declare his faith in the Emperor and pledge his support, it is already apparent that he does not understand Papinianus. His words are:

Hier dient Papinian,
 Das wunder unsrer zeit. Cleander zeig ihm an,
 Dass er (auf dessen treu wir einig uns verlassen)
 Uns bald die red' an rath und läger woll' abfassen! 20

As Bassianus does not understand Papinianus, so Laetus also miscalculates Bassianus' trust and thinks Papinianus will aid him to gain the throne. All concede that "Fortuna" plays a major role in their lives, but the courtiers are able to credit Papinianus only with their own values, and so they miscalculate badly his reaction to events; we gain an impression of characters vainly struggling against "Fortuna", and out of touch with one another.

Cleander's conversation with Papinianus in Act III shows that Papinianus will not bow to Bassianus and sacrifice his principles, and so it points to the tense confrontations between Emperor and subject in Acts IV and V. The placing of this conversation within the act points to Papinianus' likely death,

²⁰Ibid., III, 209-12.

for it comes immediately after the revelation that Laetus is to be handed over to Julia for punishment and immediately before the scene in which his heart is pulled from his body. Laetus has fallen foul of the absolute ruler and dies a horrible death; Papinianus is bound by his beliefs to disobey the Emperor's order, and the arrangement of the scenes in Act III suggests the way that Papinianus will meet his fate.

At the start of Act IV, Cleander reports Papinianus' refusal, and the confrontation scene between the two protagonists now arises. The gradual build-up to a verbal conflict between the representatives of two opposed viewpoints is a technique familiar from Gryphius' previous martyr dramas. As the clash of opinion between Imanculi and Catharina had prepared for the verbal duel between Abas and Catharina, so Papinianus' clash with Cleander raises expectation of the dramatic results of the confrontation between him and Bassianus. The use of stichomythia in this scene and the one in the preceding act between Cleander and Papinianus is particularly effective; the two protagonists attack and counter, the conflicting absolutes of obedience and justice meet head-on; Papinianus is immovable, and Bassianus, as ruler, must have complete command:

Bassianus: Hat Geta nichts versehn, nie sich auf uns erkühnet?
 Papinianus: Sein irren hat, mein fürst! die straffe nicht verdienet.
 Bassianus: Nicht, da er uns nach stand und cron und leben zielt?
 Papinianus: Verläumbdung hat allein diss traur-stück abgespielt.
 Bassianus: Es sey nun wie es sey! man ist uns gleich verpflichtet.
 Papinianus: Doch nicht zu loben, was mit keinem ruhm verrichtet. 21

Like Catharina, and unlike Stuardus, Papinianus is not a prisoner; he can escape death by a simple act, an act, however, that runs contrary to his conscience. There is no plot to rescue Papinianus as there had been the "Gegenhandlungen" of the Russian ambassador in Catharina von Georgien and of the Fairfaxes in Carolus Stuardus. The "Staatsintrigue" of Laetus and its subsequent events provide enough action to make an interesting escape plot unnecessary, for Papinianus is faced with the ultimatum only in Act III. Much of the final two acts, however, is taken up by a depiction of Papinianus' stoical acceptance of, even desire for, death, through a series of temptations used with skilful dramatic technique; these temptations, aimed to deter him from death, are doomed to failure as the presentation of his character in the very first act made clear, but the interplay of argument creates a certain tension and allows Gryphius to air his views on his hero and life in general. As in Catharina von Georgien, the rejection of these temptations to escape emphasises the total

²¹Ibid., IV, 163-8.

freedom the heroic figure possesses. Both Catharina and Stuardus, as well as Papinianus, are so convinced that higher powers are guiding their destiny that they do not presume to interfere; because they feel that their sacrifice is right, they assume the approval of powers beyond this earth.

Family ties do not bind Papinianus, and he resists his wife's complaints; the loss of the insignia of his office cannot harm his pride; the two captains offer him the throne with the support of the army, but they are ignorant of Papinianus' feelings on regicide and deposing the legal Emperor, even if he is a tyrant; for Papinianus a ruler is answerable to the Gods and the voice of his own conscience. Indeed the chorus at the end of Act IV predicts justice's revenge on Bassianus.

The first two scenes of Act V may also be seen as temptation scenes; Julia's offer of marriage and the throne is summarily rejected by Papinianus, for she too cannot appreciate his idealism; his father Hostilius offers him a piece of worldly advice, a compromise that would allow him to effect good in the world eventually, but at the price of concealing his own rigorous standards until the time was ripe. This suggestion is perhaps the most enticing temptation; it climaxes the attempts of the

various characters to divert him from a course that leads to death. The temptations and his conflict with Bassianus indicate just how much his idealism is at odds with the world. To balance the forces of the world, the voices of the chorus and of his son support his action. Papinianus' ideas have been outlined and seen in conflict with others enough to permit an acceptance of his readiness to let his son die rather than sacrifice his beliefs, particularly as the son is the complete, if younger image of his father, already tired of life and ready to die. As even his son's death cannot move Papinianus, Bassianus has no alternative but to kill him, for he still suspects treachery, and now believes Papinianus wants to avenge his son, ignorant, as he is, of Papinianus' views of regicide.

Papinianus makes a majestic final speech; he declares again his belief in justice, and makes it clear he sees his death as a sacrifice for the peace and justice of the state. The conflict is finally settled; as in Catharina von Georgien and Carolus Stuardus, the hero dies and the tyrant lives on; but as Abas' end is predicted and he is tormented by regret, and as the deaths of Cromwell, Hugo Peter and their associates are foreseen, so Bassianus' triumph is quite hollow and only on a physical plane; divine revenge follows his criminal act as surely

as it follows Abas and Stuardus' executioners; Catharina, Stuardus and now Papinianus maintain their spiritual integrity, and all three suggest, by the way they die, the eventual triumph of their beliefs. Bassianus is tormented by his conscience in the form of the Furies, whereas Papinianus enjoys eternal peace.

As previously mentioned, Papinianus is, unlike Gryphius' other martyr heroes, not a royal ruler. He is a lawyer and general, and the members of his family, his parents, his wife and his son, are good, but weak, characters, with the notable exception of the last mentioned. The aristocrats, Bassianus, Geta, Julia and those around them are presented in a much more unfavourable light, and it is perhaps true to say that a contrast between aristocrats and "Bürger" may be Gryphius' intention; Papinianus may be intended as a model of behaviour for the members of the town-council to whom the drama was dedicated.

To conclude this assessment of the structure of Papinianus, mention may be made of remarks by Lunding on the elements of the 'dramatic' in Papinianus; he observes that:

In Catharina von Georgien und Carolus Stuardus wird das geschichtliche Geschehen in epischer Form mitgeteilt, dramatisch ist nur die Wiedergabe der "Katastrophe". In Papinianus bevorzugt Gryphius weitgehend die dramatische Veranschaulichung. 22

²²Lunding, op. cit., p. 31.

Papinianus finds himself in a position where he has to choose between the dictates of the state and his own moral feelings as a result of a "Staatsaktion", dramatically presented, itself caused by a "Staatsintrigue". Catharina von Georgien and Carolus Stuardus present heroes after the event, at the moment of truth; in Papinianus we see the hero becoming enmeshed in events which he cannot prevent. It is no surprise that Papinianus, of all Gryphius' dramas, should have been presented to the travelling players on make-shift stages; there are scenes of courtly splendour, a convincing presentation of life at court, interesting, well-defined and contrasted characters locked in a conflict that is not only verbal; there are spectacular scenes and murders before the eyes of the spectators; this last feature marks the culmination of a trend already remarked upon, that is, a gradual movement in Gryphius' dramas away from the reporting of death by means of a messenger towards an actual presentation of violence and horrible death upon the stage. The theatrical mourning scenes after the death first of Geta, and then of Papinianus and son, bring the action nearer the experience of a middle-class audience. The "Reyhen" provide the spiritual framework for the material events and reveal the

meaning of what has happened, and they also suggest what is to come. In line with the tendency to greater realism, the chorus is in close contact with the people in the drama and the events on the stage; for example, a chorus of ladies joins Julia in mid-act to mourn the death of Geta, and at the end of the drama all the choruses unite with Papinianus' parents to offer a paeon of praise to Papinianus.

The arrangement of parallel scenes between the Laetus intrigue and the fortunes of Papinianus had brought out the "Vergänglichkeit" theme in the drama's structure. Following the now familiar pattern of Gryphius' martyr dramas, the "Unbeständigkeit menschlicher Sachen" is contrasted with the "Beständigkeit" of the hero; Papinianus' moral outlook is viewed more favourably than that of the courtiers, and his lofty position allows him to reflect upon the narrowness and transience of life, a fact of which the other characters are all too acutely aware.

Many examples bear out this awareness of the unreliable, fleeting character of life. Papinianus' first monologue reveals that he realizes how quickly and unexpectedly human fortune may change; he is speaking about rulers:

Ach! aber ach! wie leicht nimmt ihn der schwindel ein
 Und blendet unverhofft sein zitterndes gesicht,
 Das er durch gähnen fall wird, ehr man denckt, zu nichte!
 Wie leichte bricht der fels, auf dem er stand gefasst,
 Und reisst ihn mit sich ab! Badl wird der gipfel lost
 Dem abgrund selbst zu schwer, dass berg und thal erzittert
 Und sich in staub und dampff in weite brüche splittert; 23

He speculates that the cause of this fall from such a height is
 "die ungeheure pest, / Die man verläumdung heisst."²⁴ Through-
 out the drama the insidious slander at court recurs frequently
 and a composite picture of court intrigues and shifting patterns
 of power is built up. The portrayal of the great man about to
 fall, or already fallen, as in Carolus Stuardus and Catharina
von Georgien, is familiar; as in Leo Armenius, the suspicious,
 conspiratorial atmosphere of the court makes the protagonist
 despair of ever gaining reward for his virtues and recognition
 of his services to Rome. Papinianus closes his monologue with
 these words:

Was könnt ich anders hoffen?
 Ein schatten-reicher baum wird von dem himmel troffen;
 Ein strauch steht unversehrt. Wer die gemeine noth
 Zu lindern sich bemüht, sucht nichts als eignen tod.
 Wer sich für alle wagt, wird auch nicht einen finden,
 Auff dessen rechte treu er könn in schiffbruch gründen. 25

²³Papinianus, I, 10-14.

²⁴Ibid., I, 18-19.

²⁵Ibid., I, 151-6.

In Act II, after Geta's murder, Julia gives eloquent expression to the changeability of human fortune and the vanity of worldly splendour in court surroundings:

Wir sitzen demant-feste,
Umringt mit glantzem stahl, verwahrt mit tausend wehren,
Umschrenckt mit strenger macht, beschützt mit tausend heeren,
Bis sich das schnelle rad umwendet,
Und ein schneller augenblick
Die herrligkeit in nichts, die cron in hand und strick,
Die ehr in schmach, die lust in tieffste schmerzten endet. 26

The structure of the drama allows Gryphius ample opportunity to repeat these familiar themes; Cleander's report to Bassianus of Julia's reaction to her son's death is another example:

Die erde wird bewegt.
Das stirnen-band zureisst. Man bringt die todten-bahr
Für kinder, für gemahl, für freunde. Ja die schaar
Der liebsten wechselt oft und freut sich zu verletzen,
Vor die sie vor den hals entschlossen auf zu setzen. 27

Worldly honours are to Papinianus "du verblendend ehr! / Du leichte hand voll dunst!"²⁸ With her son's death imminent, Eugenia Gracilis voices her thoughts on the wretchedness of life, in which everything is mutable and hope turns to despair:

²⁶Ibid., II, 334-40.

²⁷Ibid., III, 116-20.

²⁸Ibid., IV, 317-8.

Was sind die langen jahr,
 Als staffeln zu der angst, die das gekrönte leben
 Nach so viel rauher qual dem abgrund übergeben,
 In welchem ehr und ruhm und stand und glück versinkt
 Und unser hoffen selbst in tieffster seel verinckt! 29

Papinianus' son, faced with death, expresses in simple, dignified lines the apparent purposelessness of life, in which man is born to die; his mention of "tugend" hints at the solution which Gryphius offers to the problematic nature of life, and which will be discussed shortly. These lines are worthy of a full quotation:

Es ist ein mensch geboren
 Und als ein mensch dem tod in der geburt erkoren,
 Geboren in die welt, doch von Papinian!
 Geboren, wo man nur durch tugend leben kan,
 Erkoren von dem tod, als mich die welt empfangen,
 Erkoren von dem tod, der stets mir nachgegangen,
 Noch an der mutter brust. 30

Papinianus comforts his son with the words that, although chance rules on earth, the manner of his death is noble and worthy, a positive stand against the world:

Der grimme zufall raubet,
 Mein sohn! dir jahr und stand, und was die erden schätzt;
 Doch schenckt er, was kein beil noch sturm des glücks verletzt.
 Mein sohn, stirb unverzagt! Diss leben ist ein krieg
 Voll angst, ein solcher tod das allerhöchste siegen. 31

²⁹Ibid., V, 38-42.

³⁰Ibid., V, 239-45.

³¹Ibid., V, 260-4.

As the initial situation and the turn of events allows the characters opportunity to reflect upon the transient character of human affairs, in this drama as in the others, Gryphius presents a hero, who, by his very nature, cannot accept normal worldly values, and who, in his facing of his tragic situation, reveals an attitude of mind that rises above purely temporal considerations. Papinianus, as much as Catharina and Stuardus, is a model of behaviour, perhaps more for the lawyers and town-council of Breslau than for a more general public, for Papinianus himself is a lawyer and the dedication of the play is to the town-council.

Act I revealed a character resplendent with great virtues. The lengthy "Eingangsmonolog" and subsequent scenes with his wife and a servant depict a man of integrity and righteousness. Because he cannot flatter and lie and is by nature open and honest, Papinianus has already suffered from court intrigues, yet he still dispenses common justice and no-one is turned away. In conversation with his wife, he foresees that he may die soon (as did both Catharina and Stuardus, early in the plays) and in line with the assertive personality of Baroque heroes he lists the virtues he hopes to be remembered by, and in so doing points

to his magnanimity, his fearlessness and steadfastness in the face of death, his honesty and love even for his enemies - "Ja, die mich unterdrückt, bis in den tod geliebt, ..." ³² Magnanimity is the special distinguishing mark of Gryphius' last martyr hero, as the title of the drama indicates; with regard to the Christ analogy discussed in the previous chapters and with regard to Gryphius' concept of the martyr figure in general, it is interesting to note that Papinianus, although not a Christian Hero, asks his enemies to be forgiven as he dies, as Christ had done on the Cross.

Humility is, however, not as marked a feature of Papinianus as of Stuardus. He is very much concerned to clear himself of suspicions brought against him, and is conscious of a need to uphold his pride and honour, and to maintain his self-respect. As he says in answer to the accusations of favouritism towards Géta:

Denn dass ich seitwärts ab von ihm mich trennen sollte,
Wenn Antonin durch mich was schädlichs suchen wolte,
Kommt meiner ehr und eyd und redlichkeit zu nah. ³³

³²Ibid., I, 334.

³³Ibid., I, 207-9.

Later in the act, speaking to his wife, he states that "Durch schmeicheln ward ich nie, durch pochen nicht gewonnen."³⁴ He realizes that, in his environment, fortunes change quickly; he has no great faith in others, and has a stoical outlook on life. Yet he is not indifferent to the problems of human life, and does not stand to one side. He has a deep, genuine concern for justice, as he reveals when he affirms that the state is wrong to condemn and kill Christians for beliefs different from its own; this issue concerns him directly. If that is justice, then, he says, justice is wrong: "Ist das die römische zucht? / Ist diss ein neues recht, so sey diss recht verflucht."³⁵

Papinianus is clear-sighted and a realist; he is quite conscious from the very beginning of the possible sequence of events and the probability of his own death; in common with Gryphius' other martyr figures, however, he is ready to accept death without fear, whenever it should come:

Ich schau des brudern faust im brüderlichen haar,
Die grosse standt in noth, die länder in gefahr,
Die flott in lichtem brand, den hohen thron zustücket
Und mich durch eines fall (doch ohne schuld) erdrücket.
Doch klag ich Rom, nicht mich. Ich scheue keinen tod,

³⁴Ibid., I, 320.

³⁵Ibid., I, 97-8.

Den mir von langer hand die eisen-feste noth
 An diese seiten gab. Man liess vor vielen zeiten
 Zu meinem untergang den werkzeug zubereiten;
 Verläumdung schliff das beil, das durch den hals wird gehn,
 Wenn mir der heisse neid wird über haupten stehn. 36

Papinianus' clarity of mind is appropriately demonstrated by his reading of his present critical situation and his predictions as to its development.

The chorus of "hofe-junckern Papiniani" add to the portrayal of this exemplary hero by giving Gryphius' own views on his excellence in a more direct way than revelation of character in conversation and monologue. The chorus restates his fearlessness, integrity and honesty:

Er weiss nicht, was verläumdung sey,
 Und ist von furcht und zagen frey;
 Man hält auf seinen leib verräther nicht in sold
 Und kaufft sein haus nicht um mit neugepregtem gold. 37

Like Catharina and Stuardus, Papinianus displays his personal excellence through self-sufficiency and his keeping faith with his own standards of conduct. For him this truth to self is all-important - "Er lebt vor sich ihm selbst zu gut, ..." ³⁸

³⁶Ibid., I, 49-58.

³⁷Ibid., I, 411-4.

³⁸Ibid., I, 421.

Gryphius voices through the chorus the now familiar thought of the inner strength of the hero to overcome his trials: "Er findet sich in sich und, was noch mehr, die noth / Liegt unter seinem fuss, er pocht den grimmen tod."³⁹ The first act has now been examined for its revelation of Papinianus' character. Given this character, it is unlikely that he will obey an order that runs contrary to the dictates of his conscience, for "Gewissen" is a key-word in the drama, used many times by various characters. By the end of this first act the "constantia", strength and integrity of Papinianus' character have been amply brought out. In his firm resolve, Papinianus is as inflexible as Catharina, and in his acceptance of death as ready as Stuardus.

Papinianus does not therefore find the choice between life and death a hard one to make, for to choose life would be to betray himself and live with a bad conscience. He is a non-Christian figure, yet he does appear in this drama in the secularised form of a saint; the historical setting does not allow a Christian martyr, therefore he is modelled more upon the transcendent; Papinianus is a "Rechtsgelehrter" who dies for his concept of justice; this is not simply the

³⁹Ibid., I, 431-2.

justice of Rome, but rather his own vision of a perfect and eternal justice. For Catharina and Stuardus the sources of the strength with which they fight the impermanence of everything mortal, are the belief in God and hope of eternal salvation; for Papinianus it is his belief in the eternal values of truth and justice. Hence his words in conversation with Cleander: "Wer vor die warheit stirbt, pocht aller zeiten noth,"⁴⁰ and a few lines later: "Mir ist diss haupt vors reich, mehr vor die warheit feil."⁴¹ He sees his death not as an exemplary sacrifice before a Christian God, but for the values of the state. He offers himself to Themis, the goddess of law and justice, as Stuardus and Catharina had offered themselves to God, to suggest by the manner of their death an atonement for the sins of the world, and he prays for forgiveness for sinful people. An analogy with Christ's sacrifice is again apparent; consider how Papinianus addresses Themis:

Gönne, dass ich dir zu ehren
 Dir, die ich jetzt sterbend grüsse,
 Die ich annoch sterbend liebe,
 Mein nicht schuldig blut vergiesse
 Und (who ich was bitten kan)
 Schau diss reich heilwertig an! 42

⁴⁰Ibid., III, 472.

⁴¹Ibid., III, 504.

⁴²Ibid., V, 349-54.

Without the expressly Christian background of Carolus Stuardus and Catharina von Georgien, there is much more "Schicksalgefühl" reminiscent of the Byzantine drama Leo Armenius. The rise and fall of characters is more incomprehensible without a Christian God; in His place they bow to the figures of fate and chance; in such a world, the criterion is, for Papinianus, the manner in which he takes leave of the world, as heroic as possible, in defiance of "Fortuna"; Papinianus makes death his own, in his choice lies his freedom and his independence of chance, his opportunity to assert his ego; Flemming says of the death of Gryphius' martyr heroes that it is a "Sprungbrett zur Icherhöhung und Verewigung kraft eines heroischen Sterbens".⁴³ Papinianus is very much alive mentally; the dictates of his reason prevent him from escaping death, and he stands in pointed contrast to the Emperor, who, though he does act, does not have the calmness and clarity of mind, nor the peace of soul of the hero. As Flemming again says of Papinianus:

⁴³W. Flemming, "Die Auffassung des Menschen im 17. Jahrhundert", DVS, VI (1928), p. 427.

Als Vertreter des Geistes steht er dem eigenmächtigen Affektmenschen gegenüber, zwar voll Würde und Gehaltenheit, doch nicht als weiser Erzieher oder schlaue lenkender Beichtiger. Ganz erfüllt von der Wucht ethischen Gebotes ist auch er aktiver Willensmensch, impulsiv schwillt das Pathos seiner Rede. ⁴⁴

Papinianus dies and the Emperor lives, but the manner of Papinianus' death demonstrates the victory of moral values, and there is never any doubt in the spectator's mind that Papinianus will overcome the temptations that are offered in the last two acts.

The restrictions of the martyr genre, originally determined by theology, are loosened with this presentation of a secular martyr figure, who nevertheless reveals a character similar to the two Christian martyrs. Papinianus cannot conceive of a glorious meeting with God in heaven, but he can imagine the impact of his example upon others and the praise of his name for having willingly left the world. Papinianus utters these thoughts to his wife Plautia as he attempts to reconcile her to his death:

Wer hier beständig steht, trotz fleisch und fall und zeit,
Vermählt noch in der welt sich mit der ewigkeit
Und hñnt den Acheron. Mein hertz! es heisst nicht sterben,
Wenn wir durch kurtze qual unendlich lob erwerben,
Das nach uns, weil die erd' auf ihren stützen liegt,
Tod, grufft und holtzstoss pocht und über alle seigt,
Die zwar auf blut und leib, nicht auf die seelen wütten. ⁴⁵

⁴⁴Ibid., p. 435.

⁴⁵Papinianus, IV, 233-9.

Papinianus is as much a martyr figure as Catharina and Stuardus, only without their Christian beliefs. A direct analogy with Christ, as in Carolus Stuardus, is not brought out, but the sacrificial nature of his death, his attitude of mind, the almost Christian conception of the Gods and divine justice are reminiscent of the preceding dramas. The conflict between eternal order and temporal order is viewed on a cosmic scale, and Papinianus foresees the clash with its terrible repercussions:

Wer wachend um sich schaut, beobacht, was geschehn,
Und spürt, wie hoch die lufft von donner-wolcken schwanger,
Schleusst leichtlich, dass die glut erhitzt auf hof und anger,
Und bergt sich, wo er kan. Wer auf der wache steht,
Muss stehn, ob schon der strahl ihm durch die adern geht,
Solt auch auf ihm allein sich gleich der blitz erheben. 46

The fall from honour and glory is, antithetically, a triumph and cause for celebration for Papinianus: "Wer meinen fall beweint,/ Sieht nicht, wie hoch ich sey durch diesen fall gestiegen."⁴⁷

Papinianus wants to promote his concept of eternal truth and justice and also maintain his own integrity. Under pressure of outward events, he has to sacrifice himself to remain true to these concepts, but he does uphold them and so is triumphant. The laws are seen as ideas in their perfect state, and virtuous behaviour

⁴⁶Ibid., I, 366-71.

⁴⁷Ibid., V, 34-5.

as a necessity to adhere to these eternal laws. Individual and general virtue guarantees and safeguards the order of the state, and yet individuals will come into conflict with the state if the affairs of state, as in Papinianus, are badly managed. The political importance of this drama, like all the others, is considerable and will shortly come under discussion.

On the topic of Papinianus' excellence of character, one should note that of the many temptations he resists, there is only one that could possibly make him hesitate in his decision to die. This is the practical solution his father Hostilius offers, which is that he should obey the Emperor's wishes, and then unobtrusively and gradually contribute to the general good and eventually effect much that his death now would never allow. Hostilius says:

Schön ists, mit einem wort, den geist vors recht hingeben:
Doch schöner, recht und reich erretten durch sein leben.
Wer vor die tugend fällt, thut wol; der noch veilmehr,
Der vor die tugend steht. 48

Hostilius is suggesting a compromise, a move to one side to avoid direct conflict, the 'usual' solution; it is, as Heckmann says,

⁴⁸Ibid., V, 87-80.

"nur der Ausdruck natürlichen Unbehagens an der lebensfremden Form des dramatischen Helden."⁴⁹ Papinianus does condemn this suggestion because it touches his concept of justice and would give to injustice a temporary validity as justice; for Papinianus justice supports the state as an absolute quality, and wherever injustice prevails it is the duty of the subject to stand up for what is fundamentally right; Papinianus' conscience will not allow him to condone a murder. He replies to Hostilius with the following words:

Wenn aber solch ein stück, ob dem die welt erzittert,
Ob dem, was nah und fern, bestürzt und höchst erbittert,
So sonder scheu verübt, stets keiner seelen frey,
Dass sie so schnödes werck vor schön und recht ausschrey. 50

Not only his conscience, but everything in him rejects such a compromise, no matter what the price:

Solt ich denn solch ein stück trotz sinnen, trotz gewissen
Ausstreichen und die faust, die noch blut-trieffend, küssen?
Nein! Nein! es koste stand, es koste was es wil!
Mein vater! wer verleurt, gewinnt auf diesem spiel. 51

For Papinianus, as for Catharina, the purity of the idea must not be tainted at all and if the reconciliation of the temporal with

⁴⁹Heckmann, op. cit., p. 72.

⁵⁰Papinianus, V, 123-6.

⁵¹Ibid., V, 131-4.

the eternal is not possible, then death is a welcome way out. The wheel of fortune turning threatens to damage his own human worth and take away his self-respect, so he can only find satisfaction in a radical break from the world. Hostilius can doubt the value of his son's sacrifice - "Man nennt diss leiden schön;"⁵² he says ironically - but Papinianus must reject the suggested compromise. Papinianus' vain fight against corruption has left him tired and sceptical of success; the world can offer no reward for his virtues, and his steadfastness can only be appreciated in death. He says towards the end: "Ich bin des lebens satt, / Das so viel krummer gāng und wenig rechter hat."⁵³ As in Catharina von Georgien and Carolus Stuardus, acts are viewed in the light of an eternal, supreme judgement; the maintenance of individual "Tugend" is the ultimate human value, and the form of punishment for betraying this value is the voice of conscience, in the form of the Furies. Both Laetus and Bassianus commit acts that run contrary to the ideal concept of the right; Laetus is punished by death, and Bassianus, the Emperor, and hence a more important figure, is plagued, significantly, by the Furies. Papinianus does not clamour for

⁵²Ibid., V, 77.

⁵³Ibid., V, 229-30.

a "Jenseits", his stoical outlook does not permit the impulse towards a heavenly reward for his righteousness. He would like to live to a ripe old age if conditions were different; he dies more purely for the idea alone than Catharina and Carolus, who have the hope of salvation.

From the discussion of the preceding works, it has become clear that Gryphius' dramas demonstrate an interest in political behaviour. Audiences and courtly scenes are numerous, and problems of state have been discussed. As in the previous drama Cromwell and Peter had opposed a very different ethical standard to that of Stuardus, so in this drama the intriguer Laetus and his Machiavellian views are contrasted with the high ethical standards of the lawyer Papinianus to bring out the personal excellence of Gryphius' martyr. On a political level, Papinianus is a drama that investigates the relation of "Staatsraison" to justice and the law, and the problem of the obedience of the subjects to their ruler. Gryphius' public was the circle of civil servants, who, as trained lawyers, were themselves familiar with problems of state in both theory and practise, and who would find in this drama an expression of their own interests and of an ideal standard of conduct.

Papinianus' views on the obedience of the subjects follow lines of thought already familiar from the earlier plays. His refusal to accept neither the offer of Julia nor that of the two Army captains to ascend the throne demonstrates his "grossmüthigkeit" and is in line with Gryphius' technique of outlining through the medium of his martyr figures his views on political matters. The captains maintain that Geta's murder has broken the oath of allegiance binding them to serve the Emperor; Papinianus answers that the Emperor creates his subjects, and not the reverse, and that although he has committed a grievous crime, only the Gods may cast judgement upon him, not his subjects; and that his own conscience will punish him. The captains claim that mortals protect the laws of the Gods and must punish transgressors themselves; again Papinianus counters that subjects are bound in trust not to the ruler personally, but to his throne and House. Rather than overthrow a tyrant, Papinianus suffers his own death and that of his son, and as he dies he prays for the Emperor who is executing him.

Papinianus contains an assessment of the ruler's position with regard to law and justice; the laws do not impose the same restraint upon a ruler as upon his subjects, and yet they are

not simply the rulers' whims, as Abas sees them. The barriers to his absolute power are ethical in nature, and boundless tyranny is rejected. The courtier Laetus offers to Bassianus a concept of limitless freedom, but the Emperor is aware throughout the drama of the limitations of his power and hence suffers emotionally after his murderous act. The following lines from the first scene of Act II illustrate their different points of view:

Laetus: Ein fürst ist von dem recht und allen banden frey.

Bassianus: Ihn bind't der götter furcht. Diss band geht nicht entzwey. ⁵⁴

The power of the voice of conscience is such that even tyrants must heed it. Gryphius seems to be suggesting that Bassianus also has a concept of the eternal good, but, lacking Papinianus' firmness and integrity, cannot apply it to his actions. Certainly Papinianus takes away from the Roman laws their historical-political context and setting, and imposes Gryphius' own ideas of the right upon them. Papinianus is convinced that the eternal justice of the Gods is manifested in these laws, and his decision to die a martyr's death rather than betray this belief indicates to what degree Gryphius lends to the law a transcendental idea;

⁵⁴Ibid., II, 69-70.

even if a protest against the ruler's abuse of the law is warranted, his special position makes the oath of allegiance all-binding.

Papinianus needs a background in which to function. Lunding says rightly that "Papinian eine zeittypische, anti-machiavellistische Abwandlung des abstrakt-dogmatischen Märtyrers darstellt."⁵⁵ Consequently the figures that fill the background represent the "Machtwille", and the conflict becomes one between power and right. Papinianus' martyrdom represents the temporal triumph of power over right. Laetus, Cleander, Bassianus, Julia are all materialists, avid for power and worldly honour, and yet all are made aware by the turn of events of the impermanence of things and thus are in a state of nervous tension. As in the other plays, the intellectual, argumentative character of Gryphius' drama encourages these personages to put forward their views. Taken as a group opposed to Papinianus' high ethical standards and unable to comprehend those other than their own, they may be seen as 'evil' characters. The trend towards a more detailed depiction of the characters contrasted with the martyr hero has been

⁵⁵Lunding, op. cit., p. 53.

noted already. The portrayal of human evil, envy, hatred and calumny is given its fullest treatment in this final drama. Gryphius seems to exhibit, as Gundolf says, "eine seelische Neugier für die Macht des Bösen."⁵⁶ Geta's murder leads to a clash between the interests of power politics and the truth. Papinianus cannot accept expediency; for him the means cannot justify the end, as truth before the Gods is the statesman's ideal. So Papinianus is favourably contrasted with the various courtly figures, for whom power is right, the Emperor himself excepted. The study of the various types of individual to be found at court seems to interest Gryphius in itself, not merely to depict them as foils of his martyr Papinianus. The sympathetic treatment of Chach Abas in Catharina von Georgien has been noted earlier; Gryphius' own emotional involvement in the execution of Stuardus had led him to present the representatives of the idea of the sovereignty of the people in a most unfavourable light in Carolus Stuardus, but the last drama is again in line with the trend in Catharina von Georgien towards a more understanding view of the 'evil' characters, especially in the case of Bassianus, the Emperor. The two Emperors Leo

⁵⁶F. Gundolf, Andreas Gryphius, (Heidelberg, 1927) p. 45.

Armenius and Bassianus are both weak and indecisive, prone to self-pity because of their isolated position between man and the Gods. The loneliness of the monarch is emphasised in all four dramas under discussion, but especially with regard to the two rulers mentioned above, who have little power of decision. In Leo's case this failure leads to his downfall, and in Bassianus' case to his openness to a suggestion to commit a murder already contemplated, which results in his being tormented by his conscience. Armenius was the "Titelheld" and Bassianus an 'evil' character, so there is a difference in their function in the dramas.

The two chief representatives of 'evil', as well as being contrasted to the martyr figure Papinianus, are also differentiated from one another. Laetus is the type of unscrupulous and ambitious politician, similar to Hugo Peter in Carolus Stuardus, who advocates the expedient approach to power politics and does not judge an act according to the law. His viewpoint is seen in the following lines from his conversation with Bassianus at the start of Act II: "Man sieht nicht brüder an, wenn man um cronen spielt."⁵⁷ "Ein fürst muss eltern zwar, doch nur als fürsten ehren."⁵⁸ Laetus is a cynical realist,

⁵⁷Papinianus, II, 21.

⁵⁸Ibid., II, 59.

the type who figures prominently in Lohenstein's dramas, but to whom Gryphius is ethically opposed, as his contrast with the martyr Papinianus demonstrates. Laetus breaks Bassianus' melancholic lethargy, which his awareness of the difference between his power and his lack of decision has caused; his intrigues influence events as long as the decision has not been made, but once reached, his influence is short-lived. Laetus' argument with Bassianus reveals an attitude prevalent in the seventeenth century, that knowledge is power and that man now stands above ethical considerations, free and independent - "Wer oft das meiste weiss, gibt wenig auf gewissen."⁵⁹ As Laetus' fortunes turn and death approaches, he does gain some insight into the meaning of resoluteness and courage. In line with his views, he feels no guilt or regret, only that, although chance has deterred him, he will choose to die and defy fickle "Fortuna";

Kit kurtzem, Laetus muss nur stürzen oder fallen.
Kein langer rathschlag gilt! Was schadets, wenn versucht,
Was noch zu wagen steht? Dafern es sonder frucht,
Hab ich die schuld dem glück und mir nicht zuzuschreiben. 60

⁵⁹Ibid., II, 99.

⁶⁰Ibid., III, 354-7.

His psychological state parallels that of Papinianus; Papinianus' character is already fully formed from the start, but Laetus comes to an understanding of the transience of life and the necessity of a noble death. Here are his words to the captain who comes to take him to Julia: "Schaut, die ihr nach stand und würden steht, / Die ihr durch dienst und blut wolt fürstengunst erwerben, / So laufft die freundschaft aus! Wir suchen nichts denn sterben, ..." ⁶¹ The scene with Julia is thematically parallel to the final encounter of Bassianus and Papinianus: Laetus displays great courage, he refuses to bend and so lose his self-respect and be other than what he is. His fearlessness as the servants come to bind him is reminiscent of Papinianus' courage and self-assertion:

Unnöthig! lasst mich stehn!
 Lasst aller marter macht auf meine glieder gehn!
 Es zeuge, wer es sieht, dass ich mehr qual zu tragen
 Behertzt, denn Julie gefasst mir vorzuschlagen! ⁶²

Laetus is a man possessing Papinianus' "constantia" and strength; oriented towards the world, he is guided by materialist values. He takes his own death as fortune's judgement upon him for having allowed the opportunity to depose Bassianus slip by; his

⁶¹ Ibid., III, 400-2.

⁶² Ibid., III, 611-4.

chance has gone, and with it, in a world where such opportunities do not come twice, his position of power and his hopes of success.

"Stirb Laetus! stirb! weil nichts vor dich zu hoffen steht, /
Weil vorsatz, anschlag, ehr und stand zurücke geht."⁶³

Punishment follows the action in a very short time; the way in which Laetus faces death is reminiscent of Papinianus' defiance of the world; his death, too, he makes very much his own:

Ein nicht erschreckter muth,
Der nicht mehr dienen kan, vergeusst das frische blut
Mehr freundig denn die feind' erbittert ihn zu pochen
Geht! Laetus hönt die qual und stirbt nicht ungerochen. 64

Laetus' fate parallels that of Papinianus, both are examples of courage and steadfastness, yet to very different causes. Laetus is Bassianus' evil angel, his other self, a figure subsidiary to the tyrant, one who sets the action moving with his power over the Emperor and who indirectly causes Papinianus' martyrdom.

Laetus' views of the fickleness of "Fortuna" raise the question of determinism. Geta's death had been predicted as Cleander's report to Bassianus on Julia's reactions to her son's death makes clear:

Als der die welt erblicket,
Um den man ietzund traurt, ward ihm der tod beschicket.
Es wusste schon Sever, eh ihn der götter schaar
Aus unsern armen riss, dass Geta kurtze jahr
Zu herrschen angesetzt. 65

⁶³Ibid., III, 319-20.

⁶⁴Ibid., III, 411-4.

⁶⁵Ibid., III, 99-103.

Papinianus suggests that his own fate has been decided for him, as he calls his imminent death "des himmels schluss".⁶⁶ In the "Eingangsmonolog" he seems to foresee all that is to pass, as if the characters are puppets responding to the force of events in a pre-determined way. Papinianus' speech, it is suggested, is perhaps more a tribute to his clear-sighted reading of the initial situation than a manifestation of some powers beyond man. Chance or fate may determine events, but Papinianus asserts the now familiar idea of man's freedom of choice between life and death, a small area of decision in which man can live fully. As Catharina and Stuardus have faith in God's purpose for them, so Papinianus also believes in the powers of the Gods and a cosmic approval of his sacrifice.

The notion of some power controlling destinies is brought out in the use of dreams and the appearance of spirits, which is a feature of Gryphius' martyr dramas. Laetus has a moment of insight and feels that the letter from Bassianus cannot auger well; Papinianus realizes he may be heading for a fall, but himself has not time to listen to a dream his wife wishes to relate, as he is concerned only to face actual events, what he can perceive, not what can be imagined: "Es ist nicht zeit

⁶⁶Ibid., V, 139.

auf träum anietzt zu sehn. / Wer wachend um sich schaut,
beobacht, was geschehn, ..."⁶⁷ In line with the trend towards
a more realistic drama, only one spirit appears in this play,
and then only in the chorus at the end of Act IV.

As the tyrant Abas had been contrasted with the martyr figure Catharina in Catharina von Georgien, and Hugo Peter and Cromwell with Stuardus in Carolus Stuardus, so the weak tyrant Bassianus is contrasted with the martyr Papinianus in the present drama. Papinianus is a man without guilt; and Bassianus is a man with innocent blood on his hands. The Furies represent the conscience of Bassianus. Immediately after stabbing his brother, Bassianus no longer feels secure, but rather threatened by his surroundings. A feeling of isolation forces on him the idea of personal guilt, and he does reveal that, despite his revenge against Laetus, he really does consider that he himself must also bear the guilt:

Verzeih betrübeter geist! es war nicht unser schuld.
Es war zwar unser schuld, doch wurden wir getrieben
Durch die, die eigennutz mehr denn den fürsten lieben; 68

Gryphius emphasizes Bassianus' personal guilt when his end is

⁶⁷Ibid., I, 365-6.

⁶⁸Ibid., III, 30-2.

announced to him in his sleep by the Furies and the spirit of his father Severus. The triumph of justice and its revenge upon Bassianus is forecast. After Papinianus' death Bassianus does imagine he sees actual apparitions, but these ghosts are purely subjective, a product of his own conscience. Heckmann's remark upon spirits in Gryphius' drama deserves mention: "im Trauerspiel Gryphius' treten sie als antreibende und bestimmende Gewalten auf, die das Ureigene des menschlichen Gewissens nur bekräftigen und ans Tageslicht zerren."⁶⁹

Bassianus himself is a type of individual very different from Papinianus; he is an example of the man with power and authority who does not live by the high standards Gryphius is advocating through the martyr figure alongside whom he appears; he is without drive and dynamism, a man finding it difficult to reach decisions and, more important, unable to find himself; he exudes a feeling of unhappiness and lack of interest in the world; he is the anatomy of a melancholia that leads to a feeling of persecution and finally insanity, a sorry picture of man out of touch with the world around him, surrounded by lies; the Furies recognize his state of mind: "Er sinck in laster ein / Und aus laster in mehr noth, / Und fühle sich stets

⁶⁹Heckmann, op. cit., p. 138.

lebens-tod!"⁷⁰ The historical Bassianus Caracalla was a tyrant who played with lives as with so many dolls and committed many atrocities. This "Grauengemalde" has been softened by Gryphius into a man who is certainly no unproblematic immoralist but who, in such a shifting, uncertain world, with such a lofty position, has a melancholic disposition, an inclination to brood and a powerful conscience; he is, in fact, as problematic and ultimately as sad a figure as Abas. The martyr figures cannot be really seen as tragic figures, for they are superhuman, unbending and free, happy to die for their beliefs. Abas and Bassianus, despite their despotism, are recognizably human figures, at the mercy of strong instincts which they are unable to control, guilty, and yet, because of their awareness of their sins and the torments of remorse, quite sympathetic. As in Leo Armenius, there is a marked contrast between the Emperor's need to exercise firm control of the state and his ability to do so. He is painfully aware of his own weakness and the reality of the world, and yet, because of his position and desire for power, he feels compelled to disobey the voice of his own conscience. Bassianus is an example of the individual who does not follow the dictates

⁷⁰ Papinianus, IV, 470-2.

of the inner voice, in contrast to Papinianus. He is endowed with absolute power on earth and yet exceeds the limits of his power by offending against the eternal laws.

Both the virtuous central figure and the two 'evil' subsidiary figures become acutely aware of the impermanence of worldly goods and tired of living. Papinianus and Laetus actively welcome death, but Bassianus is a prisoner of his way of life and cannot break out by an act of will of which he is incapable. He would like to be virtuous, but the necessity of maintaining absolute power in the state does not allow it, as, it is suggested, in present circumstances virtue at court is condemned to death. In this respect Heckmann observes that "Die Last des Regierens liegt nicht so sehr in der Verantwortung als in der Notwendigkeit des Handelns: nämlich im Menschlichen, das ihn trotz seiner Auszeichnung aufhaftet."⁷¹ His fear of defamation and Laetus' slandering of Geta to suggest defiance to his will can make him act. As Papinianus remarks: "Verläumdung hat allein diss traur-stück abgespielt."⁷² Bassianus does not deny this, but counters that it is still Papinianus' duty to obey his Emperor.

⁷¹Heckmann, op. cit., p. 148.

⁷²Papinianus, IV, 166.

All the characters have some degree of melancholia in their character in the world of the court, an optimistic view of life is hardly possible. The martyr rejects life if he cannot live by his own standards, and his sadness and magnanimity combine to lead him to a serene resignation: "Die Grossmütigkeit erhebt die Trauer gleichsam in den Stand der Einsicht, in der Mensch auf alles vergängliche Geschehen mit Gleichmut antwortet."⁷³ This thought gains expression in the words of the chorus at the end of Act I. The changeability of human fortunes upsets Laetus' plans to usurp the throne, and he sadly reflects upon the nature of the world before he decides to assert his own ego and die as a sacrifice to his fate. Melancholia affects Bassianus, the victim of inactivity and introspection, and Laetus, the man of action who did not seize his chance and whom fortune has deserted. Bassianus is passive and introverted, Laetus active and extroverted; they represent the two faces of the coin, two types of courtier, both of whom are eventually defeated, as the martyr triumphs.

In conclusion, we may say that Papinianus' passive resistance to tyranny had, to quote Szyrocki, "einen ganz besonders

⁷³Heckmann, op. cit., p. 155.

beispielhaften Wert für den Landessyndikus Gryphius und für den Breslauer Stadtrat, dem das Werk des Dichters gewidmet war",⁷⁴ and that it had, as its background, according to Flemming, "die Wucht und Schwere eines Lebens, das der Bewahrung der verbrieften Rechte und Freiheiten seiner Heimat gegen den habsburgischen Absolutismus geweiht war."⁷⁵ Papinianus, like all the other dramas, does not betray any open opposition to the Habsburg Empire and the "Reichspolitik", and this is no more than speculation on Flemming's part, although it is readily admitted that Papinianus does seem to allude to the political and religious conditions of the years after the Thirty Years War. However, that may be, as a drama, Papinianus rates as perhaps Gryphius' finest achievement; the dramatic movement and the art of presentation are more effective than in the preceding dramas, the whole concept of the martyr drama has undergone a secularising process to produce a drama that is, as already outlined, free from many of the restraints of the dramatic conventions and much more an expression of Gryphius' own dramatic genius.

⁷⁴M. Szyrocki, Andreas Gryphius: Sein Leben und Werk (Tübingen, 1964), p. 94.

⁷⁵Flemming, Das schlesische Kunstdrama, op. cit., p. 41.

CONCLUSION

As we have seen, Gryphius was concerned in his martyr dramas, Catharina von Georgien, Carolus Stuardus and Papinianus, with the phenomenon of constant change, generally in the sense of decay. His acute awareness of the effect of Time on human existence dictated a need in him for the immutability associated with the promise of a heavenly life; he was thoroughly convinced of the "Vanitas" of the world. Gryphius' gaze, then, became directed towards the spiritual union of the individual with God, and a peace and a comfort that only death could bring. The absolute value of material pleasures was therefore rejected.

A lesser man than Gryphius might have been broken by the personal disasters he endured during his life. His bearing towards these misfortunes must be studied in association with his Christian creed, and Christ he regarded as the supreme stoic. His heroic martyr figures, Catharina, Stuardus and Papinianus, demonstrate that human beings are capable of overcoming the onslaughts of fortune; their bearing suggests that "Fortuna" is subject to the will of God and is, in the last analysis, a

positive force that helps to shape man's destiny. The martyr figures embody and proclaim the poet's religious ethic and are unmoved by physical suffering; they accept death calmly and gladly, for death means union with God in eternity. Death not only brings this union of the isolated, menaced individual with the Eternal; it also dissolves the personal problem of Time.

Gryphius wrote his dramas on the figures of martyrs at a time in which it was the literary fashion to write such plays; this fact can easily be explained when one considers the fears, anxieties and obsessions of that period. The courage displayed by Seneca's heroes was associated with the exemplary bearing of Christ, and this development of the cult of stoa acted as a bulwark against the despair and confusion which threatened to overrun Germany during and immediately after the Thirty Years War. Gryphius' martyr dramas may be said to be representative of the age in which they appeared, in that they embody the hopes and wishes, the fears and despairs of his contemporaries. Running through all his martyr dramas are these three factors - the "Vanitas mundi" theme, the Christian ethic, and stoicism.

In Gryphius' close adherence to historical fact in all his martyr dramas there is evidence of a belief that a real

relationship existed between worldly events and higher truths. It was this belief that determined the allegorical form of his martyr dramas. The form does not arise from a conflict of wills between the principal characters, for the dramatic impulse is the Christian moral, which is then given visible shape. Gryphius' dramas, as we have noted, lack on the whole action and tension, for considerations of dramatic technique are subordinated to the ethical convictions which form the central idea. The techniques Gryphius did use for the expression of these convictions in the martyr dramas were an extensive use of the monologue, a chorus employed to reinforce the dialectics, contrasting scenes and personages, and stichomythia, which was well suited to the intellectual, argumentative character the martyr dramas assumed. We have, however, noted a development in the form of the martyr dramas towards a greater realism, i.e. in the increasing use of the spectacular scenes (which do not reach the fantastic heights of the later Baroque dramatists, Lohenstein, for example, but which do move away from mere reporting of action to presentation of the martyrdom on the stage), a more liberal concept of the Unities of Place and Action and, in the last drama, Papinianus, increased motivation and more dramatic action and movement. It is interesting to note that in Papinianus, where the Christian ethic is stressed least, the play gains in terms of dramatic effect.

The Silesian "Kunstdrama", as we have noted, attracted spectators from the middle and upper classes. A less cultured audience might not have been as patient with the rhetoric and dialectics of Gryphius' dramas and might have demanded more action, more sensation. The martyr figures are static and immovable, fully formed from the start, representative of an ethos and therefore immutable. The figures contrast with the 'evil' characters, who, as we have observed, could be given a much more individual portrayal, and made into interesting, sympathetic people capable of development. The refinement of form and the secularisation of content in Gryphius' martyr dramas reach a high point in his last drama, Papinianus, as we have seen.

Among German writers earlier in the century, Opitz had been able to translate and encourage dramatists to follow certain rules; it was Gryphius' task, however, to realize Opitz' ideas and create a German drama. Gryphius strove to bring meaning into the world and invoke in his audience fear, steadfastness and a sense of the right, in martyr dramas set in a historical framework and proclaiming a high ethos. The martyr dramas reveal, by their very nature, i.e. characters of royal rank involved in a "Staatsaktion", Gryphius' political views; we have already discussed his monarchist-absolutist idea of the

state, and his opposition to the concepts of the sovereignty of the people, of the pact between ruler and subjects, of the right to the people to resist a criminal ruler, of "Staatsraison" and of expediency. The major dramatist of the next generation, Lohenstein, introduces a new theory of state with rational-political tendencies, and his Ibrahim Sultan (1673) shows the value of reasonable statesmanship. In Gryphius' martyr dramas the ruler owes allegiance to God, who avenges Himself criminal acts, whereas in Lohenstein's dramas, although the dynasty's ruling power is still intact, it is not untouchable and is without God's protection. The above mentioned drama criticises the irresponsible, sensual tyrant who loses his throne on the considered decision of his subjects.

Indeed a comparison of Gryphius' dramas with those of the representative of the younger generation demonstrates the gradual replacement of "Glaube" by "Vernunft" as the keystone of dramatic writing; it explains in part the reason for the decline in the number of martyr dramas written later in the century. The secularising process already mentioned reaches the point where one finds that Lohenstein does not write martyr dramas at all. His plays emphasize that the "Beständigkeit der

Vernunft"¹ is lacking in man, especially the great men of this world, and this causes their downfall. Lohenstein's heroes are more active than Gryphius'; they are directed by political guile, and they attempt to escape a downfall they themselves have occasioned. When their suffering becomes too great and the strength to resist is exhausted, their dynamism is lost and only then is there a turn to faith, in order to alleviate their suffering. Lohenstein's dramas contain a condemnation of human vices, and they praise the virtue of a lofty spirituality, but for Lohenstein 'delectare' is as important, perhaps more important, than 'prodesse', for he belongs to a younger generation moving away from the Christian ethic of his ascetic predecessor and more interested in spectacular drama. His dramas emphasize psychology and intrigue and are full of life and passion. They appeal more to the heart, whereas Gryphius' martyr dramas present heroes who command respect and admiration and appeal more to the mind and the conscience. The two dramatists seem to symbolize the gradual transition from "Gottesmenschentum" to "Sinnenmenschentum". Lohenstein's tragedies, due to their dynamism, are much more dramatic than the martyr dramas of Gryphius, but they have lost

¹Wentzlaff-Eggebert, op. cit., p. 16.

the ethical standpoint that characterized the latter. The interpretation of catharsis by the two poets, for example, is very different. For Gryphius the word becomes identified with purification; a moral purpose is discernible in his dramas and both pity and fear should be overcome by a supreme love of God. On the other hand, Lohenstein's spectacles of vice and debauchery must certainly have purged the good citizens of Breslau of all their pent-up sensual desires!

We may indeed speculate that the growth of rationalism and the receding memories of the Thirty Years War were factors contributing to the decline of the martyr drama. Certainly Gryphius did not establish a tradition of serious religious drama in this form. The goal of dramatic writing turned from the 'prodesse' of the early seventeenth century to the 'delectare' of the late seventeenth century; perhaps Gryphius' dramas were too serious and too much an individual means of expression for the personal problems of a serious-minded man to establish a strong tradition. Powell blames the social and cultural conditions prevalent in Silesia, which prevented the growth of a popular and native theatre and a wider frame for Gryphius' achievement,² but there seems to be no final answer.

²H. Powell, "Probleme der Gryphius-Forschung", *GRG*, XXXVIII, new ser. VII (1957), 328-43.

Martyr dramas were a mediaeval form for which later generations had little use.³ Martyr figures were clearly inimical to the theatre of the "Aufklärung" and Lessing was concerned with a sympathetic, psychological portrayal of characters. The Romantic movement spoke against psychological drama and was deeply interested in the Middle Ages, but still the form did not experience any new "Blütezeit". Goethe, however, inspired by a passion for Calderon, the Spanish author of martyr dramas, did conceive the plan of a martyr drama from the time of Charles the Great.

Schiller also expressed an admiration for the Spanish Baroque dramatist. We have already mentioned Schiller's psychological portrayal of his heroes,⁴ but there are some interesting parallels between the heroes of Gryphius and those of Schiller that Rehm outlines in an article on Schiller and the Baroque drama.⁵ He asserts that Schiller may be compared with Calderon in several respects: both dramatists portray the victory of an idea, a belief, and the triumph of free will. Rehm suggests that a closer and earlier contact with Calderon

³cf. Lunding, op. cit., p. 66. ff.

⁴vide ante., p. 132.

⁵W. Rehm, "Schiller und das deutsche Barockdrama", DVS, XIX (1941), 311-53.

could have lead Schiller towards an even higher Romantic idealism. Things Baroque certainly exerted some influence upon him; Karl Eugen was a potentate in the Baroque mould and at the time of Schiller's birth the Baroque tradition was still strong in Swabia, as could be seen in church architecture and operatic scenery, for example. Schiller took the figures in his plays from the Baroque "Geschichtsraum" and his plays were "Staatsaktionen" as much as Gryphius', as they were concerned with the rise and fall of heroes. He shared with Gryphius and Vondel an interest in the House of Stuart. But no writer, certainly not Schiller, has ever really exploited the martyr drama genre so thoroughly in German literature as Gryphius. His treatment of this type of drama and martyr hero is exhaustive and quite unique in the history of German literature.

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