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HEROINES AND HISTORICAL FATE
IN THE DRAMA
OF DANIEL CASPER VON LOHENSTEIN

DISSERTATION
Presented in Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements
for the Degree Doctor of Philosophy in the Graduate
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The Ohio State University
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CHAPTER I

PAST AND PRESENT CRITICISM OF LOHENSTEIN'S DRAMA

This essay will treat the stature of Daniel Casper von Lohenstein (1635-1683) both as an historical tragedian and as a depicter of great heroines. It will concern itself principally with analyses of his six plays rather than with attempts to define the "Baroque" as this may appear in his works. Many worthwhile contributions to the cultural history of the German seventeenth century, to what now is known generally under the all-inclusive term, Baroque, help shed light on the productivity of Lohenstein. To these commentaries the essay will from time to time refer, and often in order to acknowledge its indebtedness. It will mention especially several specific commentaries on his dramaturgy. Since only one monograph deals with some concentration upon the particular Lohensteinian vision of heroic womanhood, the essay may, it is hoped, contribute to the understanding of the dramatist's achievement, an achievement whose claim to merit depends largely on the many exciting heroines who people his stage. While several
critics have indicated the importance of history in Lohenstein's plays, none has traced through the author's total dramatic production how the presentation of history is concentrated in his feminine characters, in their destinies.

Before taking up its special task, the essay can perhaps at least do some service by tracing the growth of criticism on Lohenstein as playwright. Without presenting its own arguments on his behalf, it can nevertheless point out a number of harmful exaggerations which some critics in part unheedingly transmit, worsening the chances that a more casual reading public may become acquainted with interesting works of the past.

Unfortunately, for over two centuries the picture of Lohenstein as a writer has been not readily accessible to the general reader of German literary works, and his reputation has long stood under the shadow of negative criticisms. His name has depended to a large extent on his major prose work, the large and little read Arminius. It has lived through individual poems which still appear in anthologies to represent him. It has depended, finally, on a few reprintings of individual plays, whose editors have given unfavorable or at best
reluctant commentaries concerning their worth. Ludwig Tieck included *Ibrahim Bassa* in his *Deutsches Theater* (1817). Felix Bobertag edited the second version of *Cleopatra*, with all of Lohenstein's annotations, in the series *Deutsche National-Litteratur* (1885). In our century, Willi Flemming edited the sister African tragedy, *Sophonisbe*, for the series *Deutsche Literatur* (1931). Toward the end of the nineteenth century several critics took the first steps in freeing the memory of Lohenstein from scholarly stigmatisation, yet few have appeared until in recent decades to speak without an apologetic tone of the playwright who has no place in the standard repertoire, indeed scant recognition in learned circles. These significant commentaries anticipated the first critical edition of his plays under the editorship of Klaus Günther Just (1953-1957), who reopened to public inspection a long-closed chapter in the history of German drama. The present essay received considerable stimulation from Just's contribution, which may succeed in solidifying positive interest in Lohenstein's theatrical accomplishment.

But, before returning to the newer critics of Lohenstein, let us review the opinions of the older
critics. That is not to say that one's attention must turn to the past, for Lohenstein enjoys still today a copied and recopied "lexicon" reputation which has been the property of many generations. The purpose in examining the persistent shape of the negative argument against Lohenstein is not to deride the compilers. While active scholarship needs to submit opinions to ever renewed examination, it does not call for or benefit always from unfriendly or abrupt rejection of the aesthetic prejudices of earlier commentators. If one rather peruses the record, the whole charge sheet against Lohenstein, very interesting and coherent details stand out. These details can serve as clues, moreover, not only indicating his major faults but also suggesting his peculiar artistic make-up. Certainly details which constantly cause contention point either to some basic spiritual chasm between the author and his critics or to the jagged features of his individual artistry, features which shock and baffle, and thus deserve intense analysis. Thus a review of the critical literature can furnish at least insight into change of taste and outlook, or eventually also significant starting points for the investigating student.
The standard line in its handbook expression may be illustrated with the weighty *Reallexikon der deutschen Literaturgeschichte*, in the second edition (1955) supervised by Werner Kohlschmidt and Wolfgang Mohr:


The 1950 edition of Wilhelm Kosch’s *Deutsches Literatur-Lexikon* disposes of Lohenstein more compactly, with reference to a stigma which is supposed to be attached to the name itself:

The first edition of the Merker-Stammler *Reallexikon der deutschen Literaturgeschichte* (1925) is blunter, more outspoken in its terms than the second, although one recognizes nearly the same message:


Erich Schmidt precedes the above commentators thus in the *Allgemeine Deutsche Biographie* (1884):

Die Poesie ist für L. eine in schreiende Farben gekleidete Magd der Polyhysterie; "bloßes Nebending," "erleichtender Zeitvertrieb," wo er weder "Auffenthalt noch Gewinn" sucht, "kein Handwerk." Kein innerer Drang, keine Originalität, nur Fortführung und Caricatur vorhandener Richtung tritt uns entgegen. Seine Vordermänner sind Andreas Gryphius und Hofmann von Hoffmannswaldau... Lohensteins Phantasie ist lahm und wirtschaftet mit einem mäheselig gesammelten Tropenvorrath, Erfindung hat er nur insofern, als er jede greuliche Marterscene durch eine noch greulichere, jede gewagte Buhlszene durch eine noch nacktere, raffinirtere überbieten kann. Sein Stil ist Marinismus...

It is no wonder then that Felix Bobertag opens his introduction to the volume containing Lohenstein's *Cleopatra*
with apology and undertakes an inquest over the corpus which he wishes to present to the medical ampitheatere of 1885:

Die zweite Schlesische Schule, deren Erzeugnisse wir in zwei Bänden unseren Lesern darbieten, steht nicht eben im besten Ruf. Um so mehr erscheint es geboten, sorgfältig und gewissenhaft bei ihrer Betrachtung und Beurteilung zu Werke zu gehen. Wir werden viel zu tadeln haben, eben daher aber haben wir auch die Aufgabe, die hier vorliegenden Verirrungen aus ihren Ursachen zu begreifen, sie mit analogen Erscheinungen zusammzuhalten und die Schattenseite des geistigen Lebens, welches sich uns hier darstellt, mit den eigentümlichen Zuständen des ganzen Zeitalters in Verbindung zu bringen.

He breaks his staff over Lohenstein's tragedies:

Sie sind tragisch, wenn Schandtaten, Handlungen des Wahnsinns, der Grausamkeit, der äussersten Verworfenheit, Hinrichtungen, Folterungen, Pest und Kriegsgreuel an sich tragisch sind, und man kann es ihnen zu gute halten, dass der Altmeister Opitz keine bessere Definition der Tragödie gegeben hatte, als wir hier in die dichterische Praxis umgesetzt finden. Aber es fehlt die Grösse der Gesinnungen, die Grösse der Leidenschaften, wenn diese auch bis zum Wahnsinn gesteigert erscheinen, ja es fehlt selbst die Grösse der Begebenheiten, indem sie sich nicht ihrer Bedeutung entsprechend in den Seelen und der Handlungsweise der Menschen spiegeln.

Although Bobertag sees a failure by Lohenstein's age even to comprehend the tragic, he follows with his good service of publication in the footsteps of Tieck. Despite his interest in Lohenstein, Tieck expresses disturbance at his "shadow side" too:

Am widerwärtigsten aber ist sein Hang zur Grausamkeit, denn er scheut sich nicht, alle Arten von Tortur und Hinrichtungen auf die Bühne zu
bring, so wie die anstößigen Situationen, die er oft als wahrer Cyniker schildert, alles in ziemlich wohlautenden Versen, aufgeschmückt mit einer gewissen Anzahl von Bildern und Gleichnissen, die immer wiederkehren, nur interessant durch manchen schönen, wahrhaft poetischen Ausdruck, durch kühne Wendungen und eben so gewagte wie treffliche Wortfügungen.14

One can pursue the distaste for seventeenth century drama during the nineteenth century in greater detail, but for the limited purposes of the present sketch it may suffice to penetrate at once to the opinion moulders of the eighteenth century, to the critical dicta of Bodmer and Breitinger, to the pronouncements of the reformer Gottsched, and to the influence of the great thinker and playwright of a new era, Lessing. Walther Rehm has treated the shifting of viewpoint toward the tragic and the drama within the German culture in his excellent article entitled "Römisch-französischer Barockheroismus und seine Umgestaltung in Deutschland."15 He shows how new demands for a purified theatre, the temporary phase of reform of plays based on "chief and state actions," heralded a more radical change, an impulse toward nature, as nature was then beginning to be understood.16 Simplicity, naturalness, and the inner human substance -- these did not need the grandiose
costuming and speech of the seventeenth century stage, nor did harmony and beauty seem to belong estranged among the intrigues of court, the cruel realities of politics, the turbulence of world history. Lessing, the first playwright to win a permanent place in the standard repertoire, has exercised an obvious effect upon future generations. While in France school children attend and are accustomed to the poetic diction of the seventeenth century drama, German children have never since Lessing heard any body of dramatic works from this earlier period. One cannot underestimate the importance of simple aural conviction in the validity of histrionic language. Besides lack of experience in hearing seventeenth century drama, the German public wanted encouragement to read plays which did not present the more acceptable ideas of the new era. In fact, the most important critics virtually anathematized seventeenth century literature, especially its drama.

Gottsched, hostile toward the Italian pastoral, heroic, and courtly poetry and toward similar "excesses" in the French, also attacked the pathos of Senecan tragedy. He singled out Lohenstein as the bombastic German par excellence:
Im Deutschen kann uns Lohenstein die Muster einer so schwärmischen Schreibart geben. Seine Tragedien sind überall damit angefüllt, und er verdient deswegen der deutsche Seneca zu heissen.  

In general he rejected the poetics of Lohenstein's generation:

Opitz, Dach, die Gryphier, Kanitz und andere von unsern besten Poeten, haben wohl niemals, auch in verliebten Gedichten, ein sarges Ohr gefügert. Hofmannswaldau und Lohenstein aber sind auch in diesem Stückslein die Pusstapfen der gellen Italiener getreten, die ihrer Feder so wenig, als ihren Begierden, ein Maass zu setzen wissen; und diese Vorgänger haben sehr viel angehende Dichter verderbet, die wohl gar in Schäfererszählungen Zoten gerissen.

The separation of Hofmannswaldau and Lohenstein into one camp, as against the "purer" Gryphius and his ilk, one continues to encounter in practically all criticism after Gottsched.

The Swiss critics, Bodmer and Breitinger, champions of "nature", made even more devastating attacks upon Lohenstein. The second part of Die Discourse der Mahlern leveled numerous criticisms against the gallant poets, especially Hofmannswaldau and the so-called (second) Schlesian school, while the fourteenth discourse of part three parodied the novel Arminius. 19 This mockery was healthy and hardly severe in contrast to Breitinger's biting comments on Lohensteinian drama:
Wann ich nur an Lohensteins Trauerspiele gedenke, so überfällt mich Frost und Eckel, der geduldigste Mensch, der nicht zugleich dumm ist, möchte über dem Lesen dieser Tragedien die Schwindelucht bekommen. Da findet man nichts anderes als eine ungestaltete und ungeordnete Materie, einen Haufen verworrerner Begebenheiten, wo weder Ort, noch Zeit, noch Wohlstand beobachtet ist.... Wenn er bald in lauter Gleichnissen und Metaphor mit sich selbst zuckt, bald um eine Schöne von seiner eigenen Schöpfung in Schwulst und Wahnwitz bultet, bald die verborgensten und seltensten Wunder der Natur mit einem Doctor-mässigen Ernst erklärt, wenn er plötzlich, wie in einer Verstümmelung, aus sich selbst gerät, und über die Wolken fliesst, und im Augenblick wieder so tiefe fällt, dass er mit kindischen Sprachwörtern, spitzfindigen Spielen, schliessenden Gleichnissen und dergleichen ohne Mass um sich wirft. Die höchste Hitze und der höchste Frost wechseln bey ihm ab, ein Kennzeichen des äussersten Verderbnisses in der Schreibart, wie der schwersten Krankheit in dem menschlichen Leib. In allen diesen Stücken hat Andr. Gryphius vor ihm nicht viel zum Voraus, ausgenommen dass seine Personen in einer menschlichen Sprache reden....20

Indeed, while Gryphius manages to maintain a small credit, it is little enough that Breitinginger grants.

Whether one examines the older or newer negative criticism of Lohenstein's drama, one notes that he is often rejected, while Gryphius is more readily accepted. In fact, most later commentators make a special point of contrasting the two playwrights, with an express emphasis on Gryphius' human "inwardness" as against Lohenstein's lack of this invisible but necessary
substance. The latter writer they tend to regard merely as a distortion of the former, almost a counterfeit image without personal distinction, beyond the excesses in which he is supposed to indulge. One concludes that the roots of the now very swollen contrast between the two Silesians have borne a stubborn plant, which still flourishes. All that Lohenstein does comes out, for certain critics, an exaggeration of the style and subject matter which make Gryphius great; and all that remains of the latter in the former is blood and thunder. Quite often the old, sanctified note of moral aspersion creeps in. One is reminded, at least indirectly, that Lohenstein does not possess, or his characters do not possess, a beautiful soul. While Gryphius, through his deep religiosity, has impressed the Goethezeit with its special demands for "inwardness", Lohenstein obviously has not; nor have the lexicons ceased to judge him by the standards of the past. As late as 1935, an article by Werner Paul Friedrich, following a well-beaten pathway, tries to define the cleavage, separating the hateful and beautiful souls, the sheep from the goats:

The main difference between the two dramatists lies in the shifting from a stern Ethos to a
sensational Pathos. Gryphius wanted to teach; his preface to the tragedies, speaking of the horrors of war and of the vanity of men, emphasizes that point. He creates heroes whose life is no problem at all for them, but a categorical imperative (Papinianus). Such pure souls then, only rarely a prey of despair, become his mouthpiece in his preachings against the wickedness of tyrants and in his exultations of Christian courage. Lohenstein, apart from his moralizing platitudes imitated from Seneca, has no such strength of religion and character. Both authors represent the two extreme forms of thought of a century which oscillated between religious devotion and coarse sensuality. If, in Gryphius, we eliminate his high ethical purpose then we see nothing but an empty shell of hideousness and disgust. Such are, to put it brutally, the works of Lohenstein. Rationalism could destroy the religious drama, that is true; on the other hand, there existed no further possibilities of development for such a Senecan shell and the dramas of Lohenstein died of their own excesses.22

It is virtually the same complaint which Bobertag makes against the second Silesian school in general, Lohenstein in particular:

Denn sie hatte zunächst den gänzlichen Mangel an idealem Gehalt zur Folge, der uns hier /i.e., in Lohenstein's case/ überall am meisten abstösst.23

Bobertag sees a continuance of such lack into the early eighteenth century, despite the reforming reaction by Gottsched against the Silesians, a reaction which in itself represented an extreme first set aside through Klopstock.24 Bobertag's opinion reveals the strong influence of Bodmer and Breitinger upon the second half
of the nineteenth century. The Swiss critics receive
glowing recognition in the articles about their careers
in the Allgemeine Deutsche Biographie, which, as already
cited, adheres to their judgments on Lohenstein.

Let us then try to learn something from so solidified
a body of criticism which, already a century or more
steadfast, denied to Lohenstein's dramas the qualities
of inwardness! Assembling the terms of reproach, one
discovers that he is gruesomely naturalistic, pedantic-
ally exact, historically oriented; further, sensualistic,
bombastic, spectacular; and, what is more, cynical, de-
void of real character, platitudinous. His whole
striving is for effect--Pathos, as Friedrich aptly
calls it. His characters, not pure souls, have, by
implication, problematic lives. If for the time being
one is willing to accept this unbalanced picture of
Lohenstein the dramatist, its features can help draw
attention away from that for which Friedrich seems to
search in vain, Ethos; they can suggest, no matter how
distorted, that which he abhors as Pathos, that which
one can strive better to understand within the frame-
work of Lohenstein's own peculiar "theatre". For

certainly these negative commentaries point always
to one fault, the extreme theatricality of his plays.
Herbert Cysarz, in fact, designates the section on
Lohenstein in his book *Deutsche Barockdichtung* (1924) with the subtitle "Theatralik" and directs withering critical blasts against him for parading costumed pathos upon the stage:

Im szenischen Gepräg aber wahrh Lohenstein überall steifes Feierkleid und imperatorische Würde: Nur Fürsten und Helden ziemt tragischer Ornat. Alles wird in den Purpur stolzer Pathetik -- nicht blosser Oratorik -- gehüllt, Gestalten und Symbole zum grossartigen Ornament der Leidenschaft verflochten, im besten Fall in ein zweckvoll bewegendes Muskelsystem eingeschaltet, niemals individuell beseelt. Was der prall besonnte Stoff verlangt, wird wild drauf los agiert; Auf den Erfolg des Vorgangs kommt es an, nicht auf den Sinn des Handelns und Geschehens. Der Rest ist Rausch und Knall. Der Zeremonienmeister des Barock löst nicht so sehr der Rechenmeister ab als der Berserker, der selbst den Feuerwerker in die Zwischenakte weist.... Das reine Theater beherrscht und bevorzundet die Literatur.26

And let us accept also, at least temporarily, two points. First, the so often repeated opinion that Lohenstein derives from Gryphius:

Die Ethik Lohensteins sprossat aus dem Boden, den Gryphius der deutschen Tragödie erobert hat....26

Second, that it is Gryphius (as Friedrich repeats years later after Cysarz) who manifests ethical substance:

Sämtliche Menschen dieser Tragödien (Gryphs) sind geschoben, indes nicht mittelalterlich durch Vorsorge und Erbsünde gebunden, vielmehr durch einen immanenten Tragismus alles menschlichen Treibens. Ein hohes persönliches

But that is not, one may readily concede, the catharsis of the Lohensteinian drama; at least, it is not the catharsis beyond the point of departure, where Lohenstein, freeing himself from the ethical basis of Gryphius' dramaturgy, moves into a world of theatricality. The question will arise, what if any catharsis can occur in a theatre of "distorted" gestures, of Pathos.

This essay will attempt to begin with Lohenstein at the nebulous boundary which runs between Pathos and Ethos, to cross it with him, and to enter a new realm which his plays first opened up to exploration, the realm of history. The discussion will begin with the play which critics often liken to Gryphius' and which had widest appeal through the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. This is Ibrahim Bessa, which Tieck in 1817, W.A. Passow in 1852, F. Bobertag in 1875, O. Muris in 1911, Gysarz in 1924, J. Nadler in 1931, Friedrich in 1935, among others, prefer over the later works of the playwright for its inward, pious, harmonious, simple features. The discussion will progress, with various stopping places among the several later dramas, to the
African tragedies, printed in final form in 1680, the finest expression of the dramaturge Lohenstein. Conrad Müller's ground-breaking analysis of Cleopatra in 1882 followed upon and received valuable stimulus from August Kerkhoffa's exclusive commentary upon that play in 1877. Oswald Muris placed Cleopatra next to Ibraham Basse in 1911. Walter Martin, in the year 1927, saw Cleopatra as Lohenstein's most impressive and successful figure. Max Otto Katz in 1933 regarded Cleopatra and Sophonisbe as the epitomes of his art, the latter as "das reifste Drama". By 1936, the three heroines, Epicharia, Cleopatra and Sophonisbe, appear in that ascending order as great tragic personalities before the eyes of Laetitia Brede, whose article shows how far a change in taste may swing and how far understanding for Lohenstein's "hoffnungsloser Fatalismus" may progress. From another quarter, in 1940, comes Erik Lunding's book, Das Schlesische Kunstdrama, which treats both Gryphius and Lohenstein as serious dramatists, each representing a valid and coherent world-view. He adheres to Brede's preference for the bloodiest play, Epicharia, and the African tragedies, Cleopatra and Sophonisbe.

One still notes, however, on the part of Lunding the attraction to "inwardness" in much the same terms
as Friedrich used in 1935 or Cysarz in 1924, his receptivity for an invisible ideal substance in preference to a sensual and merciless reality. He acknowledges by direct quotation agreement with Cysarz to a certain degree:


Yet Lunding admits that Lohenstein’s drama is “bühnenwirkssamer”, his playwrighting "wirkungsvoller". This same tribute is found among the less flattering remarks by Friedrich:

Gryphius’ tragedies were elegies, not dramas in the proper sense of the word, for the ultimate fate of the heroes was sealed from the very beginning, and they, full of religious fervor and Christian stoicism, did not stage a fight for their
lives. Lohenstein's dramas, however, by their very emphasis on psychology and intrigue, become full of life and passion. 35

Thus, in crossing the boundary between Gryphian Ethos and Lohensteinian Pathos, one enters presumably a world of conflict, also dramatic conflict, a place of vital struggle. In this world move and act the great Lohenstein heroines, not representing any Ethos but striving to maintain their own existence.

As Friedrich himself says:

He has particularly created gigantic woman who in their wild desires are much more dynamic and human than the proudly resigned martyrs of Gryphius. Women like Agrippina or Cleopatra are not bound by religious dogma; their fate is within themselves and they act accordingly. 36

In keeping with the stated intention to learn from the critics of Lohenstein, one could investigate with most intensity this fate within his heroines, who over the years have been attracting more and more attention.

In pursuing now the more positive side of Lohenstein criticism, one comes to the extensive treatment by Fritz Schaufelberger, "Das Tragische in Lohensteins Trauerspielen" (1945), and to the monograph by Wolfgang Kayser, "Lohensteins Sophonisbe als geschichtliche Tragödie" (1941). 37 In these two commentaries the undoubted accent of praise falls upon the
Cleopatra and the Sophonisbe. What Friedrich and Cysarz define as Ethos versus Pathos, what is contrasted often as sensual, theatrical, rationalistic in Lohenstein versus the inward, passive, religious in Gryphius, -- the different mainsprings in the creativity of the two dramatists undergo a renewed inspection. Cysarz claims that Gryphius represents the purest Baroque tragedy, and at last Schaufelberger investigates this subject in regard to a rival claimant. Friedrich talks about fate in regard to the works of both authors, but a clear separation between Gryphius' fate and Lohenstein's occurs first in the above mentioned treatments. At last history is understood as the stage where Lohenstein's Pathos parades, and must parade, while Gryphius' world-stage remains firmly embedded in the Christian theory of salvation. All these matters will be touched upon opportune during the course of this present essay dealing with Lohenstein's heroines.

It will link the first powerful manifestation of a world of theatricality, of pathos, with a rationalistic conception of man's suffering. It will strive to illustrate an indissoluble connection between heroism and fate, as these appear especially in Lohenstein's African tragedies. It will take up negative points and unintended hints of other critics who
have compared the two Silesian authors, although such references will be only secondary to the main purpose in view. For example, it seems valuable to cast a side glance at a play like Papinian, which, as Lunding thinks, shows signs of that strange theatricality, otherwise attributed to Lohenstein. Perhaps, indeed, certain students of the seventeenth century have been so fascinated with various dualistic phenomena of the period that they insist on a too frequently exaggerated contrast between a supposed ethical Gryphius and pathetic Lohenstein, and undervalue common roots and intellectual junctions. Some comparative investigation will enable clearer comprehension of Lohenstein's personal achievement in introducing at so early date a theatre of historical tragedy worthy of the name.

The reader who picked up the volumes of Lohenstein's plays, as they are reprinted in the critical edition by Just, would doubtless note with some interest that the editor groups the dramas in pairs. It is more than a matter of convenience to separate them two by two as respectively the Turkish, the Roman and the African tragedies. While it is true that a score of years divides the prodigal first work, Ibrahim Bassa (1653), from the later Ibrahim Sultan (1673), the subject matter of the two derives not merely outwardly, in the locale and atmosphere, in all the historical trappings of the
Ottoman imperial court, but also inwardly, in the primary dramatic conflict, from a confrontation of opposed extreme claims. Tyranny, absolute worldly authority, vies against all rival spheres and even seeks to subordinate the inner loyalty of men to spiritual authorities. But, asserting an inner unassailable position against every threat, the martyr maintains spiritual freedom and wins everlasting glory. To be sure, we speak now of the secular Lohensteinian martyr, who will concern us in our immediate discussion, and not of a Gryphian martyr for the Christian faith. The Roman tragedies belong together also by virtue of their dual exploration of Neronian Rome, and were originally published in the same year, 1665. They have a corrupt and enslaved civilization for their stage, on which the martyr, Epicharis, and a new figure, a desperate queen besmirched by guilt, both struggle on behalf of freedom, the former idealistically and the latter personally. The African tragedies likewise appeared, in final form, together in the year 1680 and revolve around most closely related themes. Without anticipating the discussion of the greatest works by Lohenstein, one can remark that a strong thread connects the total dramatic productivity of the author. One central problem, man's freedom or bondage, obsesses the playwright
and is considered by him in changing aspects, until he has shifted his view from the play about to be considered, the martyr drama *Ibrahim Bassa*, to a final vision of historical tragedy.

A reader cannot help but be struck, at the same time, by the predominance of women's names in the titles of the plays. Only the two Ibrahims form exception. Otherwise, Epicharis, Agrippina, Sophonisbe and Cleopatra, figures from Roman tradition, reveal an extraordinary focus upon the feminine protagonist. Not in the titles, but certainly of importance in the various actions, are a host of lesser women, ranging from cruel courtesans to desperate wives, to threatened virgins, etc., a wide collection of good and bad, sympathetic and unsympathetic. The discussion must touch on them too, if it is to place properly against their collective foil the principal heroines.

Thus, in the beginning, rather than concentrate on the important male figures whose name belongs to the Turkish dramas, let us turn to the women. For, although the first Ibrahim is the chief figure of his play, he is so only through his absolute and reciprocated bond of love with Isabella. And, although the second Ibrahim actually is developed with tragic color as the victim of his own passion and tyrannical might, women
like Ambre, object of the same threat externally, carry on the earliest incorporation by Lohenstein of feminine heroism in the figure of purity and martyrdom. The essay will not analyze the particular nature of the tragedy *Ibrahim Sultan*, which is more specifically an examination of the tyrant himself, thus a play which reapproaches the tyrant-martyr conflict from a radical direction. Rather than concentrate upon the anti-hero, the essay will show various examples of the anti-heroine, important as precursors of the "dubious" Agrippina with her dark traits, and of the amoral heroines and great political women, Cleopatra and Sophonisbe. Therefore the reader must be indulgent, if the discussion passes over so lightly the male protagonists, who deserve adequate treatment in their own right. But the goal of this essay is to reach an understanding of Lohenstein's most complicated characters, Cleopatra and Sophonisbe, in whom all that is at once dubious and all that is provocatively dangerous for human existence take on a new complexion, indeed are glorified in his tragic vision of man, creature in history.
CHAPTER II

LOVE, FREEDOM AND DEATH, THE ORIGINAL EQUATION

The story of Ibrahim Bassa takes place within the exotic realm of Turkey, and is thus related to that particular seventeenth century taste for tales of the Orient. In the drama its cousins are, for example, Racine's Bajazet and Dryden's Aurang-Zebe. The taste persisted into the eighteenth century as well, when its flavoring usually became tinged with sentimentalism, but the appeal of the exotic milieu maintained itself, as a considerable number of novels and plays witness. The eighteenth century brought forth stories like Samuel Johnson's Rasselas, Prince of Abyssinia, and dramas like Voltaire's Zaire, Alzire, Merope, or Mahomet. The counterparts offered by operas were already legion and culminated in the sentimental and enlightened genre which Mozart's Entführung aus dem Seraglio exemplifies. If one keeps in mind the facts of geopolitics for the seventeenth century and recalls also the state system of the Ottomans, then the interest of Europeans is readily understandable for that otherwise
so foreign world, which posed a serious threat both to
the Christian religion and to Christian governments. The
Turkish empire extended far onto the European
continent, and especially the Hapsburg territories
touched it. The absolutism of the Sultan’s government,
the intimate connection of religion and state, and the
militant attitude of the Turkish nobles and forces could
impress even the French nation, which developed the
notion of the “Grand Turc.” The studious Lohenstein
shared with many contemporaries in his fascination for
the Ottoman realm and harvested considerable knowledge
from treatises and accounts of travelers.

Thus we must see his *Ibrahim Bassa* as a play with
definite contemporary appeal and with an overt message.
The prologue and Isabelle’s final speech, actually the
epilogue, place the play’s happenings in a definite
framework. The Grand Turc is portrayed as a very real
archenemy, the Turkish realm as an abomination. Isabelle
sets out on a crusade mission to tell the world her own
history and excite it into action against the miscreant
culture, the sick civilization, which has wronged her.
Such an achievement, the creation of a tendentious and
propagandistic play, would have been impressive enough
in an author only fifteen years old. It fits well into
the pattern of martyr plays like Gryphius’ *Catharina von*
Georgian. Lohenstein evokes both an edifying sadness for the sufferers and a sense of outrage, of justified anger against persecution. At the same time, it is clear that Ibrahim and Isabella, despite the former's execution and the latter's bereavement, triumph spiritually over the sultan, Soliman.

But a closer examination of the drama reveals that their triumph, although very similar to the victory won by Gryphius' Christian martyrs, no longer occurs through or on account of a religious faith. The good on whose behalf they sacrifice life is indeed elevated. This inner value, which the heroes affirm, is so often emphasized through reference to Christian emotions that it appears to be still Christian in fact. Therefore Ibrahim Bassa antedates by six years Gryphius' Papinian, the celebration of a pagan stoic's martyrdom for divine justice. The essay will refer to this later development of Gryphius in connection with Lohenstein's Roman plays, which center upon the same historical subject matter, Neronian corruption. Although Ibrahim Bassa is earlier than Papinian, its heroes already emerge from a purely Christian stoic tradition and take a major step toward self-dependent moral assertion. What they assert is inner freedom. Their love for each other springs from their inward choice,
and they refuse to alter their individual resolutions or to gainsay their reciprocal oaths even in the face of death. Lohenstein hereby departs from the more exact Christian point of view, the ethic of dogmatic faith, and establishes a new ethic, the secular love vow and amorous fidelity. The hero and heroine assert against absolute power and its total threat to their being a resistance very much like that of a Christian martyr. They take refuge in a claim of personal freedom from all earthly coercion, yet on behalf of an immediately experienced happiness, their marriage; by adhering to this higher authority, to which they have bound themselves by oath, they rise above the government of the sultan, above all impermanence, all vicissitudes, all temporality. In this sense, then, Lohenstein's play depends strongly on the tradition of the martyr drama. But it shifts subtly the grounds on which the heroes base their appeal to a higher instance of judgment, to an authority or legality over the demands of their ruler.  

Love in its own right moves into the center of the worldstage as protagonist. The antagonistic forces operate there, much as the forces of darkness operate in Gryphius' dramas, to undermine freedom. In fact, the dramatic conflict in *Ibrahim Sultan* revolves both
at the personal and at the state level around a struggle against enslavement. In the prologue Asia appears in the figure of a woman chained by the vices and bewails her lot under the Turkish yoke. She portrays herself as fallen, tormented by inward corruption, a mask of outward splendor. An entire civilization, which gave religions and empires to the world, is passing away forever. Asia sees herself with regret as an actress upon a world-stage; she is helplessly caught in her role:

\[ \text{Stund imand auf dem Schau-Saal dieser Erden} \]
\[ \text{So hoch gepflantzt zur Ehren-höh} \ (I, 59-60). \]

She connects her doom, her corruption, and her lack of freedom: "Der freie Nakken ist verkoppelt an die Laster" (I, 65). Finally, after revealing the abysmal horrors within her, she gives the specific reference of the play. She curses Soliman, archmurderer and "Grewel dieser Zeit" (I, 93). The personification Asia gives us the sense of impending catastrophe, the immediacy of the story, and an historical orientation. We are to remember, when the lascivious sultan threatens the lovers, that a final court, the court of history sits in judgment over his reign. Soliman's rule is a chapter in the sickness and decay of an empire. Thus, even with the immediateness of the dramatic action touching the love story, the story takes place against
a background of timeless and permanent values.

This background of values reminds us, because of its indestructibility, of Gryphius' system, except that the latter author bases his chiefly upon the Christian theory of salvation. Lohenstein's protagonists share most of the attributes which belong to the martyrs. Purity distinguishes their affections from the carnality of Soliman; loyalty and adherence to their oaths contrast sharply with his wavering, betrayal and duplicity; unshakable certainty in themselves and each other elevates them above his miserable inner emptiness and doubts. Yet Ibrahim is no longer a Christian! His flight toward Christian territory is not the cause of Soliman's anger, so much as the direct challenge to Soliman's absoluteness. The sultan cannot bear the insulting infringement through an attempt to escape his control, which he wishes to exercise even upon the private lives of his subjects. Ibrahim has fled only to seek happiness and to protect his spouse, to reach an asylum beyond the rancor and intrigue of the court. The implication, not distinctly stated in the terms later used by Rousseau, is nevertheless malaise with the social and political world. The desire to transcend earthly bondage, to leave the (Christian) vale of sorrows, has now secular
application in the rejection of the prince's court, the very center of society.

Thus two parties are immediately evident. The courtly or political group, the intriguers, who seek to manipulate the sultan, stand in opposition to the lovers, whose forthrightness indeed not only shows their non-political attitude but also constitutes a danger for their survival. Naturally the sultan fears that Ibrahim is scheming, has perhaps betrayed him for Charles V, and he sees dark outlines of a possible Christian plot. But Ibrahim regrets only this defamation against his character and explains that his flight was a personal and not a political action. He can name his outstanding services to the realm and maintains complete faithfulness, ready for death now as he was in every battle by which he built the sultan's power. His surety is unto death:

"Ich wil das scharfe Beil/ ich wil die Schwerter küssen" (I, 217).

Isabelle also stands upon her own innocence in words setting a solemn tone of dignity:

Die Tugend spricht für mich/
Die Unschuld/ Ehr und Recht (I, 312-313).

She has dared to choose the knave before the master, virtue before ambition, love before compelled passion,
and accuses the sultan of breach of faith. Clearly the struggle has resulted because of their private and passive resistance to extreme claims, but the courtiers, except for the honorable Achmat, look only for advantage in advising Soliman. The courtiers succeed, and, still unshaken, Ibrahim must enter the dungeon under sentence of death.

The dichotomy of love and politics, as it occurs in this play, will interest us again in later works of Lohenstein. What is central here is the peculiar combination which the author makes between the stoic heroism of Ibrahim in defense of his name and the bravery of the heroine, almost to the point where their figures merge. There is something meek and gentle about the sturdy soldier; something manly and hard in the chaste beauty. We easily associate such mixed characteristics with the saintly figures of Gryphius. Isabelle speaks of the harshness of the sentence not because of its physical cruelty but because of its heartless separation of the lovers. She longs to die too and sees delay of death as a deprivation. The play never raises a religious issue for martyrdom, but the ecstatic tone of the saint, thirsting for the afterlife, is still alive in Isabelle’s love-inspired cry:
Kommt hauet mich in stücke;
Zerfleischt die Glider uns; Ich schätzt Mirs
für ein glükke/
Ihr thut mir einen dihnst/kommt stost mich
in die brüst/
Bis blutt und Seel aus-sprüzt ich sterbe wi
ein Christ (1,365-368).

Not only do the lovers accept a higher mandate, love, but they feel an aspiration to consummate it with supreme homage. They are willing to give up their lives, where happiness would otherwise be possible, on behalf of their belief in such happiness! If Isabelle, also a former Christian, now wishes to die "as a Christian", she is not really advocating a religious stand. In her mind, to die like a Christian is an excited death-wish, a desire for ultimate proof of and permanence in her love.

The first parting of the lovers in act one approaches in its tone almost what one would expect of an operatic duet upon fated love. Of course, the tyrant causes the actual suffering. But Ibrahim and Isabelle cannot help realize that they are choosing inevitable extinction. Although in this case no guilt is attached to love, and it is far elevated above base passion, the heart by insisting on its triumph brings about a noble downfall. It moves the
first few steps toward Racine's sphere, where it can become the force working a tragic destiny. Thus Ibrahim cries out:

0 un-glückhaffte Libel!
Libt Ibrahm sie mein Hertz/dass Ibrahm sie beträfe;
Verflucht/ dass ich gelibt; verflucht/
verflucht bin ich
(I, 393-395).

Even if freely entered into, love plays a role as a fatal determiner by the very fact that it too puts forward an absolute claim; it parades heroically and stoically upon the world's stage to assert its impossible mandate: "Ich lib und ob man mich auf lichten Schwebel sätzte" (I, 402): Achmat und Hali Bassa, each presenting a different type of courtier, comment on the events just transpired and Achmat gives us the reference of tragedy (Trauerspiel):

Ist Hali so behertz/ dis trau-r-spiel ohne schmertzen
Und Thränen anzuschauen (I, 405-406)?

We hear the traditional themes of the prince who has been raised up and cast down by fortune's wheel. Indeed Ibrahim fits exactly in such a role, being a captive slave who rose through chance encounter to the
highest post of vizier. Lohenstein clearly is uniting two dramatic traditions, the play of martyrdom and the play about the fall of a prince, under the newer sentimental and secular banner of love. Our emotions are expected to respond equally before the spectacle of the lovers' sudden reversals of luck, which the author carefully develops, and before the knowledge of their hopeless commitment to something high and ideal on whose behalf they are doomed to suffer.

It is this sense that we should read the first chorus, of the enslaved Christians, which infuses into the play's atmosphere strong emotions of the times. This chorus is one of many elements which have for a long time convinced critics that Lohenstein begins as a poet with religious faith, from which he later departs into a theatre of empty pathos. It is well to contradict such a view with the example of what is at first to all appearances strong evidence in its favor. Like the prologue of suffering Asia, the first chorus calls into the audience's mind the actual menace of the Turks. Also it brings to bear on the events of the play an attitude directly shared by the protagonists, that of prisoners longing for freedom and subjected to a constant overhanging death sentence.
Doubts, fears, the uncertainty of life fill the strophe, which even questions whether God watches their torment. The antistrophe replies by referring to God's total plan, in accordance with which all things, even their suffering and the afflicting evil, are ultimately explained. This interruption of a divinely ordained and prefigured meaning into history lifts the curse of time, redeems temporality, in which they pine. Without recourse to such an answer, the question put by the prisoners could provoke a bold first step toward a deeper tragic view of history. The world-plan in the antistrophe corresponds to a need for confidence, for an absolute, which is paralleled in the acts of the play, in the lovers' faith in their union. Without an absolute assurance, not martyrdom, a triumph under the guise of defeat, but real tragedy, defeat by an unexplainable doom, would occur; love like the Christian faith of the chorus' prisoners promises a spiritual nullification of the inescapable death sentence.

The last strophe of the chorus ends in a cry for lifting of Turkish captivity and for revenge. Certainly this would appeal to the contemporary audience. But the emotions are already oriented less to the final triumph of God than to release from oppression. We find a parallel in the heroes' thirst for execution, i.e. the fulfillment of the ever looming death sentence. The
desire for the fall of the oppressor, the tyrant Turk, is the irrational obverse of the same coin on whose face we see the resigned martyr. The entr'acte does more than whip our resentment against Soliman and the court and stir our pity for the lovers. We may venture, on the basis of the chorus of Christians, an interpretation of the physical setting for the drama. The sultan seeks to maintain a sealed empire with absolute control of all included elements; thus he intercepts the flight of his best statesman to the outside—to freedom, which the world of Christiandom represents. The Christian faith emerges in Isabelle's speech as an implanted aspiration for that realm toward which also the captives yearn to return, as aspiration for freedom. The European world is physically the "beyond" so sought. But the captives, living in bondage, have the seed of this beyond in them, here actually in their memories of home. Soliman cannot control this inwardness, despite his control of the outward, physical nature. The play deals, moreover, specifically with two lovers who have come originally from the "beyond" and who have sought to return. Their return flight has been to regain freedom, the necessary condition imposed by love. Now, although they will not be able to escape Turkish
chains, except through death, they still affirm their love, that seed of the "beyond" in them, as memory is in the galley slaves.

Death will become, paradoxically but no more paradoxically than in the Christian belief, identified with the beyond of freedom; in death they hope to fix forever their roles as free spirits. The complex rationalization, with its supporting references to the Christian religion, scarcely clothes the glaring irrationality of the death wish in the martyr-lovers. And strikingly, their religion is not the issue for them; it is against their freedom or love that the empire of slavery and sensualism stands opposed. Thus one discovers in Isabelle the roots of all later Lohensteinian heroines, the self-consciousness of acting a role and of appealing to a judgment somewhere beyond the footlights of a world-stage:

Schaut/urtheilt ob ein Mensch im Schau-Platz
diser Erden
Durchs Himmels Hass und Neid mehr kan
gedängstigt wârden
(III, 5-6).

Her monologue opening act three reveals her awareness of having persevered throughout a lifetime of continual loss and endangerment, so that if she cries out the martyr's plaint, she does so with full security in her
own heart. Isabelle still fits intimately into the Christian mould, in so far as she prays with patience and humility for deliverance and sees a God who is somehow the enactor and judge of the drama in which she is caught. At the same time, however, the concept of fortune emerges, the inconstancy of the world, from which she prefers to exit rather than surrender her constancy, her love, her role:

Gott/mächtigster Erretter
Printz aller Printzen Printz/lass uns dis
Vnglücksa-Wetter
Nicht gar in nichts verkehren; wo nicht/hilf/
das der Nacht
Des Kerkkers/uns der Tod geschwind ein Ende
macht (III, 73-76).

The motive of escape from the darkness and duplicity and debasement of the world will inspire later heroines to go beyond Isabelle's position and to choose suicide.

Themes about which the essay shall have to speak further—the soul's inner guide, its constancy in perfidious chaos, human reason in the prison-house of the senses—are grandly summarized in a statement of tragic import in the first lines of the final act. Let it suffice for now to reiterate that the protagonists' love is more an attitude of constancy than a passion, more a reasoned sentiment than a physical attraction, in order to understand the ecstatic language used by Ibrahim to Isabelle:
As already explained, his forthrightness is based on acknowledgment of absolute values, but this extreme non-political attitude also exposes him to the dangers created by intrigue, even now blinds him to the false security of a momentary reprieve. But it is the terms of happiness here which with their death-laden masochistic images impose tremorous expectations. Ibrahim's fleeting minute of joy sounds like a martyr's embrace of annihilation. It is clear that his love feeds on suffering and glows brighter with greater darkness. Isabelle wants death too, even before the ultimate sentence comes. She looks forward to a kind of joint martyrdom, in terms which forshadow the later, more complicated love-suicide of Anthony in Cleopatra:

The ecstatic surrender of life, like the desire to merge in a higher extra-corporeal love, reveals the depths of existential malaise. This supersedes the Christian disgust with earthly things or rather extends it into
the secular world of Lohenstein. That is most evident when Achmat bears tidings to Isabelle that she and the Christian prisoners may go home to their fatherlands. Freedom, literal freedom, no longer means anything; it only suffices, with Ibrahim dead, as a symbol of inner freedom.

Death becomes the central issue of life, and Isabelle lives on only on behalf of Ibrahim's death, to proclaim their story to the world. She cries out with sentimental regret:

O das der Blutt-hund dir die Kling ins Hertz zu treiben
Durch unser Brust/befohln! du solstst ein werther Both
Als mit der Freiheit sein! O freiheit/der der Tod
Noch gar ver-zukkert ist! Auf! heist mich auch erbleichen!

(V, 276-280)

The moribund side of love is emphasized in Isabelle's apostrophe of her lover's head. Certainly here the grusomeness of her devotion points the way toward Lohenstein's later and more grisly "theatricality" of death, but we shall be in error if we try to dismiss these traits as pathos without substance. It is more than a shock effect to have her kiss the severed head. Lohenstein goes one further step, having already moved away from the ordinary martyr play. Evincing a tendency
which will assume more and more importance in his work, he raises the significance of the love story onto a universal level. Isabelle clutches the head like a sacred relic. She is elevated to the stature of an evangelist, not so much of a religious faith, but rather of an historical mission, to lead a sacred war of Freedom, to bring about the collapse of the Turkish empire, the symbolic and contemporary realm of tyranny, the dark inconstant land of passion. The ideal of freedom, originally presented incarnate in the private claim to happiness by the lovers, has now ascended to the level of humanity, to the political arena. The sentimental story of fated love gains significance against the background of passion and slavery as a phenomenon with repercussions on a world scale.

We are at the threshold of the play of martyrdom as it may be extended into the political sphere. Early in Ibrahim Bassa, Isabelle puts a key challenge to Soliman: "Libt uns der Keiser denn so mach Er uns doch frei" (III, 124). But love as the heroine knows it, as a state of freedom, is diametrically opposed to love as the tyrant experiences it, a blind captivity by his unhemmed passions. We cannot mistake the fact that in his play of the anti-hero, Ibrahim Sultan,
Lohenstein returns twenty years later to the same subject matter as in the original Turkish drama: freedom of will versus helpless determination. The conflict is basically the same; in the second Turkish play chaste love and virginity face the threat of a tyrant's abuse. The action opens with Ibrahim's attempted rape of his murdered brother's widow. Her purity and modesty, her chaste devotion to the memory of her husband, inflame the tyrant; beauty awakens the ugly depths of animal nature. The idea of fated love, which issued in edifying sadness in the first Turkish drama, assumes more sinister significance here. Confusing his uncontrollable drives with a mandate from heaven, the sultan falls prey to the dark and dangerous sea of passions which will tragically wreck his reign:

...Von dem Verhängnäs ist
Die Sisigambis uns zum Paradis erkiest.
Weil wir ja/ausser ihr/nicht Heil/nicht Ruhe
finden (I,49-50).

He speaks of fate as a final reference for his own surrender to unbridled lust. Yet already there is a tragic note of truth in his statement, for he impresses us as a man condemned to inner emptiness, in search of a soul-mate, indeed of a soul, a man who is provoked by a divine excitant, beauty and worth, as these are incarnated in the noble widow. At the same time, a
dangerous and potential threat exists for the beautiful and worthy human being, whose divine qualities attract the passions of the world. This idea is not carried out as Hebbel later develops it, say, in Agnes Bernauer. But it is into this kind of endangerment that the innocent Ambre is drawn because of her very virtue.

Love no longer represents a free attitude or a standard of conduct for Ibrahim Sultan; quite different is the absolute claim he makes on behalf of what he calls love:

Das Lieben aber hat diss Recht und Eygenthum:
Dass kein Geldbe de nicht auch kein Gesetz es bindet.
Denn hier schafft die Natur/und die Vermunft
verblindet
Durch der Begierden Rauch. Sonst sol ein jeder
zieln
Auff Glauben/aber hier mag man mit Eyden spielen (I, 126-130).

Thus he raises himself above the eternal standards which guide the virtuous. In Ibrahim Bassa, the distinguishing mark of the martyred lovers is their constancy to each other and their fulfillment of all obligations, even to their enemies. Most important is the matter of the oath, which troubles Soliman's conscience; the oath belongs to the constant sphere of love, the permanent sphere of lawfulness. In the later Turkish play being himself unfree, Ibrahim Sultan like Soliman erroneously breaches the immutable norms of greatness. As the play progresses,
Ibrahim Sultan's attention will turn upon another attractive person, the daughter of the Mufti, Ambre, who is very devout and binds herself with a sacred oath to remain a virgin until she completes a pilgrimage. Ambre's pretension to an inner or spiritual life is as important as her physical violation by the sultan. The wild desecration provokes the ultimate political crisis among the country's leaders, who see in Ambre their symbol of true strength and value. Lohenstein does not, then, begin his drama with a hectic attempted rape just in order to excite his audience. The figure of the sister-in-law, Sisigambis, acts as forerunner for Ambre. Sisigambis insists upon keeping her oath to preserve quietly the memory of her spouse; in struggling against Ibrahim, she struggles to control her own destiny and role, an image of herself. The importance of the personal image and of inherent nobility in Sisigambis already suggests political ramifications, when she protests: "Kein Fürst/ kein Ibrahim herrscht über die Gewissen" (I, 151). Lohenstein links the question of conscience with an inherent quarrel between the individual's claim to personal liberty and the state or ruler's intrusion upon it. Sisigambis' attitude foreshadows thus not only Ambre's but also that of the Marquis de Posa in Schiller's Don Carlos, despite the latter political, tragic hero's far separation.
In Lohenstein's second Turkish play, although its chief subject remains the disintegration of the ruler, the inner life asserts itself. It remains steadfast in the virtuous despite all coercion of the world. The opening speech by Ambre is virtually a prayer which clothes her in a martyr's robe. The central issue comes forth, that of light versus darkness, reason versus the animal passions:

"Hilff: dass kein Nebel nicht mein Licht verdästern kann" (II, 6). She swears an oath to remain always directed by the inner image of God and asks:

"Er tilge nur in mir sein reines Bildniss nicht" (II, 21). The relativity of Lohenstein's concern for the religious issue in itself is, however, quite obvious. Ambre is actually a good Mohammedan.

Most important, nevertheless, is her similarity to Isabelle. Like her predecessor, she is quite conscious of the world-stage, where one's life becomes, very much in the Christian sense, a role or a test, which you play well or ill. History is a place of judgment, sometimes deceptively distinguishing true souls by torment and punishments; of this Ambre is already convinced;
Die Welt ist wohl zu nennen
Ein Schau-Platz/wo man nur die Unschuld siht
verbrennen/
Und Galg' und Rad ihr baut. Calpare. Und uns
ein Predigstul/
Der uns ins Herz schreit: Dass Tugend hier
den Pflü/
Dort ihren Himmel hat; dass die umbdörnten
Lilgen
Im Garten dieser Welt/ die Reiff und Mehltau
tilgen/
Umbblümté Rosen solln im Paradiese seyn
(II, 31-37).

One of the concerned nobles and important officers, the
Begler-Beg, is also attracted to Ambre. He serves as a
clear contrast to the sultan, for his courting is
reverential, solemn, sure, without the slightest
suggestion of the flesh. In fact, he is among the
male characters of Lohenstein, amorously seen, without
color. He is the incarnation of spiritual affection
and bases his love entirely on a promise to aid Ambre
at any cost, a promise he fulfills even after her death,
when the physical prize no longer may be won. The
love pact closed by Ambre and the Begler-Beg of
Roumania does not correspond to the factual union of
Ibrahim and Isabella. But it is similar, in so far
as spiritual affinity, mutual esteem, and complete
personal sacrifice characterize it. The suddenness
of the match may disturb us, with our Western point
of view, but it suits the nature of the very idealistic
parties and the political need of some defense.
Ambre is directed by an ideal of permanence to build her resistance to the sultan. Her talk of Christian flavor should not deceive us. An examination of her principles reveals less the sway of a transcendental Godhead than a yearning to comply with an indefinable Agency, which she names expressly Fate. A powerful death wish motivates her actions. Death appears to her as a means to secure forever her earthly gains, to justify herself historically. She registers the Lohensteinian conception of history as the time of testing, as, however, not the showplace of the Christian God, but rather of Fate:

Doch/das Verhängniss gebe:
Dass ich so sterben könne/und nicht zur Schmach
ihm lebe.
Der Tod ist kein Verlust/wo Tugend/Ehre/Ruhm
Gewien des Lebens ist. Der Tod ists Eigenthumb
Und's Ende der Natur; nicht der Beseelten Straffe
(II,367-71).

A transition has taken place, by which the Christian God exits as the regulator and judge of history; history itself remains, evincing the workings of an inscrutable power, to which Ambre turns. Immortality of the soul is replaced by fame. Since the realm of fate is timeless, death is the only doorway to permanence.

From the first moment she steps on stage, Ambre's whole orientation is toward dying:
"Wer heilig lebt/schmeckt schon den Himmel in der Welt" (II, 386). After her rape, she curses even her own beauty, that fateful attractiveness incarnate in the flesh, and expresses disgust for her own body:

Die Schönheit ist ein Aass/das Geyern meist gefälllet/
Ein Aass/das stets Gestanck der Laster von
sich haucht/
Der Wollust giftgen Dampf statt süssen Balsams
braucht/
Und Raben an sich lockt/die Ehr und Zucht uns
fressen/
Und ihren Geilheits-Koth schmiern auf ihr
ünstern Essen (IV,140-144).

Because it is connected with the image of the stars, we recognize that beauty belongs ambiguously to the area of destiny:

Die Schönheit ist ein Stern/der mit dem Schwantz
allzeit
Auf neues Unheil weisst/ein Abgott/der entweiht
Von derer Andacht wird/die sich zum Opfer finden/
Weil sie für Weyrauch ihm meist stinckend Hartst
anzünden (IV,145-148).

The antithesis "Aass-Stern" expresses the dual nature of human beauty, which has correspondingly two derivative possibilities, death and immortality, the former fleshly, the latter inner or spiritual. Thus Ambre kills herself in order to be remembered and avenged, like a famous Roman predecessor, Lucretia. Her suicide forms a nucleus around which the sultan's officers can build their legal
case for his deposition. Her peculiar combination of Roman virtue and of saintly removal from things earthly still belongs largely to the passive role which a martyr might play. She does indeed do what no saint may do by taking her own life. But, then, only the shadowy form of Christian martyrdom persists in her case.

Although Isabelle is moved at the end of Ibrahim Bassa to act as a crusader and Ambre commits suicide, we cannot view them as particularly active figures. Their roles are the acting out of a progressively more pessimistic attitude of inner dignity. Far different are the scheming courtesans who work against their pure happiness and must work against it! A frantic energy and unrest fills the women of the seraglio, with perhaps the exception of Sisigambis. They realize full well the dangerous potentialities of power, but all are by necessity involved in intrigue, in manipulation, whether merely to maintain or to better their positions. Roxelane, in Ibrahim Bassa for example, joins forces with the most sinister courtier, Rusthan, and the Islamic church, in order to overthrow Ibrahim Bassa, not because the latter threatens her in fact, but because he is good. She fears his potentiality. And more so does she fear Isabelle, whom she envisions as
somehow more devious and crafty than herself. She foresees losing her own status, gained through skilful planning. She has insinuated herself into the sultan's bed and near the throne. Operating in the sphere of the passions, Roxelane uses her intellect in an attempt to control her surroundings. She depends on duplicity, deception and bewilement, in fact, upon playing with human weakness. She is the political woman, resolute as are the heroines, but calculating. To her the world is a game, a mask which must be penetrated by "Vernunft, und Arglist und Verstand" (IV, 51). While Isabelle and Ambre prefigure the grimly determined Epicharis, Roxelane is forerunner of the type who first is explored in the figure of Agrippina. Even Epicharis however will share certain of her characteristics.

Roxelane is not yet problematic because she does not appear to suffer. She is too much the incarnation of a devilish activity and too seething with violent tendencies. Her cynicism is her life. But we can detect already in her, as the instrument which does hurt to the lovers, a tragic implication. She is an example of political man inexorably driven by the urge to anticipate, even outcalculate the subtle workings of history. Behind her frenetic plotting lurks desperation. This is, however, more evident in the women of Ibrahim Sultan.
The latter Ottoman queens are forced, on behalf of their own and their children’s safety, to enter into intrigue. The explosive atmosphere of the court continually threatens them, to the extent that one may say the chief characteristic of the non-martyr type is precisely his inner uncertainty and dread before the spectre of a sudden reversal of fortune, and possibly death. Thus Sekierpera, the procuress, in seeking to ingratiate herself with the sultan, cannot fail to endanger the position of the already established wives. Nor can Kiosem, the queen mother, stand aside from scheming, lest a new and dangerous figure move closer to the ruler and perhaps turn him against her. She must be cruel and devious, having already killed by poison, for example, the only woman whom he has ever really loved. Consequently the sultan is in a sense a potential enemy among potential enemies, a prey to their subterfuges but also a counteractor. Even the natural bonds and the holiest laws are violated because of the political impulse. In fact, through its very structure the court must tend to spawn unnatural phenomena and crime.

In summary, then, of the cast of women who people the Turkish tragedies, we may say that there appear representatives for all the tragic possibilities which Lohenstein exploits more fully in the Roman plays. To
these we shall turn to examine his strangely paired heroines, Epicharis and Agrippina. If the original equation for Lohenstein's drama is formed upon the story of the martyr, as in Ibrahim Bassa, the anti-heroic figures play a vital part already. On the one hand, love is glorified as a redemptive agency, an absolute surety; on the other hand, love is connected with endangering passion, with baseness and with uncertainty. For the martyr love gives a final and positive meaning to any suffering; to the anti-heroic figure it is the cause of misery and confusion. We observe this dichotomy in the relationships between persons caught within the world of the court, where sound individual conduct is not necessarily the same as clever political conduct. The equalizer, love, draws together successfully only those who renounce the political attitudes and tools of force; but the success, being only inward or personal, implies an inherent tragic structure in the political world. By 1665 Lohenstein had thoroughly examined the tragic structure of the world as the showplace of history, or the process of political action.
CHAPTER III

POLITICAL MARTYRDOM AND HISTORICAL IDEALISM

Lohenstein's Epicharis and Agrippina appeared together in the year 1665, therefore after Gryphius had composed his Papinian of 1659. Twelve years separate Lohenstein's two dramas from his original work, Ibrahim Bassa. Likewise a gap of twelve years exists between Gryphius' Katharina von Georgien and Papinian. During this period Lohenstein composed one other dramatic work, his Cleopatra of 1661, which he later revised and published with Sophonisbe in 1680. This first Cleopatra, with which the author was not satisfied, underwent significant changes which indicate how Lohenstein progressed in his conception of tragedy. We shall discuss them, then, in relation to the final version of the play. Since this first version also presents a heroine who shares a great deal in common with Agrippina, treatment of the latter figure and her importance will serve well as a preface to analysis of the African tragedy in its two variations. Now we turn to Epicharis.
This play seems to be a strange mate to pair with the Agrippina. But their historical proximity, while it testifies as to Lohenstein's versatility, has another explanation. In Lohenstein's work, extreme opposites meet and conflict. Dualities, such as flesh and spirit, passion and reason, lust and purity, enslavement and freedom, fill his first drama, Ibrahim Bassa. The two plays of 1665 form a similar duality, with the chaste girl Epicharis in contrast to the incestuous queen Agrippina. But, as in the first Cleopatra, so also in these plays, the clear line between the opposites, the distinct polarity between heroic virtue and antiheroic vice, begins to falter. We note tendencies for an exchange of attributes between heroes and villains in the Roman tragedies, and this blurring of the boundary brings with itself a new, distinctly Lohensteinian concept of the heroine. This development must command our special attention when we look in more detail at Agrippina. Only then can we understand how she can be a title heroine next to the martyr. But this martyr herself no longer corresponds to the ideal types, Ibrahim and Isabelle! Not even as a secular figure does she fit exactly into the pattern of Papinian. Lohenstein no longer deals with a completely unambiguous hero like the stern Roman, whom Willi Flemming, one of the most renowned
Baroque scholars, considers the supreme achievement of Gryphius and of the seventeenth-century German theatre.\(^{44}\)

In order to contrast her, let us look a moment at her closest correspondent. In \textit{Papinian} the hero stands fixed. He is like a frozen attitude, a statue surrounded by numerous smaller copies, which his family members, all similarly named, provide. They form a party inspired by one and the same principle; they die for this principle in one and the same manner, thus underscoring the hero's position. Rather than act deceitfully, inconsistently or cowardly, he always affirms the truth, yet maintains nonetheless complete loyalty to Nero, his prince. Nero is the anti-hero and represents the anti-principle of a treacherous and inconstant world, man's political world. Although Papinian could easily overthrow him, he does not resist basely by any defense the sentence by Nero. The final act of the play develops into an operatic climax, a moving chorus of praise, for it is devoted actually not to any action but to the hero's funeral. Thus not Nero, but Papinian emerges as the triumphant figure. We must recognize him after the final proof of death as a great example, the stoic martyr overcoming for eternity an endangering world. He is buried before our eyes, removed into that timeless repository of great men and deeds called death.
Epicharis too commands at least the second half of the fifth act, where her inner fortitude undergoes and emerges victorious from every test. Being in fact imprisoned throughout most of the play, she does appear in the role of an unrelenting martyr, a passive sufferer under despotism. But she does more than merely affirm a higher principle. The radical difference is that Epicharis also actively combats the anti-hero, betrays her emperor, and never hesitates to appeal to a higher instance above worldly government. In short, she starts as an active crusader and claims the right to rebel. Her conspiratorial attempt ensnares her in the chains of suffering. Papinian, however, unwavering like Lohenstein's Ibrahim Bassa, acknowledges even his duties to the corrupt earthly ruler. He remains obedient to an established order that has somehow become imperfect in its earthly expression. The heroine Epicharis refuses to accept worldly corruption as ordained, so absolute is her stand. She sees Nero as usurper of an ordained and divine order and his government as an inimical instrument for its suppression. She strives to rally the remnants of the nobility in order to re-establish freedom, the original and heroic state of men under the Roman republic. Whereas, then, in Papinian we witness the aftermath of man's fall, the time of tyrannic
darkness in which solitary lights or examples remind us of higher principles, in *Epicharis* we witness a final struggle against the oncoming night for political man.

In what manner, however, does Lohenstein present this heroine so that we sense something ambiguous in her struggle? A more detailed examination of the play cannot confirm "on whose side" the author explicitly stands. Despite all her heroism, Epicharis belongs intimately in the meshes of an historical happening and is involved with a varied collection of fellow conspirators in an abortive plot. Thus, although she distinguishes herself as the ideal figure among them, they too play a significant role in the formation and disintegration of a political party. This Lohenstein observes from a lofty height with silent impartiality, and for this "coolness", as negative critics have put it, he is notorious. Because of his often defamed "polyhistoricism", he appears less interested in taking a position himself than in letting history talk for itself. At times he can chill us with a brutality and cynicism which is related to that experienced in the English drama of history, as for example in many plays of Shakespeare. But it is not a certain coolness or impartiality which casts a shadow upon the travails of the heroine; rather, her whole aim, her whole inner being,
appears to be in direct contradiction to the historical process which unfolds for Rome. Before tracing the signs of this process within the acts, let us consider briefly the choruses.

The choruses stand outside the main action and give a broader reference for it. They formulate and abstract the universal principles at work in the drama, which thereby gains the character of an exemplary segment of history. The first chorus makes very evident that dark clouds overhang the action we have just witnessed, the crystallization of a plot, even before this plot has a chance to be hatched. The terminology of soothsaying predominates. Before any attempt to change the political system, Lohenstein immediately places a prediction of failure in the form of a prophecy or interpretation of Fate. A decree already exists: "Verhängnäs-Schluss" (I, 802). The second chorus is a disputation among "Klugheit", "Gelück", "Zeit", and "Verhängnäs" each of whom wishes to claim credit for Nero's impending success. The first three have argued against one another without reaching any equation of the determinative influence respectively of wits, chance and the historical moment on his victory to come, when Fate interrupts and subordinates all speakers as mere
agents, expressions of its will. Thus Lohenstein elevates Fate to a lofty and arcane position; extrahistorical, it manifests itself in history through the complicated and intertwined agencies of intelligence in men, of fortune, and of the moment of action. Lohenstein’s concept is not simple determinism, which is what he considers roughly under the figure of "Zeit". "Verhängniss" has unexplained purposes, but unlike the Christian divinity no clear world-plan. Yet it is awesome. For Fate says of itself merely that it is:

Eh als Rom war/eh als die Tiber floss/
Eh Glück und Zeit und Klugheit trieb ihr Spiel/
Schrieb ich der Welt schon Satzung/und beschloss;
So weit sol sich erstrecken Nerons Ziel

(II, 576-580).

In the third chorus, the Tiber and hills of Rome bewail the blood which flows and curse the reign of Nero. They cannot bear the inflicted burden of Fate, against which no scheming prevails. The Tiber wishes his waves could drown the tyrant; the hills pray for a catastrophic flood to cleanse them of him. Clearly the position of Nero is alterable only by a change ordained in the order of things:

Denn/wo verspielt der Menschen Witz/
Da müssen Berge/Flüsse/Blitz/
Ja Sternen selbst Tyrannen niderschlagen

(III, 766-768).
Against the decree of Fate, then, Epicharis
presumes to contest, although, as we shall soon explain,
at first blindly. In what light must consequently the
higher principle stand, which she advocates? The fourth
chorus will clarify her martyrdom by expounding the
significance of Rome in world politics. The three
continents which comprise the Roman empire, Europe,
Asia and Africa, complain bitterly of their enchain-
ment to Rome and call to the gods for revenge.49
Rome herself, the mother city, bewails her own
suffering at the hands of her children and asks Fate
to take away her crown. The Cumean Sibyl prophesies
things to come, the whole series of emperors, the
future of slavery and suffering, by which these
continents are avenged upon their enslaver, Rome.
Each ruler appears in the prophecy under an emblem;
the first in an act of destruction: "Itzt tritt ein
Löw ein güldnes Bild zu Grunde" (IV, 693). The vision
is interpreted:

Röm ist das Bild/die Freyheit war das Gold/
Itzt aber ist in Eisen es gewandelt (IV,689-690).

Rome herself acknowledges that her rulers have mauled
the great ideal of freedom:

Wahr/leider ists. Des Caessar Löwen-Klauen
Zermalmeten der Freyheit güldnes Bild (IV,695-696).
Epicharis' struggle, then, is a defiant gesture on behalf of an impossible cause, a lost nobility, a past golden age, the original state of Romans. The ideal of freedom has become ambiguously the force which leads her into conflict with Fate and into perdition.

In the age of iron, golden freedom has become unobtainable in the political sphere. No matter how earnestly desired, it lives on only internally in man's spiritual life. Herein lies the tragic nature of political man, as Lohenstein sees him, a creature who has lost his nobility but cannot regain it through politics, since the mechanism of the state represents the antithesis of such freedom.

We recognize at once in Epicharis' attitude the idealistic excess, the death-laden absolute demand, which marks a potential martyr. While the nobles of Rome chafe under Nero's tyranny and their own degradation, they look upon the loss of republican virtue and freedom as a fated process. Rome seems to them to have become an irresistible organism which destroys or absorbs both individuals and states. Epicharis, however, refuses to accept this idea of historical determinism and puts forward her concept of man's freedom to choose his own path of conduct.
Alleine sich bemühen
Der Zeit zu müssen bey so viel ist Aberwitz.
Wir heucheln unser Schuld. Der ungeheure Blitz
Der so viel anheft ein/wird in den schwarten Hertzen
Der Sterblichen gezeugt. Der brand/wir
beschmertzen
Kommt vom Verhängniss nicht/er rührt nicht ungefähr/
Nein/von der Missethat des grimmn Blutthunds her
(I, 24-30).

Epicharis would make man responsible for his own destiny,
and thereby also give him the dignity of being more than
a controlled creature. She attributes the loss of
nobility to guilty cowardice and offers to die herself
on behalf of Rome's surrendered freedom, to demonstrate
the inner worth she advocates. She can see only victory
in dying for such an enterprise:

Des Ruhms verspritzte Blutt
Für allgemeine Ruh ist eine Purpur-Flutt
Daraus die Tugend uns/die wir großmütig sterben
Und lachen Feind und Tod/muss Ehren-Fahnen färben
Die Welt und Nachwelt rühmt (I, 85-89).

She invokes the nobles as "ihre Helden" (I, 89). Her
political program is literally to transform the Romans
back into a race of heroes! Thus Epicharis is
diametrically opposite to the passive hero, for she
wishes to impose her inner values by force, by manipu­
lation, by politics upon an unheroic world. The discre­
pancy is, of course, that the world is unheroic by virtue
of a political system based on force, manipulation,
deceit, the very evils she wants to eradicate.
How differently Seneca talks in his first appearance, when Natalis interviews him in the hope of winning him for the conspirators' cause. Seneca disputes with his host on the question of regicide. He can find no legal justification. For his position admits of no duplicity or crime, even in the name of justice. He acknowledges the absolute rule of his prince, accepts the evils of his government as a mandate of heaven and a natural curse, and refuses to sully himself with blood. His is stoic resignation which stands in the direct tradition of Papinian, passive compliance with destiny:

"Ein weiser trägt behemmt/ was das Verhängnäfs schickt" (I, 573). In contrast to Epicharis with her activist program, Seneca believes that the heroic sphere is inward and personal, not to be imposed upon the outward, temporal and political arena of existence. He takes refuge in a metaphysical truth, with complete neutrality toward the events in a turbulent world:

"Ich werde nicht bey euch/ auch nicht beim Nero stehen" (I, 596). In precarious isolation between the opponent political parties, his heart nevertheless speaks for the plotters and gives advice, in which sounds a fateful note:
"Mein Wunsch ist euer Sieg/mein Lehren: eßt euch nicht" (I, 602). Lohenstein thus presents us with two figures, Seneca and Epicharis, so that a clear picture may emerge of man's helplessness against destiny. On the one hand, Epicharis tries to shape destiny through sheer will; on the other hand, Seneca accepts Fate. But in both cases it draws on regardless of its victims' attitudes.

The long narrative passage in scene one, where Epicharis recounts her past up to the moment in which the play occurs, is unique for Lohenstein's first acts. It may not be compared, however, to the prolix narration which fills act one of Gryphius' Cardenio and Celinde (1647), as simply a means to cram the whole background of the story into the drama, and then let the drama climax to resolve the story. First of all, of course, this narration leads speedily into the present.51 Second, it serves more to characterize Epicharis than merely start the play rolling, and it smuggles into the action which she now undertakes the signs of her undoing, subtle but unmistakable omens.

Part of her narration, in fact the larger part, tells a love story with which Ibrahim Bessa's shares traits, the story of her mistress Arlan and Arlan's brother Palamed in their respective searches for
happiness. A villain of many machinations, Marcellin, attempts to rob Palamed of his beloved Camille, next tries to capture Arian herself. In the background looms the power center from which the evil intriguer operates—Nero's circle. Peril after peril, escape after escape occur. In every case it is Epicharis, using counter-tactics, disguises and tricks, who defeats the courtier's designs. Epicharis appears as the heroic actor per se, who without any self-interest places himself in opposition to a treacherous world. By her frequent use of man's clothing, she establishes further her sexless or bisexual nature. She is a sublime and pure incorporation of struggle, a protean image, not a personality but a series of masks. She is devious for a purpose:

"Dass ich verkleidet Brunst und Tyranney berückt" (I, 314).

But the narration has evoked these pictures of peril, treachery, deceit and escape in such a manner that Epicharis' present liberty still is beclouded by threats. It ends bringing her disguised to Rome, to the very center of danger, into Nero's circle. Its high point is her chance meeting with Proculus, the Roman admiral, on whose ship she is discovered hiding during her last escape. She believes in his claim that he will aid a plot against the emperor and that he awaits a chief "der gülldnen Freyheit" (I, 324). But
any familiarity with Lohenstein's water images suffices to make a reader uneasy, as soon as he hears of admirals, fleets, or oceans. Perhaps we go too far if we think that the author infuses a deep unrest and uncertainty into the play by the constant mention of sea-flights by Epicharis, or that he implies something inconstant about Proculus in the very fact of his office. Nevertheless, within the play Natalis utters his own discomfort in a warning:

Dem Proculus zu viel zu trauen/ist nicht Rath; Der von der Zung ein Mann/ein Weib ist in der That (I, 341-342).

Herein already lies Epicharis' downfall. She believes in freedom; because and on behalf of freedom she tries willfully to manipulate men and events. But the incalculable will defeat her; just as she disguises herself, so that world can wear masks. And though she has a man's heart in a woman's body, the reverse may also be true. The tragic mistake of the political hero resides always in his trust that he can outcalculate, can control the vast process in which he himself is only an element, can outwit destiny.

The discussion about Piso underlines the difficulty. Many conspirators harbor misgivings against him and think he wants to replace Nero on the throne, yet they regard him as their candidate and are willing to accept
dictatorship as the only solution to Rome's problems.
Against them, Epicharis warns that the ultimate result can be only more terrible corruption and tyranny, since inwardly he is ignoble and sinful, and insists that they must re-establish true freedom or be doomed.
Finally they reach a compromise. They agree to put aside Piso after the rebellion and elevate Seneca, whom Epicharis names, the only honorable man. To achieve her pure aim, Epicharis agrees to a dubious murder. Also she selects the one man who will not act. So Lohenstein develops the hopelessness of her political involvement. The last scene of act one, ending with the conspiratorial ceremony of mixing of blood, foreshadows the oncoming mutual blood-letting of grisly proportions. Seneca sits uncommitted upon his high fence. Piso shows signs of hesitation and cowardice. He pretends that he is unwilling to defile the laws of guest-friendship in order to withdraw from active participation in any assassination attempt. If flaws and weaknesses so quickly come to light in the proposed temporary leader, then the dramatist tells us that an Epicharis may indeed exist, but alone as but one member of a configuration of individuals.

As Lunding remarks in his excellent treatment of Epicharis, Lohenstein establishes a scale of human worth, on which in the course of the conspiracy's collapse the
individual plotters find their own place. In so assigning them, the author does not attempt to affirm or deny the validity of their several motivations. He readily acknowledges the special preeminence of the heroine. Rather than glorify her, however, as an exception to the human race, he places her at an extreme idealistic end of his measure stick. She demonstrates a reality, human nobility and self-abnegation. Piso demonstrates another reality, self-seeking opportunism and craven hesitation. Seneca offers yet another with his wisdom, resignation, and interest in his fame. In the first act, Lohenstein has synthesized an historical group whose collective story must be determined by the complicated tangle of private characters, motives, and attachments. The conspiracy cannot be stronger than its weakest member, whereby implicit is the impersonal, motiveless, ideal blindness of Epicharis who attempts to deal with and direct personalities. Latent truths lie in these personalities, whom Lohenstein treats very carefully. In fact, he pays great attention to individuals, no matter how small their part, in an effort to show us how great the range of humanity is and why, therefore, collectively it is enslaved. Because Lohenstein casts his eye upon the whole, he must impress us as scientific and cold. But it is in his total vision, however pessimistic, that
an Epicharis exists with unimpeached validity. Gryphius is unable to accomplish this. His creation is more black and white in Papinian, with the squadron of nobles on one side, that is, the reduplicated images of Papinian in his family around the rock-like hero, and the army of baseness on the other side, gathered about a jealous and despicable Nero. Lohenstein's "Papinian", the stoic Seneca, likewise does not fit easily into the white field of a black-and-white universe, but he stands very near Epicharis despite their differences.

We shall consider this pair further very shortly. As the first chorus prophesies and as the composition of the rebel party indicates, the conspiracy begins to fall apart immediately. A detailed examination of the various stages would be worthwhile study, yet for the purposes of this essay a few salient points must serve to sketch in the line of development. The significance of Epicharis' narration in act one becomes clear when Proculus arrives, declaring his love for her in flowery conceits. The unexpected and incalculable happens. Despite her prudish removal from the arena of love, Epicharis must now experience directly the threat of an external passion—in Proculus, to whom she has looked for help. Like Ambre she has unwittingly attracted worldly desires upon herself. Through the passions of Proculus, Fate protrudes into her ideal
existence with menaces. Small indiscrepancies in her opinions about Fate in act one now assume greater importance. Epicharis has admitted that the passions do restrict one's freedom and constitute a kind of destiny; being driven, as for example by love, man subjects himself to Fate:55

"Lernt/wie uns Töchte doch muss das Verängnöts treiben" (I, 156). No reasoning can prevail upon Proculus. Rejected and embittered, he departs planning his revenge. A dark nimbus begins to descend. Scevin, concerned with the gravity of the undertaking to which he has sworn himself, tries to bolster his courage and prepare himself for the eventuality of death. His strange behavior, in freeing slaves, preparing a great feast at his house, drawing up his testament, and so forth, causes suspicion in his freedman, Milichius. Another passion, greed, leads the servant and his wife to guess what is afoot and betray him. Once more Fate intrudes via the passionate and weak nature of man. Lohenstein is merciless in the exposition of the consequences.

Indeed, his tone grows ironic and cynical.56 For instance, he shows how the servants' fabricated story, colored by them to gain more credence with the emperor, succeeds as a lie in imitating the truth. A reversal has occurred in the value of veracity. The evil emperor plays the role of fact-finder and ferrets out the
actuality through every kind of trick. Now dissimulation and deceit must work on behalf of the nobles, if they are to win over the epitome of treachery, but only Epicharis shows ability with her brilliant lies which foil Proculus testimony. The theme of duplicity staggers upward to newer heights. The political inquisition of suspect prisoners develops, through acts three, four and five, into a spectacle of unmasking. In confessing, plotters rip off their veils of innocence. Frequently they reveal confederates, thus tearing away their disguises too, in a terrifying wave of panic and betrayal. Thus, in their own manner, they unmask themselves either as weak, maladroit, cowardly, sometimes pitifully base, or as firm and admirable to varying degree. High officers and respected soldiers, when confronted with ignominious death, expose hidden moral scars, unexpected flaws, and very human debilities. We may state that it is Lohenstein, the brutal realist, who produces the strange ironic twists, or we may state that it is Lohenstein, the superior observer, who allows men under pressure to bare their innermost selves. As the mask rises from the assembly, we see a gradation of humanity.

In this drama of political nemesis, virtually nothing happens after the first act except a step by step collapse of hope. The potential rebels hesitate and fall into Nero's net. The potential leaders waver
or refuse service. Only the strident encouragement of Epicharis persists despite every reversal. The climax of the third act makes us aware that any further bravery on the part of Epicharis is in vain. Ripe with death from its inception, the plot cannot succeed despite the few remaining possibilities of rescue. Thus the further subject of the drama will be chiefly the stages of her martyrdom against the background of a political purge. In scene six of act three, Nero uses ironically the term tragedy in order to frighten his captives. He refers to the futile suffering of the heroine:

\[
\text{Ihr kommt gleich recht/zu seh'n: Das schöne Trauerspiel Derselben/die die Schuld halsstarrig leugnen wil (III,593-594).}
\]

The whirlpool has also drawn into its current the name of Seneca, whom Natalis has named in such a way that he appears guilty of collusion. Nero has sent an emissary to see whether there is any sign of death in his old mentor. Now the deaths of this pair, Seneca and Epicharis, brought somehow into proximity by Fate, will command the stage. And talk of Fate grows as the end approaches.

In act four Epicharis awakens from her unconsciousness in the dark dungeon, where Sulpitius Asper and a few
adherents have gathered round her. Her cry for release sounds like that of a Christian for death, escape from the travails of earthly life:

Kommt zu der Sterbenden/hertzliebste Geister her! Drückt mir die Augen zul Empfanget meine Seele! Führt sie aus dieser Gruft/aus ihres Kärckers Höle (IV, 34-36)

Downcast, Venetus Paulus questions the sense of the universe under the aegis of fate, since evil is lifted up, the good injured. Epicharis, having already revealed a deep death-oriented ecstasy, chides him not to blame the gods even for darkness and suffering; even travails come as gifts for the inwardly good person. In fact, they merely act as agencies by which the spirit tests and proves itself, a very Christian theory which is repeated in the first chorus of Agrippina (AG. I, 678-680). Here Epicharis says:


Epicharis embraces her pain and peril just as a saint embraces the heavenly grace of martyrdom:

Ich selber rechne mir mein Leid fär ein Geschencke Der Götter (IV, 83-84).
Her joy is to suffer:

...Ja wenn ich die blutigen Glieder schrenecke
Umb Pfal und Folterbank/empfind ich grösser Lust/
Als Acte/die gleich ruht dem Käyser auf der Brust
(IV,84-86).

Yet it is remarkable that, even in the moment when
Epicharis willingly accepts a destiny of sacrificial pain,
she maintains her unwavering purpose. She does not
surrender her dream of freeing Rome in order to luxuriate
in death ecstasy. She checks her friends' urge to die
before they complete their work. Rather than abandon
the other prisoners, even though they have abandoned and
betrayed her, she wants to save them. She summons all
her strength to write a message to Piso, to inspire him!
She writes a second letter to Seneca to ask his support.
Once again, then, Epicharis manifests her heroic desire
to bring about through sheer will power the impossible
deed which Fate itself has not decreed. In death's
house she plans upon the doorstep, very clearly now a
blind hero, growing in stature as hope extinguishes
everywhere but in her alone. This hopelessness Lohen-
stein emphasizes in the grisly blood-bath of the fourth
act, where Nero plays cruelly with men as a cat would
with mice. Doubtless features of the Wanderbühne and
of martyr plays are employed here to intensify our horror,
also to prepare us for the awesome performance of
Epicharís under the worst torture. Two scenes seal the doom which has broken loose like an animal rage in act four. The stage is cleared in scene three of the bloody sufferers, as if to give a cool reminder of the higher sacrificial victims yet to die. Nero decides that Seneca must expire. In scene four, as a prelude in contrast to Seneca and as the extinction of the final political possibility, Piso falls without resistance. We hear once more the fatalistic despair of the Roman nobility and through Scaurus the answer which Epicharís has given in the first act:

\[ \text{Piso.} \quad \text{Gedult steht willig aus was Gott und Himmel schlässen.} \]
\[ \text{Scaur.} \quad \text{Miss dem Verhängnisse nicht eigne Fehler bey (IV, 548-549).} \]

This difference in attitude toward Fate has characterized the whole conspiracy, and represents the fatal flaw in it! But the ironic implication emerges also that in neither case, whether in blind denial of and opposition to Fate or whether in passive acquiescence to it, can man escape its toils.

Seneca, the wisest Roman, knows this full well, and he has acted accordingly without vacillation from the very beginning. The dramatic use of the double message from Epicharís is clearly to contrast the failure of the politician Piso through fear and the triumph of the philosopher through courage, although both follow
ostensibly the same pathway, suicide. The only other comparable figure of unwavering perseverance is, of course, Epicharis herself. Lohenstein allows Seneca to speak out an equation whereby we recognize conclusively that the noble stoic and the political idealist have an inner affinity, Seneca says:

"Sie und ein Weiser kan die minsten Schmertzen fühlen" (V, 8).

They both depend on an inwardly validated absolute faith. No earthly consideration can move him, least of all the fear of ruination and death, because he takes refuge in a divine and unassailable realm of freedom, his own spirit:

Ja/wie die Götter selbst nichts schmertzliches empfinden/
Wenn man ihr Bild zerbricht/die Tempel äschert ein;
So/weil die Weisen ja auf Erden Götter seyn
Und Geister über Sonn und Sternen in sich mehren/
Kan Unfall zwar den Leib ihr blosses Bild ver-

zechren/
Nichts aber Irrdisches dem Geiste Schaden thun.
Weil in nicht ausser ihm so Schatz als Wesen ruhn (V,56-62).

He evokes the great examples of stoic heroism, Socrates and Cato, and wishes only to be worthy to follow them. As in Epicharis' mind, such death means both release from and victory over earthly bondage:

Ja/wenn/ was irrdisch lebt und Knecht ist/muss erbleichen
So blühst das Himmlische/der Geist wird Fessel-frey
Und Tod und Todfeind legt uns Ruhm und Siegs-Krants bey (V, 96-98).
Lohenstein, a fervent admirer of Seneca, presents strong arguments to absolve him from any blame in connection with Nero's monstrous development. Seneca defends his own conduct throughout life, despite all appearances or slander to the contrary, and rests upon the absolute security of his reputation as an inner truth:

"Bey uns stehts/was wir sind/nicht was man von uns hält" (V, 126).

In fact, Seneca has little love for the world which the Roman court offers. Stung to bitterness by his pupil's repayment of his years of devotion to wisdom, he utters the anti-courtly and anti-social invective which becomes so prominent in literature of the eighteenth century. His pre-Rousseauian attitude still has ties with the Christian notion of blessed isolation, of saintly hermitage away from the madness of the world, and puts the power system into prominent relief in the role of an oppressor, a detriment to happiness, as we have witnessed it also in the story of Ibrahim Bessa:

Und/wolte Gott/dass ich verwiesen blieben wehre/
In Cynros Einsamkeit umbringt von Fels und Meere/
Doch Meister des Gedöcks und im Gemütte frey/
Entfernt von Hof und Neid und strenger Tiranney
(V, 187-190).

In not resisting the external assault of tyranny, Seneca believes that he is obeying a dictate of Fate and, like Epicharis, regards Nero as its agent, even though their legal views differ;
He thinks that he approaches realization of his innermost nature, acting out at last the philosophy of which his works speak, centered around the correct attitude toward death—the Christian *memento mori* donning stoic garb:

Wer/was ich schrieb/wird lesen/
Wird urtheil'n: Dass der Tod mein Mittel-Punct gewesen/
In dem Gedanck und Schrift als Striche sich verlohrn/

But Lohenstein does not let Seneca purchase a cheap glory.

Fate, with an ironic twist that has disturbed critics, holds in store that Seneca must struggle to kill himself, he who is so disgusted with life! But what certain critics have not understood, this further test intensifies our respect for him, indeed fills us finally with awe.58 He is sardonic toward his own strength, the signs of life as it were in a protesting body:

Wil mir nun Seneca zu sterben nicht verstatten/
Der mir dis Thor selbst hat zur Freyheit aufgethan (V, 304-305)?

Yet the irony is double-edged, for he can permit himself, now that his slashed limbs refuse to bleed, the experience of Socrates. Even poison proves powerless to overcome
him, however, and he must enter a warm bath to make his wounds flow and the toxin reach his heart. Lohenstein utilizes here the same technique as in his scenes of torture and execution, achieving through repetition a staggering of our emotions through a series of critical moments. At the same time, through the majestic calm with which Seneca surmounts obstacles and through the tenderness of Pauline's companionship even into death, the death scene ascends onto a heroic, almost superhuman plane. Never does Lohenstein come closer to the Corneillean goal of exciting admiration rather than compassion as in this play. Nevertheless, he never goes quite so far that Seneca becomes a stony embodiment of a principle, a flinty statue without the subtle human shading which awakens pity.

Now he has prepared us for the climax exceeding the outermost limits in goriness and horror, the martyrdom of Epicharis, before whom one can indeed feel as if in the presence of the more-than-human, the corporeal manifestation of a principle, and for whom one experiences the supercession of pity by wonder. To a certain degree, Epicharis manages to infuse some of the grim humor and free spirit of Seneca into the victims who must die in front of her. Her slightest success infuriates the tyrant. Sabina Poppaea, Tigillinus and Nero have entered the dungeon under
compulsive need for triumph over the stalwart, unbending girl. Her tongue lashes them with defiant truths, so that indeed they suffer more than she in mind and are frustrated to rabidity. They perpetrate the most hideous crimes, mutilating her companions before her in order to snap her spirit, while she praises the victims, even kisses one of the severed heads, and continues to spew insults and scorn upon the royal party. Her most piercing stabs are her keen descriptions of what the emperor's group are doing and for what reasons. She understands that they seek the defeat of her free spirit and that their quest for extinguishing every light of liberty has put them beyond the pale of humanity, has driven them berserk:

"Itzt wandelt Tyranney sich erst in Aberwitz" (V, 698).

Epicharis actually unnerves Nero, who begins to tremble with premonition of the Furies. She depicts the blackness and terror of his soul, haunted by the ghosts of his victims. His final words, after she dies unbroken and through suicide, ring very hollow, trappings of state over an abyss inside himself. The picture of Nero gone mad ends also the drama Agrippina, and we shall probe its features in connection with his criminality when we discuss the other play of 1665. In this regard, then, we shall also look once more at Ibrahim Sultan, which
studies the disintegration of a man who, by being absolute lawgiver, places himself outside the law and thereby finally loses all stability and his wits. About Epicharis we may remark in conclusion that she not only fulfills the high role of the martyr but finishes her existence as a voice. Through her opposition to Fate, through her suffering, through her greatness in defeat under the crushing burden Fate imposes, she seems somehow to acquire a glow of supernatural being, as if she has won reconciliation with destiny and may utter final, absolute pronouncements. She speaks on behalf of historical truth the definition of that polarity in humanity which her drama, and Nero's, has demonstrated:

"Wird Nero nur durch Schmach/ich durch die Tugend leben" (V, 732).

No critic has seen that the secular orientation of Epicharis' goal, a distinctly earthly objective and political program, in no way excludes her from the special province of the supernatural. She approaches that sphere through her heroism. She enters it just as a Greek hero might through profound experience of his humanity and of doom. The re-establishment of a Republic, although quite terrestrial, is still a great goal, in fact a hopeless task equalled only perhaps by a religious mission to redeem men from corruption. Epicharis' aim in politics implies already, as the essay has pointed out, a corresponding moral program of regeneration, and
thus her aspiration belongs among the inspired, impossible wishes expressed by fanatic reformers. In her heroics she similarly exceeds the boundaries of the normal and possible. On behalf of her impossible aim, she endures in an unnatural and virtually supernatural fashion extreme torments; she rises above the common denominator of the weak flesh to assume a special rank, like a saint, but also like a Hercules.

But Epicharis is in human incarnation. She, like the ancient heroes, long seems indestructible even in body, but succumbs at last to the most degrading extinction in surroundings of intense misery. All the while that her heart beats on for her cause, we witness the horrible spectacle of mutilation and inevitable death. A strong Christian tradition has clouded our vision for this other type of holiness outside the precincts of dogmatic mission, for the elevation of a human being simply through pain. This heroic pathway is, despite the high mission, here political rejuvenation, the road of "blind" sainthood. Epicharis refuses to give in to the facts of life and of man, the creature; she struggles, so it seems, naively and unseeing for the impossible. Yet her nature permits her sight of what is eternal and timeless. The picture of pure, noble, free man—a picture so bright and real before her eyes, but hidden largely from others—drives her forward. One of the serious errors up to the present has been insistence that
a Christian orientation (ethos) can achieve the sublime level on which sainthood and tragedy occur, and that a non-Christian orientation (pathos) cannot. What is blindness in Epicharis from the point of view of normal humanity, is holy vision from the point of view of higher humanity, and thus she and Papinian share a lot in their stubborn inability to adjust to "real" conditions. The stern Roman stoic, whether Gryphius' Papinian or Lohenstein's Seneca, is however less pitiful, because he purposely withdraws from the hopeless entanglements of the world. Epicharis is different then. She is more compelled to resist futilely, much as an Oedipus, with the best intentions, the onslaught of destiny. Although she is not morally tainted, she acts with no more success.

In summary it can be said that the great attractiveness of Epicharis is her blind dedication, so different in the long run from mere stoic pessimism. Yet, while she stands largely upon her own heroic reputation and becomes great through sheer suffering, it would be nonsense to claim that her motives are not ethical. In fact, just as Gryphius' Papinian is pathetic in gesture, so is Epicharis ethical in purpose. Whereas the majority opinion has held Lohenstein not to be a tragedian, this essay proposes that he is already approaching convincing tragedy in the play Epicharis. In this play he brings forward the hero as a person who is hopelessly threatened.
by doom, whether he resists or not, whether his goal is
great or petty, his motivation elevated or base.
Naturally, in the case of the heroine Epicharis, the
positive qualities outweigh to the extent that one may
speak more of a play exciting admiration, rather than
compassion. But the roots of tragic pity are already
deeply grown. There is no wise retirement from the
dangerous world; there is overconfidence in personal
ability to oppose it. These ingredients in Epicharis
can be discerned also in the African queens, prior to
the final collapse. The essay hopes to trace the
shifting of Lohenstein's attention more and more from
a merely stoic heroism to the hopeless struggle of great
personalities in his African plays. It hopes also to
show how the queens Sophonisbe and Cleopatra, as well
as Agrippina, achieve a similar immortality by virtue
of struggle in a fatal encounter with the historical
process. Epicharis prefigures much more than one at
first may think under the immediate impression of her
strong affinity to the Gryphian martyrs.
CHAPTER IV

CRIME AND DOOM

The political drama, Epicharis, was also a fate drama. The heroine's story took place within and against the background of Roman historical development, which served definitively to explain her doom. She opposed with blind hope an invincible process of universal enslavement. As in Greek tragedy where an unexplained impersonal, numen-like will may crush a blindly struggling protagonist, without there being any explanation for his fall beyond its being decreed, so in Lohenstein's Epicharis a prophecy had to be fulfilled. For the Greeks a curse, a prophecy, or even the whole history of a family, with a chain of causes and relationships stretching into dim mythological obscurity, far beyond the victim's control, exist outside of the particular play in which one witnesses the inevitable tragic results of foregone doom. So also did the choruses in Epicharis give the "foreplay" or fable, revealing truths beyond the temporal sphere
of the play, here of course historical circumstances she could not control. Lohenstein counted on his audience's knowledge of at least the infamous Neronian chapter in Roman history. He made it into the psychological basis of conviction in the inevitability of events which transpired within the play. From the point of view of a present-day audience in any age, all that has already happened stands fixed, immutable, "inevitable". Thus in *Epicharis*, Lohenstein subtly drew together historicity and fate. Through his use of historical subject matter he created the equivalent of fate drama embedded in mythological tradition.

*Agrippina* also takes place within an historical tradition. The choruses make evident to the audience the close connection between moral issues and political development for Rome. The extratemporal realm, Fate, likewise indicates through prophecy of "things to come" (which have, of course, already transpired in history for Lohenstein's audience) the larger picture wherein the actual drama fits as an exemplary detail. The first chorus presents a general moral reference; the familiar dualities make their obligatory appearance in Lohenstein's language. The second chorus specifies the historical connection and even follows the binding threads far into the past, into mythological origins.
After act one two groups, the vices and the virtues, appear with figures representing justice, vengeance and reward to perform the first choral interlude. The vices argue that men are blind to worship gods who do not reward, the virtues warn that the attractiveness of vice deceives, being "aussen Gold/inwendig Asche" (I, 603). Consequently, the question arises why men cannot see the light of reason, which is directly equated with virtue, and whether vice or virtue affords genuine satisfaction. Justice uses the story of Ulysses passing the sirens to illustrate its belief that pleasures debase man to the level of the beasts. When the vices ask whether it was virtue or justice which crowned Nero, the virtues answer the sharp challenge. Virtuousness is a heroic attitude against the world rather than a pious activity aimed at supernatural reward, and brings in itself its own reward. Now justice, here a very papery goddess, more bluster than conviction, calls on her minions, reward and vengeance, to show her power by raining punishment on sin and by crowning the virtues. But the Christian principle of justice continues only as a hollow shell; retribution can only occur in history or through the witness of history, in so far as man suffers from bad conscience while alive or fears a bad reputation when dead.
With no eternity of hell or heaven for the soul, with only the possibility of securing a good or a bad memorial, virtue must indeed strike the stoic pose. Immortality has become monumentality.

Yet the Christian influence permeates the stoic. Platitudes about innocence and spotlessness, the statuesque emblems of crown and palms, which reward bestows, distinguish saints or martyrs, but Lohenstein applies these emblems here to abstractions, the virtues. Three rather mysterious last lines which summarize the chorus reveal, however, the deeper level of this disputation. They give us the emotional force of Lohenstein's hitherto very abstract argument through a metaphorical finale:

Denn: Dass ihr ja der Tugend Nectar schmeckt/
Eh als ihr solt verfinstert leben/
Muss ein Tyrann ans Licht euch heben (1,678-680).

This ominous pronouncement would as soon define the martyrdom of an Ambre or Epicharis. The tyrant, according to this chorus, plays a role as the agent of darkness, very similar to the theological function of the devil. He provides the challenge of evil, threatens the good, and serves as exemplary contrast. The dark abysses of
nature, the insecure ocean of passion, constitute a
dangerous factor which too often operates unhammed in
the tyrant. And thereby he lifts into brilliant re-
lief the stellar clarity of the spirit, the secure
guide of reason, which exemplify—the martyr! Only
the African tragedies offer other examples of men
guided by reason alone, the great conquerors Scipio
and Augustus. Yet who is the martyr in Agrippina,
who may here taste the "nectar of virtue?" Instead
of a recognizable martyr in the footsteps of Ambre,
Epicharis, or Ibrahim Bassa, the troublesome and
provocative figure of Nero's mother commands the stage.
The chorus reaches, then, a victorious note like the
false triumph which closes the first act and exalts the
wronged mother, Agrippina. It recapitulates in the
disputation between opposed parties of abstractions
the dramatic conflict which takes place at court
between pro-Agrrippina and anti-Agrrippina influences
and ends with her restoration and reward. Apart from
its imitative function, the chorus serves as a back-
ground of values against which later horror will erupt.
But subsequent actions of Agrrippina will not in any
way invalidate these permanent values, any more than
Nero's crimes will.

The second chorus offers the example of a pure
martyr in the story of Rubria, a Vestal virgin, whom
Nero has defiled. She acts as choragus of the Vestals
who comment on the happenings of the drama much as would a Greek classic chorus. They connect the events in Rome with traditions concerning the city's foundation and prognosticated fall. The legend is that Aeneas brought with him from Troy the holy fire and a picture of Pallas. The goddess is clearly connected with reason by tradition. As long as the image survived, the city was to live, while the sacred fire was carefully cultivated in Rome in the temple of Vesta. It symbolized by its continuance the perseverance of the home of the Romans; a dead fire meant the extinction of civic life, the reduction to ashes of their existence. Now the virgins lament bad omens for the image and fire, and Rubria interprets these by referring to the story of Paris:

So bald in Ilium der Geilheit Brunst entglam/
Und Paris Helenen dem Menelaus nam;
Ward unser Feuer auch verzehrt.
So bald ihr Tempel ward befleckt
Untwiech die Göttin weg/ihr Bild ward fort-getragen;
Ganz Troja ward in Brand gesteckt
(II, 508-513).

Thus the symbolic fire receives a double, ambiguous significance. Since a remote time in the past, according to the authoritative myth, it has borne a curse. On the one hand, it represents the life force of peoples; its presence marks the existence of a nation; and its loss or transfer means the termination of empire. On the other hand, through defilement of this
life force, the fire breaks out wildly and consumes its housing, whether temple, city or nation. In other words, the unruly passions devastate both men and states, and contagious vice signals collapse—historical doom. This is an ever popular theory.

In European literature of the seventeenth century, fire and flame are standardized metaphors for love and/or passion. Lohenstein now widens the scope of these fixed emblems to include also all destructive forces, whether national corruption or personal weaknesses. He creates thus a prefigurative mythology of the imperial family, the house of Caesars, when he emphasizes that Julius descends from Aeneas and Venus. Aeneas brought holy fire, the life force, in order to establish Rome; Venus gave the passions, flames of love, which would later put the Roman state into conflagration. Pallas, the chaste and rational deity whose image protects the city, will soon pull up stakes and remove to another people (who are identified in the novel Arminius and elsewhere as the Germans!).

This other folk, hinted at in this chorus as inheritors of the empire, is distinguished through a promise of eternal reign, should it remain pure. Rubria accuses Nero as the dangerous new Paris who defiles the sanctities and starts the destructive blaze which must waste Rome:
Ich seh in Rom schon Trojens Brand/
Von Agrippinen ist die Fackel ja gebohren;
Dem Otho wird Poppe' entwand/
Und für die Helena das Käyserthum verlohren

The play's heroine no longer fits in the ranks of the Isabelles, Ambres or Epicharises, for she herself has given new issue to the curse of political and social doom, in her son Nero. Agrippina belongs rather with those ancient tragic figures who carry within themselves the seeds of destiny. Lohenstein carefully points out that on every level, political, moral and biological, Fate emerges upon the curse-bearing queen. She gives birth to her own murderer and to a monstrous tyrant.

Rubria speaks further as an innocent victim who hopes through her own death to expiate the sacrilege against the goddess. She wants at the same time to wipe away the besmirchment from herself. The tragic conception of expiation enters into the drama, the notion that sacrifice, blood-letting, cleanses:

"Die Seele wird gereinigt nur durch Blutt"

Her death and her pronouncements are not merely a moralizing entr'acte, as critics persist in believing of Lohenstein's choruses. Rather they forebode the greater spectacle of death and terror which must follow grievous crimes against nature, crimes which we are to witness in the third and subsequent acts.
And they anticipate Agrippina of the fifth act, terrified by guilt and anxious before the spectre of bloody doom, whereby alone she may wash away the stains upon her name. The playwright makes the connection between his chorus and the drama itself most plain. He literally provokes the audience in its historically grounded expectations, when Rubria prophesies:

Mein gantz verzückter Geist wird inn'/
Und sieht; Wie auf die geile Brust
Der Mutter auch ein Sohn den stumpffen Dolch
muss wetzen.
Poppee bünst auch Schuld und Lust
Und Nero muss die Faust im eignen Blutte
netzen (I1,559-562).

Her vision of doom is ecstatic. We have witnessed in Epicharis the phenomenon of proximate death bringing about a strange emotional intensity and insight into Fate. Epicharis never becomes a seeress but she is allowed to pass final judgments. Agrippina never attains to such "sainthood" in the throes of death but she does demonstrate a pitiable, most human awareness of Fate. We shall, at an appropriate moment, discuss her illumination by the deep and shaking experience of her own guilt, her insight into her criminality which must be punished, and the pathos of her heightened consciousness. Let it suffice now to say that Rubria's pure and saintly ecstasy, like the joyful certainty of Epicharis, descends vicariously
onto the human plane where a guilty heart trembles, after long struggle, with tragic realization of inexorable punishment. We shall show how, through her attitude toward destiny, Agrippina rescues her fame and gains at least the stature of a sacrificial victim, which is more or less what Rubria seeks and what the final words of the chorus underscore:

Nun mögt ihr euch/ihr Sterblichen/ bescheiden;  
Dass Andacht auch die Sterren meistern kann (II, 569-570).

The final attitude, then, in face of death can elevate even the besmirched and mortal victim into the unchangeable and immutable sphere of greatness.61

But let us begin now with the play where it seizes hold of the tradition of a curse in the royal family. In Nero a twinned set of excesses characterizes the duality, politics and love, which the choruses treat. The opening scene reveals the emperor as tyrant, prating about his absoluteness:

So ists! Die Sonn erstarrt für unsers Hauptes Glantz/  
Die Welt für unser Macht (I, 1-2).

He pictures his perfect rule and Rome's golden age under his scepter, all of which should lead us to imagine him as the most fortunate of mortals. But his extreme claim, his thirst for immortality betray the opposite of what he intends. He vaunts:
"Und Nerons Bild wird stehn im Tempel
treuer Seelen" (I, 27).

Because of inner insecurity, he makes exaggerated
demands upon the world outside him for recognition.
He cannot distinguish between his own desires and the
mandates of law, so great is his need to have his
own way and feel superhuman. Thus he enjoys the
misleading flattery of devious courtiers, like Otho
who depicts with physical details soaring into a very
oriental exoticism a prince's paradisiacal existence.
He purposely excites the jaded emperor by claiming
to outdo him in the sphere of love; and thus the name
of Poppea, the ambitious wife of an ambitious husband,
penetrates into the court. Otho's boast that her
inflaming beauty makes him feel like a god achieves
the desired result, for Nero, the would-be god, sighs
loudly and exposes the "Hertzens Narben" (I, 144)
which smart beneath his pompous royal pretenses. This
man absolute in political power is a vessel of torments
and prey to infatuations; in him the drives of rulership
and of eroticism intertwine dangerously.

The second scene expands our vision of Nero, con-
fused and ruthless, caught within the political
intrigues of the court. He would lash out at once
against a suspected threat by his mother Agrippina,
in which wily and power-hungry officials have made
him believe. It is of little importance whether her
accusers tell the truth or not in this atmosphere of deceit and anxiety. What matters is that their report could be veracious, since she has every reason to be plotting against her son. For he has stripped her of her former political power and, as we shall learn, has also made clumsy attempts upon her life. The controlled statescraft of Seneca contrasts remarkably, when he analyzes the situation. He insists on making no rash move, on hearing out the accused; plans to gain pledges from the army, vouches for its commander Burrhus, although he is an appointment of Agrippina; points to the fact that the informers are enemies of his mother's house. Thus, while Seneca can reason coolly, Nero betrays the forlorn uncertainty of political man, for whom all bonds of loyalty, all sure foundations of truth have crumbled, even the elemental ties of nature in the family. He exclaims:

"Wem ist/wenn die Natur selbst falsch wird/
mehr zu trauen" (I, 248)?

Nero's actual isolation is as extreme as his claims of greatness. He cannot even stand on the limited safe ground of personal happiness which a family union may offer. Thus the lawful realm of nature becomes for him, through politics, a jungle, in which brother, mother, wife may at any moment spring unmasked upon him.
From the onset of her appearance, Agrippina plays the role of a caged animal desiring freedom. Although she actually suffers only house arrest, she exaggerates in into imprisonment: "gleichsam hier im Kerker" (I, 284). What hurts her most is the abeyance of her renown, based on her former political power; she feels "bey aller Welt mehr als vergessen" (I, 287). She believes that fortune has cast her down, thus assumes the pathetic pose of a fallen noble, a shipwrecked example of the world's treacherous changes (I, 291, 292).

Far from indulging in rhetoric, Lohenstein carefully announces the dominant themes of her endangerment, which she senses with the first faint intimations of doom. In act four she will experience a catastrophic reversal and undergo an actual shipwreck! In chafing under the stigma of exile from court, Agrippina resists personal diminishment as a queen. Octavia sees Nero as a violent and debauched husband, whom her own wifely virtue repulses. Agrippina sees further that he is potentially murderous. Thus her urge to return to court and denounce their calumniators is finally motivated by sheer necessity:

Der Blutt-Durst Nerons wird auch/glaub es/
   nicht geleschet/
   Bis er die Mörder-Faust mit Mutter-Blutte
   wäscht (I, 351-352).
In her defense against the accusations, Agrippina again assumes her majestic pose. But the chief attribute she claims, her freedom, represents the fundamental danger to her tyrannical son. He wants literally to be deified, yet she says: "Ich machte mich zur Magd/und ihn zum Götzen nicht" (I, 370). Her warm individuality and her consciousness of attractive womanhood aid her rebuttal of Silane's information, that she is planning to marry a rival claimant to the throne, Plautus. She calls this woman cold, childless, lustful, unable to comprehend a mother, and gives herself out as just the opposite. But her statement will prove itself to be fatally false: "Läst mich kein Kalt-seyn nicht nach frembder Glutt ge-lästen" (I, 392). Once again we discover the dangerously twinned impulses that are at work in Nero. Agrippina admits being of passionate nature, yet she is at the same time a political personality. So filled by a political conception of herself is she, that she speaks in the regal first-person-plural forms, unlike the perhaps more self-secure African queens who use the singular. At the same time, her noble attribute of freedom connects her still with the heroes of freedom, the stoic and political martyrs. Her resoluteness in the face of danger makes that clear. She uses practically the same words as Ibrahim Bassa (IB, I, 217) in scorning the threat of death. She exclaims: "Wir wollin das Mord-beil küssen" (I, 415).64 Thus, although
Agrippina no longer is a passive sufferer like Ambre, or a pure political activist like Epicharis, but rather belongs to the milieu of the court, she shares with the martyrs a true aristocratic stature, not shammed as in Nero's case. Just like Epicharis she continues only by dint of will power; indeed she has no other weapons with which to defend herself, "Nun die Natur uns nicht zu schätzen Kräfte hat" (I, 433). Nature, the lawful relationships of the family, she realizes are dead. But this is exactly what Nero cries out too! Agrippina then, finds herself caught in the same net as her son, isolated in the "unnatural", supra-personal political web of relationships which characterize the Roman court and state.

She sees, however, with greater clarity the implications. Adroitly she turns to her own advantage the facts of her deteriorated political status, which is the product of other women who cater ambitiously to Nero's lusts. She convinces Seneca and Burrhus of her weakness and innocence, even tries to stir their pity:

"Diss ist das Trauerspiel/das schon mit mir beginnet" (I, 439).

In making this statement, Agrippina both knows and doesn't know its full import. Because of her ever vital hope, she argues with conscious pretense of theatricality; because of her fear, she unwittingly
pronounces the truth. She speaks therefore, in the strange manner of the doomed, by her own mouth, the chilling oracle which Fate ironically releases.

 Appropriately, to entangle her more in the role of a blinded victim, she can enjoy a false victory in her meeting with Nero. The actress Agrippina, acting desperately for life and honor on the real stage of the world, comes forward. She opens all the vents of her suasion in a masterful speech, spellbinding her son before he can utter a word. Her attack utilizes the faint ties of nature so weakened by their political existence. She must seize the extreme means to excite remorse, and thus renounces her motherhood while also emphasizing her motherly readiness to shed her blood for his welfare as in the past. Her pathos ranges from anger to tears and it awakens a corresponding pathos in Nero. He cannot withstand her performance's emotion, he succumbs in rue as if she is now his accuser, and begs her for forgiveness and peace of mind. He explains the pathetic situation of the ruler, who knows that ambition obeys no laws, and his need for trust:

Die Mutter werde sich nicht Ehrsucht blenden lassen/
Uns mit nicht falscher Hold und Liebe pflichten bey (I, 576-577).

For a moment he sounds pitiable, like a melancholy child longing for the secure love of his mother. In fact, Nero changes so far in his passing phase of regret that
he sets in office Agrippina's favorites and banishes her enemies. Such radical reconciliation can only portend another more drastic reversal of her fortune, similarly as it proves once more his personal weakness. It can only emphasize how radical also the break in natural relationships has been and may again be. As we have mentioned, the triumph of the virtues in the first chorus is a parallel "false" climax, with a mysterious intimation that suffering at the hands of a tyrant is necessary in order to secure glory.

The second act, which shows Poppea's rapid rise to power, gives a clear picture of the realistic basis for Agrippina's pathetic defense. Behind the intricate language of the prince's courtship and the diplomatic seduction by Poppea, the carefully calculated advances and concessions, the questions and guarantees, a tremulous expectation of erotic fulfillment suffuses their encounter. It would be a gross mistake to dismiss the love scene as a mere piece of politics, a cynical bargain, even though both parties are quite conscious of making a deal. A hot breath of unrestrained royal passion, that can become violently aroused against any opposition, erupts. For sake of comparison, one can listen to the now ecstatic, now morose tones in Monteverdi's *Incoronazione di Poppea*. It treats the same Nero-materials, excepting Epicharis, which fascinate Lohenstein, both the stoic greatness of Seneca's suicide, the banishment
of the royal women through the adventuress' ascent, and
the cruel, ruthless passion of a mating that recognizes
no laws other than desire and wilfullness. In Agrippina
love is treated amorally as one of the natural forces
to be tapped for power. Paris seizes the opportunity
to plot against Agrippina and breach any solidarity in
the royal family. Again suddenly cast down, Octavia
and Agrippina can find no allies. Seneca and Burrhus
blame Octavia for her purity, for not competing
sexually with her rivals. But it soon is apparent
that they sense the shift in fortune and have decided
not to resist the emperor, even if he asks a divorce.
Seneca will not take the bait which Agrippina offers
by suggesting that they too, Seneca and Burrhus, may be
removed, if a shift of power occurs because of Poppea.
Lohenstein presents the stoic hero of Epicharis as a
cunning politician in Agrippina, a radical reversal
of his dramatic function and evidence of Lohenstein's
antithetical thinking. Thus the queens grasp des­
perately at straws and must go so far as to appeal
to Otho. His cynicism characterizes courtly
corruption. He embellishes his political pandering,
which he candidly acknowledges, while he scorns the
entire moral system of monogamy and chastity. Once
again the twin themes of Rome's fall apply to Poppea's
case; eroticism and lewd ambition go hand in hand.
Otho's view belongs to an age in which quite openly,
as at the court of Louis XIV, erotic amorality was practiced, and erotic power marked feminine politicking.

Octavia exclaims that such a knavish spirit ("Knechtisch Geist", II, 392) exists in a Roman, also that nature in him has somehow denied itself ("Ver-kennt sich die Natur", II, 395). The theme of Roman degradation as synonymous with moral and political enslavement is already familiar through Epicharis. In act one Agrippina has described herself as free, thus appearing still noble and even related to more ideal heroic figures. Now the complete hopelessness of her position is clear. To survive, she must constantly play the game of politics. But politics, we know, is the dangerous, potentially tragic struggle which destroys human happiness and security; it represents "unnatural" or amoral nature, a jungle nature, in which men are not free but bestial, devoid of law. Yet to stand upon one's purity, innocence or nobility, without participating in politics, virtually means choosing extinction. In manoeuvring for support, Agrippina tries to convince Otho of his own insecurity but she is speaking out her own frantic expectation when she warns:

"Denn wer vom Hofe kömmt/kömmt endlich auch vom Leben" (II, 435). 65

Otho's removal very soon to a far corner of the empire shows the validity of the queen's warning and anxiety.
She has little choice but to give in to the promptings of the jungle law and utilize her natural but amoral erotic powers. She transgresses thereby that other lawful naturalness, the taboo of family relationships.

Agrippina hopes desperately to steer her ship to safety over the treacherous sea of passions; she gives herself to the elementary abyss of life in order to win continuance of her existence. Out of these elemental depths arises the dubious life-force like something awesome and demonic. Acte, a favorite of Nero, is stunned and worried; she talks of this "unnatural" nature as if it is supernatural in the queen's case:

Ob wider die Natur gleich auch solch Feuer kämpffet/  
So bässt doch die Natur für Agrippina ein/  
Weil ihre Würckungen mehr als natürlich seyn. in sie werd Claudius durch Zauberey vcrlibet (III, 78-81).  

The familiar metaphoric "fire" flames up in her, with full significance both as passion and as an agency of doom. It is so intense and so overcomes the natural, i.e. familial, system that it impresses the most degenerate courtesan as a force which is more than human in its origin. The second chorus has, of course, already revealed the remote divine origins of the passion through the mythological story of Aeneas and Venus and the holy fire. In Agrippina Lohenstein develops dramatically an idea which he explores further in the
African plays, especially in the second chorus of *Sophonisbe*. The queen's unusual charm, here of course summoned for a last vital moment, as she knows all too well age has weakened her position, - this intoxicating eroticism constitutes a special natural phenomenon. Beauty is an incarnation of a magic attractiveness, and love is a divine principle moving the world. On the simplest level, Poppea obviously acts as the erotic stimulus which provokes Agrippina's extreme defence; the love-making of both women serves clearly as one of the motors of Roman political development. On a higher level, extraordinary beauty already marks one's special origin, one's claim to greatness, one's human "divinity" which a Nero seeks in vain. Seneca, refusing to acknowledge Agrippina's charms as anything more than terrestrial fact, clarifies with sober rationality that this force has nothing to do with ritual or spells but exists within living beings:

Dass man die Ursach erst so fremden Kontsten

gibt:

Der Libreitz einer Frau ist schon die Zauberey

(*III, 82-83*).

The seduction scene in Nero's bed chamber has no equal in literature. An audience of our own times may find so vivid a painting of incest distasteful. The shock is certainly stronger than that through Phedre's confession to Hyppolite in Racine's tragedy: These
contemporary seventeenth-century uses of incest as a dramatic medium reveal, when compared, a certain common area of interest as well as Lohenstein's independence from French models.

First in importance, both dramatists, the German polyhistorian and the French classicist drawing on mythology, were deeply fascinated with the darker side of the passions. Each claimed in forewords that his intention was to expose the dire effects of perversity and to give his audience an example. The moralistic aim, as genuine as it may be in both cases, cannot disguise their attraction to dramatic confrontations for characters who are involved in or plagued by illicit desire. Similarly, both authors claim to follow with great faithfulness authoritative sources, whether historical or mythological. Lohenstein gives complete textual notes for reference in Agrippina. Racine says in his introduction to Phedre: "Je rapporte ces autorites, parce que je me suis tres scrupuleusement attache a suivre la fable." Neither takes personal responsibility for the violent eruptions in his drama. They justify their work as verisimilitudinous, based on past occurrences, if they present elemental forces which are taboo in the Christian moral scheme; in fact, they dote on antiquity or the "other" world of the Orient.
Lohenstein, however, never softens the violent reality of his heroine's sensual attributes or the perniciousness of her game. He exposes not only the effects of perversity but also the actual physical situation. A "flamme noir" operates as internal motive force in Racine's Phedre. Her monologues, mostly self-examinations, reveal the introspective torment of a mind coming to grip with indomitable desire, "unnatural" natural impulses. Her emotions and the problem of fated love form the subject matter of the tragedy. But Racine manages everything within strict limits of a pruned vocabulary and theatrical system, whose taboos forbid so much that he in fact "amends" his authorities. He must transfer from Phedre to her servant Oenone all traits of real perverseness or baseness. He must make clear that Phedre's "crime" is simply even to admit to herself what she feels and to unburden herself to the beloved person. Yet Hyppolite is only her stepson, whose father she believes to be dead at the moment of revelation! Racine emphasizes in his introduction:

Les moindres fautes y sont sévèrement punies. La seule pensée du crime y est regardée avec autant d'horreur que le crime même. Les faiblesses de l'amour y passent pour de vraies faiblesses; les passions n'y sont présentées aux yeux que pour montrer tout le désordre dont elles sont cause; et le vice y est peint partout avec des couleurs qui en font connaître et hâler la difformité.

Lohenstein's first chorus maintains also that passions cause disorder and that vice is a deformity, yet Agrippina and
Nero exhibit scarcely any but monstrous faults. His introduction invokes no severe moral code to cloak his heroine. The remoteness of legend suits Racine's treatment of the theme of incest because he may manipulate a little to dress it in the conventional French garb of idealized nobility. Lohenstein prefers the historical arena and, although he too dresses the Roman court in the habit of a seventeenth-century absolutistic realm, he feels a compunction to submit entirely to facts, as he sees them.

Both men share a didactic aim in stimulating us to pity, and simultaneous horror. Yet the core of their dramas is the very attractiveness of a criminal heroine, because our revulsion before her transgression only stimulates more strongly our sympathy. Certainly to the secret court of the human heart Phedre appears guiltless but damned. Likewise Agrippina appeals to us because of her hopeless situation. The circumstances of Theseus' return impose on Phedre the sacrifice of an innocent, and this justifies a further spectacle of her torments; she must suffer the remorse which will lead to an irrational act, self-immolation, and thereby expiation. The poet purposefully intensifies through Hyppolite's death not only parallel horror and pity for Phedre, but also our terror before the wild outbreak of elemental forces, seen especially in the report of a monster from the sea and of Hyppolite's own horses which bloodily trample the youth.
Lohenstein steps out of the shadow of any puritanical morality when dealing with the passions, that is, with the demonic sphere. His obsession with the historicity of destructive impulses brings him to stage incest with pornographic details. History verifies the wildest conception of Neronian eroticism, and therefore the facts of destructive passion supersede all interest in the heart, in love, as it appears in the case of Racine. In the African tragedies, especially in Anthony's fatal love, Lohenstein approaches Racine more. But in Agrippina the heroine is not idealized from the point of view of the heart; she is not in the least enamoured of her son. She struggles, on the contrary, with a hated monster whom she needs to dominate, lest he assassinate her on behalf of Poppea. Despite these differences with Racine, the image of the wild horse must come: It stands for demonic impulses, passion free of bridle (III, 152-155). In both dramas, the attractive heroines have some mysterious connection with outbreak of the elements.

Even Nero fears that the incestuous behavior of his mother is against "nature" and that the "beast", given free rein, must plunge its rider into an abyss of sin (III, 160). Blindly, Agrippina contradicts his belief in natural law and works to destroy in him restraining taboo. Thus, in the presumption that she will gain control over her son, she undermines the last basis of possible protection for
herself. Her specious proof calls upon a mechanistic concept of the universe, whose impulse she names love. But her view differs little in substance from what Lohenstein considers in the second chorus of *Sophonisbe*. Fated passion, necessary love is the motor in a world devoid of any God who may serve as prime mover—a melancholy system of immutable destiny prevails:

Einfältiger! Wer gibt dir so albre Fabeln ein?
Worwider Stern und Welt selbst müssen Zeugen seyn.
Wir müssen die Natur der Dinge Zirkel nennen.
Denn würde nicht ihr Lauff zu seinem Uhrsprung
rennen/
So würd ihr Uhrwerck bald verwirrt und stille
stehn (III,179-183).

This advocacy of a return to her womb is laden with morose connotations of doom. A non-Christian, pagan cyclic view of the world, with history as the ticking of time in a gigantic, rationally perceived process, does not hide the function of irrational drives within this process:

Sol sich der Vogel nicht ins Netze lassen kirren/
So pflantz ihm die Natur nicht das Geldsten ein;
So tilge sie den Baum/ wo schöne Beere seyn.
Wenn in den Augen schon der Schönheit Schwefel
stecket/
Wird in dem Hertzen leicht ein solcher Brand
erwecket/
Der nicht zu leschen ist/bis Licht und Tacht
entgeht/
Und der Vernunft Gesicht in vollem Rauche steht.
Sol der nun strafbar seyn/der nicht durch Nebel
sihet?
Der sich nicht leschen kan/wie sehr er sich bemühet?
(III,214-222).

Again the dubious love metaphor of fire recalls the prophecy of the second chorus. Here the metaphor is worked to
incorporate also the theme of reason beclouded. Agrippina
once more speaks both as a conscious actress in a desperate
role and as an unconscious voice of destiny, a victim
uttering veiled truth. She indeed now awakens the de-
structive element, here called flame, in Nero, and it
is not to be extinguished until its source material has
been consumed in the blaze. She, as mother of the monster,
must suffer from her offspring's monstrosity; she the
inflamer must be burned. Lohenstein maintains his equation
of moral nature with reason, against which Agrippina contends
in order to sway Nero. Seneca has already said that shame
and taboo are rationally conceived:

"Diss sehen Augen zwar/die nicht vernebelt sind"
(III, 64).

In this wise, Agrippina's perverted struggle is all the
more pitiful. For she believes that she is acting
rationally, with calculation, in her plan to turn her son
against reason. Herein resides the tragedy of unnatural,
political existence, which rests on the inherently
contradictory principle that man can manipulate or control
the mysterious and irrationally driven process of the
world, into whose captivity he is born for an unavoidable
destiny.

The timely interruption by the worried court
prevents any successful seduction. The politicians have
devised another imagined plot in order to frighten and
sober Nero. When he recovers from the intoxicating spell of his mother, he is revolted by her attempt. The courtiers, obviously allying themselves in a camp not opposed to Poppea, fear the queen greatly, especially now that they know to what lengths she may go in her personal struggle for recovery of power. Nero pales too before the thought of her will. When he begins to plan her death, we realize how tragically blind her stand has been from the start. Now Nero calculates, pretends, uses strategem, and the game turns about. From this moment on, despite any more planning on the part of Agrippina, because she trusts vainly in her ability to survive and in her cunning, when in reality she is nothing more than the outwitted, outplayed and finished former potentate, we look less on her as an evil mother. She has become an unknowing victim.

Nero adopts Anicetus' plan, which is for Nero to invite her to a love tryst in blissful seclusion from the court. The place can be reached only by water. The ship onto which she must be lured alone is so constructed that it will fall apart at sea. Thus Lohenstein makes his favorite image of the perilous ocean very concrete. This concreteness occurs again in Cleopatra in the actual historical materials preceding the moment of dramatic action, that is, through reference to the battle of Actium, and in the drama itself, where all hinges on control of the
water routes of escape. Nero asks whether his mother will be so foolish as to try such a treacherous escape route to hoped-for security:

"Wer weiss es: ob sie sich einst auf das Wasser wage" (III, 373).

Her aversion to water clearly has been synonymous with her survival thus far and with her clever direction of her moves. But Agrippina, the deceived deceiver, believes in her son's acting of the role of lover. She takes the great risk. Embarkation upon the sea is the symbolic, and "real", equivalent of her leaving the firm ground and venturing into the realm of the passions in her seduction attempt.

Agrippina's voyage, to which we shall soon turn, demonstrates what she herself has done in bringing about her own fall. She has erased the last restraint in Nero, has removed the small ground of safety from beneath her own feet, and now travels on a thin flooring of cunning over the abyss. Yet now, because of her blind hope and her struggle, she grows to heroic stature, becomes tragic. Lohenstein has achieved this stature for her without one concession to moralistic rules, without diminishing in one iota her guilt and illicit behavior. He has seen in her desperation alone the motive for tragedy and the grounds for a tragic conception of man. Neither the world of passions nor the manipulations of reason can insure her against the dangers of earthly life—and now
there is no recourse, as there was with Epicharis, to a higher instance for salvation. Agrippina's hour has struck; her role in Rome is finished. Agrippina suffers, then, as does Cleopatra in the African play, despite her attempt to use reason to her own advantage. In this respect, we differentiate between Racine's Phedre, a victim of love-fate, and Agrippina, a victim of historical fate.

The third chorus is worthy of special note not only because as a narration it contributes to the flow of the play's action, but also because it celebrates the figure of Agrippina. Through it the unmistakable intention is carried out to depict the queen as a tragic and majestic heroine.

Two groups, sea and mountain divinities, report in strophe and antistrophe the events on the water during the shipwreck of Agrippina. Lohenstein varies the choral function, so that it goes a step beyond mere comment on the action within the acts, beyond the usual abstractions, arguments or predictions, to which one is accustomed in Ibrahim Bassa and Epicharis or the first and second choruses of this play. Only the modern moving picture could, of course, stage these tempestuous events; for the drama poetry must paint them, and a report is necessary. It could be given from within the play's action, let us say, by an observer of the scene from an imagined hill or simply related after the fact by the traditional messenger
of Greek and French literature. But the author prefers a poetic intensity that does not entail any break between the scene of her beguilement and the moment when she is saved from almost fatal treachery. After the heated pitch of act three, with its seduction and deception, only a lyric transition can lift the audience's senses to apprehend the terror and raging of the "storm" which threatens the royal mother. Figures representing the realm of physical nature are made observers of the, from the ordinary point of view, lifeless and inanimate happenings of this sphere. This personification sets the natural events more obviously as objective parallels to the subjective events that transpire in the world of passion. In fact, the sea deities protest that they are not guilty of the act which occurs, over which also the mountain spirits sorrow. The sea would help Agrippina. But Nero, because of evil passion, is trying to drown her. The reactions of nature in the physical sphere emphasize the repulsiveness of the crime, which occurs through a trick, an artificial and unnatural seawreck. Nature even interprets the significance of its own reactions as well as the significance of the shipwreck:

"Die Laster sind die rechten Schiffbruchs-Winde" (III, 485).

Here Lohenstein demonstrates the intricately conceived connection between his rhetoric and the substance of his drama.
A personified natural setting makes sententious remarks by using images taken from its own area! The sea and rocky coast talk about the play's action in terms already familiar on the lips of the human actors--the water metaphors which one finds everywhere. For example, nature exclaims:

Wer aber mag bey Well' und Winden
Aufrichtge Treu und Libe finden (III, 495-496)?

Such a statement rests on the same metaphoric base as Anicetus' intricate remark about a trick wreck:

Was kan dem Zufall mehr als Schiffbruch
ähnlich sein?
Ist nicht das wüste Meer ein Spiegel
schnöder Sachen/
Ein Zirckel Unbestandes? Der ungepfältte
Nachen
Ein Brett/da nur der Tod drey vier kwer
Finger breit
Mit unserm Leben grünztzt (III, 356-360)?

Not only does the water serve as a metaphoric system to express the concept of Fortune, or the concept of Passion, but also it literally and factually merges with the metaphoric usage. The illustrations from nature are objective demonstrations of subjective or psychic phenomena. Above, for example, one may "translate" the metaphor, "bey Well und Winden", roughly as "in turbulent passion". Yet at the same time, one may accept the non-metaphoric factuality, that Agrippina cannot find loyalty
and love upon the water. The extension of a metaphorical system to such extreme limits characterizes also Elisabethan drama and the English metaphysical poets.

The chorus increases our awareness of witnessing a famous spectacle of history. Personified nature takes upon itself the job of preserving the memory of the event; its "stummen Zungen" (III, 525) will sing of the perilous night. Thus the very features of natural things reveal certain historical truths. The flood, the shifting element which washes away all forms of existence into the amorphous oblivion of time, will not annihilate this moment, this spectacle of wrecked majesty:

"Wird dis Gedächtnis nicht verzehrn" (III, 524).

We hear at this point virtually a promise by the poet himself that the greatness of Agrippina cannot vanish. Through reference to the famous myth, the birth of Venus from the sea, this thought broadens into a triumphant rescue of her existence from the engulfing shapelessness. Agrippina comes like the goddess back to land. Her attractive form re-emerges from amorphous nothingness as the incarnation of a principle out of the ever shifting waves of time. In using the metaphoric system of water, Lohenstein progresses from a purely narrative function for it, linking acts three and four, to the function of objective correlation between the concrete and metaphysical phenomena of the drama. Then, with the authority of
literary tradition, he overcomes or rather supersedes the
metaphorically developed spectacle of temporality, of
destruction and oblivion for man; out of this spectacle
a new truth of immortality comes. He shows through the
comments of the natural divinities that they rejoice in
Agrippina's rescue. Even though they represent,
metaphorically, the threat to her, they praise her
intrinsic attractiveness. One suspects some neo-
Platonic influences behind these statements by the
author.

Thus, although the queen is doomed and must be
claimed by the forces of time, Lohenstein pauses a moment,
allowing her a last victory. Through poetry he redeems
her, connecting her to the eternal Venus principle. He
lifts the curse of death for a few seconds to indicate
the other, permanent dispensation through fame, recorded
by art, as we hear in nature's prayer to the emblems of
an eternal order:

Du braune Nacht die du steckst Agrippin\nGestirnte Todes-Fackeln an/
Dein Schatticht Sarch sey weg gethan/
Die Sternen solln zu Freuden-feuern dienen
(III, 511-514).

The stars as fires of joy point toward immutable greatness.
Here, naturally, the literal meaning applies too, for the
stars shine brightly to illuminate her landing, as the
techniques of the seventeenth-century illusionary stage
could even simulate. But behind the scenic actuality of
this poetry one detects an old duality, death and fame. One must conclude that the deeper purpose of the choral narration has been to celebrate in a poetic interlude the rescue by poetry of a majestic form, to proclaim Agrippina's salvation through a memorial of her tragic experience.

We shall turn later to the fourth act, in which Nero shows signs of madness and plans brutally to murder his helpless mother, although she sends an emissary in all humility to him. The fourth chorus removes every shadow of doubt as to his intention, in so far as the chorus depicts the defeat of love by ambition. Love claims to be a protectress of mankind against time, death, ambition or pain, but is unmasked as ambition's helper and therefore condemned by time and death. The Orphic theme of love's survival over time through spiritual continuance (IV, 383-394) finds utterance but will have no precise application until Anthony's case in the African tragedies. The fact is emphasized, however, that Agrippina's attractiveness increases through adversity. Once again, when Nero views her corpse, this intoxicating attractiveness moves him. He even experiences renewed lust. In this sense, then, love's claim of survival does not lack justification. But one must not confuse the "love" of the fourth chorus with sentimental love; love here remains simply the Venus principle, an attractiveness
which acts in stimulating the world. Although it has
divine origin, as myths illustrate, it brings with itself
tragic implication, as soon as applied to human (political)
struggle. In this chorus, love's defeat by ambition,
Lohenstein refers to the story of Sophonisbe whom he later
treated in drama (IV, 413-414). Agrippina has also failed,
like Sophonisbe, in her attempt to conquer by means of her
charms the tendency toward tyranny, the ambition to rule
which obsesses Nero.

Rescue from shipwreck has made Agrippina all the
more terror-struck with a sense of defeat and with
anticipation of death. Sorrow has become the inner
characteristic of her isolation and fall. Her first
utterance in act five is:

"Bestürzte Trauer-Nacht! Du Abbild meines
Hertzen" (V, 1).

She sees herself as the victim of her son's absolute rule:

Der Schwefel brenne schon/der auf dem Rach-Altar
Der grimmern Tyrannney sol Fleisch und Blutt verzehren/
Dass seine Mutter ihm zum Opfer muss gewähren
(V, 28-30).

She thinks of her escape from the sea as an act of godly
vengeance, saving her for worse torments:

"Die Rache habe mir zu mehrer Kwal erhalten"
(V, 41).

In the hour of nemesis, Agrippina is obsessed by memory
of her past crimes. They are many and heinous, and their
punishment must be accordingly severe. But her violent
and lustful career, the remembered monstrosity contrast vividly with the pitiful loneliness and guilt of the defeated woman. She has dared to go to extremities and therefore now suffers in extremity, so that we sympathise as for Lady Macbeth in the hour when past evil haunts her. Agrippina is conscious of her wicked son as an instrument of faceless influences, of numerous political intrigues, persuasions, plans, for which she represents an impediment and which consequently manoeuvre to destroy her. As a heroine she stands uniquely apart from Phedre; her crimes are as real as Lady Macbeth's, as likewise her terror and guilty conscience. And she is quite aware of her political doom, for not moral guilt alone but also political guilt act as ultimate avengers of her sins. Lohenstein has succeeded in doing that which chorus two has intimated. He has united the drama of family crime and curse with the drama of historical fate. Predestined, and yet guilty—the tragedy of nemesis. Agrippina now meets her murderers with the profound knowledge of her destiny:

Itzt ist die Stunde dar
Die mein Verhängnäs hat den Sternen eingeschrieben/
Eh als mein Lebens-Kwäll im Hertzen ist beklieven.
Diss ist der Tag/auf den der Tod mich hat betagt/
Wie der Chaldeer Witz uns leider! wahrgesagt
(V, 92-96).

Anicetus’ judgment of Agrippina’s hubris uses the terminology of rationalism. He sees her as the Cartesian animal which presumed to challenge the universal mechanism with her inferior, subjugated mind.
One gathers the whole extent of her significance through the hopelessness of her plans and schemes. Her tragedy has also meant reason's failure; reason does not suffice in the struggle to control one's own fate; man is helplessly exposed to historical determination. Human nature is tragically split. Its mechanics, the natural impulses, drives, passions, enslave; yet its spirituality, the ideal directive power of reason, giving aspiration to the stars, cannot manipulate destined processes of earthly history.

Lohenstein does not, therefore, simply base his tragedy on man's conflicting attributes, reason and passion, drives and will, or however one may pair these dual manifestations. For we have witnessed in Epicharis how idealism can lead at best only to immolation and in Agrippina how crime leads to the same end, death. Lohenstein indeed derives his dualism and tragic sense from the Christian tradition. But only after his rationalistic dissociation from theology does he arrive at a view of tragedy as the drama of time itself. Time is unmasked as unredeemed, replete with violence and madness, with only tragic heroism as an answer to doom. Thus, when Agrippina hears the approach of the assassins, she cries out:

"Verräcktes Spiel der Zeit" (V, 111)!
Time makes little sense to man who is caught within its toils. But man by compulsion struggles vainly against its anonymous will.

Lohenstein's rationalism, in overcoming any Christian optimism that time is subject to redemption by God, cannot find any new solution to the question of the existence of evil or to the question of enslaving temporality. Instead, his rational analysis of man under the Cartesian categories leads into profound pessimistic discoveries, unearths the horrible manifestations of some perplexing irrationality in man and in his world. While Racine finds his way back to the ancient tragedy, which portrayed these irrational eruptions, by a subtle psychological introspection in his guilty heroine, Lohenstein discovers similar demonic phenomena in man the actor, man the wearer of many costumes, man upon a world stage. But one should not see the less psychologistic "roles" which Lohenstein presents as mere pantomime in an operatic decor. That temptation may be stronger in the case of Ibrahim Bassa or Epicharis, but certainly Agrippina is too fleshly real to be mistaken as a histrionic pose, an attitude. Lohenstein makes equally clear in the figures of Nero and Ibrahim Sultan that madness is more than blustering violence. They are marked by an irrevocable destiny which slowly aggregates unto itself every facet of their personalities. The play Agrippina ends not only with the queen's tragedy but also with the sentencing of Nero to mental torture. Ibrahim
Sultan in the second Turkish play, finishes in hopeless insanity.

A terrifying drama of family murder now forms the root of the Roman political drama. Matricide excites our tragic sense, which responds readily to irrational stimuli. Thus although doubtless he never quite becomes tragically central in the drama, even Nero begins to open certain pathways to our sympathy through his perplexity with crime and his inability to expiate. Conscience looms up in the fourth act hand in hand with forewarnings of doom for the guilt-ridden emperor. The ghost of Britannicus appears on stage before the sleeping man to give a picture of the inner visions, fears and torments which plague the monster. When he awakes from this nightmare, which represents his very soul, he no longer speaks with pompous assurance as in act one; all his human frailty and trembling expose themselves. As in the play Epicharis, any example of resistance, steadfastness, bravery or inner security calls forth in him animalistic furor, a desperate and jealous reaction of violence. Thus he shows traits of rabidity against Agrippina's faithful messenger, Agerin. Agerin belongs to the unusual higher echelon of heroes who act always honorably and truthfully despite the world's threats. In refusing to lie in order to save himself, he acts on behalf of his own image. Nero has no noble picture of himself as a guide. His mind
houses demonic deformities, which gain more and more control over his behavior. One cannot, therefore, dismiss the final scene of the play so lightly, as even Lunding does, as a mere "effect number." Nero's weakening mental hold on life has slipped to the extent that he has believed Agerin to be magically protected against pain (IV, 309). He cannot manage through inner resources to overcome the spell of his mother, whom other figures have already connected with magic (III, 78-81). He quivers in encounter with Agrippina's ghost, who accuses him of dishonoring her grave and condemns him to suffer forever pangs of conscience, unless he appeases her spirit through an offering at her burial place. Burrhus comes upon him at that instance, when he is ready to kill himself for peace. The emperor's conscience swells with torment and paranoid imagination; for him the night hides enemies, and he believes the army wishes to murder him. Nero finally turns to magic, because he feels no security in the world, no trust in nature.

Magic is powerless. The outcome of the rite is defeat for Zoroaster, the wizard, who has boasted that he can influence Fate. He has misused the heart of Mnester, a loyal servant who killed himself, as an example, to placate Agrippina's spirit and to assuage the dishonor of her burial. And therefore this pure offering loses its power when touched by Nero. The magician's invocation of the dead woman leads not to reconciliation but to mental shock. Nero faints at the apparition of his mother and
imagines falling into an abyss. The conjuring has brought him into the dark regions of death within his own mind, depths which he dared to plumb through crime. The final chorus now presents the spectacle of his mind, the story of eternal damnation, which the furies and the spirits of Orestes and Alcmaeon act out. The solution departs from Gryphius' religious or stoic catagories and draws closer to the psychologizing view of Shakespeare. Lohenstein warns against meddling with the abyss (V, 788-790), and demonstrates the nightmare of conscience (V, 855-856). Yet clearly the abyss, spawning manifestations of negative kind, such as lust, incest, murder, and madness, now emerges as a fountainhead of Fate. No longer does the bright ideal sphere of Epicharis nor the unshakable love of Ibrahim and Isabelle represent exclusively the mysterious realm of Destiny.

The failure of magic signifies not the triumph of rationality but rather the rational perception of an abyss in man. As Seneca has remarked (III, 82-83), even the physical and erotic charms are rationally perceptible forces and not an invoked spell. Anicetus, likewise a coolly calculating politician, has sought to reduce the phenomenon "Agrippina" to an element in a rationally understandable universe (V, 160-165), a clock-works of nature. Lohenstein is concerned deeply with the question of violence and crime, which he re-explores most thoroughly in the male figure of Ibrahim Sultan, his last original
inspiration for the drama, if one considers that Cleopatra
and Sophonisba have their roots in the same creative decade
as Epicharis and Agrippina. In Ibrahim Sultan, Lohenstein
treats the theme of magical beauty, that is charming woman,
not to glorify a heroine but to explain the helpless
depravity of an anti-hero. This feminine grace is divested
of the last traces of any irrational justification. It
becomes, without a doubt, one of the constants of the
universe, a neutral and rationally perceptible part of our
world. It is, however, often tragically the excitant lever
which triggers off inside the human animal a "mechanical"
response—in contrast, let us say, to a "spiritual" response.
As the essay has pointed out, Ibrahim Sultan reacts to Ambre
as a beast would, while the Begler-Beg responds in an
altruistic and noble manner. All the rational condemnation
of the former's wild urges does not, nevertheless, detract
from our sympathy for him as a driven man. Lohenstein may
not have gone as far as Shakespeare and made some equation
between character and destiny, but he has certainly indicated
in the case of weak Ibrahim an internal source of disorder.
The world is his ambiguous stimulator. In part the world
is guiltily responsible through a host of betrayers like
Sekierpana, partly guiltlessly responsible through its rarer,
victimized saints like Ambre. But the ultimate origin of
Ibrahim's trouble is within, is his internal chaos and lack
of intellectual guidance.

Lohenstein first indicates this internal situation
of disorder in Nero, but he only clarifies the tragic problem
in the final phase of Agrippina for the emperor. Although one may have believed all through the play in Nero's "guilt", only the finish shows how little guilty he is in a moralistic sense. His guilt pertains rather to helpless criminality. This exposure to a menacing world, the ambiguous stimulator and object of his reactions, assumes a terrifying proportion. The emperor is so little able to control the stimulated apparitions within his mind, so little able to cope with his life as a monster, that he must resort to magic. And what is magic in the rationalistic view of Lohenstein? It is a false extension of the rationalistic principle. While a Scipio, an Augustus, a Seneca can exercise his reason to steer a course through the endangerments of his world, the arena of history, Nero lacks this faculty. He tries to substitute an analogous kind of control for aid against the things which threaten him. His torment is expressed by the ugliness and complexity of the rites. Through Zoroaster, the best available wizzard, he exerts himself mightily to no avail. In a perverted way, Nero's agonized search for rest is the anti-heroic obverse to the martyrdom of an Epicharis. This is a monster, but this monster suffers. And Lohenstein tells us plainly that there is no possible escape for him from his abyss, not through reason, for he does not rule over his own mind, not through irrationality, for his chaotic impulses cause only worse pain, and not through supernatural help, for no God intervenes and no man's magic powers work against the facts of nature.
One may make other comparisons between Nero in *Agrippina* and the later Ibrahim Sultan. Their surroundings, the respective courts, do not provide any safe grounds on which the internally weak may rest and combat personal faults. The whole system of power, in which they are forced to act as rulers, is a dangerous and corrupt inheritance. The sole examples of life presented to the rulers, if one excepts the small number of saints, are the already masked functionaries of power. The world itself is peopled for them with dubious personalities who represent no firm, fixed principles. The most solemn exterior of a great man, the most holy appearance of a great event may prove to be inwardly a vile house of madness. Thus the process of the world and all the events which happen in it offer not simply a rationally comprehensible operation—like a clock's—but the externally apprehended facts of a system which one only describes in rational terms. The facts, however, are themselves masks of non-rational, incomprehensible impulses emitted by Fate. This ambiguous source for historical happenings is also behind the sacramental trappings of the world stage, behind the rationally propped-up authorities such as church and state. That is only partially evident in Nero's world, for Lohenstein does not spend as much time on the Roman beliefs as he does for African religions in his African plays. In *Agrippina* he concentrates wholly on the final scene of
magic. But the hollowness of the outwardly splendid and "rational" events of the grand world, in the higher spheres of religion and government, is portrayed in violent contrasts in the play Ibrahim Sultan.

The second Turkish drama alternates the dazzling spectacle of a coronation with the dark scene in a dungeon. It alternates discussions of law, right, tradition with naked acts of violence. Thus the fourth chorus claims bitterly that corruption and treachery lurk under the sacred regal or pontifical robes; all the outward glory masks the hideous inner truth:

Nim du den Rock des allgemeinen Heiles/
Gärt über ihn des rechten Äyfers Schwerdt/
Wer meynte? dass der Aufruhr meistenteiles
Gekrönte Köpfe so-vermummt verzehrt?
Hierinnen kan ein Stifter Nord- und Brandes
Ein Schutzherr seyn/ ein Vater's Vaterlandes.

Tisiphone/zeuch an die Priester-Kutte/
Nim die geweihte Fackel in die Hand.
Wer dächtte? dass die Infel schwer von Blutte/
Dies Rauchfass wer' ein Kwell voll Gift und Brand.
Dies Mummwerck kan als heilig dich erheben/
Wirstu gleich Gift im Himmelbrot eingeben
(IV, 507-518).

In such a tone, Lohenstein anticipates the change of rulers which takes place in act five as the result of a coalition between the Moslem church, the queens and the army against the empire's maddening tyrant, Ibrahim. While civil and ecclesiastical authorities formulate a concept of law under which they can judge their monarch, a law based on plain political necessities, he continues to parade in the role
which no longer factually exists. The mask, the state function, passes to others who bestow it upon a new ruler, and only the stripped human being remains, laden with all the crimes which his political existence has allowed, has even tempted him to commit. The naked guilty man finds no garment of majesty around him to cloak the abyss of his nature. Instead he awakes into the world as a dark prison, filled with spectres of doom and the horrors of madness.

In fact, Ibrahim Sultan's career fits the pattern of Calderon's *La Vida es sueno*, for he originally emerges from a dungeon and misery to absolute rule, which is his testing ground, and there in failure condemned again to nothingness, returns to his origin.

Now, at the time of crisis, the sultan becomes a ludicrous actor, a blind man playing out a show over which he images he is still judge. His position becomes all the more pathetic because of his mother's efforts to soften and improve him, so that she may save him. This monumental blindness in a hopeless extremity evokes even for the criminal or anti-hero who has murdered Ambre a sympathetic response. The very fact that he is being driven as a captive to his lusts and whims does not make him despicable, although theoretically he should be repugnant, because one senses that he has never really exercised or been able to exercise the power of moral choice. Rather he appears almost a pitiful victim to the state system of power and to the shift in the constellation of this power.
Lohenstein dwells on every step of Ibrahim's resistance to his destiny, as it appears in the various political events of his fall, because

"Doch diss ists Vorbild nur des rechten Trauer-Spiels" (V,451).

Although Nero never quite attains tragic stature, Ibrahim definitely does. And thereby Lohenstein recognizes fully the tragic implications of the non-heroic personality of the tyrant, which even Soliman has manifested in the first Turkish drama through torments of conscience. In the last play of his career, also the last Turkish play Lohenstein reaches the point where, like Shakespeare, he can create tragedy based on the weakness of man rather than upon his strength, upon his immorality rather than his morality, and upon his collapse rather than upon his perseverance to victory when bludgeoned by chance. In the figure of the sultan as the already deposed ruler who performs empty gestures, Lohenstein approaches the Shakespearean vision of man the futile actor, so bitterly and nihilistically stated by Macbeth in his final moment of existence ("out, out...".).

But Ibrahim has no last strong spite in him, and if to the end his blindness has captured our attention, it is his abject station finally which strikes us.

Like a little boy he seeks his mother's protection. Nero manifested this same pitiableness momentarily in act one in his encounter with Agrippina. Kiosem cannot, however, really move Ibrahim's enemies. He yells that he
would rather die than return into darkness of prison, yet
begs to be put into the nearest cell when he believes he
must otherwise be killed. This grovelling and broken figure,
once a king, disappears into physical and spiritual depths.
The play's final scene shows Ibrahim in his dungeon. He is
besieged by oncoming madness and his guilt, cursing the
remote outside world, trying to resolve to kill himself
rather than suffer shame. He grasps for stature:

Ein selbst-erkiester Tod ist rühmlicher und
besser/
Als der Tyrannen Spiel/der Hencker Opfer seyn
(V, 756-57).

He sounds momentarily almost like a martyr; Thereby he is
all the more pitiful, for he cannot find any means with which
to kill himself and starts desperately beating his brains
against the wall. The grim, ironic twist of Lohensteinian
Fate indicates how indeed Ibrahim is doomed to his
ignominy as anti-hero. Ambre's ghost intervenes and
states that he may not be granted even the slightest
reprieve, not even self-inflicted death. In this instant,
then, Ibrahim's guilt passes beyond the ordinary sphere of
moral condemnation into the amoral, inscrutable framework
of nemesis. He cannot help himself through any voluntary
act. The executioners enter, the mutes who strangle
political prisoners, while Ibrahim sees the spirits of
murdered bassas come to watch accusingly. In his ultimate
terror he asks to be choked rather than have to bear the
presence of ghosts any longer. The human mind has become something very different from the repository of unshakable ideals, as in the first Turkish play or Epicharis; it is also the gateway into time for eruptions of some frightful nightmare, a terror which seems attached to life.
CHAPTER V

LOVE AND POLITICS

Cleopatra of 1680 provoked several favorable commentaries toward the close of the nineteenth century, and more space has been devoted in secondary literature to this play than to any other by Lohenstein. In 1877 Kerkhoffs distinguished Ibrahim Beasa as the first Trauerspiel according to artistic rules in the German language. But he elevated to the rank of real tragedy only Cleopatra: "Es stellt uns zugleich dar den Höhepunkt der tragischen Kunst im XVII. Jahrhundert und die erste kunstmäßige deutsche Tragödie". He devoted almost his entire essay to a scene by scene analysis of the play, so important did it seem in his opinion, while he neglected entirely Lohenstein's Sophonisbe. Like Kerkhoffs, ignoring the sister African play of 1680, Conrad Müller in 1882 spent a large part of his essay in a discussion of Cleopatra. He compared the editions of 1661 and 1680 and was the first to point out a certain consolidation by Lohenstein of a tragic style from one version to the next. Thus, although
both commentators interpreted many changes negatively and found considerable faults in the dramaturgy itself, they established the grounds for an understanding of Lohenstein's ultimate purposes and merits. It was at least evident that the revised edition of 1680 represented a culmination for the playwright.

Sophonisbe languished in the shadow, although the gains in Cleopatra criticism were bound to attract attention eventually to common traits in both African plays. Cleopatra meanwhile was in ascendancy. Although apologetic in his tone, Bobertag in 1885 selected it to represent the best of Lohenstein for the series Deutsche National-Litteratur, volume 36. By 1927, still dismissing Sophonisbe, W. Martin saw in queen Cleopatra a perfect synthesis of heroic and courtly woman: "Ein Idealtypus dieser Art ist Cleopatra, wohl die eindringlichste Gestalt aus Lohensteins Dramen". The present discussion will deal with the emergence of the figure of Cleopatra (1680) as a tragic heroine. One may well put the question, why does Lohenstein entitle his play simply by the one name, especially since Anthony is so prominent in the initial action. Certainly also Augustus exercises a principal role at the conclusion yet does not win any claim to titular prominence. The answer to this inquiry must lead to some awareness of the precedence of the person Cleopatra over all other persons and considerations of the drama. Lohenstein's final tragic
view will be concentrated in her character and particular history, to which in a certain sense the characters of Anthony and Augustus are adjunct but not equal in importance for the author.

The three queenly tragedies, *Agrippina*, *Cleopatra* and *Sophonisbe*, have in common a rapid initial start, a precipitation of a crisis, in combination with the delayed appearance of the female protagonist. The first act here opens at the moment of virtual defeat for Anthony.72 The preceding historical circumstances and events which have led to the impass are not acted out on stage but are only reported, and Anthony dominates, already portrayed in the character of a doomed man. For him the play begins, then, at once as a play of nemesis. The key words, *Verhängnis* and *Glück*, appear which will run through the entire spectacle of undoing and collapse. Anthony, in flight and despair, cursing a power that is invincible, exhibits a considerable consciousness of history in the first lines:

> Keht Rom den heilgen Nil nun in ein rothes Meer?  
> Fleusst nichts als Bürger-Blutt statt fruchtbar Wassert her/  
> Wermitt die Tiber wird ersüßt/der Phrat beflecket?  
> Die Gräntz ist der Natur/der See ihr Ziel gestecket/  
> Der Schatten misst die Nacht/das Sonnen-Licht den Tag/  
> Nichts aber den August. Kein Bindnis/kein Vertrag  
> Ist seiner Wercke Maass. Rom mag die Welt besiegen/  
> Er sieget über Rom (I, 1-8).

A triumphant principle is on the march, politically as the Roman state, individually as Augustus; but Rome and Rome’s chief are more than mortal opponents with whom one can
fight on equal footing. Behind these theatrical masks, Anthony senses something irresistible, a destiny for himself and Egypt.

By his brooding and reflection in scene one, Anthony stands out as a very human hero, a man of tested strength but now undermined by weakness. He demonstrates momentarily a certain inability to struggle further or to act positively and must whip himself into aggressive defiance again. In contrast, the as yet unseen foe, who Anthony believes cannot be limited in any conventional way, seems inhuman. In Augustus' relentlessness is the terrifying aspect of a beast of prey, an apocalyptic monster in destructive rage:

Wer will den Tiger zwingen
Durch Gütte/der bereit in den zerfleischten Darm
Die Klauen eingesenckt? Hal heiss erhitzter Arm!
Der dem gefällten Wild auch Höhl und Nest zerstört!
Der/wenn der Stamm zermalmt/die Wurzeltn auch versehret/
Der/wenn der Löwe Raub und Négel eingebißt/
Der Löwin auch die Brust und ihre Jungen frisst
(I, 16-22)

The kingly lion without teeth and claws—so Anthony, with the pathos of a very sentimental hero, sees his hopeless role as protector of Cleopatra and her dynasty. Yet, in regard to Augustus, Anthony witnesses the conflict as primeval struggle for mastery and dominance, without suggestion of ultimate purposes beyond the facts of life.
and survival. He refers to a nest, a last refuge, and not to a higher set of values. Anthony is faced simply by the animal instinct and horror of downfall, beleaguered now in his citadel.

He fears only loss of personal freedom, simple animal freedom, loss of a last opportunity to determine his own life's course, and all the consequences stemming from capitulation. Egypt is Anthony's marriage portion; Cleopatra is his consort; the geographical, political and familial spheres of liberty overlap and are simultaneously ringed by threat. Rome, the empire menacing all outlying independent lands, is infused with the ethos of conquest and it drives toward enslavement of the whole world. Likewise Augustus aspires toward absolute power over all Romans, who formerly enjoyed republican freedom, toward annihilation of political liberties and toward his own emergence as tyrant. He wants to be the supreme ruler and moulder of history, with command over all individual destinies:

Für seinen Füssen liegen
Volck/Adel/Rath gebückt. Was Lepidus und ich
Besassen/hat er schon; und gleichwohl müht er sich
Zu spannen in sein Joch das Land/das ihr betretet
(I, 8-11).

Anthony would prefer to avoid the conflict and be left alone to enjoy his married happiness in a limited free domain of his own, but that is impossible in the face of Augustus' voracious pretensions. So great is Anthony's despair that
he thinks about sacrificing himself, since the gods hate him, for his family and the welfare of all. His initial speeches convey thus the first overtone of his nature as the priest-king who must die, a victim of an historical necessity and collapse of the state.

Lunding sees the successful statesman in Lohensteinian drama in terms of a machiavellian or masked personality and of his ability to survive. He concludes that Anthony has denied the vital urge by adherence to a personal truth: "Durch seine Hingabe an etwas Persönlich-Privates, Sinnlich-Unvernünftiges, nämlich die liebe, hat Antonius das Lebensprinzip des staatlichpolitisch denkenden Menschen verraten". In my view, Lohenstein has also achieved an interesting development of the stoic sentimental theme which appeared in Ibrahim Bassa, his earliest drama. There pure love was an inner goal of freedom and a higher authority on behalf of which Ibrahim abandoned the state and even submitted to death. The saintly lovers certainly acted through inspiration for private happiness but in spiritual opposition to the demands of their political ruler upon them as subjects. Anthony, however, has started life as a free Roman citizen and a noble and has retreated finally to Egypt, where he still maintains liberty and a share in the direction of government. His love suicide will elevate a quite terrestrial reality, his intimate connection to a beautiful and desirable woman, to an absolute status. He will not die executed on behalf of an idea, as say Ibrahim, but through tragic self-immolation.
upon the imagined loss of Cleopatra, his personal paradise and at the same time fellow ruler of the state Egypt. In scene one Cannidius reminds him, however, that he cannot hope through his death for any guarantee for his family or Egypt:

...Weil die Rämer ja zur Dienstbarkeit gebohren/
Weil Rom das Haupt der Welt die Freyheit hält
für Bley/
Die Knechtschaft für Gewien... (I, 68-70).

All is not yet lost nevertheless, if they fight, the Egypto-Romans,

...Wo noch ein Hafen sey
Der Freyheit und für uns (I, 7-72).

Thus the terms of Anthony's personal situation are made synonymous with the terms of Egypt's extremity. His urge to die, if he followed it, would mean in the opinion of several of his advisers political suicide for the realm.

Already, with the insistence on metaphors of sea and harbor, ship and storm, one perceives that a rhetorical proliferation underlies the language of the drama. Anthony cannot speak merely for himself. Individuals do not express themselves, in the sentimental sense of the Goethean age, but rather choose more or less fixed phrases and modes of expression, combine, recombine and heap these cliches in lieu of emotional intensity; they express usually more a
representative or generalized truth, which manifests itself at the particular moment, rather than a confessional truth, a truth of the soul.

Nonetheless, one may not regard an involved image, such as Anthony's first extensive use of the picture and theme of shipwreck (I, 23-30), as a mere convenient application of a standard cliche to an appropriate situation. These cliches not only carry inherent in themselves the philosophic premises of the Lohensteinian world but also serve as the theatrical masks of mysterious forces at operation in such a world. Behind the complicated intertwining of motifs move realities and verities which fit only into a suprapersonal, authoritative framework of language. But Lohenstein's fascination with the cliches of a classicistic vocabulary, the set of instruments he conveniently recombines and uses for assaying man in history, goes beyond mere utilization of a rhetorical system. Always there persists between the rhetoric and the real situation a more than emblematic relationship; often this relationship proves to be irony. Thus it is not surprising for example, that water metaphors occur so often, since Egypt is synonymous with the Nile and since its life demands control of access to the sea. The significance of Egypt as a land threatened on sea, by water, the dangerous element, will be discussed further.
Likewise, the characters who use the metaphoric language, which is representative and sometimes ironic, speak often with a self-consciousness as actors performing roles. Rhetoric fits their ironic awareness of themselves engaged in an action. Rhetoric underscores frequently the bitter realization that somehow they are individually, caught in struggle against "das verkehrte Spiel" (I, 86) of the world, involved in a universal metaphor. Without a religious conviction, but with only factuality of events, there exist no ultimate reasons and justification for the vicissitudes of history, for personal suffering, for helpless enchainment by the circumstances of one's own nature. Only the awareness of faceless opponent powers and of one's own role remains, a brooding obsession evident in the characters in Cleopatra. This status for man as actor or player is very important in Elizabethan and Spanish Golden Age theatre as well as in the German drama of Lohenstein.

But this general concept of life as theatrics, like several other important features of the drama, has led astray criticism of Lohenstein, who suffers usually from comparison to Gryphius in the manner indicated in the introduction. For example, Rütsch carefully excludes Lohenstein from "Baroque" drama, whose basis he believes is a world-theatre of theodicy best represented by Calderon: "Auch Gryphius gehört von unserem Aspekt aus in diese Ordnung. Lohenstein dagegen steht ausserhalb,
er hat den hier vorgebildeten neuen Heroismus in seinem Formalen isolisiert: seine Helden erhalten sich nicht aus der Hand Gottes zurück, sondern sie treten sofort absolut als solche auf und ermangeln eigentlich eines Gegenspiels". The counterplay is indeed not by a beneficent deity but as quoted, "das verkehrte Spiel", the workings of an historical fate. Unfortunately Rätsch, after painstakingly weeding out Lohenstein from among contemporaries who fit better into a Christian scheme of salvation or theodicy, does not take a further consequent step and declare Lohenstein a tragedian. Yet in Lohenstein's plays the actors' roles are decreed by fate!

One must ignore a powerful rash of pessimism in so-called "Baroque" drama, including the Shakespearean and Racian varieties, in order to use Gryphius, whose affinity to theodicy one readily accedes, as the sole measuring stick for Germany. Putting Lohenstein aside conveniently and taking up a generalization about Baroque typology, Rätsch, nevertheless, next excludes the possibility of tragedy in what he names Baroque dramaturgy: "In diesen Formen wandelt sich im Barock eine eigenartige folgerichtige Dramatik ab. Sie ist nicht tragisch, sie hat statt der Tragik den Gehalt der Theodizee. Diese erhält eine Kraft zum Drama aus dem Aufstrebenden Individualismus, der sich ihr als Partner entgegenstellt
und seine Auseinandersetzung mit ihr austrägt im Schauspiel des gespannten Gleichgewichts, im Trauerspiel des Gerichts, in der Tragikomödie der Verwandlung. 75 After suffering exclusion, Lohenstein now is tacitly included and Ratsch can comfortably confirm the myth of a monolithic Baroque.

But in Cleopatra the singular Lohensteinian pathos sounds in a court devoid of any but human judges, the audience of history. The inexorable factuality of existence obsesses the actor who strives to assert his identity and justify his role. In a world of catastrophe, in which blood, fire, treason, conquest are constant potentialities, only freedom from oppressive external claims seems to matter, yet no character can escape these claims. The need for freedom is, as will be shown for this drama, the quality which distinguishes those of noble spirit from the base and knavish. The harbor is then accordingly emblem of a refuge of peace and liberty. But Lohenstein's consciousness is the actual prompter of such an image, for it is, in historical fact, the specific harbor of Alexandria which is the ultimate retreat of the last great hero who resists as a free agent the encroachment of Rome, and of Rome's tyrant, upon all liberty. Also, the image of the destroying storm is specifically applicable to the great defeat at Actium, where Cleopatra's fleet fled the Roman sea power and precipitated the total collapse.
The literal circumstances of Anthony's situation are everywhere aptly in accord with the metaphors which dominate the first act and the whole play. It does not suffice to define generally the rhetorical language of Cleopatra; one must also explain the peculiar resonance between the pathos of the speakers and their quite accurately expounded predicament.

It is interesting that when Anthony recounts the defeat at Actium he portrays his hidden enemy, destiny, with the same terms which he applies to ambitious Augustus. It seems as if the very mood of nature was against him in the sea storm that ripped his fleet prior to the naval encounter. The world is a place, according to Anthony, "Wo das Verhängnis mir stets Zähn und Klauen wiess" (I, 89). He recalls his own fearlessness, which was insufficient to withstand the Roman tide of victory. Any further resistance will accordingly only be a gesture in extreme isolation. No trustworthy allies can be found. All desert the man marked by ill fortune. Yet a handful of warriors follow Anthony. They are the "Helden dieser Welt" (I, 122), who refuse to change the role in which destiny has singled them out, or so it at first appears, before the several defections to the camp to Augustus take place and before control of the harbor of Alexandria is betrayed to the enemy. The acceptance unto death of a role which demands personal suffering affirms for the
Lohensteinian actor his inalienable identity as a noble. Christian submission appears newly costumed in Lohenstein's drama as a pagan heroic stubbornness and at the same time as self-consciousness of treading the boards of a world-stage. Thus surrender is virtually impossible for the Anthonian type:

Der Tod sieht bitter aus/noch bitterer das Leben/
Das Schimpf und Ketten trägt (I, 147-148).

While self-consciousness of acting a role often introduces ironic notes, the concept of the world as play (Spiel) causes, in its variation as drama (Schauspiel), a most serious tone, as when Antyllus, Anthony's warrior son, continues:

Ich wil den Geist aufgeben
Mit Freuden/eh ich wil des Frechen Keyser's Knecht/
Der Römer Schauspiel sein (I, 148-150).

Bitterness and determination not to be a spectacle of unworthiness are counterbalanced by joy in one's own identity. And so the actor must play on, achieving affirmation and reaffirmation. With maintenance of role as the highest happiness, a supreme sacrifice is even desirable; thereby despite the consciousness of captivity in a role, in decreed circumstances of struggle, the ideal of freedom is upheld:

Gefahr is für Gefahr der beste Rath und Pflaster.
Wie kann das sicher seyn/was uns die Tugend Laster/
Ein Römer knechtisch heisst? Gesetzt/wir fallen hin;
Die Freyheit bleibt uns doch fürs Leben zum Gewien/
Ein nie verwelckend Lob fürs Ungemach zur Beute
(I, 159-163).
What scene one emphasizes over and over again is that in adversity in the world of power struggle a noble stirring ("edle Regung," I, 187) can bring surety. A man's free spirit brings greatness, and greatness guarantees him the only immortality, whether or not he is defeated physically.

The numerous antithetical statements of defeat as victory, death as immortality, extinction as a guarantee against time, reveal however, as this essay hopes to demonstrate, an irrational tendency in the resolution of personal destiny in Cleopatra. The terminology has its parallels in Church language. Warriors are distinguished with words usually applied to martyrs and virgins ("gültnen Ehren Lilgen", "Purpur unsers Blutts", I, 203, 204). The free man like the saint is expected to suffer death rather than admit base attachment to life. Earthliness is still felt to be corrupting, even though stoic malaise has replaced Christian passiveness. But Anthony represents a pathetic example of confusion. He is in quest for such purity and permanence because of his attachment to his wife and family. These are the tangible blessings he can well recognize. Yet like those heroes convinced of their own monumentality, who face death with unmistakable pride, Anthony too thinks about his picture ("mein Bild
in Eintrachts-Tempel", I, 252), his victories ("mit meinen Lorber-Zweigen", I, 244), and his lasting memory ("mich ins Zeit-Register", I, 232). His anxiety is that Augustus is stealing his fame and seeking to eradicate his glory: "Itzt such er mich und mein Gedächtnis zu zernichten" (I, 255). August plans ruthless annihilation of all opposing glory and nothing is able to restrain his inhuman ambition (die Rasery zu stillen", I, 236).77

Because, however, Anthony is more human, he suffers from the conflict of honor and love. He feels his nobility, but senses painfully that the physical area where he can exercise it and enjoy it has shrunken to a last minimum. One sees that he is willing to die mainly because he does not want to abandon his human environment, for he does not grasp the opportunity of flight from Egypt to Iberia in order to entrench "die freien Sinnen" (I, 145) in a craggy exile, as Canidius already suggests. Anthony calls Egypt the present fatherland of Romans, that is, of the free, and refuses to abandon it and Cleopatra. For him the crisis is double. He fights ostensibly to prevent the eradication of liberty, Augustus' aim:

Dass Niemand ja von Rom wo eine Zuflucht habe/
Und dass mit mir und euch die Freyheit geh zu Grabe (I, 271-2).

But actually he needs Egypt to sustain him vitally, and, as Junius puts it, exile and escape would only prolong the agony of existence: "Die Zeit vermehrt das Wahl/ein ferner Lauf den Strom"(I, 321).
Thus the ideal of freedom proves in Anthony's case to be near to a suicidal attitude. He connects the joyful sphere of liberty to a specific terrestrial area, to the realities of his domestic life, to a woman he loves and to her country. Since he must survive or perish with Cleopatra, Anthony's life is linked to Egypt's. In glorifying Anthony to win his continued support, Cleopatra's chief minister Archibius' words reveal the extent of the bond and also foreshadow the spectacle of a doomed union:

Wenn Tacht und Oel entgeht den loderdn-hellen Flammen/
So zeucht der letzte Strahl die ganze Glutt zusammen;
Wenn sich der Sonne Rad senckt in die diästre See/
So sieht man: dass sie erst mit Blutte niedergeh;
Wenn Seele/Sinn und Geist aus Marck und Adern stertzen/
So fängt der Tod erst an zu kämpfen mit dem Herzen;
So mag/wenn Stadt und Reich mehr keinen Atfen hat/
Die Sonne dieses Reichs/das Hertze dieser Stadt
Der grosse Fürst Anton mit letzten Tugend-Strahlen
Der Freyheit einen Sarch/ihm sein Begräbnfs mahlen
(I, 399-408).

No praise could be more moribundly portentous while being quite accurate. As future events will reveal, the emphasis on the heart (Hertze), characterizing Anthony, is appropriate in more than one way. Thus far, in the first scene of act one, "heart" summarizes his heroism and his readiness to sacrifice for the commonweal, attributes of a great prince, whose magnanimity is thought to derive
from the inborn quality of freedom (Freyheit). His "heart" manifests, however, a second and negative fealty, a passionate connection which seems most unfree.

In every instance, then, the duplicity of Lohenstein's dramatic idiom prepares one for a tragic pagentry. The realm is in dissolution, the harbor stronghold too precarious a defense. The inner conflict latent in Anthony's contradictory situation reflects itself in the language of the play in important words and images with double meaning. Anthony, former triumvir, stands for the great Roman virtue, reason, yet fights against the empire of Rome to preserve a foreign kingdom ("mein Heyrath Gutt", I, 14), a kingdom marked by every sign of death. Its queen is the world's wonder of fleshly and womanly beauty, of beguiling passion, and he defends her in defending Egypt, her state. In fact, Anthony is not merely Anthony the noble Roman who can talk in terms of courage and liberty, but also part of Cleopatra's domain and her devoted lover; he is married to his destiny.

One may profitably spend time examining the case of Anthony in scene one, for his case is the first statement of factors which, in another guise, determine the lot of Cleopatra. Outwardly he is the Roman and male figure, and as such normally should be associated with reason. Outwardly she is the Egyptian woman and should be linked with passion, as at first she appears to be, coming on stage in tears with
the heated words, "Mein Fürst! mein Haupt! mein Hertz!" (I, 462). Cleopatra has witnessed numerous omens in the temple. Thus her initial appearance is under the sign of the animal gods of Egypt at the downfall of their country. The motif of sensualism merges with that of a cult, in which divinities have taken bestial forms. Here one uncovers a startling variant of the paradoxical duality, whether of freedom and attachment or of reason and passion, which troubles Anthony. Although the gods stand for the life-forces of the country, their earthly aspect is weighted by dark and mysterious portents. For example, the sacred ox, in which Osiris soul is supposed to have taken dwelling, goes berserk, hurling itself to extinction. Thus the spiritual theme of self-immolation, the Roman, Anthonian, or sentimentalized magnanimity unto death, appears in its Egyptian, Cleopatran or animalistic variation, in a frightening example of mysterious madness.

The sacred creature, symbolizing in the temple the whole realm of Egypt, has irrationally destroyed itself. In describing Anthony as a "priest-king" who must die, one uses the term comparatively, whereas Cleopatra is in fact the chief priestess of Egypt. Anthony's relation to the divinities is, however, established. In connection with Cleopatra's appellation as Isis, he is called Osiris. Just as Osiris' soul has entered the animal nature of the ox, so also Anthony has entered in the kingdom of animal gods,
Egypt. Caesarion interprets the temple omens a sign that all the gods are striving to annihilate the Egyptian house. The mutual collapse of the two chief representative divinities certainly portends only ill:

Das Bild der Isis stand
Bestärzt/wie da Osir vom Typhon ward zerrissen;
So dass zur Unzeit auch die Hohen-Prister liessen
Das grosse Trauren aus (I, 514-507).

Although he does not interpret the harming of the temple’s Isis and Osiris in the light of a "tragedy", bemoaned already by the priests, Anthony explains the situation in terms of the familiar duality, reason versus passion, or spirit versus flesh, and himself links the Egyptian problem to the omen:

Ach! wolte Gott! die Sinnen
Des Leibes tödteten nicht Muth und Rath in dir!
Den Typhon ist das Fleisch/ und die Vernunft Osir;
Was Viehisch in uns ist/ermordet Seel und Leben
(I, 520-523)

Typhon, the ass, incarnates brainless, vindictive and stubborn nature. Ironically, Anthony, a Roman who ought to and believes he does uphold the principle of rationality, is operating from within the Egyptian world of animal gods, a realm of the flesh and passion. Yet he refuses to see what Caesarion sees, that "Egyptens Untergang/und Ende
sey nun dar" (I, 546). In the presence of Cleopatra, he grows more and more determined to resist fate and to rally a defense. He still hopes to placate the gods and fate, while on the other hand Cleopatra herself knows that,
"Ach! das Verhängniss beugt sich durch die Andacht nicht" (I, 550). Under her spell, Anthony actually seems to become blinded to the threat and to believe in a remote solution, keeping up the illusion that fortune may reverse in his favor, while he exhorts her to act according to her station, that is, according to the ideal of freedom and the free spirit!

The confrontation with Cleopatra achieves two ends dramatically. On the one hand, it indicates the divided nature of a tragically noble hero, Anthony, while announcing the Egyptian themes of doom. On the other hand, it presents the warm figure of the queen, who appears at first sensual and dominated by passion, shaken with emotion in her relation of signs and wonders. The role is convincing, which all the more prepares for her appearance in the second act, when under this mask of the flesh a most calculating reason reveals itself. The principal attention of act one still focuses on Anthony. In the third scene, the remote possibility comes true, and an unexpected turn of fortune occurs which could promise him literal freedom. Lohenstein added this episode, the embassy of Sertorius from Cantabria, to the original materials. The result of the addition is a sharper delineation of the character of Anthony. Sertorius' ship comes like a reply to the grim realities.
In Cleopatra's words:

Das Unglück fesselt uns ja rings übher mitketten/
Und das Verhängnis leuchtet sogar der Hoffnung Licht
Mit schwartzen Finger aus (I, 572-573).

But the new ambassador is from the rocky crags of a free land; he is the herald of freedom who bears a commission of hope to Anthony, that he should come to lead the Iberian struggle against encroaching Rome, should leave the debacle of Egypt and renew his cause, freedom's cause. Spain is a region that can boast yet:

Dass sich mit uns durchaus kein Römisch Joch
gefütet.
Weil wir nun lieber Asch/als ohne Freyheit
sind (I,600-601).

Sertorius warns Anthony that:

Es ist nur Thorheit/stehn/
Wo das Verhängnis uns heisst andrer Wege gehn
(I, 625-626).

He liberates the concept of destiny from its melancholy aspect of inevitable defeat and collapse and makes it positive through the ideal of freedom. He puts before Anthony the fresh potentialities of decision. Indeed, Spain's spirit is enheartening in comparison to the death-laden Egyptian atmosphere. Just at this moment a second envoy is announced, Augustus' ambassador Proculejus, as if fate wishes to intervene and interrupt the influence of a valid hope. The council convenes in scene four with Cleopatra absent, to deal with him.
Proculejus introduces a new element, the cold reasoning of statesmanship, behind which one espies Roman ruthless will to power. He too thinks in terms of a spectacle, when he says Augustus offers peace, "Weil er dass blutige Spiel nicht ferner schauen kan" (I, 662). But in the tyrant's sphere of operation, the word Spiel retains its most primary connotation of play, of a game, the political game here, furthered by deceit, dissimulation and treachery. Since Proculejus is addressing former Romans, he attempts to split them from their Egyptian people by extending Augustus' offer of a settlement. At first he chides Anthony's alliance to Cleopatra. An argument takes place, and Anthony, who probes for Augustus' actual attitude, hurls counter-examples to all the envoy's points of promised security. Obviously, the beleaguered hero, believing that Egypt is the new homeland of Roman or free men, is reluctant to be dislodged, and especially since he distrusts Augustus, the unfathomable schemer. Finally the question is reduced to a taunt that Anthony, a noble Roman, is captive of a base passion, an accusation which he counters with a heated defense of the queen:

Proc. Wie mag ein solcher Held sein Fall-Brett so sehr lieben?
Anth. Mein Glück is/wie ihr Ruhm/ins Sternen-Buch geschrieben (1,739-740).

The first overt discussion of the deep conflict in Anthony as a Roman brings out that the Roman ratio, represented by
Proculejus, is not only clear thinking or reason but also raison d'état, political thinking which recognizes no power higher than the will and no earthly ties that are sacred, if political necessity demands their dissolvement. As in the earliest play, Ibrahim Bassa, freedom is a paradoxical aspiration. Although the ideal is the ability for free decision or capability of controlling one's own destiny through will, Anthony's choice to fight for Egypt and his own married happiness, his Glück and Heyrath-Grott, seems to bind him dangerously. It is almost as though freedom itself must remain a supernatural aspiration, which has no satisfactory temporal or terrestrial sphere of application. Refusing to betray his queen and seeking delay, Anthony agrees to a preliminary appeasement of Augustus, the release of the hostage king Artabazes.

Scene five continues in closed council the exposition of Anthony's dilemma. Junius, a figure of loyalty in the play, sees the impasse: "Also zermalmt das Glück auch steinerne Gemüter" (I, 892). The statement, like so many, is both specific and ironic. On the one hand, fortune deals Anthony, the rocklike soldier, a crushing blow. On the other hand, happiness, so desirable present good, destroys his Roman character. Junius puts the problem directly:

Jun. Anton hat zu gewinnen Ruhm/Ehre/Freundschaft/Thron/wo er sich selbst gewinnt.
Ant. Und alles Knechtisch thut/was Caesar an ihn sinnt? Canid. Es ist kein knechtisch Werck sich selber Überwinden (I, 896-899).
The officers seek to convince him that he must subordinate beauty and love, that the exigencies of ruling outweigh all other things. Now in the face of so bitter a choice Anthony begins to emerge tragically; his great flaw is his absolute aspiration to remain by his decision already made, his longing for loyalty and truth in a world of intrigue and deception. He asks: "So schätzt ihr Eh und Treu und Eydschwor so gar schlecht?" (I, 902). Anthony opposes to the political world of duplicity, as did Ibrahim Bassa, a unified or sacramental ideal. In his eyes as to Ibrahim, the validity of one's love oath is all-important. Anthony carefully distinguishes his former callous political marriage to Octavia and his genuine attachment to the Egyptian queen. Love for her has made him believe in the sanctity of his word. Love opens his eyes to ideal and non-existent conditions of life, to permanence, trust, and lawful bonds between himself and another human being. Anthony's answers in the debate about responsibility for control of one's destiny bring out the theme which eventually will dominate the spectacle of his fall—the theme of that other, non-existent realm, not governed by reason or will:

Ant. Nicht wo Vernunft und Zeit kein Regiment mehr hat.
Die Liebe lässt ihr Reich durch Klugheit nicht verwirren (I, 941-943).
If one were to establish a hierarchy of values in Lohenstein's "Baroque" view, as Schaufelberger does for example and applies throughout his commentary, seventeenth century mechanistic psychology would dictate that ratio stands above passio. Reason allows the spiritual component of man to be active, while passion makes him literally passive, a sufferer of the dictates of his own corporeality. Descartes' famous statement, "I think, therefore I am", even places the weight of conviction in one's existence upon the intellect, mind, spirit, or soul rather than upon the physical evidences or the bodily senses. Yet Anthony gives us pause. According to the system of values ruled by reason, only the sultans of the Turkish plays or a Nero should speak of love as a force with a right of its own. And nevertheless, somehow Anthony, not a sensual casuist excusing his own baseness, proclaims almost like an Ibrahim Bassa love as a higher authority, a non-earthly absolute reference. Not even time bounds it. As for Ibrahim, love is not a pretext for carnality, despite the obvious sexual relationship with Cleopatra. Anthony's domestic bliss, in his own words, suggests something akin to the extratemporal bliss promised by religion and used as a reference for religious activity on earth, where bliss is so lacking. Love fixes Anthony's eyes upon something else than the demands of political necessity. This irrational, autonomous and direct power creates a
blindness to the crooked historical world of real power struggle. At the end of the act, despite warnings that Cleopatra has acted deviously and is negotiating with Augustus, Anthony pays no heed, even though he himself senses that love is a force which makes him disregard danger. 79

Anthony combines the steadfastness of Ibrahim with the helplessness of the sultans, ideal love with passionate bondage.

The death motif now intertwines with the motif of refuge and freedom. These components of an irrational impulse toward self-annihilation are involved in the story of Anthony's love. He sees himself as a new Paris, unable to do otherwise, although it means a fall. He denies man's free will, in fact, to act against fate:

Ant. Was das Verhängnis schleust muss Erd und Mensch erfüllen (I, 959-950).

Thus, whereas in the case of stoic Ibrahim love was associated with the hero's higher spiritual faculties,
Anthony elevates fate above control even by human reason. And from his original proclamation of freedom as the ideal, he has moved to acknowledgment of doom. He cannot be touched by the argument that every man is the smith of his own fortune. He cannot act as a Masanissa, the king who overcame his love for the Carthaginian queen Sophonisbe on behalf of power through alliance with Rome. One may ask how, if Anthony rightly suspects Augustus, he can be blind? That will become more evident upon the appearance of Cleopatra in the second act when she displays not only her bewitching nature but her cunning. It is enough thus far to perceive at work in Anthony's soul an unconquerable love that, like the ideal of personal nobility through freedom in Ibrahim Bassa, does not fail in the face of death. Anthony later keeps his word that not even the physical removal of Cleopatra would alter his attitude: "Kein Lieben wird auch nicht durch ihren Todt erkalten" (I, 1012). Isabelle, a much purer figure, expressed this Orphic survival of love over death in Lohenstein's very first play in rejecting the threats of the sultan. One sees how far Lohenstein progresses from the simpler martyr tradition to the portrayal of a great tragic love.

A chorus follows Anthony's statements of absolute loyalty but it does not continue as one might perhaps expect upon the theme of love. There is nevertheless a deep logic connecting the first scenes with the abstract plane of the entr'acte, where the author retreats from the
historical events of the plot. A group of mythological figures appear to create an allegorical framework for understanding the melancholy happenings in the segment of "time" just witnessed. On the extratemporal level of pure ideas, they celebrate and acknowledge the supremacy of one eternal power, Fortuna. The hierarchy of representative gods, Jupiter, Neptune and Pluto, pay homage to her sceptre, using once even the same words with which Anthony, describing August (I, 4), opened the play:

Wir stelln uns ein/und fallen dir zu Füssen;  
Um/große Göttin/deines Zepters Gold/  
Der der Natur die Gränten setzt/zu küssen  
(I, 1069-1071).

The proliferation of rhetoric thus binds the actors of the plot with the allegorical commentary into a total dramatic scheme. The gods justify Fortuna's regulation of events in the world and believe that a superrational will is active in her. One cannot perhaps reason out fortune's meaning, but only the foolish reject her power as aimless: "Die Thorheit pflegt das Glücke blind zu nennen" (I, 1077). Just as the three realms of air, water and earth (the underworld) stand beneath Fortuna, so there are subordinate godheads under Jupiter, Neptune and Pluto, forming the pyramidal structure of an absolute ruler's empire, an empire of unquestionable tyrannic authority, in which all lesser wills are simply agencies of the highest will. The tripartate division, which
occurs at every level or rank, gives to this picture of the universe under the aegis of fortune correspondence to the Christian trinitarian mystery. This parallel trinitarianism is however expanded to the extent where one perceives that the most microscopic details of the world must ultimately be significant and derive from some aspect of universal truth. This conception of authority and of authoritative universal verities, infinitely divisible into component abstractions, descending onto the lower echelons and by implication onto all creation, indeed fits the pattern of a theodicee -- if the supreme mover is conceived of as beneficent. Here the figures of the chorus obviously extol Fortuna. Yet one makes a mistake in seeing even a deistic theodicee, as in the favorite seventeenth century mechanistic view of a universal clock works, behind this chorus. For fortune, as other choruses and passages of the play reveal, is only the regal mask of the will operating in the universe. This will receives no name here and remains in the background, but elsewhere Lohenstein calls it fate.

The absolutistic structure of the chorus corresponds also to the facts of Augustus' position in the Roman world, and in general to the Renaissance prince, as tyrant, the absolute will who cannot be questioned any more than God could be. Love, however, is not even mentioned as a godly power. Not until the second chorus is there an allegory
of love, Venus' triumph. Here, however, all the figures are distinctly masculine and partake of the same rational functionality in a world ordered by a higher arrangement, the seemingly arbitrary Fortuna. The ironic twist is that the chorus links the exposition of Anthony's emerging passion to the exposition of Cleopatra's hidden rationality. In respect of will, she is more masculine than her sentimentally loyal consort.

In act two the political intrigue by Cleopatra begins, clearly observed from the point of view of the audience, as she seeks, in contrast to Anthony, to control her own destiny through reason. With calculation she plans to use the power of love against him. Lohenstein achieves a dramatically striking reversal of the normal situation of the martyrdom tradition, where the most sensual figures are unreasonable, sometimes practically insane tyrants with huge sexual appetites; thus he intensifies our awareness in Cleopatra of a discrepancy, inherent contradictions, in the human nature of the paired protagonists. He portrays the supposedly passionate, sensual queen not as a victim of love or lust but rather as the incarnation of political man, while Anthony, the noble Roman, evolves as the tragic lover. He in turn is not really a negative example like the sultans but a more positively interpreted sufferer. Cleopatra belongs to
the group of Lohensteinian courtesans first encountered in the violent schemers and sexual manipulators of power, ranging from a less problematic Roxelane to the tragic Agrippina. If the latter demonstrated an exotic combination of perversity and anxiety, this is not lacking in Cleopatra. But the Egyptian queen exhibits a more chilling realism, a cold rationality which has command of the hottest desires. Her attractiveness is even more perverse, if one considers that she exercises it not to keep in control a sensual monster, but to undo a helpless hero. Her coming monolog proves her to be quite conscious of politics as a vicious game (piel) and of history as theatrics (WeltSchauspiel). She expresses awareness of herself as an actress well versed in all the tricks of appearance and pretense. All her acting is also on behalf only of a role, her role as queen. One does not as yet recognize any deeper, truer person, speaking behind the mask. Lohenstein virtually equates her political existence with her histrionic personality.80 Already this role evokes pathos, since the actress, who is obliged to struggle to maintain her regal mask, seems somehow to have no other choice; yet at the same time, she acts in such a manner as to destroy the sole alternative, which is what Anthony's love represents and promises. While Anthony also surrenders to the demands of an inner truth and thereby accepts doom, Cleopatra resists the eruption of fate within her domain and within
herself. She presumes to employ all the wiles of her considerable talent and long experience in survival against a master player, Augustus.

The first scene reveals her intricately fencing with the secret envoy from Augustus in order to find a vulnerable spot in the Roman, but to keep up her own guard. The emissary, Thyrsus, exemplifies her opponent's craftiness in persuading her that she is on secure ground and that his attentions are sincere. Cleopatra gives herself out to be overwhelmed and stirred by the emperor's confession of love but argues that Anthony affords her a guarantee which she is afraid to relinquish. Thus she draws out of Thyrsus the hoped-for offer that Augustus will indeed accept her as his queen. The bargain she strikes is cynical. Thyrsus, with typical Roman coldness, puts the matter in what he assumes is the proper light, political necessity, and perhaps in this way fools the politically oriented queen into believing that Augustus has sound reasons for wanting her. Thyrsus' hint is brutal:

Es ist nicht Grausamkeit/Genad ists/wenn man tötet
Den/der sich selber zu ermorden nicht entröthet
(I, 69-70).

The implication is that Anthony, somehow suicidal because unpolitical, has lost all grip on things and his own worth. In his stead Augustus will fulfill the proper majestic role which is equal to Cleopatra's station.
Thyrsus' disdain for Anthony as a fallen leader and potential suicide masks, however, a single purpose, to destroy by any means possible the existing bond between him and Cleopatra. For indeed it is only Anthony's love which holds Egypt for her against the foe; he is the last barrier. The spectators of this drama enjoy the ironic perspective in viewing the game, since they know that Augustus has attempted unsuccessfully to turn Anthony against the queen and that only his loyalty has so far saved her. Her own disloyalty, which exercise of her rational freedom from ties of love makes possible, leads her to use his devotion treacherously and undermine her own state. Lohenstein, a true tragedian, goes far beyond the black-and-white dualism of many seventeenth century authors who are constrained to present the spiritual faculty of man only in triumph, albeit the triumph is an edifyingly sad victory in martyrdom in many cases. In Cleopatra he shows that rationality, freedom from passion, supposedly the means of controlling destiny, also fails. The Roman or political ideal, of which Augustus is the epitome, is in the final analysis no explanation moralistically of success. The drama will soon demonstrate step by step how, although committing herself wholly to politics, Cleopatra cannot avoid fate. It will be Cleopatra's tragedy that reason is not sufficient to enable her to see every truth in a
complicated world of deception, where one can quite rationally miscalculate. For *raison d'etat* is based on a fallacious presumption, which amounts here to hybris, that an individual can predict history by manipulating others, and reason overlooks the very principle of freedom upon which it rests, according to which, however, the persons in the calculation may be themselves calculators. Reason is presumptuous to the extent that it pretends to usurp the function of fate, the inevitable but non-calculable process of a world in which the many individual apparent freedoms and likewise the apparent bondages are all subordinate to an uncontrollable world-process.

Lohenstein does not any longer glorify love as in *Ibrahim Bassa*, where it is connected with ideal and absolute freedom, yet one may rightly regard *Cleopatra* as his realistic, and perhaps sardonic, development of the old conflict between love and politics, politics being the hard world of brute force. If reason is the cold instrument of survival, the political attribute, it is nonetheless blind in its own fashion, blind to an area of freedom from historical circumstances. Love, which can never dissimulate, represents this other sphere. Unfortunately love is so simple and straightforward that reason can easily manipulate it. Lohenstein's view thus modifies the basic elements of a theatre of dualism, already present in the martyr plays, and imbues these with deep pessimism. Neither acknowledgment of destiny
nor struggle against destiny obviates disaster. Neither submission to one's human nature nor the attempt to master and manipulate it changes one iota the determined outcome. The ideal and absolute attachment to a vision of bliss and permanence, which Anthony shares with the martyr, does not redeem him from the enslavement of passion. The rationality of Cleopatra only draws her into a treacherous whirlpool of time, historicity, impermanence, and she joins not the elite of martyrs who keep faith but the ill-famed oath-breakers, the sultans and Nero.

But in her plan to outwit disaster Cleopatra is far from a hateful figure. The tragic distortion of truth, which her game necessitates, must strike one as disturbingly ironic in its implications. She reverses all the facts and accuses Anthony of plotting a betrayal. Thereby she herself plays a part in what Anthony, in the play's first scene, called "das verkehrte Spiel" (I, 86). She even uses the same images, which Anthony earlier applied to Augustus, portrays her lover as a ravenous beast that goes so far as to violate nature itself, "in eigenes Fleisch zu rasen" (II, 133). The theme of topsyturvyteness emerges often in close company with the theme of berserk frenzy. To convince her closest circle, Cleopatra uses a strong argument for the court, so laden with intrigue:
"Wer zweifelt/ da er ja so heimlich mit uns spielt"
(II, 159)? She pretends that Anthony, an open person, wears a mask! Caesarion almost upsets Cleopatra's acting by raising the issue of Augustus' true nature; he claims that Augustus will seek to exterminate him as a son of Julius Caesar, and possible rival, and this fear exposes the conqueror's brutal aims. Suddenly Cleopatra is enraged, with an anger which she can never act out against Anthony, because the thought of such treatment stings her pride. Something in her womanly nature responds. The possible transgression upon Caesarion's birthright would be also a crime against her, injury to her motherhood of him by Caesar. She cries out against the suggested monstrous deed by a cousin:

Unmenschliches Tiger-Thier!
Willst du Natur und Blutt / Sohn/ Vater/ Mutter scheiden (II, 208-209)?

Worry about Caesarion leads finally to pangs of conscience over her dissimulation, misgivings which illuminate another side of her character and suggest tragic conflict. She fears what the future may say about her, a woman who goes against the law of nature, against her marriage, for political gain: "Wird Welt und Nachwelt uns genung zu ldstern wissen?" (II, 234). Augustus is, despite his greatness or even because of it, inhuman, cold,
precise, ruthlessly free from binding laws, a manipulator. Cleopatra begins to feel that heaven will curse her for such a union as she projects. She now views the oncoming night as an approach of sorrowful events, in the same words which Agrippina used in the first line of act five of the Roman play, when she felt overpowered by crime and doom: "Bestärtzte Trauer-Nacht!" (II, 244). Cleopatra has not, however, reached the Roman queen's stage of tragic awareness where she can make a complete identification between her own soul and the tragic happenings: "Bestärtzte Trauer-Nacht! Du Abbild meines Hertzen" (Ag. V, 1). Nevertheless Cleopatra is not a dramatic character easy to define and dismiss as a schemer like the earliest courtesans. Like Anthony she is filled with contradictions. If previously she has shown herself consciously connected, as priestess and queen, with the cult and politics of the realm, now the first convincing signs of a profounder identity as royal mother and spouse manifest themselves. This identity cannot or at least does not assert itself and defy compelling necessity until the end of the drama.

Lohenstein capitalizes on a confrontation between the loving husband and father, Anthony, and Cleopatra, who for sake of appearance implores him to spare his
Anthony's warm affection, his human flaw, is very moving.  

Anthony's un-Roman side becomes clear in his rejection of "appearance":

Man muss bey Römern sich oft Römisch stellen an.

Anthony, in order to demonstrate his good intentions, accedes to Cleopatra's desire for a proof of loyalty, the execution of Artabazes, an act which must sever any relation with Augustus. She obtains this concession through impassioned denunciation of treachery and calumny. Anthony makes a grand protestation of his devotion to her and swears he totally rejects any proposal of the emperor. Cleopatra, who believes herself in control of fate, thinks that she is flattering Anthony when she says:

Des milden Himmels Gütte
Verleihe Glück und Sieg dem edelsten Gemütte/
Dem das Verhängniss selbst sich unterwerffen muss (II, 409-411)!

The manner in which Anthony's "noblest spirit" does triumph in an unexpected way over fate becomes clear later in the play. Now, however, all attention is focused on the figure of Cleopatra, who in the second act assumes remarkable stature. She takes the stage alone, in a monolog.
This speech is significant because it shows in isolation and unmasked the problem of the political woman, who is deceived by her own rationality and the belief in her ability to manipulate passion. Notable, however, is the lack of a confessional tone and the persistence of a rhetorically determined mode of expression. The metaphoric structure of the drama's language pervades everywhere. Nevertheless here is definitely interior speech, comparable often to a Racinian soliloquy.\textsuperscript{82} It begins as an outburst that reveals the anxiety and next the compensatory overconfidence of the queen:

\begin{verbatim}
O Strudel-reiches Meer der jammer-vollen Welt!
Die Segel stehn gespant/die Netze sind gestellt
Uns in den Hafen/ Ihn ins Garn und Grab zu führen. (II, 427-429)

Wo sind die Nebel hin/ die uns das Licht benahmen?
Die Sonne der Vernunft vertreibt den eiteln Dunst. (II, 434-435)
\end{verbatim}

Cleopatra's privacy is revealing. Reflection on the uncertainty even of Anthony's loyalty and affection allows insight into her compulsive need to use trickery. Her mind is populated with the fears and suspicions of a ruler. She actually feels surrounded by deceit, treachery, calumny. Her position results because she herself plays with others and destroys her own foundation of trust, the correspondence of appearance and reality, that sacramental unity for which Anthony stands. In Cleopatra's mind her lover remains
ever a potential enemy, simply because she is unable to think in any terms other than those of her political existence: "Denn/ dem ist nicht zu traun/ der gleichfalls uns nicht traut" (II, 452). The blind inconsistency of such reasoning is clear to the audience. Cleopatra still assumes that Anthony may be acting like other politicians, with distrust toward all, even toward her, and that his perfect behavior may be just a perfect dissimulation. Therefore she hastens frantically to do away with him, before his devotion may prove to be merely an appearance. In her fears she sees herself outtrumped by an unforeseen betrayal. And so she betrays him. The cruel logics of history as political struggle demands it.

With horrified fascination one observes the queen making her false step in a theatrical world of masks, thinking she can distinguish the faces. In her desperation to save Egypt, she falls into Augustus' trap, believes enough in her ability to utilise the paper promise of a ruthless conqueror, and sacrifices a true, proven husband. Her tragic flaw, an overweening conception of her own powers of reason and craft, a too confident attachment to an historically outdated identity as enchanting queen makes her betray herself unwittingly.
She is the counter-example to Anthony. Whereas he was
the victim of his passion, she is the victim of her reason,
ratio. Over both reigns inevitable fate. Cleopatra’s hope
is based on her past triumphs and not actuality. Not
recognizing that her final hour has struck, she concludes
that because she can kill Anthony through love she is able
to affect the cold Augustus also:

Denn ist die Kunst nicht gross
Der/ die den Julius für ihr sah kniend ligen/
Durch süssen Libes-Reitzen den keyser zu bezigen.
Nur Luther das Glücke spielt/ die guten Winde wehn/
Und Isis lässt uns selbst ihr untern Schleier seh’n.
(II, 476-480).

The presumption of being able to understand the workings of
fate must precipitate a corresponding nemesis. This nemesis
becomes the subject of the play after Anthony’s tragedy of
passion is fulfilled.

In the fifth scene, after Cleopatra’s monolog, the
envoy of Augustus, Proculejus, and the queen’s minister
Archibius confront each other. The Roman is stunned by
Anthony’s breach of relations. In his eyes Anthony is
anyway now “einer Knecht” (II, 535) and he spurns the
Egyptian pretension to resistance. He bares Rome’s cynical
attitude: “Wer Löwen-Klauen hat/bedarf des Fuchs-Balgs
nicht”. (II, 543). But when he sees the murdered king’s
corpse, he speaks of madness:

Welch Rasen kommt euch an? seyd ihr von Sinnen
kommen?
Wie? hat Tisiphone in euch den Sitz genommen.
(II, 569-570)?
In Roman eyes, the Egyptian world seems always to appear raving and suicidal. As a final stroke, Archibius next adds the head of Jamblichus, and the severance of Augustus and Anthony, as Cleopatra wishes, is a fact. The scene prepares us for Anthony's re-entrance in scene six. He enters now fully aware that the die is cast. A fresh army led by Agrippa has just entered Augustus' camp. The crucial moment has been reached.

Verziehn wir länger nun/ biss uns der Weg benommen
Sey übers Meer zu fliehn/ so werden wir der Last Der Ketten nicht entgehen. (II, 598-600).

Lohenstein spends considerable time on the preceding fifth scene in order to underscore the rupture that is irreparable and add intensity to the new urgency of events recognized by Anthony. Archibius tries to explain Cleopatra's reluctance to depart, on the one hand as regret to abandon her country, on the other as fear of the water. The argument is well grounded:

Allein ist das Fliehen
Zu Wasser so verhasst; seit dass die See-
schlacht ward
Bey Actium verspielt/ heisst sie die
Wasserrfahrt
Der Klugen Aberwitz/ die Schiffe Todten-
Nachen/
Das Meer des Typhons Schaum. (II, 622-626).

Indeed, ships are the death-barges for Egypt, ever since Actium, and the fact that Rome controls the sea is decisive -- and symbolic of its mastery in the
treacherous element which represents Fortuna. Antyllus arrives in haste to report that Cælius has defected, bringing the fleet over to Augustus. Now the last harbor in Anthony's history, the port of Alexandria is sealed, the overseas refuge made useless; consequently, Anthony draws ever nearer to the realization that there is only one final and certain haven -- death. The uncertain element of the waters and the "Strudel-reiches Meer der jammervollen Welt" are indeed synonomous.

Anthony, stricken by so many reverses and disappointments cannot weather the storm any longer; he feels himself incapacitated for rational direction of operations. In his despair he speaks of his own blindness, which he attributes to the disfavor of the deity, that robs him of sight to distinguish men's allegiance and treachery. His loss is actually the result of his own virtue, of trust, but his words he speaks unknowingly with irony against himself. He feels marked by destiny, but he does not realize how great a part Cleopatra plays in his undoing:

Wis harte greiffet uns die eisern-harte Hand
Des wilden Unglück's an! Gott nimmt uns den Verstand
Die Treue von Betrug und List zu unterscheiden;
Und weils Verhängnifs schleust die Köpf uns abzu-
schneiden/
Verwirrt es unsern Rath. Geh/nimm/mein Sohn/
dich an
Des Werckes/ weil ich nichts vernünftig ordnen
kan.(II, 643-648).
The second act closes when Anthony senses being a victim of the gods. He takes the standpoint that the gods created love and passions in man, who is thus tragically endowed; man's naturalness is then servitude under the gods. He has said concerning Paris and Helen: "Der Himmel hat die Brunst/ die Brunst den Fall eregt" (I, 958). But his love will soon gain a claim, like theirs, beyond the boundaries of nature. Thus although Fortune sets the limits for nature, "der Natur die Gränzen sätzt" (I, 1071), Anthony has unconsciously already spoken of his triumph over fate: "Mein Lieben wird auch nicht durch ihren Todt erkalten" (I, 1012). The survival of love over death, the old Orphic theme, is announced. It is in the third act that Lohenstein introduces the actual moment of the love-death, whose irrationality has greater appeal than the appeal of either reason or passion, and which provides the only answer to Anthony's fated history.

An allegory with mythological figures also follows the second act. Paris represents Anthony and the judgment of Paris is re-enacted. The choice delegated through Mercury by fate is that Paris either decide for Juno, who is "Herrlichkeit" (II, 688), Pallas, who represents "die vergöttende Tugend" (II, 695), or Venus, who says: "...mein Paradis schwimmet voll Lust" (II, 700). Although Juno and Pallas offer respectively "Zepter" (II, 728) and
"Lorbern" (II, 734), Venus, who has felt no need to coerce like her rivals with veiled threats, promises:

Helenens dir zugewiedmete Strahlen
Werden dir Kronen und Palmen bezahlen.
(II, 739-740)

Both of the spurned goddesses warn that "Wollust zur Erde muss neigen" (II, 758). Juno calls him mad; Pallas recalls the story of Circe's enchantment of men into beasts. Both announce "lodernes Troy" (II, 763), the important example given also by Rubria in Agrippina. The equivalent to Troy is, of course, Egypt. Venus, however, wins the judgment and proclaims love's might. In act two likewise the modern Helen, Cleopatra, has bound together Anthony's fate and the fate of her country. All the warnings of Juno and Pallas which continue the thematic development of omens by animal godheads, of berserk earthliness, of nature destroying itself, and of the invincible attraction of the flesh, prepare simultaneously for the brooding opening of act three, where Cleopatra will enter "acting" into the tomb.

The words which Anthony spoke in act I concerning "ein Hafen...der Freyheit und fär uns" (I, 70-71) and all the references to death, fall and burial, take physical shape in the third act, where "appearance" brings us to the brink of reality, as if fate is emerging irrevocably from any and every action that its victims undertake.
Anthony is approaching the moment, "wo Vernunft und Zeit kein Regiment mehr hat" (I, 942). Death is looming up as the only sure haven, verifying his earlier thought: "Zwei Hafen hat man nur: gewehrt sein/ oder todt." (I, 951). And the abyss so often referred to in the first two acts becomes visible in the shape of the burial vault of the Ptolomean line, where Cleopatra acts out theatrically her death, thus plays now that which she will perform soon in reality. The ironically weighted speech of Charmium, her maid in waiting, protests against the feigned self-immolation in terms which are to be positively affirmed very shortly:

Bestürzte Königin! ist die Lebens-Bahn?  
Der Hafen der Gefahr/der Anker unseres Hoffen?  

In the final act the answer to this question is yes. But in act three Cleopatra explains how she is attempting to anticipate fate and control her situation, on the basis of a new alliance with Augustus and removal of Anthony:

Drumb ist es hohe Zeit: dass man sich des entbricht/ 
Dem das Verhängnis schon sein letztes Urteil spricht. (III, 39-40).

The queen's tragic flaw of presumption, her belief that she can interpret and act on behalf of destiny, does not preclude her awareness of the sphere of passions, since
in fact manipulation of passions is her trade. Yet she seems to miss the whole point of her own words, so blinded is she by the demands of rationality, when she explains: "...nur die lib ist ungeschminckt." (III, 59).

Calling in all her women, the queen carries out masterfully the pagentry of death. She is a consummate actress in a world that for her is a stage. She employs all the cliches of drama, but now they have become more than rhetorical flourishes; they are bursting with ironically latent truth. Almost every lie she tells becomes, because she tries to deceive, a verity. Thus when she laments: "Mein itzig Beispiel lehrt: der Stand sey Last und Bürde" (III, 106) she is unaware that she will soon enter historical record as an example. That statement of the bitterness of ruling will be a major theme in the Reyen of the fourth act. The fake burial rite of act three is nothing less than a "play within the play" and Cleopatra rehearses what she is to fulfill later as a serious role; without realizing the significance of her behavior, she performs as "theatre" the pathetic spectacle of her own factual end and emerges "playingly" in her true part, experiences, despite the present image of herself as a clever actress, the future image toward which she progresses. Her acting is a step in the development of self-awareness. She seems irresistibly
drawn toward temple and tomb, irresistibly inclined to take on the role of the dying queen. Rütsch points out a widely found tradition in Baroque drama which he calls the theme of the "Schauspieler seiner Selbst," pp. 93, 155 ff. In this tradition, the play as a whole is unmasked as reality, there is self-consciousness of being an actor, and one's role is the greatest experience. Thus he explains fondness for dreams, visions, entr'actes, plays within the play, interwoven genre, etc., in the seventeenth century. P.160: "Damit erscheint erst die barocke Innerlichkeit des Theatermotivs, dass diese Schachtelformen, die in der Renaissance rein ornamentale Funktionen hatten, jetzt einen Sinn im Umfang der Handlung bekommen, ein Gleichnis bedeuten oder ein Mittel..." I agree that this deeper purpose characterizes also Locenstein's choruses and "bracketed" inner plays, but I disagree that in his case the concept of the "play" must (as Rütsch, disregarding him, argues generally for the Baroque) depend upon the idea of God as author and supreme player with men in a transcendental irony of theodicee.

As a thematic group, love, death and fate draw together in the dissimulating speech of Cleopatra (III, 117-121), until self-extinction assumes erotic color. The queen even proclaims that she wishes now to marry death (III, 166). Her burial ceremony initiates
under the signs and auspices of the animal godheads of Egypt, as Lohenstein details them line after line. The sensualism of espousing death is further emphasized by the pagentry and solemnity of the cult. Lohenstein also uses to great effect the emotional language of Christian longing for the other world, having Cleopatra cry out ecstatically:

So komm/ O süßer Tod/ O liebstes Wohlgefallen! kommt und erk万里et mich/ vergiftete Kristallen! ich küss Gifft und Glass! Charm. Was thut sie, Königen?

Cleop. Was das Verhängniss heisst. Iras. Wo denckt sie/ Göttin/ hin?


Behind the mock stoic drinking of the hemlock and behind the Christian yearning for eternity, one cannot miss the almost ecstatic nihilism of her exclamation. The "role" is said with too convincing an emphasis of relief, the joy of no longer fleeing fate but of accepting it. The impulse toward destruction, toward freedom from further historical struggle, bursts out rapturously. Cleopatra is indeed too excellent an actress; her words ring too convincingly. Again it seems as if truth shines through all the theatrical costuming of her world, a world sick for death:
In the meantime Anthony is suffering a dream in which the ghosts of kings Antigonus, Artabazes and Jamblichus awaken in him guilt and regret: "Dein Gewissens-Wurm erwacht" (III, 310). The accusation affects a man like Anthony who has demonstrated human conscience toward laws and ties; he must hear applied to himself the terms he has applied to Augustus: "erhitzer Löw/ erbostes Tigerthier" (III, 314), "wildes Unthier" (III, 319), "Blutt-Hund" (III, 329, 344), "Wütterich" (III, 347). The ghosts curse him, painting the most horrible tortures which they wish upon him. They damn likewise "Egyptens Helena" (III, 406) (see Reyen of act two), the "zaubernde Medea dieser Zeit" (III, 405), who will perish with him in the conflagration she has caused. They shake Anthony awake with premonitions and inner doubts. He calls to his servant Eros. Anthony feels that it was "kein falscher Traum" (III, 438). The overwhelming reality of conscience attacks Anthony now, as it attacked queen Agrippina, because he can no longer keep up the statesman's amoral mask. Through his love, he has become a suffering, guilty and attached man. The signs of a visitation, a foretaste of fate are present; his dagger lies before him,
as if placed there by a supernatural agency, inviting him to self-immolation.

Men-at-arms now recount the weird occurrences of oracular nature that have taken place during his sleep. The protective deity from whom Anthony is descended is withdrawing from the beleaguered city:

Es war gleich Mitternacht/ als Wolck und Himmel krachte/
Die Erde bebete; das Stad und Bürger wachte.
Des grossen Tempels Thor sprang von sich selbst entzwey.
Nach diesem hob sich an von Bachen ein Geschrey
Und wilden Satyren/ die tausend Fackeln trugen/
Und hundert Trinckgeschirr in kleine Stucke schlugen/
Wie wenn sie bey der Nacht Sabazus Fest begehn.
Ein Esel trug vorher den Trunckenen Silen/
Ihm folgte Bachchus nach bekränz't mit frischen Reben/
Sein Spiss und Wagen war mit Epheu rings umbgeben/
Vier Luchse zogen ihn durch die bestürzte Stadt/
Für Maeris Thor hinaus/ wo Caesar's Lager hat.
(lll, 445-456)

The occurrence is apocalyptic vision but in a non-Christian world. All the spirits are in mad tumult, and the irrational life-force deserts the hero. This is a pandemonium. The connection between Anthony and the god Osiris gains greater significance, when we learn that Bacchus, or Dionysos, is his ancestor. Both gods were linked and equated in the Roman world; their connection to sacrificial death, orgiastic rite, intoxication, madness, and rebirth is similar. The raging of Bacchus corresponds
here to an irrational welling up of life-force in Anthony, which results in his self-destruction. We learn specifically about the tragic split in his nature, when he says:

Ich bin dem Vater nach vom Hercules gebohren/
Vom Bachchus aber stammt mein Mutterliches Hauss. (III, 458-459).

In other words, Anthony is outwardly a Roman hero and masculine statesman in the Roman tradition of cold rationality and self-control. But a feminine, earthly component is in him, a dionysian non-rational impulse that binds him to the kingdom of animal-gods, Egypt, and to its queen. One is familiar with the mythology of a dual nature from Agrippina, Rubria chorus. In Sophonisbe the figure of Hercules adds exemplarily in the fourth chorus and represents the proper conduct of the ruler.

Anthony is already crushed by loss of his house's deity when the news of Archibius, the chancellor's defection is heaped upon his misfortunes. His whole existence and physical defense is played away, "verspielt" (III, 505). He calls on Eros to fetch his dagger for him. Only the intervention of his son Antyllus prevents immediate suicide. But Anthony is broken and can only dismiss Antyllus to go carry on the fight without him. He has degenerated completely from
active soldier to passive lover, a sufferer. At this juncture Lтеocles arrives to relate the queen's death. Anthony has, through this final blow, reached tragic self-awareness of his human isolation and suffering:

Muss unser Hafen uns nun auch zum Wirbel werden?
Unglücklicher Anton! Verlassenster auf Erden (III, 541-542).

The Christian theme of flight from the world recurs now in new intensity, repeating the acted agony of Cleopatra and her longing for extinction. But the marriage theme also re-emerges and really dominates. One thinks of Gottfried von Strassburg's magnificent proclamation of the ethos of love, of the Orphic story of love conquering time in death. Nor does the irrational, almost religious ecstasy of Wagner's reworking of the Tristan-Isolde story, exceed the intensity of Anthony's speech: 86

Cleopatra mein Licht! Cleopatra mein Leben! 
Du Seele meiner Seele um deinen Schatten schwanden
Die Lebens-Geister schon/ die mich die heisse Noth
Dir aufzuopfern zwingt. komm angenehmer Todt!
Erwünscchter Jаммер-Fort! ich suche dein Gestade;
Wer deine Küsten kiest/ der segelt recht gerade
Den Glückes-Inseln zu. Cleopatra mein Licht!
Äch! ich erblicke schon dein sternend Angesicht!
Schaut ihren neuen Stern in den Saffirnen Zimmern/
Und den verklärten Geist umb diese Pfosten schimmern;
Hört! wie die Turteltaub umb ihren Buhen girrt/
Der in der Sterbligkeit ein-oder Wüsten irrt.

nein/bin ich doch bereit/
Der morschen Sterbligkeit meist schon vermodert
Kleid
Dem Leib zu ziehen aus. Nicht scheue/ meinem
Schatten
His renunciation of the world and farewell to its play and pomp are reminiscent of Christian rejection of earthly existence. Here, however, here is no beneficent afterlife into whose refuge to flee. Death is truly extinction, and history indeed the showplace where man is proven, but it is not a testing ground for admittance to eternal life with God. History remains showplace only of a "drama" in which the tragic actor grows ever more aware of his role, finally embraces it, and finds his identity and meaning in his own character. His exit must consummate the role. History is theatre. Thus, in the seizure of love, Anthony's acknowledgment of love represents a choice which has reference to no higher set of values, to no religious principles. The only metaphysics are those of history (existence) and extra-historical permanence (death). He chooses love for eternity; so he wants to be forever remembered -- as the hero who chose love at the price of dying. Death is the fixer of roles that are developed on stage, that is, in time, whose plot is history. Lohenstein departs in this regard from his Christian contemporary, Gryphius, in a gigantic leap that reaches to the present, and to
the nihilism of Wagner's Musik-Drama. Indeed, the connection between operatic formulae and Lohenstein's dramatic structure is very important and must be recognized.

Perhaps one of the most moving features of Anthony's suicide comes through the parallel death of Eros. This boy who bears the name of the god of love is Anthony's servant. Anthony now begs: "Du Eros thou uns nur noch diesen treuen Dienst." (III, 580). All the attributes of love -- loyalty, service, sacrifice -- are pronounced with tender confidence. Love's nature is complete surrender of self for another, in fact, self-annihilation to lift the fleshly boundaries of individual isolation. Consequently, Eros, appears in the play not only in the aspect of master but also of slave, in the guise of a servant, the term most abhorrent in the drama. But the slave too frees himself by an act of the will! This act is essentially an irrational gesture of nobility. Eros, the boy in waiting, stabs himself first, before he will harm his beloved master. Thereby love, whose earthly passionate aspect is associated with man the creature, man the despised non-rational animal, redeems itself and asserts a powerful claim to glory. Anthony exclaims:

O mehr als edler Knecht! dein Tugendhaft
Gemütte
Sticht tausend Römer weg/ und lehrt: dass das
Geblätte;
Das das Gefängniss auch nicht wahre Sklaven macht
(III, 605-607).
This motif of servants committing suicide to redeem a lifetime of base stature, a moment which occurs in several Lohenstein plays, repeats later in the fourth act.

Next, by reversing the prior news of Cleopatra's suicide, Lohenstein demonstrates that Anthony's triumph is permanent. The hero no longer remonstrates against the world; he is not filled with curses against fate; he has found Glück, true happiness, which is deepened by the knowledge that she lives. Still loyally blind, he never suspects her of fraudulent behavior. Diomedes, the messenger, perceives the cruel circumstances of Anthony's mistaken gesture, and inveighs against a topsy-turvy deceiving world: "Verrücktes Trauerspiel! O grimmer Parzen Schluss!" (III, 635). Anthony greets the news of her survival with a superhuman will to live just long enough to see her alive. This operatic device of the remeeting of a dying lover and his beloved is intended to intensify our sense of sorrow over his tragic end; but it also serves for yet another encounter between truth and appearance. One must witness the irreconcilable blindness of love. He asks to be borne to her; now he dares call on once unfriendly gods to give way:
In the burial vault Cleopatra carries on her pretense and succeeds in not betraying to dying Anthony the truth about her own "suicide" attempt. Thus he expires in full confidence of unimpeached devotion. The scene offers a further proof of his generous nature, in that he forbids Cleopatra to follow him and recommends her and his children to Augustus, whom he pronounces as testamentary guardian for them, believing by his death to remove a great obstacle to Augustus' favor. His whole attention is focused on their welfare. His only thought for himself is one of final rest. He directs that his body be kept in Egypt according to Egyptian practice. Thus after asking the living to give into fate, he commits himself to Egyptian earth; (III, 730):

Kein Leib werd auf die Slutt auf Römisch nicht gesetzt/
Sätzet ihn nur in die Gruft der Ptolomeer bei. (III, 734-735).

So Anthony completes his total acknowledgment of his "Egyptian" attachment and becomes transfigured as the victim of this attachment.87

The transition from Anthony's love-death to the next level of the tragedy is effected through a choral
renewal of the theme of fate. Clotho, Lachesis and Atropos appear in a direct address to the spectator:

Alle drey. Ihr schönödes Volck der Sterblichkeit/ Wie dass ihr so sehr alber seyd? Wenn ihr die Zeit- und Glückes-Flucht Durch euren Witz zu hemmen sucht? Glaubt; dass ihr Sinn und Hand hirumb vergebens schärft/ Und ohne Frucht und Grund in Trübsand Ancker wärfft.

Lachesis Durch euren Witz ist nichts getan. (III, 750-755).

Having viewed the Anthony tragedy, or the tragedy of passion, one is next to view the Cleopatra tragedy, or the tragedy of reason. It too is powerless against Verhängniss-Schluss (III, 759). As the sisters reveal, whether fortune be good or ill, man is helpless and cannot control destiny. The historical world, the phenomena of reality, manifest a sort of arbitrariness despite man's scheming and pretension:


Now the three sisters review their spinning of threads for Anthony and Cleopatra, emphasizing the theatrical costumes in which they have dressed them and how easily they are transmuted into tragic clothes. An oracle is
spoken also, using of course tradition already well known to the spectators. The audience is conscious of watching an example, taken from actuality, from past history, and seeing it again upon the stage. Lohenstein fastens everything together in terse statement, as if in a popular saying or couplet:

Des Fürsten Faden trennt ein Dolch/
Cleopatrens zerbeist ein Lolch. (III, 793-794).

The tone of doom is renewed. One realizes, or is reminded by this historical reference, that the drama is ascending to a second stage where Cleopatra will dominate the scene, her fall be the subject. Now she must deal with another who is Roman, not a victim of destiny but almost synonomous with destiny.

With the fourth act the drama practically starts a second time. The action seems to recommence and broaden into a world perspective. The first scene opens in Augustus' tent. There Dercetaeus, who was present at Anthony's suicide and decided to capitalize on the fortunes of war, reveals the story of his master's death. Augustus very carefully scrutinizes and weighs the report. One notices the calm and deliberation with which the emperor expresses himself, always manifesting the appropriate "emotion" and commenting aptly. Also, he wastes no words; there is something sharp and clear in his manner of handling the defector. For a moment he
allows himself to question:

*Hat das Verhängnis denn uns nicht den Ruhm
wollen gönne;*
*Dass wir zwar sighhaft sein/ doch auch vergeben
können. (IV, 53-54)*

But here the question is not *de profundis*, is not a
revelation of inner conflict, for Augustus truly uses
rhetoric rather than spontaneous exclamation. He has
chosen the proper feeling for himself to cherish upon
the occasion, and also one that disguises his own nature
as a merciless conqueror. One recognizes, however, that
Augustus is not at all mad in the usual sense. He has
nothing in common with berserk animalism as represented
by the Egyptian cult. He does not commit violence
unless the violence is necessary to his program; thus
he takes advantage here of a chance to appear generous,
because Anthony is already dead. Augustus possesses all
the craft of a great ruler, all the acumen and ready wit
of a highly rational amoral character. Just after his
appropriate "regret" of not being able to show intended
generosity, Augustus' words indicate how rapidly he
returns to his central obsession with the power struggle
and how coldly logical his thoughts are:

*Jedoch der Schmerz muss nicht verspülen Glück
und Zeit/
Ein Augenblick versäumt Sieg und Gelegenheit.*
*(IV, 55-56).*
The second scene, following quickly, brings the Roman officers into his presence for discussion of strategy. Augustus reveals the situation, after saying that time has come to offer a settlement to the enemy. In short, he prepares the grand coup in his tricking of Cleopatra.

The ethics of absolute rule are voiced especially strongly by the fieldmarshall Agrippa, who in opposition to misgivings of Mecaenas, advocates dissimulation:

Des Feindes Knochen sind der Siger Kuntzweils-
Spiel.

Das Auge wölckt sich oft; Im herzen scheinen
Sonnen.

Wer sich nicht anstelln kan, der taug zum
Herrschen nicht. (IV, 30;32;34).

The argument is examined in detail by Lohenstein. Through the debate of the officers Augustus decides to try persuasion, before resorting to naked force. His advance knowledge of events in Alexandria permits him opportunity to plan, without being actually surprised by the embassy from Cleopatra. She hopes to sway him with the accomplishment of Anthony's death. He is aware of the inner weakness of her defenses, which lack a chief, and plays as with a mouse up to the moment when, to underscore his total grasp or the situation, he produces the fatal dagger, astounding the Egyptian envoys. Agrippa interjects:
Augustus uses the vantage to act the role of a great, gracious prince, all the more to impress and deceive the enemy. He releases the hostages, whom he no longer needs; he occupies the city, in order to "protect" Cleopatra from lawlessness of the mob; he extends amnesty to the Roman troops of Anthony, guarantees the sanctuaries of Egypt, and makes other promises of little regard, since he can easily break all.

Yet even Agrippa worries, in scene three, on account of the political situation of the city of Rome itself, which may resist and object to Augustus' highhanded and independent negotiations:

This scene reveals the necessity, the historical necessity, imposed by the circumstances of Rome's drive to world domination, a necessity which compels even an Augustus. Egypt must be integrated into the empire! But, and this is Lohenstein's insight into the historical fusion of all wills in the operation of fate, Augustus is not really protesting the arguments of his officers; again he is pretending to want the nobler and better action.
and to accept for the good of state that which he himself, by his very nature, desires. With subtle guidance, he allows them to talk him into his already predetermined scheme. He allows them to insist on his breaking his promise for reasons of state, just what he needs to do in order to win a complete and demonstrable victory with trophies and spoils. He wishes to show a fabulous queen in chains to the city and to divide the Egyptian treasures, as part of his total plan to appease and manipulate Rome. In other words, Augustus is not simply adjusting to the exigencies of his historical situation but is calculating far ahead of any other mind what advantage he can obtain through compliance with a given necessity. His remarkable statescraft he lets appear natural or necessary, while he keeps his hands on the reins of power and maintains the appearance of noble intentions, morality and reverence.

He can utter thus a cry that again is very apt and rhetorical: "Verdammte Staatsklugheit/ die Treu und Bund heist brechen." (iv, 238) So prevalent, however, is the state ethos of appearance and feigning that one can never be positive where, with Augustus, truth leaves off and theatre begins. One may wish to credit Augustus with misgivings, but these misgivings, like Cleopatra's, are always concerned with reputation rather than with moral
action versus sinful action. For Augustus does not merely take up the suggestion of Gallus:

So fange man den Wurm durch eigne Zauberei/
Und tichte: dass August verliebt/ gefangen sei.
(IV, 275-276).

He has already carefully prepared for such a strategy by his secret message to Cleopatra, by his generous peace terms despite awareness of her weak defenses, ahead of negotiation, by his permitting of a discussion in the staff meeting that must lead in the direction he desires. His protestations elicit in his officers agreement with his designs, without their realizing how he guides them. Still, the situation is delicate and he worries about his name; that is, he skillfully transfers any blame for that which he wants onto his council:

Weil ihr euch ja last träumen
Was Fruchtbars zu vollziehn/ so will ich euch
enträumen:
Dass ihr/ jedoch mit Glimpf und Vorsicht an sie
setzt;
Doch/ dass ihr meinen Ruhm im minsten nicht
verletzt.(IV, 301-304).

In Cleopatra's chambers, one learns with the first words of Caesarion how empty the Roman promises were. The soldiers of the occupying army are not respecting the protected areas of the city. Cleopatra senses that she is now an object of derision and pity, because she has
been blinded to believe in Augustus. She uses the term Dunst, as in her monolog in act II, when she had presumed to believe she could free her vision through exercise of reason (II, 435, "Die Sonne der Vernunft vertreibt den eiteln Dunst"). Now she recognizes being a dupe:

Ja/ leider! wir sind hin!
ich bin Erbarmens wert/ doch werther zu verlachen;
Dass ich den blauen Dunst mir liess fürs Auge machen. (IV, 320-322).

This undeceiving marks the first major step in the queen's growing awareness of herself as a tragic figure, of her true historical identity.90 One hears an echo of the dead Anthony's cry: "Unglücklicher Anton! Verlassenster auf Erden:" (III, 542)! Cleopatra now transfers her hope to her son Caesarion, whom she wants desperately to save. Again she pins her thoughts on the past -- on Julius, his father. She has achieved the tragic stature of being ready for sacrifice, while her last wish is the same as Anthony's, freedom, some refuge against time and historical necessity, and her son represents a remote escape, a possible continuance of her royal identity:

Doch wünscht ich diese Schuld durch meinen Fall zu büssen/
Könnt ich dir/ liebster Sohn/ nur durch den Tod aufschlüsseln
Zur Freiheit einen Weg. (IV, 325-327)!
Because Caesarion refuses to debase his noble blood by disguising himself as a moorish slave, Cleopatra must argue that safety lies only in masquerade. Now the theme of dissimulation is re-interpreted in light of human desperation for survival, as a universal principle of life:

Die ganze Welt geht itzt verbummmt; und
Tugend kan
Nicht ohne Larve gehn/ sol sie nicht
Schifbruch leiden.
Muss sich nicht Hannibal wol tausendmal ver
kleiden (IV, 343-346)?

The world has become indeed a stage, individual existence a role and mask, history tragedy.

Even the gods, she argues, have had to bury themselves in bestial forms, base earthly masks. Here one finds the second overt explanation in the play of the significance of the animal gods of Egypt, symbols of a divine life force encarcerated in nature. On the one hand, the struggle of this force for freedom causes irrational self-destruction, just as the god-bull Osiris plunged berserkly into the well and just as Anthony has committed suicide. On the other hand, this divine force eventually ennobles and makes sacred what in general "Baroque" terms, is ignoble and evil -- the animal forms in which something godly everywhere is in
flight, or servitude. The earthly mask receives, in Cleopatra's words, almost a mystic sanctification. Deepest pessimism pervades the Lohensteinian world-concept and out of this pessimism arises dark tragic awareness of history. Yet there is also something fascinating and provocative in the non-rational drive of life, even if it can turn upon itself destructively. In chorus four of Agrippina, nature celebrates a triumph of some beautiful manifestation in the flesh. The dangerous elements cede in respect to the indestructible attractive principle, whose memorial they hope to keep locked in the natural scenery itself. So similarly, Cleopatra invokes nature to protect the royal spark of like which she has seen in her son and which she feels must live on. Nature itself is the theatrical mask and costume of the godly life principle:

Fehlt ihm gleich Witz so pflegt ihn Treue doch zu scharfen.
Ach Junil die du dich verstellst in eine Kuh/
In Fisch verkehrter Mars/ und auch Dione du/
Du Stier Diespiter/ Diana/ die/ das Morden
Des Typhon zu entfliehn/ zu einer Katze worden/
Lyaeus Ziegen-Bock; du fedrichter Mercur/
Du Rabe Delius/ lasst Schlang und Wind die Spur
Caesariuns fuer den Verfolgenden verstreichen:
(IV, 350-357)!

One senses here in this invocation a close connection between Cleopatra, as priestess to earthly deities, and nature itself. She asks the Egyptian and Roman
incarnations of godhead in animal forms to conspire with
the natural elements. These receive a mute animate function
to cleak in the formlessness of their desert the precious
form of Caesarion.

When the queen sends him into the far south to the
moors, she looks forward to the possibility of revenge
upon the Romans through his agency. For she still thinks
in terms of her royal office. The motherly feelings
which began erupting in the second act were linked with
the images, with her memory of Anthony and Julius, former
princely consorts. As queen her attitude of greatness
rests largely on pride in her union with such heroes.
This pride and memory she cannot allow to be extinguish-
ed, so that her affection for Caesarion is also an
expression of love for her country, a re-affirmation of
her political marriages on its behalf. Thus her farewell
mixes maternal with patriotic concern:

Nim diesen Kuss noch hin; sey auf dein Heil
bedacht;
Sorg' umb dein Vaterland. (IV, 383-384).

When the Romans of Augustus' staff confront her, the
challenge to her greatness is direct. One observes further
development of Cleopatra's tragic awareness in her defense
of Anthony, an important part of her life, whom they try
to defame, thus wounding her:
Slowly a new feeling is asserting itself in opposition to the Romans. It begins as a sense of forlornness, which she now must share with dead Anthony, and demands its own rights against the ethos of cold statecraft:

Epaph. Was/ große Königin/ verwundet sie so scharf?

She speaks in the role of the fallen ruler, as does Syphax at the start of Sophonisbe, but also in the role of widowed queen.

Nevertheless, Cleopatra will not surrender easily and, although her plaint rings with truth, she must also express it in keeping with the part of nobility which she maintains in order to conquer Augustus' hardness. While she pretends to be overwhelmed by his equally feigned amorous intentions, she is no longer really deceived. Instead, Cleopatra literally is rising above her own role, majestically aware now of her own heart, and dissembling for a last great revenge. She gambles for time, time to rob Augustus of his triumph and time to make permanent her freedom, and the only reliable solution is death. She now deceives the Romans largely
by uttering the truth. And they suppose in spite of her revelation of feelings that she has acted her sorrow and believes still in safety through Augustus. Her fear of debasement, which is exactly what the Romans intend for her, restates the dominant theme of all Lohenstein dramas, the desire for liberty:

Lein Geist zwickt mich ins Chr/ es sagt
mirs mein Lertze;
Die Freyheit sey verspielt. Hilf ab so herben
Schmertze/
Cleopatra/ stirb/ stirb/ als Fürstin/ nicht
als Magd.

Ach/ leider! du versätzest
Mich in die Dienstbarkeit/ die keinen Sklaven
drückt/

In their eagerness to reassure her, they tip, of course, Augustus' hand and she learns the worst. Accordingly, to outwit him, she gives the impression that she trusts him alone but not Rome's general policy: "ich weiss/ August begehrt selbst unserm Weg-Zug nicht." (IV, 466).

In her private meeting with the emperor in the seventh scene, Cleopatra achieves ultimate mastery in her last performance of the role of deceiving lover, who is in addition now conscious of having fallen to the deception she practises but of which she is finally undeceived. By not abandoning the role originally motivated for deception, even after she discovers that
she herself has been tricked by her intended pawn, she actually does outwit him. For he, now more than ever convinced of his own success by the consistency of her behavior, allows her what seem necessary concessions in support of his own dissimulated appearance as lover. Thus Lohenstein, in the action itself, makes an intoxicating conceit of plot out of the metaphor of the world as a stage. In this critical encounter for the queen, her involved unveiling of love for Augustus and her seduction attempt contrast strikingly with the coldness which shines through his all too logical and inviting suggestion that she come to Rome to be honored by him. Although Cleopatra tries to work her spell as of old and makes a last stab, many lines reveal her anxious consciousness of age; it seems as if her charm belongs to the past, with Julius and Anthony. She begins with formulae of humility and worship toward her conqueror. She next invokes the memory and example of Caesar, a protector, to soften Augustus, who by implication must strive to be worthy of his predecessor. This provokes Augustus, acting supposedly as Egypt's friend in the Julian tradition, to declare his love for the queen once again. Given this reaffirmation, she confesses that in him her old passion for the great Caesar reawakens, that in him the image of a love she imagined extinguished by time takes new form, and she
progresses to erotic advertisement of herself by recalling the voluptuousness mate Julius enjoyed. So hotly does she woo, that one is reminded of the desperate bedroom scene between Agrippina and Nero. But Augustus responds too diplomatically, in too flattering conceits, and soon exposes the key purpose of his behavior. Acknowledging the finality of her role, Cleopatra does not hesitate longer but feigns obedience and requests a token freedom, a modicum of honor:

Wir wünschen eh den Geist/ als seine Gunst zu missen/
Doch lass uns nur August noch dieser Hol geniessen;
Dass: da der Wegzug nicht kan hintertriben sein/
Uns/ die wir allen heisch des Keyzers gehen ein/
Vor frey-steh den Anton Egyptisch zu be-graben.


Thus she brings about her last chance to rescue her identity and achieve realization of Anthony's last wish: royal burial.

For the first time, not a mythological allegory but a chorus of distinctly human figures forms a mask or pageant. This human element, all important, interrupts the melancholy progress of the drama. The scene is idealized, protected, an idyllic garden on the Nile,
with simple people who are close to nature — men and women gardeners. Except for the scattered comments by Anthony that the gods implanted passions in man or for the furor of Cleopatra as a mother against her children's enemies, nature has remained far removed from the splendor of royal personages and palace decor. The change is deliberate and not mere entertainment. Lohenstein imitates the classical pattern of alternating verses, strophe followed by antistrophe. But more important is the operatic character of this chorus. It is an intermezzo, distinguished however by a close connection of its themes to the themes of the drama. The first strophe proclaims the blessedness of those who choose a pastoral and plesureful existence over the cares of power and state. They are exchanging "Ein frey Gemütte für Verdruss" (IV, 638). The connection of love with freedom is again affirmed. The first antistrophe continues the proclamation of blessedness and perhaps capitalizes on a religious emotion through an echo of the Biblical beatitudes. The women contrast falsity and coldness to "reine Tugend" (IV, 641), "Scherz ohn Argwohn" (IV, 642), whereby love as passion, otherwise scorned as something base, here is ennobled. The second strophe paints further the worthlessness of political existence versus the peace and enjoyment of life based upon the land, the pastoral or earthy way,
"ein verschmehter Hirten-Stab" (IV, 654). The second antistrophe of the women rejects the narcissistic attitude of the great, their addiction to masks, pretenses, cosmetic exteriors. The final strophe of the gardeners claims that love changes to lasciviousness in palaces. They express the deep-seated malaise with the courtly world, its deep estrangement from honesty, health and nature; the purity of love and nature's claim come here into their own right. In fact, politics, the "play" ethos of the state give no freedom, since only love leads to true freedom:

Aus Gold-gestrickten Purpur-Betten
Macht man Mord-Gruben/ knechtsche Ketten.
(IV, 679-680).

This idea, that love's realm frees one from bondage in time, is completely secular and indicates a gap between Gryphius and Lohenstein. The final strophe of the women summarizes Cleopatra's tragedy and endangerment, with interjection of the theme of theatre:

Der Kilus mahlt das Schau-Spiel schnöder Sachen
Recht an Cleopatren uns ab.
Man rächert ihr/ und wil sie knechtisch machen/
Man raubt ihr Freiheit/ Tod und Grab.
(IV, 681-684).

Certainly the queen is defended here against besmirchment, if we regard her final actions. The equation is stated unequivocably: "Freiheit/ Tod und Grab" (IV, 684). The transition is made to the fifth act whose theme is thus
already stated. Love has enjoyed in the midst of a drama about political struggle a moment of idyll. This idealization of the natural has lifted the burden of the play for a brief respite, has raised a voice against man's artificialities, his "play," and the lyric moment subsides, as if a reminder of some extratemporal interlude, while history and tragedy resume away. Within the fifth act Cleopatra will reaffirm her love for Anthony, and Augustus, the political conqueror, cannot overcome the grave. It is the place, "Wo wahre Treu im hertzen glimmt" (IV, 678). Lohenstein accomplishes, then, a definite purpose with his humanized chorus which gives us a new reference for the queen's future and past behavior. He also emphasizes a function of poetry and of his drama: to present the timeless, fixed example through knowledge of which we, the audience, are released from our everyday bondage. The intermezzo after act four frees one for witnessing an end to all struggle. It is a prelude for the serious reopening of the scene in the temple of Isis and Osiris and burial vault of Egypt. The poetic moment, indeed a generic moment -- the pastorale -- serves as a bridge to the specific and individual moment of freedom for Cleopatra.

After the chorus, the ponderous atmosphere of the tomb can better convince. Solomnity rules. As in an opera, a final summation has been prepared; the play burial
of act III introduced the cult atmosphere, with its somber splendor and sensual majesty, and now through destiny Cleopatra is about to fulfill the "theatrically" and "deceivingly" initiated ritual of the dead. One must understand her in her function not only as queenly victim but as queenly priestess for the sacrifice is a self-immolation. A new inwardness possesses her, a religious self-knowledge is gained, evident in her invocation speech. Now she verifies what she had undertaken as "deception".

Fortune is still the governor of history. But not struggle, rather self-discovery, is the attitude demanded in a world ruled by fortune. The inner truth, rather than control of outer events, is the final teaching; the drama, as a piece of history, has exemplary purpose in revealing the necessity of a final confession of the inner truth. Thus Cleopatra, whom we saw defending Anthony in act four, accepts as her duty the enterment and honoring of Anthony, whom she acknowledges in the end as her great love. In so doing, she fulfills the last words of the intermezzo, saying now:

Kommt/liebste Schwestern/kommt/bringt ihm
durch eure Hand
Ein Opfer wahrer Treu und letztes Liebes-Pfand.
(V, 13-14).
The funeral pomp in the actually presented ceremony of embalming is portrayed with pathological realism. The physical stuff of life becomes examined with a peculiarly Renaissance fascination for details, which do not destroy but instead intensify the mystery of corporeality. The body is "fixed" also, by ritualistic methods of preservation, just as the spirit is "fixed" by fame; death is the maintainer of greatness, whereas history is a potentially dangerous arena of self-assertion. Together, the fleshly token and the memory of the dead allow a kind of monumentality, that Egypt so remarkably displays in its ponderous tombs and pyramids rising out of the formless desert. The carrying out of the service of embalming is indeed moribund, but moribund because death has evolved as the only realm where love can express itself; Cleopatra's action manifests a deeper tenderness and devotion to her dead lover. She even speaks to him, as if she begs of him a sincerely desired forgiveness, and asks that she may die with him, remain forever with him in death, and be remembered with him; death becomes her somber bridal night, with Orphic overtones:

Cleopatra fashions a momento for Anthony's grave:

Hier liigt Egyptens Heil/ die Freyheit Roms umbfangen.
Denn beyder Wolfsahrt ist mit dem Anton ver-
gangen. (V, 59-30).

Let us leave discussion of the significance of this memorial in regard to the drama as a historical tragedy to the conclusion of this analysis. Right now suffice it to say that the motto serves as indication of Cleopatra's penetrating insight into the monumentality of the events that transpired around her and the greatness of the fall of Anthony.

The queen's ladies try to dissuade her from death; now the plea also verifies what once they acted. Their arguments attempt to connect baseness with desire for suicide:

Ein Knecht lüst leicht sein Blutt aufs Herren mächtstoss flüssen/ Umb der Unsterbligkeit und Freyheit zu genüssen.
was aber treibt hierzu die freyen Sinnen an (V, 75-77)?

She rejects the argument, as in act four, with assertion of the heart's claims over those of the state:

Ach klein-muths-volle Hertzen!
Ihr wisst den Ursprung nicht so ungeheuer Schmertzen. (V, 79-80).

Thereby Lohenstein presents Cleopatra ultimately as an advocate of a kind of greatness of soul not synonymous
with Roman greatness (ratio). She will not even bother to consider any longer their pleas that she try to gain advantage through Augustus. She rejects him for not being like Anthony; he is a house of lies:

So ist dem Keyser nur sein Liebes-Kosen feh
Umb unsern Untergang. Die sich zu sehr verbinden/
Die lassen selten Treu und Wahrheit bei sich
finden. (V, 138-140).

At this juncture, Lohenstein has Antyllus the son of Anthony, step out of the group of priests, among whom he is hiding disguised, and challenge Cleopatra for her treachery. This happening is of considerable dramatic import. Thereby the author is able to underscore the change in Cleopatra and her evolution as a woman. She has progressed from politics to love. He appears almost as a memory of Anthony from the past, and as her conscience, to curse her. But she blesses Antyllus, after begging his forgiveness. She speaks to him with motherly tenderness:

Vergieb/ Antyllus/ mir/
Wormit ich freilich dich und den Anton beleidigt.
Gesteh ich doch die Schuld. Sie kan nicht sein
vertheidigt. (V, 202-204).

He is unable to kill her, as she asks him to; he realizes the cruel discrepancy between what she now is and what she has been. Antyllus repeats the motif of the topsey-turvey world: "Verkehtes Spiel" (V, 213). He grants her a final
wish, that she die uncursed by him; like Anthony she no longer resists fate or the gods but instead finds happiness (V, 218; 223-224). She leaves a letter for Augustus proclaiming her freedom ("Du hast mein Reich/ mein Geist der Freyheit Thron erreicht" (V, 229) and asking mercy for her family and servants, just as did Anthony. To emphasize her courage, Lohenstein makes necessary two attempts with the asps, similar to the test which Seneca faces in Agrippina. Again a loyal page gives the supreme example by voluntarily trying a snake on himself. And her ladies-in-waiting seek to redeem their lives of base stature by voluntary death; no longer do they wish to play away their glory:

Wir haben ohne dis durch allzu tieffe Demuth/
Durch die man hat den Feind/ das Unthier/
zähmen wolln/
Viel unsers Ruhms verspielt/ den wir itzt hertzhaft solln
Ersetzen durch den Todt.

Nur muttig! Charmium/ nun ist der Tag erschienen/
Da man Feind/ Noth und Todt grosam/ pochen kan. (V, 356-359; 368-369).

Needless to say, the ethics of Christianity do not allow such taking of one's own life, and in this regard a gulf separates the martyr plays of Gryphius and the African histories of Lohenstein. No higher power takes a life here, but rather individual willfulness, arbitrary irrational
refusal to be overridden by destiny, dictates self-annihilation. Freedom, an act of the will, even if irrational cannot ever be reconciled with "freedom," willful control, according to the Roman ethos of season. The Romans arrive and protest vainly, while Belisam retorts with "unreasonable" triumph:

Wer gibt den Überwindern
Ein Recht/ die Willkühl uns des Todes zu verwehren (V, 384-385)?

Thus what Charmium has pronounced is verified:

"Weil die standhaffte Treu auch in der Grufft besteht." (V, 381).

In the second to last scene, Augustus arrives and seeks to revive his prey Cleopatra. He operates with the lightning-swift coldness of reason: "Ein kluger Mann lässt sich kein schnödes Weib bethören" (V, 422). But he has lost to Cleopatra and laments his loss:

Warum wolt ihr nicht auch uns diesen Ruhm noch gönnen:
Dass wir dies Weib nach Rom zum Schauspiel führen können. (V, 439-500)?

Even the great Augustus is momentarily stunned by the wonder which an animal will to freedom has inspired in him. He asks out loud in amazement:

"Welch Grimm/ Cleopatra/ welch Wütten kam dich an " (V, 505)?
The theme of the raging gods of the temple recurs then. The power of Cleopatra over Augustus through death is clear. Under the circumstances, using his reason, he must make the best of the situation; but, then, Augustus' outstanding attribute is the ability to create appearances that are apt, and here the advantage is to be gained by composure and generosity, especially since the prey is dead. Thus, once more, we are not able to distinguish exactly where Augustus' sincere admiration for Cleopatra leaves off and calculation begins. The essence of rhetoric is that one can learn and acquire the proper devices of speech to render any thought or sentiment; the confessional tone neither suits or conveys feelings of a ruler. Nevertheless, Augustus shows his own greatness and awareness by acknowledging a worthy opponent, whom he no longer needs fear, and almost by virtue of his acknowledgment a chapter of history is sealed. His remarkable mind goes even further, when he projects his vision to see that her memory will outlive Rome's power:

Die Ehren-Maele sind der Tugend Sonnen-Strahlen.
Welch Urmensch Machtet denn die Helden-Bilder ein?
Cleopatra wird stehn/ wenn Rom nicht Rom wird sein.
(V, 536-538).

Under her spell he exhibits his most human side and guarantees the dead lovers honorable burial and memorials.
The final scene of the tragedy leaves us with a picture of the conqueror initiating a new era. An aura of reverence for the great moments of epochal change surrounds the action. There occurs worship of history itself, a cult of the factual magnificence of the heroes. Augustus worships, because he senses that he too has at last entered the ranks of the immortals. Yet even here one notes the cold hardness of present reality. Augustus spares the younger offspring of Anthony and Cleopatra, since these children are harmless, and cheaply enhances his reputation. But he is merciless toward Caesarion, an adult and an actual claimant to power through Julius. He uses the pretext of Caesarion’s flight as an excuse to pursue him to death. He protects however the sanctity of death, because in doing so does not alter the contemporary power structure of the living. He avenges Antyllus, who would also have been a potential threat, and thus protects literally no more than a heap of dead flesh, conveniently dead, from which he draws considerable glory. He takes only a small token of conquest from Cleopatra’s personal possessions back to Rome, but with the convenient aim of dedicating it to the temple of Venus in the city. He concentrates his attention, however, on settling the arrangements of government, raising the Egyptian treasury, establishing a privy council, appointing a governor, thus incorporating Egypt into the empire. He is at his best, confident with the surety of absolute power and of exemplary
conduct. Disdaining to pay his respects to the graves of
the collapsed dynasty, he pauses at the tomb of Alexander
the Great. He is the victor and darling of history for
this moment and identifies himself with the archetype of
lasting fame. Lohenstein, who has presented us the
tragedy of history, does not disguise or pass over the
very important reality of history as victory. But both
victory and defeat are subject to a higher instance: fate.
And glory is the only, the amoral, the necessary answer
to a universe without a beneficent deity.

The ultimate historical framework, in which one is
to see the grand actions of Augustus, is not given by
Augustus. All removes again to an abstract plane.

The concluding chorus presents the four rivers, the
Tiber, Nile, Danube and Rhine, on behalf of three geopoliti-
cal and historical empires. Lohenstein's concept of
fate as a power which arranges the succession of events,
thus a historical determinism, is clear from the claim of
each falling realm that it is a victim of fate but not
outshadowed (e.g. V, 801-802) by its follower. A concept
of historical succession of great powers issues finally
as a tribute to the ruling house of Austria. This chorus
is not integral to the tragedy, except in so far as it
stirs the audience to awareness of history as a process of
change as well as a series of examples. The perspective
at the end is reversed actually, because the spectator becomes conscious of himself watching a play about a past time, with intrusion of the immediate present and its claim which is based on past happenings.

Lohenstein ends Cleopatra in a manner similar to Sophonisbe within the framework of historical vision, except that this is reciprocal in the latter play, where queen Sophonisbe views the future through the Didc-apparition. In Cleopatra, great river systems perform the same role as the empires do in Sophonisbe in the final chorus. In startling contrast to the heated emotion of the queen's immolation, the long-range historical perspective, with which Lohenstein brackets his drama, sounds lofty and cool. The playwright's return to a sublime vantage point should not, however, come as a shock, if one appreciates the choruses, constant reminders of the "perspective" of lofty, intellectual concepts or principles at play. These various frames for the story, i.e. the specific "history" of the queen and Anthony and Egypt's collapse, intervene regularly, encompass the action, actually constitute an interwoven genre. On the one hand, the precise and factually detailed story, on the other hand, the abstract universally perceived principles -- these interwine for unceasing reminder of
the grand metaphor of the world as theatre, the performance in costume of a spiritual drama whose purposes and causes are, however, at least in Lohenstein's work, far and remote from mere human understanding. In the final analysis, Lohenstein bows before the unsolved mystery of this drama and seeks, by his great faithfulness in historicity, to imitate the creative process of the world, the process of world-theatre, and to establish examples which illustrate that one metaphor of acting as existence, role as character, and the play as fate. What commentators have several times criticized as obsession with detail, pedantic scholarship, polyhistoricism is the natural result of the author's fixation upon that metaphorical system of theatrics which besets his age. But it is well to recognize the individual merit of Lohenstein who, by means of the metaphor, returned to the tragedy, because he came to understand the theatrical process in terms of some invisible, fateful "authorship". Another necessary consequence of his historical-theatrical obsession was a certain introspection in his created characters, who had to conceive of themselves in terms of being on the stage of history. They are predecessors of the great self-examiners of much later German dramatic writing.
CHAPTER VI

FATAL GRANDEUR

The other African tragedy elevating the figure of a fascinating queen is *Sophonisba*, which Lohenstein may have begun already before 1668 and which he probably wrote in order to commemorate the marriage of Leopold of Austria and the Spanish Infanta in the year 1666. It was, however, first published by Fellgibel together with the revised version of *Cleopatra* in the collection of 1680. No concrete evidence exists whether or not *Sophonisba* too underwent revision. But it is justifiable to accept the date 1680 as the valid demarcation for the play. It exhibits an advanced development of Lohenstein's tragic sense and similarity with *Cleopatra* in choice of historical subject matter and locale. The fact that Lohenstein issued simultaneously his reworking of the latter drama and *Sophonisba* cannot be explained merely as a convenient union. In 1673 the author had returned to his dramatic origins and published *Ibrahim Sultan*, in which the frightening spectacle of a ruler's mental and
political collapse put into tragic relief the confrontation with historical necessity, rather than simply the story of heroic self-assertion by martyrs against external threats. The descent of the broken king into darkness and extinction was followed by a sharp contrast, the coronation of his son, which showed the continuance of the state and of the historical process. Seven years later, after twenty year's interval between Lohenstein's first African tragedy and its final rendition, one may well assume that the materials impressed the author, who had already reflected upon his own earlier productivity through the second Turkish play, as being suited for a deeper interpretation, indeed for a summation, of his tragic view. For the materials of Sophonisbe belong, despite its early inception, to the same sphere of history. And perhaps the renewed occupation with the African heroine, Cleopatra, summoned Lohenstein to deal once more also with queen Sophonisbe. This pair represent the most mature product of the dramaturge.

As the opening lines of Sophonisbe reveal, the drama is set at an earlier phase in the same historical period which culminates in Cleopatra. Whereas in the latter Rome has reached its pinnacle of power and has garnered in the outposts of the world under the aegis of its empire, in
Sophonisbe one sees the rising power of Rome in the days of pristine, republican vigor, at a crucial turning point in its fortunes, the phase of the Punic war and conquest of Carthage. Rome reacts positively, as does Hercules so exemplarily in chorus four of the drama, upon the crossroads of decision. The Carthaginian episode antedates, then, the Neronian episode, where Rome's rise loses its meaning and direction, where Rome's process of enslavement of the world has become internalized and Rome's own body politic shows signs of decay. But in Sophonisbe as still in Cleopatra, Rome is the starred power which Destiny protects and furthers; at the play's beginning it is the shadow of Rome which falls upon North Africa in foreboding of the future. An older civilization and empire, the Phoenician, is on the defensive and in collapse. One cannot separate its death agony from the fate of its rulers.

The action starts as in Cleopatra, so to speak, at the end, at the moment of imminent defeat for Sophonisbe's capital city. From its inception the play is an analysis of the stages of hopeless struggle against doom, which stands literally at the gates. Instead of witnessing this collapse from the point of view of the besieged, as in Cleopatra through the eyes of retreating Anthony, the reader stands with the conqueror outside the walls. This
difference in the initial situation of the male protagonist is not arbitrary but rather most significant, as later action verifies. Whereas Anthony first appears in flight before and victimized by political aggression, Masanissa is from the start the political aggressor. The former is a political failure, seeking to escape his Roman past and captivated by an African, an Egyptian nature; the latter is a political success, an often passionate African but in process of Romanization. King Masanissa, the ally of Rome, gloats over the revenge he is accomplishing against his fellow African king, Syphax. But underlying his bitter and cruel satisfaction with the spectacle of fires in the city about to fall, there sounds in the very first words of the play, which he utters, his awareness of history as the stage where man, attracted to doom, stands on trial:

Die Schuld schwert um Verterb/wie Mutten umb das Licht. (I, 1).

Lohenstein uses the same basic image which is of such importance in Agrippina. There one discovers a complete mythological fable in chorus two which explains the dubious connections between love and the life of the body politic, Rome. One of the potentialities of the "fire", sustaining the city in the form of the sacred
Vestal flame, was a destructive consummation if it took possession of men. Masanissa's statement grimly announces a similar theme of destruction as the result of an inner weakness or proclivity and of doom as some irresistible attractive fire. It is not long until he must struggle to overcome such a suicidal attraction in the person of the queen, whom he has not yet encountered. The two parts of this first line in the drama balance each other, or rather the initial half of the statement, an axiom earthly and popular in tone, is deepened through its second part, a comparison which portrays doomed men as helpless victims. Perhaps Lohenstein already casts a subtle veil of irony over the scornful comment by Masanissa, who later must suffer himself because of love. For, in gloating over the conflagration, he betrays his own fascination with the show of collapse, with the Carthaginian role of fiery consummation. Although the image of fire is not treated expansively in a chorus, it appears again and again throughout the play up to the moment when Sophonisbe will ascend willingly her own pyre, a dominant emblem of collapse. Thus, even a reader unfamiliar with the mythological prefiguration for Rome in Agrippina, the story of Helen and the conflagration of Troy, rightly links the burning of Cythra, Masanissa's temporary weakness, and the funereal arson of Sophonisbe in act five.
A difference, however, in the usage of the fire image places in contrast the play of crime or sin, *Agrippina*, and the historical plays, *Cleopatra* and *Sophonisbe*. Willi Flemming, the most recent editor of the second African drama in question prior to Just, puts too much emphasis on the guiltiness or guilt feeling of the heroine, who is supposed to expiate her crimes through death at her own hand. Certainly the sense of guilt affects the heroine, even if it never changes her outwardly inconsistent behavior from a moralistic viewpoint. But one must be careful to see that, whereas *Agrippina*’s crime against nature provokes in her, despite her having entered into it with desperate calculation, the painful torments of a soul set prey to demonic visions, to guilty anxiety of retribution, and to a sense of inexpiable taint, *Cleopatra* only regrets her blind surrender of Anthony and her lost chances with her noble spouse. She reacts as a wife and mother and can rewinn to a great measure, at least by certain tokens, such as Antyllus’ blessing, her assurance. With similar loss, but with much less guilt and virtually no bitterness, *Sophonisbe* too can be positive of her own stature at the end. Lohenstein thinks more about the question of state. Syphae’ "guilt" in breaking the Roman alliance is, simply because of his misjudgment and failure, only a historical guilt. Thus one witnesses his fall in terms of historical
fate rather than of sin. He acts wrongly in a period of historical change so constellated that Rome must win out. Any struggle against her amounts practically to personal political suicide. In this sense, Syphax flies blindly toward perdition, a moth attracted by a dangerous splendor, in trying to maintain his independent majesty. Masanissa has not made the same mistake. In the further development of the play, one of the dramatic questions will be whether he too will be attracted to the fatal error of opposing Rome, that is, historical "will," on behalf of an attractive personal good. Masanissa, however, returns to his original understanding of historical inevitability, as in the first scene, when he gives up his future love, Sophonisbe, and surrenders individual freedom and happiness on behalf of political power.

There is no question of guilt as a flaw in character or as an ethical fault. In fact, twentieth century readers are more likely to think of Masanissa as the sinner of the play, because of his betrayal of the queen. If the light and fire which dominate this drama visually indicate forces of consumption and immolation, if the factual "Flamme" and "Brand" which level Cythra have metaphorical counterparts in the "Flamme" and "Brunst" of passion, one must not think
that Lohenstein moralizes, as does Scipio, in associating the emotions and doom. He presents instead the facts of conquest and defeat with no further reference to an overarching metaphysics; history is the final instance. As will be demonstrated by the final chorus, the historical scenery in itself passes before our eyes as a segment excerpted from a gigantic process, whose tendency or drift is ultimately beyond human control. Syphax and Sophonisbe are not responsible for Cythra's fall morally. Rather they are out of tune with history. The great Roman virtue, reason, is quite machiavellian, an ability to sense the correct actions to take in accordance with historical necessity. Scipio has gained this ability at the price of self-conquest, of suppression of passions which lead one irrationally, in favor of a single obsessing passion to rule. Roman rationality is unmasked as a ruthless ambition to control the world, rather than be controlled by it. Sophonisbe's fall results accordingly under the aggressive attack by Rome upon her independence; the fall literally is loss of control over her own destiny, with only the recourse to death.

Sophonisbe shares with Agrippina and Cleopatra in being a defensive player in the game of power. Lohenstein's introductory poem to the drama talks of history in the
double sense of the word play. It is both a showplace of man, the actor with many roles, and the protean mask of a universal principle of play, that is, action. Behind the metaphor of the theatre resides the conception of the universe's operation as theatricality. In the three queenly histories, of Agrippina, Cleopatra and Sophonisbe, an almost preconceived elegiac mood, a prejudicial sadness is invoked for those great roles which must terminate, because some unknown authorship is in process of resolving them and fixing them in the repertoire of the world theatre. The intensity of the actor's playing becomes, with desperate undertones, equivalent to protest or resistance to the decreed conclusion, a pathetic self-assertion, and at last inevitable compliance according to the script. Sophonisbe's personal history must be viewed not as Lohenstein's composition but, from Lohenstein's point of view, as what history dictated as subject matter for tragic interpretation. Lohenstein's laborious effort to annotate his play indicates his concern with factuality, and he considers history as his authority. One might go so far as to say, history is the author and Lohenstein, the often scorned polyhistorian, merely secretary. Just as in the case of Racine, we may accept the moral assertions by Lohenstein about his characters as in no way impeaching the validity of the emotionally appealing heroines, despite the most evident non-ideal traits in their behavior. Lohenstein has
authority for presenting on stage the provocative, sometimes criminal, struggle of his women, whose charm no censure can obliterate. Especially in the case of Sophonisbe, the moral categories recede, and only the question of greatness in acting out a given role remains. Because the scales have tipped and she acts in opposition to overwhelming odds from the very start, our sympathy focuses on her.

Masanissa speaks this important motive, when he says:

"Das Spiel ist itzt verkehrt" (I, 73).

In the world-wide contest between two major powers, the same reversal of fortune as for Sophonisbe has taken effect. The astute Masanissa even thinks of opposition to Rome as a kind of madness, since Rome is marked with signs of victory:

Was ists für Aberwits; dass Cythra pocht und hähnt
Die/die's Verhängnis selbst mit Palm und Lorbern krönt (I, 49-50).

He already envisages Carthage crackling in flames. Lohenstein uses very effectively the audience's awareness of the story of Carthage's complete destruction in order to create the sense of fatefulness, when Masanissa predicts so accurately. The capture of Syphax introduces the important parallel theme to that of play, the drama of historical action. Actually Syphax cannot act in the sense
that he is an enchained prisoner, but the desire to act continues as the most important impulse. He had a part in history, but reversal of fortune has swept away his imperious role, and Rome is the agent of this disastrous change. As in Cleopatra, the desire for freedom, freedom to act or the role of nobility, collides against a tidal wave of destiny. Rome spreads out, encroaching upon the liberty of the world; it is a monster devouring all individuals and nations:

If human effort and thought cannot control its surge forward, clearly Rome is associated with destiny itself. Consciousness of this change in the game as a working of fate casts the loser into a tragic role, the role which Sophonisbe finally accepts. Syphax already sees himself, singled out by destiny, as an example of man's helplessness and takes upon himself the plaintive role of fallen greatness:

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Ach! ist dis glaubens werth? wil uns das Unglück-Meer/
Und Rom die ganzse Welt erschaffen und verschwemmen?
Rom/ dessen Siege Witz und Stärke nicht kan hemmen (I, 82-84).
In the spectacle of history, fallen majesties offer the objects of pity.

Beyond the idea of fortune's wheel, the unreliability of earthly success, the rapid reversal, Syphax gives the first indication of an area of resistance to destiny. Nothing is safe before the grave, "für der Gruft." We have shown already for the play Cleopatra that death is the only reliable and permanent fixer of one's role. Death brings it to a close and infuses it with a final significance. In Cleopatra, death has connections with the irrational life force; when individual freedom is threatened, it converts death, otherwise a threat to life, into the guaranteed escape from enslavement by historical circumstances. The close proximity of the words "Glück" and "Gruft" is not accidental. Their rapprochement becomes more and more perceptible in Syphax' exchange with Hasana. The unbending defeated seeks to preserve his status of nobility by accepting even possible annihilation without flinching. Stoic stubborness obviates debasement except physically. Death actually emerges as a blessing, a kind of salvation, because through it the noble can rescue his self-identity. Thus Syphax' heroic defiance, coupled with stoic suffering, anticipates some of the qualities which Sophonisbe possesses.
Especially emphatic is the royal consciousness of identification with his office, indeed with his country. As a prince, Syphax acts representatively on behalf of his realm:

"Das schafft kein faltend Fürst/ der seine Länder liebt" (I, 104).

He rebukes his own men who wish to save him by arranging a capitulation. Political surrender horrifies Syphax almost as much as loss of faith through cowardice can revolt a Christian hero. He uses the terminology of martyrdom, and his stoic attitude toward threats is very similar:

"Uns kann in dieser Nacht für keinem Tode grauen" (I, 108).

He fixes his hope upon the only possible justification, a maintenance of heroic or princely identity in despite of vicissitudes, whereby he proves that his nobility is indeed a state of soul. Joyful like a martyr, he wishes to merge forever with his role as king, to suffer death and attain lasting reknown:

Lasst uns behertzt und froh den letzten Schlag ertragen.
Es schafft mehr Ehre todt/ als Schave sein allhier.
Sagunt und Astapa mahlt euch ein Beispiel für:
Dass Tugend mit mehr Lust sich stürzt in Flamm und Brände/
Als Römern sich ergeb und fall in Feindes Hände
(I, 120-124).
Cleopatra felt the same way, and so will also Sophonisbe in this play. In contrast to the urge to plunge into the flames of destruction, so reminiscent of Masanissa's image of the moth and flame, the victorious king feels only the promptings of reason, cold calculation to manipulate the events of history in his own favor:

"Ein kluger muss sich ins Verhängnis schicken" (I, 207).

Thus heroic virtue has a dubious nihilistic shadow of historical guilt, while amoral and cynical intrigue masks itself in rosy terms of honor. Masanissa's suborning of Hiëmpsual reveals as the counterpart to stoic suffering a vicious ethics of necessity.

Lohenstein exposes history as an amoral process. Historical change serves as sole justification for change of conduct. Masanissa takes up all the possible arguments of deception, thanklessness, perjury, betrayal that may impede Hiëmpsual's decision and applies these negative attributes to Syphax, the man whom he wants to have betrayed. He paints the fallen king so blackly that Hiëmpsual may accept a new master to replace the wicked one. Yet one can accept readily Masanissa's description of himself as a steadfast, loyal hero constantly threatened by treachery of Syphax. Doubtless, only the fierce
determination and struggle to survive have led to his getting the upper hand, after living as a pursued enemy and almost a wild animal for so long. By joining the Romans, he cleverly reversed the harsh facts, which he now wraps in legal rhetoric. Behind the rhetoric is a melancholy and brutal fatalism which masks itself as reason:

Die Sonne der Vernunft muss solche Nebel dämpfen. Entschleus behertzt/ was Ruhr und Wollfahrt samelt ein (I,212-215).

Against this "sun" Sophonisbe later functions in the drama as another light, another attractiveness, which draws Masanissa, like the moth, toward the flame of immolation. Before the appearance of the queen on stage, two types of men have been presented, while in the background the Roman remains as the extreme representation of raison d'état. Syphax, the defeated, and Masanissa, the victor, play the parts of the ascending and sinking potentate, whose power rests upon no moral mandate but rather upon historical circumstance. That Masanissa is a divided, even torn person, has become evident through his impassioned desire for revenge; likewise Syphax pulsates with emotions. Neither can really belong entirely to the cold sphere of cunning which is the special province of Augustus in
Cleopatra, yet there alone can political man discover means to survive, and then only if he rides the crest of the wave.

The attributes of the two kings are not moralistically evaluated. But each insists upon his virtue. They engage in their struggle to demonstrate this peculiarly heroic pose which provides them with an identity. Only the meanness and smallness of a figure like Hiempsal place him in a negative category as traitor and knave. Syphax and Masanissa, in committing foul deeds against each other, have acted largely in grander interests of state. Their stature removes them from the niveau of base figures. In Lohensteln's non-idealistic vision of time, greatness is the only answer to the amorality of history. Not the ethical substance of Epicharis' rebellion, but the greatness of her goal, to restore the lost nobility of the Romans, like the hopeless magnificence of her martyrdom, make her a heroine. When Lohenstein creates the figure of Sophonisbe, she impresses us also because of her great and impossible aims of saving her fatherland. Thus the initial scenes, in which Lohenstein prepares for the collapse, the encounter of Syphax and Masanissa is not merely for historical milieu. By removing the inapplicable ethical considerations and exposing a treacherous world of struggle, Lohenstein sets the stage for the moralistically reprehensible deeds of Sophonisbe, who however by her
greatness attains tragic stature.

As in Cleopatra, so also in Sophonisbe the heroine is introduced in close association to the gods and cult of her doomed land. A scenery change occurs and the stage presents a temple, the sacral sphere in which both African queens appear so often. Although she has not yet learned of Syphax' capture, Sophonisbe's entreaty to the gods for protection emphasizes the threat of "Trauer-Wolcken" (I, 221). Like Agrippina, she senses her encirclement by danger and its tragic possibilities. Like Cleopatra, her great anxiety is not to be debased through a fall and servitude. She would prefer the most gruesome martyrdom:

So lasst den freyen Leib Schwerd/ Pfal und Brand austehn/
So lasst den Donner Keil so Brüst als Hertz zerfleischen/
So lasst der Glieder Gel auf glimmeng Rösten kreischen/
So schenokt der Lächsenden Ertst/ Peoch und Schwefel ein/
Darf Sophonisbe nur der Römer magd nicht sein (I, 226-230)?

The announcement by returning hostages of Syphax' enchainment casts her into spasmodic wavering from one emotion to the next, faltering and recovering, finally reaching a heated pitch of determination to replace him. She decides at this moment to accept her queenly identity with all the consequences of the regal role, which has
drastically affected Syphax. In keeping with the sacral atmosphere, she is ready not only to undertake personal sacrifice, converting love for her spouse into love of what he represents, the fatherland, but also to offer up holy victims to appease the hungry deities -- her own children:

Mein eigen Blutt bezeuge
Mit was für Liebes-Milch ich Reich und Völker
säuge (I, 359-360).

Thus Sophonisbe unites the notion of sacred rite with the health of her country. Like the vestal fire, the fire of the Phoenician gods represents the divine maintenance of empire. But only Hector's sacrifice of family on behalf of the state equals the dedication for which Sophonisbe prepares. This often chilling manly hardness, readiness to kill her own offspring, willingness later to accept her husband's conqueror, assumption of battle dress, we have met similarly in the figure of Epicharis. In pursuance of a high goal both women share a certain fanaticism. Epicharis, for example, was capable of the coolly calculated murder of Piso after he had once served her purpose, while at the same time she demonstrated absolute loyalty to her fellow martyrs. Yet Sophonisbe undoubtedly belongs more to the physical world of North Africa than Epicharis does to Rome. The queen is more substantial; the martyr more ideal...
One must keep in mind this difference in order to understand Sophonisbe's heated, often savage temperament. The fourth scene moves into the dark religious sphere of fate and concerns itself with human sacrifice. Lohenstein emphasizes through portrayal of Sophonisbe's state religion the most primitive level of man's confused life-urge. In order to further life, she would destroy victims, even her own children. The process of the world demands blood-letting, and she imitates the gods in her attempt to placate or sway them. A strange suicidal bent, a tendency toward self-immolation, here at the summit of the state authority and within the royal family, characterizes the Cathaginian urge to preserve the body politic. Sophonisbe is expressly associated with the fierce Amazon queen, Penthesilea, whom Kleist later portrayed with her divided or irrational nature. Sophonisbe demonstrates, and the second chorus re-iterates the fact, conflicting extremes of passion -- cunning, tenderness, hatred, savagery. A powerful rhetoric with its legalistic turns of phrase masks these drives. The queen's personality is further complicated by her association with Pallas, goddess of reason and intellect, whose image, according to chorus two in Agrippina, protected the city Troy, then Rome. Pallas, also a warlike divinity, is the perfect patronness of raison d'etat. The motivation for Sophonisbe's actions is seen lastly, however, as a decree of fate. Amilcar's address contains the important terms:
The gods are only representative deities under one anonymous power, called fate.

As one may expect from reading other Lohenstein plays, women are especially connected with the realm of fate. Lohenstein never indicates an abrupt division by sexes, but his heroines and the female personality in general penetrate what does not admit of limited rational understanding. In contrast, the rational hero, especially the Roman general or statesman, stands apart, often with scorn, from the dark cultish proceedings that seem to him to border on madness. So important is the female role in Sophonisbe that the queen has her son Vermina dress in woman's clothes in order to pray to the gods. There is another motif from Lohenstein's drama as a whole. If the gods are equated to fate, it is noteworthy that in Sophonisbe's country they are gods of fire, devouring gods who consume victims. When Syphax suddenly reappears, having escaped prison, and substitutes Roman captives as sacrifices in place of his children, Sophonisbe does not know whether the malevolence or favor (Grimm oder Gunst, "I, 446) of the gods affects her proposed action. The
uncertainty of what one’s undertaking will ultimately signify makes reverence for fate into a pessimistic awe. Vermina expresses the feeling that man’s reason is incapable of illuminating the mystery of fate; fate sits on the judgment seat, inscrutable and depersonalized:

O Blindheit der Vernunft/ die nur hat Maulwurfs-Augen/
Wenn sie schon Luchs wil sein. Wir albern Götzten taugen
Nicht fürs Verhängnisses umbwölkten Richterstuhl (I, 446-449).

Let us then, only tentatively, review the traits which characterize the North African group. It actually rejects rationality as the supreme faculty. It demonstrates an almost Christian sensibility for human weakness, coupled with an irrational impulse of self-extinction, before an awesome power in the universe, fate. It suffers from confusion of the human soul, as for example Syphax says:

"Es kämpft in meiner See Angst/Zweifel/
Freude/ Smertz" (I, 458).

The Roman group, here represented by the two victims, opposes and curses the savagery of human sacrifice. Roman reason condemns the barbaric in Carthaginian civilization. When Lohenstein stages an actual blood-sacrifice, he wishes to present a concrete evidence of the irrational depths in a soul like Sophonisbe’s. One sees the raging of natural forces beneath the civilised mask of the falling kingdom.
The first chorus deals with the complexity of Sophonisbe's soul and interprets thereby the events at the close of act one. Figures appear to act out a psychological allegory, which attempts to synthesize out of contradictory elements the unreasonable fact -- the queen's personality. The series of masks, each one designated by name with some abstraction, are to evoke all together the contributory motions of soul, so difficult to grasp and yet so evident in human behavior, which erupt from time to time in critical tumult. The goddess of dissension, a kind of mistress of ceremonies, introduces the masks after entitling the queen variously priestess of hell, heaven's fear, queen of earth, child of the abyss, etc., whose very existence provokes conflict. Sophonisbe suffers inwardly from as great emotional strife, and it is emphasized that she is driven by impulses and obsessions. The word Trieb occurs frequently. The possibility of insanity is introduced, that is, loss of reason and senses (Vernunft und Sinnen, "I, 541). The chorus refers to human "inhumanity," that can exceed the fury of wild beasts, dionysiac madness and orgiastic sacrifice (I, 567-568). Classical mythology provides examples of irrational dehumanization during the progress of the psychological disputation. At the end of the chorus the passions (Furcht/ Freude/ Schrecken/ Hass/
Beglerbe/ Liebe/ Neid," I, 575) await the decision which usually settles an argumentative entr'acte. Now a single mask, representing Sophonisbe's soul, acknowledges all the emotions and awards the prize to revenge. A single entity replaces, combines and supersedes the microscopic subdivisions of itself, makes up the total which finally must be accepted as a soul. Lohenstein does not leave in clinically analyzed fragments but fuses into a single mask his "abstract" interpretation of Sophonisbe. One must note that, beyond all the contradictory elements in her makeup, there is "something else". Although the mask, Sophonisbes Seele, accepts the various drives as the constituent strands of her being, she suggests in her last words something not driven or controlled, something not analysable, the elusive and spiritual aspect of her humanity:

"Doch Blitz zerbrich die Stricke" (1, 584)!

The yearning for freedom forms her final utterance and reservation; yet even this desire for release, expressed in the "doch" and in a sudden wish, is not a rational self-assertion! Sophonisbe remains still a mysterious incarnation of drives and forces through which some indefinable principle emerges. Lohenstein does not insist upon any connection between rationality and spirituality. The urge for freedom suffices to summarize the essence of the queen's soul.
All the excitement of events in act one is repeated in the second act, which takes place in the royal palace. The author with the effect of startling changes, wishes to express his vision of the world as "play," a concept which he treats in the dedicatory poem. There he uses the word play (Spiel) with its several connotations, not least of which is the ironic double reference to the theatre and to artistic superiority or distance: "Ich liefer nur ein Spiel" (line 19). In the initial moment of the second act, fortune again reverses. The city is already betrayed, and Syphax immediately resumes his role as the plaything of luck, a role in which henceforth he remains fixed. By a twofold experience of defeat in so short a space of time, the king can feel the dizzying inconstancy of the world and develop, as a theatrical character, even in his own eyes into the epitome of the unlucky, fallen man:

Erbärmlich Unbestand
Des Glückes! das mit uns spielt/ als mit Wasserblasen (II, 2-3).

Although Syphax is not portrayed as a strong personality, in so far as he is subject to his fitful passions, his abject plight makes him simultaneously more seeing. At least he has the insight now that doom hangs over his country, as Hannibal once recognized (II, 23-25). Despite debasement, or even on account of his fall, he draws nearer to the sphere of fate. Sophonisbe attains her own first
peculiar consciousness of fate through this shock, but she still reacts with a will to struggle on, while Syphax has become more passive; she is ready to accept what may come and fulfill her destiny with courage (II, 46-47). Syphax practically is spokesman on behalf of the author, or of the facts, when he characterizes the incoming Masinissa as a tool used by Rome for enslaving Africa:

Du eben bist der Drache/
Der Afrika verschlingt; und seine Freyheit legt
Den Räubern unter's Joch; der eine Wölfen hegt
In seiner eignen Schos/ die ihm bald selbst
wird fressen (II, 60-63).

The statement is actually prophetic, but Sophonisbe does not heed it.

The stage clears for the dramatically important confrontation. Masinissa, in whom Roman ambition, with its cold calculation, vies with African passions, is a masked personality in so far as he harbors the "wolverine" which eventually will devour his African nature. He is astonished by Sophonisbe's martial dress. Outwardly she has the resolute appearance of the ideal masculine type, the field marshal, yet inwardly she is the emotional queen and attractive woman. One meets this protean image of struggle elsewhere in Lohenstein's drama and especially in the figure of Epicharis, who often appears asexual through her numerous disguises. Sophonisbe takes advantage
of the impression she has made and tries to move Masanissa with a humble speech of submission and reminders of their common blood. She passes from this to disavowal of freedom in favor of death; thus to gain his pity for her as a misfortunate noble, she renounces the very basis of her existence, freedom, and even life. Certainly one hears the emotional overtone from Christian weariness with the world, a melancholia and desire to escape the debasement which always threatens:

Drumb schäťz ich alles diss nur für gemahlte Körner/
Darmit das Glück uns streut/ und ins Verterben lockt.
Der Himmel ist zu schwartz/ das Glücke zu ver-
stockt;
Dass ich mir noch hiervon was süßes träumen lasse.
Ich schwere/ grosser Fürst; dass ich mit Lust erblasse.
Mich stinkt das Aloe des sauren Lebens an/
Das das Verhängnäs selbst mir nicht verzuckern kann (II, 104-lf.)

Of course, here there is no Christian afterworld. What the queen seeks is a way out for preserving her own identity and avoiding the bitter possibility of Roman captivity (II, 115-116). Her death wish is on the one hand a genuine expression of the wish to exit as a free personality, on the other hand a play for the pity of Masanissa, who as a ruler is capable of understanding her royal emotions. The appeal is direct, from one
noble to another. One may nowadays be a little surprised that so much can be said with so few words, but it is to be remembered that, as in the French classical theatre, the terms which sound so abstract to the uninitiated viewer carry powerful emotive force. The metaphors playing with such terms form a network of veiled intense feeling. A definite language of "higher" souls, a distilled essence of language, indicates adequately the movements of hearts. A single phrase from Masanissa confirms one's growing suspicion that her behavior, station and sentiments have made him enamoured, and Sophonisbe quickly adds sensual emphasis to her plea, as soon as the signs favor demonstration of her own increasing emotion. When Masanissa says, "Mein Licht" (II, 134), he is already on the verge of pledging protection.

The question arises, perhaps, how far one should accept the statements couched in a highly stylized speech as "genuine" expression of the dramatic persons. For example, in light of Sophonisbe's further behavior in this act, in which she seems to reverse herself radically several times, first protesting love for Syphax and next affirming love for Masanissa, one may be tempted, if not yet familiar with the standard rhetorical apparatus of Lohenstein's or other contemporaries' language, to
associate the intricate fencing with words with the political and dubious side of man, with the deceit and intrigue of court, etc. Doubtless such cunning does emerge in Lohenstein's dramas very much compatible with rhetoric, with artful speaking. Yet one must be careful not to overlook the fact that even though rhetorical formulas, rather abstract phrases and conceits constitute an "artificial" mode of expression, one recognizes that certain characters speak with a kind of honesty which shines through the conventions, while devious intentions also stand out sorely from pretended sentiments. The truth is that all persons use the same metaphorical elements of speech, and that one distinguishes "character" just as with any other conventional language. What further complicates Lohenstein's drama is that he, as author, permits another dubiousness to affect his characters' speech; he infuses their statements, whether genuine or cunning, with irony that gives us some wide and general insight as spectators. For example, in the case of Sophonisbe one cannot state unequivocally that she is merely "pretending". If in the play-action by Cleopatra, who faked her own suicide and burial, ironic truths, prefigurations of future verities crowded her unwitting talk, one may feel discomfort about Sophonisbe's future, even while one at first believes she is only manoeuvring
with Masaniass. On the one hand, Sophonisbe may already be playing a role too well, drifting irresistibly into the role which destiny has decreed; on the other hand, she is, in frank terms, a deceiver. In the long run the play confirms the former of these two assumptions. That one even needs to worry about such possibilities ought to warn against too simplified an interpretation. Part of Lohenstein's greatness as a dramatist, and in this regard he often evinces affinity with Shakespeare, is ironic subtlety in depiction of character. This attribute is not impaired by the tendency toward a classicistic vocabulary, an apparatus of formulae, which to be sure is never as pruned and extreme as in France.

Masaniass's monologue in scene two, his first great speech, bears out the implication of his gentle address ("Mein Licht") to the queen. This internal discussion, roughly another form of disputation, penetrates far more effectively his character than could the chorus of act one Sophonisbe's. Lohenstein may use a similar scheme of balanced argument, countered antitheses, and so forth, as in many choral interludes, but he demonstrates a psychological finesse like that exhibited in Cleopatra's monologue. Carried on the usual stream of rhetoric, Masaniass's thoughts circle steadily the dilemma he recognizes and must resolve -- a conflict between his
ambition and love for the queen. Despite the argumentative exclamations, conjunctions, questions, one is conscious primarily of a mind in struggle and only secondly of set patterns. Lohenstein evokes the emotions, capturing in Masanissa more the complexity of the man, in Syphax more the stereotype. Yet Lohenstein's vision of the Numidian's soul corresponds closely to the general picture of the world, as something inconstant, shifting, reversing. That vision influences every aspect of the drama. Masanissa begins with question and paradox, the rhetorical conceit whether the victor is actually the vanquished. Next he exclaims that he is aflame, crying out a confession to the absent Sophonisbe that he is her slave. His own outburst disturbs him, for he asks himself how he can be succumbing to so evident endangerment. To demonstrate how thoroughly Lohenstein works in ironic suggestions, one can take an example from the monologue. Masanissa returns to the identical image which he uttered so haughtily in the first line of the play, now thinking: "Stürztst du vorsätzlich dich wie Mutten in die Glutt." (II, 177)?

Masanissa is able to find counterarguments against his own political convictions. But this rationalization assumes stronger and stronger emotional color, until he again finds himself praising her. Once more the monologue
returns to the original exclamation ("Achi aber/ achi"). Masanissa's heart grows cold thinking of Rome, but inflamed thinking of Sophonisba; this contradictory state fits the Petrarchistic pattern of antithetical emotion, yet out of the convention Lohenstein creates the quite actual situation of Masanissa. His political proclivity makes him consider the possibility of dissimulating, of appearing not to love, but he cannot hide his passion. That is, at this juncture in the drama he is unable.

The predicament of political man is that he is forced to wear a mask, finally to become a mask. Masanissa fights this necessity, although he perceives it. Thus his character is not the same as that of Cleopatra, as she reveals herself in a similar interior speech. He betrays a faltering and divided mind, the mind of an incipient politician who is suddenly faced by the tempting attractiveness of earthly beauty and by the dream of personal happiness. He has perhaps thought himself hardened against so pleasing weaknesses in scene one of the play. But his career is just starting, and his human response to a great woman's charm overcomes stern ambition. Cleopatra is just the opposite, a practiced deceiver and manipulator, so long dedicated to political success that she gambles her only genuine chance for earthly happiness, Anthony's love, on behalf of her state. Although mistaken in her calculation, Cleopatra
speaks to herself, one may grant with moments of misgiving, in terms of reasonable action, whereas Masanissa confesses a passive dependence on Sophonisbe (II, 215). As indicated above, the original question of the drama, guilt and collapse (Die Schuld schwermt umb Vertereb/ wie Mutten umb das Licht,"I, 1), returns as the obsessing personal struggle of the politician Masanissa (II, 177). The essay has pointed earlier to the wider implications of the metaphors of fire and light, which are associated with the destruction of Cyrtha. Other plays show similar usage. But in the second act Mesanissa speaks of fire (Ich brenn,"II, 202, etc.) as love, of light (wenn er dich/ o Sonne/ betet an,"II, 209) as the beloved. Previous discussion of Agrippina and Cleopatra has yielded examples of this parallel usage. In short, Lohenstein's proliferated rhetoric depends on the convention, encountered in all Europe, whereby emblems, "heart", "fire", "flame", "light", etc. stand for inner states of emotional life; yet he gives a realistic corollary for these metaphors in historical occurrences. In the play Sophonisbe, the queen herself is characterized by and represents the powers, often dubious, understood through emblems of light or fire. She cannot be comprehended outside of this rhetorical network.
In the dungeon (scene three) Syphax considers fortune's inconstancy and concludes death is better than incarceration. He sounds like a Christian sick of the dark world and for release:

Es ist so schrecklich nicht den grausen Tod ansehn/
Als in der Finsternäs kaum Maulwurfs-Augen haben (II, 238-239).

This imagery starts a play upon the idea of light, which is continued as soon as Sophonisbe penetrates the gloom and prohibits suicide. Syphax must doubt at first, partly because she is disguised as a Roman soldier, partly because she just recently has seemed to betray him. Her appearance is startling, and she enters much as a radiant angel to liberate him:

Deine Sonne
Die diese Nacht durchstrahlt/ des Kerker's Angst in Wonne/
Die Band' in Freyheit kehrt (II, 251-253).

In Lohenstein's earliest play, Ibrahim Bassa, the notions of love, freedom and death drew together into one group of associated principles. This earliest work, standing to a great extent under the spell of Christian stoic sentiment, gave a positive value to the association. Clarity of spirit, even the rational approach to life, contrasted the freely choosing and pure lovers as against the captivated, passionate tyrant. In spite of the radical trait of suicidal
steadfastness, an ostensibly rational ethics of love motivated the heroes. Sophonisbe too is concerned with liberating herself and Syphax, and love prompts her action. It is an indomitable principle:

Die Liebe/ liebstes Haupt/ ist aus des Proteus Orden/
Die sich zu allen macht/ nimbt jede Furt an sich Wie ein Chamaelon (II, 260-262).

Already, in the case of Epicharis, an ethical goal excused essentially immoral deeds, such as murder, although the great philosopher Seneca recognized and avoided such dubious commitment on behalf of an ideal. Also in Epicharis' case, one discovers the theme of protean masquerade for the sake of survival and for maintenance of heroic struggle. In Sophonisbe many of these diverse traits unite. She is motivated both through love for her husband, as was Isabella, through an impulse to liberate, as was Epicharis, and through a desire to save her state, as was Cleopatra. She is capable, because of essentially ethical motives, to undertake the religious sacrifice of her own children or captive enemies, acts which may horrify us as barbarous or immoral. Perhaps because Sophonisbe obeys all the dictates of immediate human necessities, she at first bewilders the audience. But in this bewilderment resides already a great part of her
charm. For she is distinctly the "light" in the play, and upon her focuses the look of all who need release from the darkness of history.

Let us recall in addition certain attributes of the queens Agrippina and Cleopatra. The first strove not merely for her old position in the Roman state, where a new intrigante, Poppaea, climbed to power, but also for naked survival. From the start Agrippina felt a growing threat to her life, and she fought desperately against a monstrous son under the influence of unscrupulous courtiers. Despite her sinful counterattack, the very vitality of the queen impressed one and aroused pity, since she could only worsen her hopeless plight. As if in proof of her greatness, she exercised even while dead erotic attractiveness upon Nero. Cleopatra excited cold August to admiration in a similar fashion, despite his scorn for suicide and his wonder at irrational fury. What both these queens possessed, and misplayed, was an intoxicating beauty, still vibrant though fading in age. Both sought to employ their wiles for a rationally conceived program of political adventure, but failed for various reasons. Agrippina could not quite manage in a crisis to displace the young Poppaea, and plunged into an abyss of incest. Cleopatra did not admit that her glory, embellished with Caesar and Anthony, was complete, nor outwit Augustus. Sophonisbe belongs to this tradition of enchanting women, and to their
charm she adds the fervent conviction of the "purer" heroines like Isabella and Epicharis. One must keep this complexity in mind and not rush to a simple diagnosis, when Sophonisbe turns immediately from the accomplished freeing of Syphax to her plans for winning Masanissa. Yes, Sophonisbe is indeed amoral in respect of her conscious breach of the marital laws respected by seventeenth century Germany, which one should regard as the norm. An Isabella would have died, free-splited in her chains, rather than break the love oath. But Sophonisbe begins immediately to devise an escape, just as would an Agrippina. She has sensed that Masanissa is enamoured and that she must utilize him. It is not, however, on grounds of Sophonisbe's original and ostensible motivations that one ultimately judges her. As already pointed out, her imagined motivation, despite its real basis, leads her further and further into a role, a destined and tragic role. And one begins already to pity the queen, who as early as in the scene where she frees Syphax, believes she is evading disaster, accommodating herself to fate.

Sophonisbe has also to solve a question which plagues the political calculator, whether Masanissa's gesture indicates deception or a genuine passion. But at the same time she foresees being cursed by Syphax for
going over to the conqueror, should he actually love her. She answers negatively on her own right to set aside Syphax. She takes a calculated risk, with full awareness of a moral prohibition. As queen and noble she cannot avoid the reasoning of politics or the commands of conscience. Yet she must choose and act, and political necessity dictates:

In effect she is taking over the cause of the realm, which Syphax considers lost. She believes he cannot rightly curse her, then, since she has broken his chains and is ensnaring Masanissa in her own (II, 304 ff.). Sophonisbe is trying to control destiny through intrigue by means of her rationality. She, like Cleopatra, hopes to use passion as a weapon of subjection;

In other words, Sophonisbe still believes that she is acting consistently, while to the audience she may appear to fluctuate from one loyalty to another. She forgets, of course, that such a game of pretended passion can be
played by the whole world; also, and this is more
important, that the passions are treacherous, not always
controllable impulses. The queen is another variation by
Lohenstein of the tragic figure of the deceived deceiver,
in whom a certain amount of self-deception is always
evident.

Masanissa experiences for a second time the shock
of discovering Sophonisbe in armor. To her original
resoluteness is now added the fact of her loyalty to
Syphax. Again she begs for death rather than fall to the
Romans. Her humility and the appeal of her action confirm
Masanissa in his love; he sees her as a supreme example of
womanhood. In protestations of enslavement to her and in
repeated images of burning, as well as other Petrarchistic
formulae, the conqueror woos. At first she stands fast on
her marriage, as she is seeking equivalent guarantees. The
actual problem is the interference of Rome. Masanissa
cannot subordinate his passion, therefore not himself to
Roman command, for he insists upon personal rights to
happiness: "Hat Rom im Lieben uns Gesetze vorschreiben?"
(II, 411)? The influence of Sophonisbe as a liberating
"light" waxes; Masanissa, carried away, reaches the point
where he claims he is ready to break the alliance.
Sophonisbe, who can now accept him as her protector (Schutz-
Gott,"II, 420), launches into an impassioned confession of
her "flame". The intense demonstration may be partly dissimulated, and it is certainly seductive. Yet it seems to border already on a genuine passion. Recognition and maintenance of queenly identity are paramount conditions for love by Sophonisbe. The moment is definitely triumph for her. But it remains to be seen just in how far she has committed her inner self. In connection with her personal exaltation, Lohenstein shows the heated excitement of Masanissa, who believes optimistically, under her spell, that he can outwit Rome by rushing into a fait accompli. The marriage is to be celebrated at once. The author has created a counter climax to the catastrophic events of the first scene of the act. Thus act one and act two are analogous. Each begins with a crisis, which Sophonisbe answers by resolute action, and each finishes with a false victory, a deceiving encouragement. Yet progressively, the queen allows herself to be enmeshed deeper in the personal situation of Rome's ally, king Masanissa.

At this high point, Lohenstein introduces the second chorus. It has two obvious functions; first, it commemorates the marriage of Leopold of Austria, and second, pays homage to the power of love. A usual pattern is employed. Dramatic figures or Masks, representing the four spheres or elements of the universe argue and by argument is demonstrated the subjection of all things to
the dominion of love. Each figure disputes with the sovereign power and is vanquished, since love is able to make absolute claims. In fact, in this chorus love occupies the ultimate throne held by fate in the first chorus of Cleopatra (Cleo., I, 1069-1072), and almost identical words define the unlimited reign:

Der Zirckel der Natur umbeschrienkt
Nicht mein Altar, etc. (II, 437 f.).

One can compare this favorite image of Lohenstein to Anthony's words about unlimited Rome and Augustus (Cleo., I, 4ff). The tribute paid by the poet is that Leopold's affection is absolute. At the same time, a contrast is established for the later acts of Masanissa, who finally succumbs to political pressure and abandons the queen. Thus, while the chorus maintains the joyous or optimistic level of the act just closed, and while it prepares through its theme for the pageant of act three, Sophonisbe's marriage -- the parallel event to the here celebrated Austrian royal match -- Lohenstein states unobtrusively, even tacitly the main tragic truth of the drama. That truth is love, as the chorus defines it, as an absolute conditioner of human behavior.

This essay has suggested above that even in the earliest stage where Sophonisbe thinks she can play with emotions, she is committing herself unconsciously to what
shall be unmasked as verity, as her true role. The drama confirms in its final stages that she no longer acts but lives her role as Masanissa's lover, just as she begins the drama loving Syphax. Of course, unless they are familiar with the "story" of Sophonisbe, which is very possible for the times, the audience is not aware at this point in the play that it is Sophonisbe, and not Masanissa, who will exhibit the invincible dominion of love. The principal matter evident to the eyes and ears is, on the purely theatrical and social level of the Lothenstein's present, a fete, which glorifies a social model, the emperor. Each allegorical mask entertains the spectators, especially the more educated, by using mythological examples which love conquers with its own counter examples. In this learned and legalistic dispute, love manages to show persuasively that it is the moving principle of the universe, and finally all the figures pay homage in a group. A theatrical illumination follows, using the letters of Leopold's and Margarite's names, a direct salutation to the royal couple. This social involvement is very important to the author. But one must remember that he integrates the various time levels of his play, and does not simply break the "illusion" of the theatre. He mirrors the history of his own day in the history of the past, true; but the tribute for the Austrian couple
is part and parcel of the "false" optimism which ends act two and which delays the full impact of Sophonisbe's undertaking. The tribute tends to obscure the chorus' underlying message when it points to love as an absolute, thus as of the realm of fate. The growing influence of love is still not clear at the beginning of act three in so far as Sophonisbe is concerned. In a scene similar to Cleopatra, I, 1, Masanissa appears to be the helpless victim of amorous feeling.

This scene opens act three and shows the king opposed to his own advisers, who seek to dissuade him from a connection with Sophonisbe. Naturally Rome is in their minds, and their basic contention is that the queen calculates politically: "Sie kann ihr Vaterland nicht aus der Seele bannen" (III, 29). That fact cannot be disputed, of course, but what is more, Sophonisbe infects her very surroundings with the idea of "freedom". The essay has tried elsewhere to indicate how freedom is associated with the principle of inner truth and especially in the drama Cleopatra, with individual happiness. This latter association becomes clear gradually in Masanissa's dilemma. Rome diametrically opposes freedom through its policies, and the officers discover their king wavering dangerously:

_Bomilo._ Wo denckt der Fürst hinaus? wil er von Rom sich scheiden?
_Masin._ Nicht/ wo die Freyheit nur wird keinen Schiffbruch leiden. (III, 41-42).
The next scene, the wedding ceremony, evokes a lyric highpoint. It is the final triumph of Sophonisbe and likewise an optimistic peak. The solemnity and pomp create the atmosphere proper to the queen, the cult atmosphere of the temple. There is a full stage, and all present act as a chorus, operatically, to render the refrain after each ceremonial climax: "Gib/Göttin/Masiniss- und Sophonisben Glücke" (III, 85). Lohenstein uses every avenue of appeal to create an overpowering splendor, a glittering, almost sanctified hope, all the more in order to contrast the terrible disappointment which must follow. This marriage cult is also united with the cult of the flaming gods, chiefly with the victim-devouring fertility goddess Astarth. Here the author makes another connection between earthliness, passion and sacredness. Lohenstein again insists on the actuality of the event, on staging theatrically a sacrament, which one can dismiss as an external reality or feel as inwardly meaningful. Lohenstein seems to perceive an analogy between "theatre" and "sacrament", as the essay pointed out in regard to other plays. Here the technique is to establish the sacral character of "ordinary" objects and events. The church similarly regards the sacramentals as ordinary materials which are infused with spiritual significance and elevated as symbols of the divine, or as outward evidence of an
inward holiness. The rendering of materials of everyday life into sacramental symbols occurs by a rite or in a ceremony. So the author brings before our eyes a detailed ceremony, and thereby can convincingly infuse the staged bad omen of the entrails with a supernatural meaning. Lohenstein tries to convey to his audience, by ritualistic impression analogous to what they experience in church, how an uncanny power, fate, penetrates the historical world even in every physical detail. As part of the wedding, the priest Bogudes must prognosticate the couple's future, and as in Cleopatra, where temple animals gave the signs, so here certain auguries, a heart that is too small and a flame that does not burn purely and brightly, cause foreboding. In the preceding chorus, one may recall, love's undying dominion is celebrated, but no direct reference singles out Sophonisbe or Masanissa. Now the reverse happens; the failure of love is hinted at. But the audience cannot yet realize that the prognostication refers to Masanissa's heart rather than to the queen's.

The intrusion of realistic politics is swift. Laelius and some Roman soldiers burst in upon the wedding and excite Masanissa by the threat to his bride's security. A quarrel over sovereignty flares up between the Roman officer and African king. He makes a hot and brilliant defense of Phoenician culture and goes so far as to raise himself the
charge that Rome seeks to enslave the world (III, 192f). In Sophonisbe's spell, he gives a veiled threat of war, to which Laelius immediately reacts with scorn from the coldly rational viewpoint that Masanissa is captive of passions and talks nonsense. The legalistic argument whether the marriage is a breach of treaty leads to the open break, for which Sophonisbe perhaps works primarily. The king's advisors must intervene to soothe the antagonists, who have drawn swords, and the question is deferred until Scipio's arrival. The climax of the African-Roman conflict in act three comes when Laelius discovers the sacrifice of Roman victims and curses the practice of human immolation, which so enrages Roman sensibilities. Yet, as Lohenstein neatly demonstrates, Laelius' denunciation of savagery, idolatry and inhumanity calls forth a bloody revenge. The Roman wants to punish brutally the priest and others to expiate Roman blood. The author has no personal comment about the primitive forces unleashed for a "just" cause but stands aside, absorbed in the factuality of such gruesome behavior. Among the victims picked from North African prisoners is Syphax, caught fleeing in Roman dress.

Dramatically powerful is Bogudes' defense of his conduct as high priest. He rests his case on the mandate of sacred laws (Himmlische Gesetze, "III, 295), the same
claim which all churches make, and Lohenstein, as author, does not invalidate or comment upon the assertion. Laelius calls this opinion mad (Wahnwitz,"III, 296) and speaks of nature itself being revulsed by human sacrifice (III, 305), only to proceed with a command that Bogudes be killed. Then Bogudes proclaims with great dignity his happiness in dying for the gods without having sullied himself. He has the triumphant and pathetic tone of a genuine martyr, yet he is a pagan, whose cult is barbarous:

Solch Tod bestetigt es: Bogudes sey beliebet
Den Göttern/ denen er als Priester sich geweiht/
Weil er zum Opfer selbst auf ihr Altar gedeyet;
Ihr edles Creutze küsst (III, 314-317).

Lohenstein even lends his speech the emotional appeal afforded by the supreme symbol of sacrificial death for Christians -- the cross. This is a remarkable moment in seventeenth century literature. After horrible human sacrifice there follows a passage in which the murderous priest justifies himself with a pathos based on the Christian tradition of piety, on language which a "humane" Laelius calls madness. Lohenstein supersedes the conflict between two attitudes, the religious and the humanistic-rational, with cold examination of belief and action as historical facts. In the author's sphere of observation there exists no beautified truth, because the truth, as he sees it through history, can be often ugly. Bogudes'
priesthood is horrid in many of its practices, splendid in its idealism, just as the Roman rationale is humane, ordered, legalistic, while Rome's program of conquest is brutal and bloody indeed. Lohenstein's superiority to dogmas and theories, lofty consideration of behavior without belief in the prejudiced notions of the actors, can be chilling and remind one of a theatrical irony in Shakespeare's vein. Lohenstein bases the worth of his characters not upon confessional grounds but upon sheer greatness and appeal.

Consideration of Bogudes' case can help us understand the actions of Sophonisbe. In the first act and in the second, she has rushed to extreme measures in order to guarantee political continuity of her state and to protect her freedom. In this crisis, she realizes that the breach will provoke disaster and that a temporary truce is needed. She does not want her new husband to be threatened by Rome's wrath. One may say that her motive still is political. On the other hand, she acts partly with conjugal love to protect Masanissa, just as she has previously rescued Syphax. As a sign of her "friendship" with Rome and as a proof that her marriage to Masanissa is not aimed against the alliance, she offers to perform upon her own countrymen the Roman act of revenge. Her price is freedom for herself.
Sophonisbe's readiness to shed blood in order to win personal or political survival gives us a shock similar to that which Queen Cleopatra causes in Corneille's *Rodogune* when she even murders her own son. Here the Carthaginian queen, however, again does not carry out her resolution and thus benefits in so far as one can admire her extreme purpose, yet need not regard her as an actual monster. A force which is ultimately to undermine her aims of state intervenes suddenly. Lohenstein carries out the principle of play (*Spiel*) announced in the dedicatory poem and allows a second shock effect to change our picture of the queen to the opposite of what one has just anticipated. Love, which Sophonisbe herself has said is protean (II, 260), intrudes in a new disguise. Syphax happens to be the first prisoner among the North Africans and has been caught escaping in the dress of the hated Roman enemy. Sophonisbe at the last moment recognizes the true identity. She trembles, powerless to strike. Like the priest Bogudes, Sophonisbe has also appealed to the audience by demonstrating an absolute commitment. Not even her violent or repugnant traits can erase this appeal. But Lohenstein wants to magnify our admiration only in order to build a surer foundation for our sympathy toward his heroine. For now he achieves a dramatic confrontation between her fierce political will
and her heart. That organ which causes so much confusion for the queen apparently also disturbs her critics, who doubt not only the morality but the validity of her contradictory actions. But it is too easy to accept the view of Syphax himself, who least comprehends his own wife. He wishes to kill her for what he imagines, as doubtless the audience has also momentarily accepted, to be dishonor and betrayal.

Syphax is unable to alter his opinion, even though Sophonisbe, at her wedding to a rival king and at a time of personal danger, reaffirms her love for her captured spouse. The question about her sincerity ought to make us wonder whether or not we have oversimplified her character and whether now Lohenstein reveals certain hidden depths in her, emotional depths not connected with political ambition. In any case, she fails to buy the confidence of Rome by a bloody act, although it might have worked in her favor permanently. Lohenstein shows ironically that, precisely at the instant when she seeks to close her second marriage, the queen is compelled by chance to demonstrate loyalty to her first husband. As confusing as this gesture may at first appear, the fact is that Sophonisbe is a queen who remains loyal, even though her type of loyalty amounts to "madness."
Let us follow in more detail the strange position which the queen assumes. Although previously she may have imagined herself to be manipulating destiny, now she finds herself entangled in a hopeless contradiction with no way out. If one accepts as amoral the philosophy of power and sees the recent marriage as a political arrangement, then doubtless the ethics of Sophonisbe's love for Massinissa have no basis at all, save **raison d'état**. How easy then the consequential step ought to be. But Sophonisbe cannot kill the man she still loves and has never, in her own mind, deceived. Fortune has divided them, she claims: "Die Untreu hat uns nicht/ das Glück uns nur getrennt" (III, 367). The vicissitudes of time do not, however, affect her love for him: "Die Liebe gegen dich wallt noch in meinen Brüsten" (III, 371). In other dramas by Lohenstein one encounters similar permanence of love, which often is said to be temporally unbounded, or which is equated with inner truth in contrast to the outward political mask, to pretense. Sophonisbe now reveals, by her adherence to her love for Syphax, the traits of a tragically committed person, rather than a manipulator of fortune. Although the actual proportions of her tragedy are not yet evident, it is already unfolding. In answer to Syphax' question whether love can have a double seat in a pure heart, she replies with amoral candor:
Sophonisbe is not the same political character as Cleopatra. She is not a woman, completely calculating, who later discovers her own mistaken entrapment in a counterintrigue and who in consequence rediscovers the extratemporal realm of love once so heedlessly played away. Sophonisbe has never in her own view acted unreasonably but only in accordance with necessity, as a true lover would wish her to do:

Doch die Vernunft schlägt das, was sie nicht nutzen kann.
Verächtlich in den Wind. Was bringt dir für Vergnügen?
Wenn diese, die du liebst, und nicht kannst wieder kriegen,
Nebst dir durch Sturm vertirbt? und nicht entschwimmen darf?
Ob ihr das Glücke gleich ein Stücke Brett zuwarf.
Wahrhafte Liebe kann Geliebten nichts missgönnen.

The last line quoted summarizes best the nature of Sophonisbe's love, which is to be tested in the case of Masanissa. In the meantime, she believes in her loyalty to both men!

Her words will later be gainsaid by Masanissa, who abandons her while she remains faithful to him, trustful and forgiving. Syphax continues until the end of the drama.
to think only in egotistical terms of "humiliation," to
curse his marriage and to yearn for death and escape.
Thus Sophonisbe has gained very little for her sacrifice,
and will finish with nothing. Without doubt one may
state that in her Lohenstein has created a unique feminine
personality and a heroine unknown in seventeenth century
drama; she clings irrationally to love and possesses
simultaneously, in heart as well as fact, two husbands.

In Cleopatra the imposing figure of Augustus comes
on stage in the fourth act. The timing of this entrance
relieves the anticlimactic drop which frequently plagues
the interval between the third act, the turning point of a
classicistic play, and the fifth act, its final resolution.
Lessing preferred introducing a fresh dramatic personality
for the fourth act in his own playwrighting. The suspense
about Augustus runs as an undercurrent through the first
three acts of Cleopatra, and he is the shadow over every­
thing. His envoys and evidences of his intriguing mind
enter and exit, as he remains spinning his net off stage.
Scipio likewise has remained in the background and excited
the audience's expectation. Now with his arrival a new
and high concept of history, a world of governing reason
as it were, materialises before our eyes in one man and
illuminates the passionate happenings with a new light.
Scipio dominates with his sense of command; he is all confidence, the epitome of victory:

Die Götter machen klar: dass eure Helden-Geister
Ihr Einfluss rege macht/ ihr himmlisch Trieb bewegt;
Weil er uns spielende den Feind zu Füssen legt.
(IV, 38-40)

Unmistakably, the machinery of the universe is geared in harmony with him. The word drive (Trieb), indicating a mechanistic view of natural law, occurs often after this moment, as in Masanissa's great monolog (scene four). The Roman, who with machiavellian cunning, knows all the levers and gears, may parade in the robes of historical "righteousness," that is, success. He has the poise, the convincing mask of greatness, a flawless role. In radical contrast to Scipio stands the nadir of defeat, Syphax, who takes refuge from mortal judgment and condemnation in the role of the defeated, an example of fallen nobility (IV, 53-57).

Although Scipio may agree with Syphax' bitter opinion of the queen, he condemns him for giving in to her. Learning that Masanissa too has succumbed to her fatal charms, he uses the term heard already in Laelius' mouth in act three; Masanissa's action is not reasonable, is madness (Wahnwitz, IV, 119). Scipio's mind has quickly formed its decision on
the queen -- she is a political danger by virtue of her very existence. This swiftness characterizes Scipio's resoluteness, not susceptible to inner conflict of passions; even his speech is clear and concise. He must kill the beauty which seduces. When Masanissa enters with soldiers and prisoners, the meeting outwardly is calm, open and festive. There are only three speeches, Masanissa's tribute, Scipio's acceptance and bestowal of honors, and Masanissa's brief offering of a blessing. Yet the very smoothness causes tension. The two leaders have carefully drawn a diplomatic veil before the court. Masanissa is rather extreme in giving all to Scipio and demanding no war prize for himself. The gesture is a move to buy something costly. Scipio, being aware of the situation, carefully avoids the wrong indebtedness, publically embraces Masanissa and lauds him with terms of fame, virtue, honor. Calling the African brother and friend (IV, 177), he elevates him in public esteem to the highest level. This gesture is the countermove, placing Masanissa in an obligated position from which he can withdraw only with difficulty. Scipio manoeuvres to obviate any bargain over the queen. That is the principal motivation for returning into Masanissa's hands the crowns and scepters. One may sense that Scipio does feel some sympathy for Masanissa, but even then he combines political advantage with reasoned predilection.
The intimate conference between the leaders shows quite a different sphere of Scipio's mastery as a man of the world. He brings Masanissa out into the open. The Roman wants to lead the African toward self-control as the true heroism and virtue, while the latter persists in a fatalistic belief that his love is ordained, divine, therefore unconquerable. Scipio couples scorn for heedless passion (ein blinder Trieb, IV, 247) with a mandate, "Bewinge selber dich" (IV, 259). He can exercise patience and firmness. His majestic poise allows, even demands, expression of compassion which is the luxury of his superior hold on life. Behind the mask of the adroit statesman, one perceives personal care:

Er jammert mich/ mein Freund; sein Leid geht mir zu Hertzen/
Ich hab Empfindlichkeit und Teil an seinen Schmertzen/
Ich sorge fär sein Heil (IV, 261-263.

This touch of the missionary fits well. As Lohenstein portrays him, Scipio resembles a Jesuit-like ideal figure. He is a soldier, realist about the world, given to absolute authority, ascetic and puritanical in personal conduct, masterly in manipulating others on behalf of power. One may believe in Scipio's compassion, but then, one may also believe legitimately in the tears of a Counter-reformer who must weep before the stake on which a hopeless
heretic perishes in error. Masanissa really has no choice but to be convinced of his folly, and Scipio sugars the bitter pill. The Roman's victorious optimism is very aggressive even in the sphere of personal matters. Rome truly signifies the encroachment of political empire even upon personal freedom.

Scipio holds up to Masanissa the power ideal, to which man must subordinate earthly pleasure and for which he must be cold to beauty. Reason amounts to power through the dominion of intellect; on behalf of power itself, a unified single passion — ambition. Thus reason, the instrument for ambition, kills the dangerous flesh. This ascetic doctrine brings forth what is perhaps Scipio's most sympathetic line: "Ich bin ein Mensch wie du/ doch der Begierden Herr" (IV, 303). If one recalls Seneca in Epicharis, one has a figure who expounds a similar philosophy. But the great difference is that Seneca controls himself to the extent of ceasing to act, even to protect himself. For a stoic, any involvement in the world, except for expression of truth, sullies. Scipio may appear to be moral, but in fact he is only puritanical for the sake of more effective involvement in history. Like Augustus, his hands are red with blood; the ethics of conquest permit him to put his crimes into a better
light. Crime for the politician becomes success, as long as he wins. Scipio's doctrine cannot match the appeal of Seneca's, perhaps because Scipio triumphs and attracts no pity. On the other hand, Masanissa evokes pathos, especially with his explanation:

Ich bin aus Libyen. In unsern Städten blühet
Nichts/ was nicht feurig ist. Die Sonn und
Liebe glühet
Bey uns zur Winters-Zeit mit mehrer Krafft
und Macht/
Als/ wenn der Hunds-Stern brennt in eurer
Mitter-Nacht (IV,309-312).

His intense suffering on account of his very nature stirs compassion, and against this compassion admiration for Scipio wins little ground. Masanissa surrenders in tears to Scipio's demand. The African's soul is pained already by bad conscience on account of the oath he has given Sophonisbe (IV, 335-341). The fact that Scipio dismisses even conscience fits with the coolness of "reason." In all of Lohenstein's plays, the love oath is connected with moral freedom and is contrasted to oath-breaking or the deception of a trustless political life. Thus Masanissa is not merely to lose his beloved but also connection with the secure inner trust in his world. That is Lohenstein's tragic vision for him as a victim of his own ambition and historical circumstances. The Roman or political clime is "midnight;" Africa gave "sun and light," being and love.
Masanissa's first thought in his monologue is Sophonisbe: "Ach! so sol Sophonisb' in Römschen Fesseln lächsen?" (IV, 345). He feels the full impact of tragic implications in his political character, asking: "Wird unserm Auge nicht mit ihr entgehn das Licht?" (IV, 367)

He vents his hatred of the Roman, whom he also fears, as hard and cruel, the ravenous beast. He does not want to pay the price of the light of beauty, the light of personal happiness, and inveighs against the structure of the world like a Christian frustrated by its darkness and disappointments:

Einfältiger Reichtum ist ein Zirkel ohne Ruhe/
Ein Sklavenhaus der Seele/ Abkömmling der Thummen/
Die güldne Larve/ in die sich Sorg und Geiz ver-
mummen/

Das Arme Ärmer macht/ und Hungrige nicht satt/
Das man mit Schweize sucht/ mit Furcht und
Schrecken hat/
Mit Hertzens-Ach verliert (IV, 380-385).

He makes momentarily the same resolve which Anthony had in Cleopatra:

Nimm/ unersättlich's Rom/Numidien dir hin/
Wenn ich Besitzthums-Herr nur Sophonisbens
bin (IV, 309-400).

One does not exaggerate by saying that Masanissa has, in knowing Sophonisbe, come in contact with a divine force; he still longs to have "So Tugend als Gestalt/ die an ihr Göttlich sein" (IV, 228). Although Lohenstein's drama is divorced from Christian theory, a divine and mysterious
principle manifests itself especially in great women. Woman is closely associated with cult ritual. In her the eternal charm of the universe is incarnated. The second chorus of Sophonisbe proclaims love as the prime mover of the world and beauty as a manifestation of this force:

(II, 488-490)

Until line 400 of act four, the turning point in the monologue, Masanissa acknowledges his dedication to the beautiful. As long as he is possessed with the idea of freedom, the yearning characteristic of Lohenstein's protagonists, he does not use the word "reason."

But after this the other side of him, the political, resurges and he starts thinking in terms of the state and of reason. He tells himself: "Das Reich ist dein Gemahl" (IV, 406). He sees a mechanistic or Cartesian universe, in which nature comes off pretty badly. Love is reduced to a base operation, a kind of enslavement in the physical system. Reason is extolled as the ideal, because it offers the possibility of manipulation, of spiritual direction. The metaphor of the clockworks is wrapped in intensified Christian pessimism; the substitution of an anonymous mechanism, fate's for a mysterious plan (God's), leads only to a worsened relationship between man's mind and his own
human nature. This fearful suppression of the body, of beauty, of love, seems to express the obverse or negative urge for release from bondage. It is another aspect of Lohenstein's all-pervading concern with freedom.

Masanissa steels himself for betrayal of the queen with moralistic rationalization:

Behertzig: ob ein Weib mehr als dein Wolstand gilt.
Im Uhrwerck unsers Thuns muss die Vernunft's Gewichte/
Das Auge Weiser sein. Denn wer dem Irrwisch-Lichte
Der scheinbarn Wollust folgt/ versincket in Morast.
Die Lieb ist töricht/ die nur im Auge Zunder fasst.
Die Schönheit ein Betrug/ ein Geyer zarter Hertzen/
Ein Raubfisch unsers Heils. Auß lasse dir die Kertzen
Der nichternen Vernunft/ die Scipio steckt auf/
Dir weisen Fahrt und Porti (IV, 412-420)

The term "sober reason" may impress one as a motto which belongs to a future age. In the eighteenth century it has emotional appeal as a slogan against the very courtly world of machiavellian politics, which it here excuses. One must not, however, confuse this particular "sober reason" with the moral reason of the Enlightenment. In Lohenstein's drama reason has not emerged from the ruthless system of dualism between body and mind to assume its later and happier functions as the guide of bourgeois poets and enlightened monarchs. Within the African plays,
Masanissa forms the counter example to Anthony; within the total dramatic work, he stands in contrast to the earliest figure, Ibrahim Bassa. In the history of the German theatre, he is the forerunner of the sobered, disenchanted prince, as in Hebbel's *Agnes Bernauer* or Grillparzer's *Jädín von Toledo*. To be sure, the case for beauty is much stronger by the nineteenth century, and the modern prince can only accept the *fait accompli*, the sad fact of already perpetrated loss. Masanissa comes from a literary period of religious frenzy. His thoughts are rich in violent contrasts and contradictions, which indicate a protagonist divided in himself, torn between two poles of existence. This division accounts for radical shifting by him from tender sorrow for Sophonisbe to bitter cursing of her. All his talk of reason cannot hide the fact that he is a man of violent emotionality.

In flying from extreme to extreme, Masanissa exemplifies the restless uncertainty and majestic turbulence about which so much speculation centers among students of the "Baroque." The first step toward understanding the psychological state of protagonists in this period is the putting out of mind of all German classical heritage. One senses the pathos of seventeenth century dualism especially in the hero's attempt to distinguish truth from deception, in the problem of appearance versus
reality. In this regard there exist, it must be granted, affinities with some of Schiller's works. Masanissa has decided, but he is still not fast and sure when he summons a servant to bring the queen poison. In his confused torments, his gesture of offering death is a strange final acknowledgment of love. For he wishes to keep his promise and save her from Roman chains, a token fulfillment of the pledge that signifies much to her. The final scene of the fourth act has shown the defeat of love by reason:

Jedoch der Zweifels-Knot ist aufgelöst und offen.
Das Lieben hat gefehlt; Vernunft den Zweck getroffen (IV, 457-458).

But, although Masanissa has become accomplice in her expected suicide, he imagines himself also in the role of redeemer, as the powerful irrational theme of death the releaser comes forward on stage:

Disalo. Der in die Gruft sie schleusst?
Masan. Doch aus den Fesseln reisset (IV, 481).

Even at the final moment, when the servant is to leave on his terrible mission, Masanissa falters, calls him back, sends him again. Lohenstein emphasizes that, despite his decision, Masanissa is more a victim of ambition, a pitiable man, than a black villain. Even in his explanation to the bearer of poison, he emphasizes
his admiration and confidence in the queen, who must act rightly in accordance with her distinguished blood.

The chorus which follows upon the sending of the poison celebrates Masanissa's decision and the "ethics" of absolute rule. In the seventeenth century the state was regarded in analogy to man, as in the middle ages, but with a heightened dualism, whereby the natural functions and drives were set equal to the blind masses, the intellect or rational tyranny equal to the ruler. Now in an allegory Lohenstein presents Hercules at the crossroads, the hero, in other words, faced by a test of inner fortitude. He must decide, as Masanissa just has. The disputation between bodily pleasure or voluptuousness (Wollust) and heroic rationality or virtue (Tugend), with its constant references to antique or mythological examples, conforms to a traditional pattern. The chorus presents a tiny play in itself, a question with conflicting arguments, followed by a resolution. The purpose is also social, to honor Leopold, who is naturally implied in the figure of Hercules. Both disputant parties, pleasure and virtue, claim that the other is a deceptive good. Virtue triumphs finally by very literally unmasking pleasure on stage and revealing her as a hideous and loathsome creature. Pleasure is, then, the old "Frau Welt" figure in new variation. She represents the temporality of all earthly
attractions, whose other side is disgusting decay and rot. Against the frightening insubstantiality of beauty and enjoyment, which are in fact only deceptions, stands sure glory, gained through manliness or virtue. The motif of stripping away the mask of outward appearance from the innerly nauseous deception shows how deeply Lohenstein is still affected by Christian pessimism. This act of disenchantment resembles the Spanish moment of insight, or desengano, when a beclouded hero sees through the nothingness of earthly attractions and reforms himself on behalf of spiritual goods. Now, however, instead of eternal salvation, honor and renown are to be won by "saintly" superiority on the battleground of history. The language is clear on this point; the goal is still eternal life, even if without the Christian immortality of soul. The regime of reason keeps the straight and narrow path through all earthly dangers and tenebrae:

Hier steht der Thron der Ehren aufgebaut.
Hier hängt die verwelckens-freue Krone.
(IV, 589-590)

Hercules (Leopold) embraces this ideal in a speech which has the function of judging the disputation. In a direct praise of the emperor, the hero indicates how heroism, or tyrannic reason, elevates a man above common humanity, indeed almost deifies him as a celestial, awesome being:

Die Sternen werden seine Kron/
Die Welt sein Reich/ der Ruhm sein Thron.
(IV, 601-602)
Throughout the fourth chorus countless references are made to animals and animalism, for example: "Der Mensch wird Vieh auch durch die Zauberin" (IV, 541). When virtue tears away the disguise from pleasure, the latter's body is described as not human but animal, infested with vermin, sores and disease. These themes are already familiar in part from chorus three, which is built like chorus one as a psychological exposition of Syphax' confused soul. Animal images dominate, and the notion of bestialization appears, as for example in the line: "Die Circe wandelt Menschen in ein Schwein" (III, 457). One cannot miss the inference that Sophonisbe, through her charms, acts as a kind of Circe who reduces men from men of manliness (Jugend) into beasts (Wollust). But one must be cautious; in taking too wholeheartedly this popularly stated concept of her intoxicating effects upon her two husbands, one overlooks the neutral comments of folly (Narrheit). Folly does not really take part in the argument between reason (Vernunft) and jealousy (Eifersucht). Instead it interjects two lines after each retort of reason to jealousy, two uncanny lines always on the same subject. These are madcap and capricious reminders of Jupiter's many disguises, especially in animal form, as a seducer. The fool figure strikes one as a representation of the illogical logic and unreasonable reason from the
hidden depths of life, a reminder that even the great
god Jupiter cannot be absolved of complicity in the affairs
which reason condemns. Lohenstein insinuates thus his
own razon de la sinrazón, and one must assume that there
is method in his madness, that he has a purpose in letting
folly speak.

The motif of a godhead entering into animal bodies
is connected to the same image complex which one finds in
Cleopatra. In this other African play, the gods had
bestial form or were half human, half animal; the hero
and heroine were directly associated with the gods, among
whom their persons represented Isis and Osiris. In
Cleopatra the union of soul and nature or of god and
animal signified a mysterious life force which animated the
otherwise dead materials of the physical world. The queen,
a beautiful and attractive woman like Sophonisbe, also
stood close to the gods, to the irrational life force or
"flame" of her country. However, the destined extinction
of this flame, coinciding with despair over earthly
captivity, caused a self-destructive outbreak. Suicide
was the ultimate pathway to freedom. One must also there­
fore consider the image of "Frau Welt" from the point of
view of Sophonisbe! She is also a captive spirit in
nature. As a beautiful woman she is in a clear sense
tragically marked; her very existence disturbs Scipio,
who sees her as an inspirer of men yet as a corrupt influence. What Sophonisbe fights for is to preserve the life of her state and her personal freedom. But temporality has all but swept both purposes away, despite her struggle.

It is in the fifth act that Lohenstein treats these same subjects, which in chorus four put the queen in so bad a light, from her point of view. With discussion of act five it is appropriate to correct the overemphasis which, for reasons of clarifying content, has fallen upon the play's intellectual scheme. The author's own notations testify as to this scheme's importance; he is proud to document the dramatic ideas with authoritative sources. But, let us admit finally that Hercules on the crossroads is a figure rather unappealing and cerebral next to the provocative queen or the tormented Masanissa. In fact, one can question the lasting effect of the rational triumph in act and chorus four. If there cool statecraft, power and political success as the ultimate ends are celebrated over the beauty of earth itself, why then, one may ask, a fifth act at all?

An examination of the structure of the last act reveals the reasons. Already the question has suggested the important fact; Hercules' decision is not a final answer for the playwright. The play bears the name of a heroine as title, and it is she who comes back against all
negative attitudes to dominate the stage. The more cerebral proofs about North African culture and Sophonisbe's fate are given prior to act five. The arrival of the inevitable comes as a relief. Emotional events may be opened wide, facts submerged in an ecstatic rather than rational moment of understanding. The moment of emotional purgation and the tremor of tragedy seize hold of the spectator. The fifth act is no more or less than a spell-binding pageant of death, which has been put off and put off, until the delayed anxiety creates almost a willingness on the part of the audience to submit to witnessing the end. In this sense, the fifth act becomes almost a play in itself, to which the preceding acts serve as preface. The plot of doom has led to the moment of physical extinction for someone great, also for "something" great -- a fallen empire. In this twilight zone between existing and dying, Lohenstein has found the most fertile grounds for his special artistic vision. Having completed the portrayal of the particular and exemplary historical juncture in which the tragedy occurs, he uses this setting of acts one through four as the backdrop for one great insight, the theatre for one great actress' grandiloquent pathos.

Thus the last act opens no longer upon a time for action in history but rather upon an answer to history. With this finality Sophonisbe seeks out and is taken into
the extratemporal, visionary sphere. The temporal confines of the theatre open, as in ancient Greek drama or in Spanish religious plays, for the irruption of eternity into the world. Lohenstein presents his equivalent of a religious "miracle" or a Greek oracle when Sophonisbe is initiated into the secrets of the future. One can recall the earlier steps toward such vision in the dramaturgy of Lohenstein. In *Ibrahim Bassa*, Isabella finishes by becoming a voice; she will go forth to inspire a crusade against the monstrous Turk. Epicharis is allowed through her sufferings to prophesy how future ages will judge her versus Nero, when both are presented on the stage, and how he will end in shame. But in Sophonisbe's case, ordinary limitations of mortality are erased; indeed, she is immortalized as the figure representative of an epoch, and her death becomes the important center of the drama, the focal point where all ages converge. With the most radical step in his entire productivity, Lohenstein makes the queen timeless by allowing her personally to hear Dido, her great forebears, explain things to come, events which place even Rome, the rational monster and her destroyer, into a new perspective of historical limitation.
The scene is the temple of the Sun and Moon, the sacral atmosphere proper to the queen. Conscious of her approaching death, she is drawn to the cult of Dido. This ancient queen, already deified as Sophonisbe shall soon be, has a history very similar. That history is connected with a figure out of Lohenstein's favorite mythological source, the story of Troy. Aeneas, fleeing burning Troy, is said to have brought with him some of the sacred fire from the fallen city, the fire which then was next transplanted to Rome and ensured Rome's life. The essay has already treated this subject in regard to Agrippina in some detail. Aeneas stopped first in Africa and became Dido's lover. But, following the dictates of the gods who had chosen him for the heroic and political mission of founding Rome, he deserted Dido and drove her to suicide through grief. Dido is now, in Sophonisbe's era, associated with a special juncture of the heavenly luminaries and with special vision. Sophonisbe enters with reverence and desire for these mysteries:

Ist das das Heiligthum/ in welchem von zwey Sternen
Die blinden Sterblichen zukünfftge Dinge
lernen (V, 1-2).

The response of Elagabel the priestess could as well belong to Masonic ritual. She speaks of clarification of the dark
confusion of life, illumination of clouded thought, the enlighten-ment through knowledge:

Dis ist es. Weil ihr Aug auf Erden alles sieht/
So Tag und Nacht erhellt; ist auch ihr Geist bemüht
Den düsteren Verstand der Menschen zu verklären;
Denn die Wissenschaft des Künftigen begehren/
Auch Sonn und Mond hierumb undächtig ruffen an/
Erlangen ihren Wunsch (V, 3-8).

Apparently Sophonisbe's intense suffering put her in the proper state of mind to contact the sacred, for certainly Roman enlightenment has nothing whatever to do with Dido's holy precincts.

The various details of the ritual which brings about contact with Dido are complicated. If one considers the sequence of events in the solar calendar, the symbolic progress of light at dusk approximates the grand event of the Magic Flute. The pattern corresponds in so far as night recedes and the sunrise brings the vision. Behind this triumph of light lurks the notion of rebirth, a whole submerged reservoir of Christian emotions. Yet at the same time, perhaps never at any other moment in his works is Lohenstein so close emotionally to the eighteenth-century feeling of enlightenment independent of Christianity. The play Ibrahim Bassa, which stands closer to the religious requirements of his day, offers the sop of a crusade, but even this concentrated its positive appeal in terms of a
cultural liberation and not conversion of infidels. Sophonisbe is the first play by Lohenstein to include a "miracle," if one discounts the poetic sea-rescue of Agrippina. But this miracle has even less to do with contemporary religion for Lohenstein's time than Isabella's call for vengeance against the Turk. One cannot state that Sophonisbe contains anything more than a foreshadowing of later Enlightenment emotions in the opening of act five, but certainly one cannot deny the faint suggestion of an attitude which holds that clarification of man's understanding constitutes the sum and total of pious endeavor. A ponderous and operatic pessimism decks out the stage in funereal robes; the somberness of the temple, the mystery of the cult do not give way to a limpid and humanitarian "explanation." If one were to pick a musical accompaniment for act five, it would be Monteverdi rather than Mozart. Not the benevolent fate which brings together a Tamino and Pamina, but the cruel fate which sunders Dido from Aeneas, an historical fate reigns. There is no wise and controlling intellect of a Sorastro, but instead an ascetic, politic, cruelly realistic Scipio.

Lohenstein's choice of Dido is excellent from the point of view of historical irony. She can represent, through her message, the principle of heroic victory over time. Her heroism is not, of course, the same as Scipio's
and that Lohenstein insists on showing for Sophonisbe too.
The Roman ideal, as in Scipio or Augustus, is the belief in cold self-mastery for the end of achieving a superhuman renown. This achievement stirs men to wonder, what Corneille calls admiration. The Roman hero gives up everything earthly, as if he were a Christian self-mortifier, because he does not want to suffer the degrading blow of time, which levels all men physically but not spiritually. Dido belongs to a different breed. She is hopelessly subjected to a passion and dies as a miserable sufferer on account of love. Yet she, by the very vehemence of her helpless state, frightens men as an example of humanity's bondage and stirs equal wonder, what Corneille calls compassion. She conquers time, even though she writhes in the grip of earthly passion, what an Augustus and Scipio must suppress. Lohenstein cites in the play a more historical version of Dido's suicide, which also resembles Sophonisbe's. As Dido says, she killed herself to preserve her love for her dead husband (V, 8ff). The motivation is similar to the general tradition of Dido's love-death. The author links both women as fated lovers; for both it is true what Elagabal says:

Dass die und jene Seele einander lieben müssen; Die Herzen müssen sich eröffnen oder schliessen. (V, 13-14)
Although Lohenstein evokes pity for Dido and Sophonisbe, one must admit that both are martial enough and resolute to awaken also a high degree of admiration. Masanissa has experienced this early in the play upon encountering the queen in full harness for war. The author sees both women in the Penthesilea role:

Ellissa hat mit ihrem Leben
Ihr männlich Hertz nicht aufgegeben (V, 81-82).

Dido and Sophonisbe do have, then, virtue in the sense of "manliness." But this attribute only serves to enhance their regal natures, and the underlying ground of their appeal remains a feminine charm and a limitless service to love.

In Dido's revelation, Lohenstein shifts from the position of act four, where Masanissa's betrayal is approved as the correct and rational procedure, to glorification of Sophonisbe. Dido laments the queen's downfall, which is blamed on fate, although Sophonisbe is supposed to share with Syphax partial guilt for the outcome. Guilt is not the important matter, however, but rather greatness. Dido urges her follower to save her name:

Mein und ihr Holtzstoss diene dir zur Lehrel
Es ist ein gross Geldick in Asche sein verkehrt.
(V, 124-125)
Dido has given added inducement for an irrational escape by telling that Masanissa no longer is true in his heart. The motifs of pride, escape and scorn are summarized by Dido's deprecatory comment on Scipio's Masanissa, who "Wird Kronen zwar/ doch in den Fesseln tragen" (V, 133).

Next Dido unfolds the course of Rome's climb, the era of servitude which it regards as "himmlisches Verhängnisses" (V, 135), and reveals that Rome will fall eventually through internal weakness and new conquerors. She sketches rapidly the tides of history up to Lohenstein's day and begins a prophetic panegyric of the house of Austria. This old Lohenstein trick, to "predict" things of which the audience is already aware as historical facts, gives indeed an aura of inevitability to Dido's vision. The deeds of the present, that is of Lohenstein's times, form her closing revelation. She sees in the seventeenth century the foreplay of still more heroic accomplishments to come, especially triumph over the Moslems. The crusade message of Isabella in Ibrahim Bassa is heard even in retrospect in the mouth of an ancient heroine, as prophecy. Finished with a description of the "future," Dido calls on Sophonisbe not to outlive Africa and Carthage's glory: "Auf/ Sophonisbel am besten ists gestorben" (V, 188). Having heard from Dido that Masanissa is unfaithful and that her country is forever doomed, Sophonisbe apostrophizes Africa in a plaint which shows
how intimately her own soul is bound up with her land. She is ready to follow Dido's pathway to fame. And what a grand exit! She has decided that, since her downfall and the land's are determined, as the gods reveal, she will embrace this fate and offer up herself and the city in a gigantic funeral pire. She knows that thus she will not be debased into having to beg proper burial and that no enemy can dishonor the dust.

Her decision calls forth a beautiful speech in which the ecstasy of self-immolation immediately strikes one's attention. This speech is at the same time a very provocative defense of all that she stands for. The core of the best Lohensteinian tragedy is expressed in these words:

Die Flammen/ die uns fassen/
Muss jeder Mensch verehrn/ der Gott ein Opfer bringt.
Sie sind die Flügel auch/ durch die die Seele schwingt
Kein Thier als nur der Mensch braucht Feuer; denn es willt
Sein Wesen vom Gestirn. Es reinigt/ was beflecket/
Es ist der Welt ihr Geist/ das alle Sachen hecket/
Der Anfang/ in den sich auch alles Aschert ein.
Welch ein gelücklich Grab wird uns die Glutt nun sein:
Eilt diesem nach/ und reisst die Fackeln vom Altare/
Steckt Burg und Tempel an. Mehr als beglückte Baarel Wo Reich und Königin den Staub zusammen mischt/
Und ihr verspritztes Blutt auf frischen Bränden zischt! (V,226-240)
First it is necessary to accept all terms like "Flammen" as having double meaning, both as emblems and as images. Quite literally, the historical situation is one of conflagration and the raising of a city. Sophonisbe's intent is equally literal, to immolate herself. Yet the "flames" she refers to are also metaphoric for her loves, or love per se. Love is her fate; its seizure is fate's power in exercise. Sophonisbe believes, however, that any person with true piety will feel and honor her downfall; the reaction she expects is a religious awe toward the spectacle she provides, as an example of a fated queen. Consciousness of destiny, under whatever names it may be called, inspires a new form of worship, respect for the dead and for monuments. These may be of individuals or cities or empires, and in artworks or in memory. What then does it mean, if the "flames" are further "wings"? The expression of ascension rings very Christian, but here one has to do with a worldly flight to the stars. This flight is both release of the soul and a kind of apotheosis. On the one hand, Sophonisbe may be saying something simple: that love lifts the soul heavenward, blissfully. On the other hand, she can also mean that her love has precipitated her fall but led her onto the pathway of immortalizing death.
She expresses the belief that love is the motivating force of the universe, the prime mover (see chorus two). It is the earthly representation of the sun's action, and thus divine. Everywhere the literal parallel, fire-light, is sustained. The significant indication of her double meaning is the statement that no animal but man needs fire, because his being originates from the stars. She elevates love, very distinctly differing from the play's Roman view, to a stature above animal nature; she connects a belief in man's special origin with love itself, the mover of the whole universe. One must here think of love as the earthly aspect of a principle permeating everything, a godly principle or spirit. But no beneficent principle is meant. The traditional image of purification by fire implies tragedy. The sidereal origin, the heavenly majesty of the stars, points to the fiery consumption of man; he returns to his origin in the form of burnt out ashes, cosmic dust. Sophonisbe's astral image is well taken, for a queen must aspire to the stars. They are symbols of awesome majesty, fixed, eternal. From this consideration Sophonisbe rushes into mad self-destruction, yearning for fixation in the freedom of the grave. She calls to her people to take torches from the altar, a holy source, and set on fire the city and temple, so that she and the realm may mix their ashes.
This touch of beserk love for her homeland makes a powerful impression. In her craze she thinks she must by destroying, save the holy places from Roman desecration, especially the sun's, from whom she is descended. At this moment, the heartsick messenger, Disalces, arrives with the poison from Masanissa. His speech, filled with reverence for the doomed queen, puts very well the position of Masanissa, unable to move the hardened Romans. Sophonisbe accepts the drink with joy, in fact as a token of love:

Willkommen süßer Trank! Ich nehm ihn freudig an/
Weil Masanissa mir nichts bessers schencken kann (V, 307-308).

Despite the bitter tone of the word "bessers," it still indicates the queen's submission to destiny. Her mind is already set on such a liberation: "Gewünschter Freiheits-Saft! verlangte Morgengabel (V, 309). Sophonisbe does not fall a fraction of an inch out of her role, a role which began as "acting" in necessity, and is now her true self. In her final moments of life she does not tear away a mask and show a Sophonisbe, let us say, prior to contact with Masanissa; instead she uses the opportunity to bless him and reaffirm her affection:

Es lebe Masinisa/ und dencke dieser wol;
Die ihn itzt sterbende zu guter Nacht gesegnet.
Geh meld ihm: dass uns dis/was uns von ihm begegnet/
Den Leib trennt/ nicht die Lieb... (V, 316-319).
She asks forgiveness for her weakness in having married two men, because fate pressed her, but never denies or withdraws her love. In other words, the heroine maintains the unusual position of having two lovers to the end, and beyond.  

This is unheard-of for Lohenstein's times. It is still a bit difficult for modern Europe, so dedicated officially to monogamy. One notes in addition the strange flavor of her language of love as a result of her persistence in polyandry. It emphasizes Christian sentiments such as forgiveness, yet it expresses all on behalf of her sinful attachments. She talks of self-abnegation, and the sacrifice is intended for the good of more than one spouse. But in the play Cleopatra, the eroticism of death received much more stress. First dying Anthony felt an ecstasy in expiring on behalf of his beloved; then Cleopatra, disappointed with the world, followed his example. She saw death actually in terms of reunion with her man. The ironic references to marriage, as in the word "Morgengabe," do not produce the same effect in the play Sophonisbe, where the heroine is quite isolated and deprived of the comforting memory of a spouse so good and blind as Anthony. While Masanissa joins the victors, Sophonisbe enjoys only the added stature of her loneliness and becomes a suffering victim of ingratitude.
Also, she has a chance to redeem herself by a willing exit, one that can help Masanissa and one that can prove her own magnanimity. In Lohenstein's drama magnanimity was from the first, as in Ibrahim Bassa or Epicharis, associated with purity. Now Sophonisbe has removed doubts as to her magnanimity, and thus has attained a kind of purification.

The Sophonisbe whom Scipio and Masanissa decried as a basilisk, a Circe, acquires an almost saintly prestige, so imbued is she with the ethics of love. Another positive quality she acquires is her sharp perception and unmasking of death's terrors. Of course, negatively seen, her bravery is nihilistic. This awareness about death, a form of desenganos, increases her stature as a "purified" heroine, and yet Lohenstein has never made her take back one iota of her illicit dual passions! In her own thoughts she is far beyond earthly imprisonment:

Vertrautste/ nunmehr ist der gülde Tag
erschienen/
Des Glücks/ der Eitelkeit/ der tausend Seelen
dienen/
Ihr Joch zu werffen ab; die Larve wegzuziehn
Gespenstern/ die mit nichts sich uns zu schrecken
mählen.
Der Todes-Schatten schafft nur blöde Augen
Schrecken (V, 325-329).

Sophonisbe's death agony is majestic because her concern concentrates on others and she thinks, as a queen and mother, of her subjects' welfare. Her wish is that
her death could buy their happiness, redeem them from Rome, but her sorrow is the knowledge of the inevitable. Thus she turns entirely to death for final consolation: "Elisa rufft mir zu: Ich were frey gebohren" (V, 429). With great ceremony she has distributed her royal jewels and called especial attention to her earrings, symbols of nobility (V, 424) and divine connection (V, 421). This recalls the moment in Cleopatra, when Augustus takes the dead queen's earrings as a sacred token for the shrine of Venus in Rome. Her sons follow her example, and so also some chief nobles, turning her suicide into a mass bloodletting. Now Masanissa arrives in desperation and wants to save her. He cries: "Ich Mörder!" (V, 519). His self-accusations threaten to lead him upon the path of noble emulation through suicide. He realizes that he still loves her; even in death she excites him, although he fears her hatred, imagines that her spirit wards him off with fire. He is about to expiate his crime when Scipio arrives. But, then, Masanissa's punishment is that he must continue to live.

As soon as the Roman enters, a new personality rules. Masanissa's love is declared madness, suicide guilt cursed by the Gods. The African's brain is supposed to be enveloped by a "dream," his heart by "desire," while "reason" will
chase away these clouds (V, 572-574). Scipio reduces Sophonisbe's double love, just witnessed sympathetically, to lasciviousness and faithlessness. According to the Roman, even Syphax now sympathizes with Masanissa. However, the prestige of Scipio is not strong enough to dispel the lasting effect of the funereal scene for the audience.117 From now on the discrepancy between the mandate of reason and the appeal of beauty and greatness is sensed deeply. The irreconcilable division in the soul of Masanissa makes him rather than Scipio into the ultimate picture of humanity and, although not an ideal model like Scipio, doubtless the focus of our tragic awareness and our sympathy. The fallen king Syphax is all hatred and dejection; the Roman leader all poise, rationality, superiority. But Masanissa is the tragically purged and affected king, who has lost his one happiness and pitifully submits to politics. Life, with its unreasonable reasons, love and beauty, is dead;

Ich wil/${\text{Grossm\"{a}chtger Held/ mich m\"{a}hn zu}}$

überwinden;

Wo meine Wunden nur noch Salb und Pflaster

finden;

Weil doch mein halbes Hertz in ihr begraben

liegt:

Jedoch/ da Sie und Ich nicht diese Gnade kriegt;

dass ihre Leiche nicht wird erst nach Rom ge-

schickt/

Da ihr Begräbnis ihr von Römern wird verstricket/

Mag ich lebendig nicht solch Hertzeleid schaun

an (V, 585-591).
Despite Scipio, Masanissa still acknowledges his debt to Sophonisbe and will keep his promise, paying thus last respects and performing this office for her, much as Cleopatra did for Anthony. Such a request Scipio cannot refuse. Sophonisbe is to receive burial. Then the first step in fulfillment of the prophecy: he gives the order that, as an example to the world, Carthage be reduced to ashes.

Many traits of this final scene call to mind Hebbel's drama, and especially Agnes Bernauer. The beauty of woman is dangerous in life, honored in death. The older tried statesman Scipio is forced to kill Sophonisbe because he understands only history as his law; the subordinate ruler must suffer and accept his loss, emerging sobered from the "dream" of life into a political career. The emphasis on a historical process that insists on victims is very similar, despite the wide separation of the authors in other respects. Lohenstein has a last line, a shout by all on stage, which seem to affirm the principle of the state or historical process over the individual: "Dass Rom und Scipio und Masanissa blühen" (V, 618). The order is striking; the vivat goes from the superindividual entity, "Rome," to the almost non-human hero of history, "Scipio Africanus," whose added name really identifies
him as a concept rather than creature, and finally to Masanissa, the weaker king and man.

The final chorus establishes the ultimate context for the play. Fate discourses with four great monarchies or empires, the Assyrian, Persian, Greek and Roman. The perspective is extrahistorical. The doctrine of the Holy Roman Empire of the German Nation is celebrated as "divinely" ordained -- by destiny! Astoundingly, the play ends in homage to the ruling house of Austria, without a single mention of the Christian God by whom all earthly rulers are supposedly ordained. Instead the anonymous power operating behind the veil of history appoints and distributes the rights. An invisible rule guides history - grandeur cannot endure:

Ihr grossen Reiche dieser Welt/
Die ihr verblüht seyd/ und solt blühen.
(V, 619-620)

Fate invites competition for the victor's crown, which goes to the strongest; "Dem Stärcksten wird der Preiss zu theil" (V, 630). In other words, Lohenstein glorifies might as right; plain historical determinism takes the place of a moral judgment. In such context, beauty indeed seems almost a gratuitous and tragic phenomenon; loyalty a saddening gesture in protest against the universe itself.
Fate sits in judgment after the successive empires have spoken and determines that, when Germany becomes the seat of Rome's empire, it will control the whole world. This notion is the ultimate dream of absoluteness, a final tyranny. The three old continents, Europe, Asia and Africa, therefore welcome the newest continent, America, into the world picture. The prospect of a "new world" which so excited European thought is incorporated into Lohenstein's scheme of history to give a boost to his praise of Austria. He is able, using the fabulous expanse of the undiscovered or newly discovered, to present the dream of the **endlessness** of Austria's rule. To modern readers it may appear odd that a play which shows a queen's inevitable fall through destiny also is used to celebrate eternal power for one house. But the contrast between the implied grandeur of the glorified patrons and the timely bondage of the play's subjects is hereby all the more striking. It is hard to believe that Lohenstein did not really see beyond his choruses which celebrate German rule, when he saw so clearly the life cycle of empires in analogy to man's. Yet his novel *Arminius*, the last great project of his own life, indicates otherwise. Sharing with so many of his age, Lohenstein was at home in a mystically tainted "Interpretation" of the cosmos. He **believed** in a
special destiny for the Germans. This hope caused him to indulge in many absurdities which contrast sharply with the harsh realism of his dramas. One needs only point out the traces of this belief in his African tragedies and their final shape, a mythology of German primacy, as in the "aria of Queen Germany" (Arminius, II, 446):

    Als Rom in Wieg und Windeln lag,
    Herrscht ich vom Eismeer bis zum Alpen

    So Rom als Griechenland verfiel in meine Hand,
    Und Asien tat mir vergebends Widerstand.

Against the operation of destiny, against the prestige of past history, his fertile mind constructed a gigantic reinterpretation of history, the story of Germany, the "exception."
SUMMARY

This essay has attempted, by focusing upon the Lohensteinian heroine, to examine in some detail the author's particular development. In taking leave of his tragedy, Sophonisbe, one must remark that what remains of his historical vision is not principally the socio-political message for his own times but rather the great timeless characters he created. For the message never changes in its essentials from Ibrahim Bassa onward, whereas the dramatic personalities do. If Lohenstein expressed through his drama hope in an era of permanence under Austrian rule, his predictions constituted another wish for fixation, for security against the powers of time, for a duration of greatness such as Sophonisbe sought for vainly in life but found in death. The Turkish threat and a desired counteraction by a victorious Austria gave Ibrahim Bassa its contemporary context. The forecast of a glorious Austrian dominance formed the timely framework for Sophonisbe. But an obsessive human desire, - whether
expressed in Isabella's urge to flee the absolute enslavement of Turkey, or in Epicharis' struggle on behalf of Republican liberty against Imperial tyranny, or in Agrippina's attempt to free herself from monstrous threats, or in Cleopatra's and Sophonisbe's resistance to the encroachment of Rome upon their independent lands, - this impulse for freedom Lohenstein captured in art. And accordingly, the essay has sought to show the dramatic spectrum cast by this single compulsive inspiration, and has not dealt with the history of Lohenstein's own lifetime or based its findings on biographical evidence.

The first play in the dramatic spectrum was *Ibrahim Bassa* (1653). It united several traditions into an heroic formula. The genre of the martyr drama, fully developed by the Jesuit theatre, offered the basis. But the threatened parties no longer looked toward a religious faith for guidance but rather toward a stoic concept of their own dignity. This picture of human worth and purity had its antecedents in Seneca and in the humanistic classical theatre of the Renaissance. In addition, the often cruel earthiness of the popular stage, both portraying man's pitiful nature as a creature and offering the spectacle of greatness (*Haupt- und Staatsaktionen*), affected Lohenstein's presentation of the conflict. This conflict was between the sultan, outwardly
absolute in splendor and government, inwardly a chaos of base passions, and the lovers, outwardly his servants, inwardly noble and loyal. Lohenstein brought into the play, although not with sensual tones, the essential secular element, a sentimental history about a doomed marriage of the heart. He integrated the story of the sublime love pair into the general rationalistic philosophy of his day, as well as into the contemporary religious sentiments. The lovers, as stoics, acted through spiritual commitment, while the infidel sultan was without self-control or ultimate principle. Thus Lohenstein stood very close to his religious countryman, Gryphius, by keeping the love issue centered around a spiritual question, symbolized by the sanctity of the lover's oaths. Dying on behalf of fealty to all their commitments, Ibrahim thereby continued to assert his inner, indestructible liberty. Although Isabella was spared death, her attitude was similarly heroic and she lived on behalf of her husband's memory and the principle of their love--freedom. Unmistakable in the lovers was an almost ecstatic readiness to suffer or die; death offered an escape from threats of debasement and, because it was a permanent solution, exercised great attraction. With the emotional color of Christian yearnings, death became equated with freedom. The play contained
Lohenstein's original equation of love, death and freedom.

The second play in the spectrum was Epicharisi (1665), also in the tradition of Christian stoicism. The sexually unmotivated heroine fought against the Roman example of inconstancy, base passions and tyrannical government, Nero. But likewise, her loyalty was to a secular ideal, here the state of political freedom which the Republic had stood for once. Connected with the loss of real freedom was the loss of human dignity or nobility, which the fanatic Epicharisi sought to restore through revolutionary activity. She was destined to become a political martyr, because her less spiritual contemporaries were unequal to the task. In effect Epicharisi wished to change the course of history, so far did her reformist plans go. And thus she struggled vainly against the historically destined order of things. Lohenstein showed the following: That Epicharisi, like the lovers of Ibrahim Bassa, rejected the authority of a corrupt earthly rule and referred to a higher instance, unfortunately to an ideal or absolute truth incapable of realization. That her undertaking caused her to become involved in the political world, with its dubious instruments, in contrast to the severely moral withdrawal by Seneca from
any sullyng participation in temporal affairs. That
Epicharis, driven by her ideal, failed to restore the
lost "paradise" of the Republic in a physical way, but
triumphed spiritually as an example and herald of
greatness of soul, that very quality of nobility which
was lacking in the degenerated Empire. Her victory
corresponded to that of Papinianus, Gryphius' hero who
died stoically for the same reasons as did Lohenstein's
Seneca, on behalf of a divine justice. The suffering
of the lovers in Ibrahim Bassa did not lead to as
pessimistic a conclusion. In Epicharis, however,
Lohenstein developed his own distinctly tragic paradox
on the basis of man's political existence.

If one leaves aside the irrational tendency, which
was evident in both plays in the glorification of suffering
and death, in suicidal defiance of overwhelming threats,
one sees that Lohenstein has enriched his treatment of
the political environment. The resistance of the lovers
was for a personal good, although to be sure that good,
freedom of choice, already had the widest implications.
But in Epicharis, the heroine's resistance was against
the very structure of the universe, against intrinsic
degrading forces in human nature and human political
development. The change from the Republic to the Empire
was treated as an inevitable development, behind which a mysterious universal principle stood, Fate. The workings of Fate were ambiguous, for man was morally committed to fight for his own nobility even against the destined process of debasement. The secular goal of fame was the sole reward. Lohenstein had completed his picture of a tragic world, in which society was corrupt, politics amoral and human passions a treacherous enslavement, yet he maintained his belief in heroic idealism.

The third play in the spectrum, Agrippina (1665), showed the abyss of this tragic world, where, when all was said and done, an Epicharls was a rare phenomenon. Here Lohenstein took the figure of the anti-heroine, the courtesan type of sensualistic and self-seeking intriguer, and made it into his tragic subject. The same facts of life prevailed, the threat was concentrated in the same monstrous tyrant of Rome, and the situation was still determined under the aegis of Fate, but the person resisting was a queen in danger of losing her hold, an inveterate schemer threatened by ruthless competition, a manipulator of passions pitted against younger erotic talent. Agrippina, wholly dependent upon her status as a powerful influence in the royal family, feared not only the destruction of her image as a great woman but also the
therewith connected likelihood of political assassination in her time of weakness. Not simply boldly, but in fact desperately, she wagered all on a criminal seduction of her own son, the fickle monster who might murder her, if Poppaea won him. Thus she flung herself into the final guilty enterprise which called forth retribution. Her sins burdened her before her death. But, what was worse, her transgression against nature had excited Nero to a more extreme perversion, matricide. Totally isolated, pitifully deceived about her own ability to oppose the destined change in the state, tormented by the spectres of death and guilt, Agrippina excited compassion. She had allowed herself to be tempted into doom, much like Lady Macbeth. She suffered, however, not merely because of ambition but also because of sheer necessity; in order to survive, she sinned. Noninvolvement in the dubious machinations of political struggle meant, as Ibrahim Bassa and Epicharis also showed, death. Yet struggle meant inevitable guilt.

Thus Lohenstein had gone through three steps or opened up three possibilities. There was the pure ideal, a secular martyr not sullied by the slightest taint of ambiguous involvement in corrupt manoeuvring or by personal baseness. There was the political hero, fanatical, dubiously involved by force of natural circumstances to use the
instruments of a corrupt world in the struggle to reform it, defeated by the way of the world and the decree of Fate. There was finally the fascinating sinner, who proved to be hopelessly trapped by human nature and by the very facts of existence in a political, not a just society. But the great contribution which Lohenstein made with Agrippina was not only the tragedy of crime in the context of historical doom, but also an all-pervading theory of historical development as a universal tragic process. This he expressed especially in the chorus of the Vestal virgins. He developed the story of the fall of Troy into a general mythology of the rise and collapse of civilizations. He made clear the analogy between a state's political constitution and its people's moral health by intertwining the traditional metaphors for love or passion with the image of sacred fire. One fire represented the personal force; the other fire symbolized a country's life, as for instance in the temple of Vesta. Misuse of "fire," or desecration of a sacred flame, provoked a natural catastrophe, in the case of Troy quite literally "conflagration." Lohenstein's myth went further than explaining internal corruption of a civilization in terms of moral vitality or in terms of irruption of natural forces in a destructive, uncontrolled manner. He also
spoke of the mysterious transfer of the sacred flame from one civilization to another. With this exemplary mythological background, Lohenstein, now a profound historical dramatist, wished to indicate what he understood by Fate. He perceived that even the moral condition of men was, in the final analysis, also but an indication of the shifting of vital forces in a gigantic, awesome process. Even the moral question was subordinate to historical determination.

The signs were evident in the character of Agrippina. Whereas Ibrahim, Isabella and Epicharis, Seneca were heroes and heroines with solid moral claims beyond the political sphere of sheer power, Agrippina made her impression solely through her greatness. For example, even in death she exercised provocative charms upon her murderer. Lohenstein had seen that, in addition to our admiration for ideal conduct, another more profound basis of tragic sympathy existed, and that was compassion, compassion even for a criminal. But that criminal had to be magnificent, and then abjectly exposed to the miserable facts of human extinction as a creature. The fight against the invincible foe, in the last analysis Fate, made Agrippina worthy of our pity. One more new ingredient of character distinguished the queen. Previously, in Ibrahim Bassa and Epicharis, everything erotic or passionate appertained
to negative figures, the despicable tyrants and vicious courtiers, although here and there eroticism lent appealing color. But in the figure of Agrippina, physical attractiveness was almost glorified as an indication of divine origin and greatness of spirit. Lohenstein complicated his picture of the world to the extent that he was abandoning the safer grounds of Ibrahim Bassa and Epicharis and beclouding the issue of ideal behavior. Now it was no longer absolutely clear that guiltlessness rather than guilt was attached to the physical life, the senses, beauty and charm. It was no longer certain whether greatness need be morally founded. Ibrahim and Isabella had even laid claim to personal happiness, to domestic bliss, and Isabella and later, in the play Ibrahim Sultan (1673), Ambre exercised the powerful charm of rare beauty, because they were so pure, but no one could doubt the morality of their undertakings, one had to doubt Agrippina's motives.

Out of all the sources named, -- the original equation of love, death and freedom; the tragedy of political idealism and historical fate; the tragedy of the "anti-heroical" greatness, or human struggle itself under the human condition -- out of this range of inspiration derive Lohenstein's two African plays and Ibrahim Sultan. The latter play actually presented a sultan of bestial passions in such a fashion that one at
last felt pity for him as the captive of his own position and corrupt nature. He undermined not only his crown but also his sanity with helpless blind floundering. In him Lohenstein explored the tragic implications already suggested by the personality of Nero. The tragedy Ibrahim Sultan was not discussed in a special section, because this essay concentrated on the feminine protagonists, but was treated in comparisons with Ibrahim Bassa, Epicharis and Agrippina. In Ibrahim Sultan Lohenstein portrayed at a pessimistic depth his major tragic male protagonist who was at the same time the villain. But it was in Cleopatra (1661-1680) and Sophonisbe (1666-1680) that the dramatist succeeded in creating great sinful heroines who could at last command attention solely because of their fatal grandeur.

The revision of the first version of Cleopatra (1661) re-issued in the year 1680 shows a definite growth in Lohenstein's dramaturgy beyond his Agrippina, although certain fundamentals remain unaltered, such as the choruses and the historical problem. The number of characters and of subplots is increased. The author strives to convert much that was previously narrated into the dramatic action, and thus to give in full complexity all the historical circumstances which affect the heroes' situation. In the first version, Cleopatra was not clearly developed at an
early point in the play as the manipulator who consciously worked toward a single political goal. Instead it appeared that she was as much frightened about Anthony's possible treachery, and only then tempted to undertake a criminal policy against her spouse with the overestimation of her own charms, which she hoped to utilize in winning Augustus. Cleopatra was nevertheless in the same general cast as Agrippina, a seductress at the end of her power, too ready to engage in immoral adventure, but doing all for the sake of political survival. In the second version, by making the tragic helplessness of Anthony so potently obvious, Lohenstein simultaneously sharpens his picture of Cleopatra. It is now clear that Cleopatra does not plunge into a desperate action because of any monstrosity in her husband, but that from the start she sees herself pitted against an awesome enemy, Fate. This enemy comes in the guise of the Roman Empire and Augustus, ravenously devouring all the world and finally also her independent kingdom. But she thinks, and this is her hybris, that she can evade destiny. Little does it occur to Cleopatra that, in causing Anthony's suicide, she has become herself an instrument of Fate, which is after all also Anthony's foe. And by removing Anthony, she destroys her only sure defense in the final hours of collapse. In other words, all that Cleopatra undertakes brings on all the more her nemesis.
in the second version, then, Cleopatra does not provoke our sympathy because she is like Agrippina, a victim of a monster in her own house, but because she is so intensely blind in her struggle, yet so intensely great in her aim, to rescue an entire civilization from enslavement. Not a pitifully weak and isolated woman ridden with guilt, but a crafty and powerful monarch acts out her own undoing, throwing away in a gamble her own husband. Here Lohenstein achieves something entirely new, which is evident even in version one. In Ibrahim Bassa, Agrippina and Epicharis, the tyrant was always shown as a man of inner weakness, violent passions, base earthly attachments, while the heroes, excepting Agrippina, stood for the timeless ideals, for the controlled and rational approach. For example, the extreme figure was Seneca in Epicharis, whose mind characterized him; he never mixed in any enterprise which tasted of corruption but lived entirely according to principles. Lohenstein makes Cleopatra rely on the faculty of reason rather than upon sentiments in her plans. She tries to obviate disaster by coolly calculating. But she has no more success than Anthony, who is a complete captive of his emotions. While Anthony is basely attached to earthly happiness, he is nobly loyal and in fact blind toward his wife. On the
other hand, while Cleopatra acts only on behalf of the Roman rational aim of power and uses her reason, she cannot possibly see every factor in the gigantic process of historical change and falls into a trap.

Thus the author demonstrates that the old duality, body-spirit, passion-reason, etc., no longer is really valid. Both passion and reason are blind and helpless against Fate. There remains ever yet only the old solution, self-affirmation in hope of a kind of immortality through renown. Cleopatra chooses to rescue her nobility (freedom) by the irrational pathway out of the treacherous entanglements of the world. She kills herself to prevent Augustus from debasing her. This extreme action awakens our admiration, even for the criminal. The step is hereby completed. In Agrippina Lohenstein brought us to experience compassion for a great woman tainted with evil; now he arouses our wonder. In the first instance he succeeded in transferring the tragic emotion felt for a pure heroine or hero, as in Ibrahim Bassa or Ibrahim Sultan, to someone impure. In the case of Cleopatra, as in the case of Epicharis, the heroine is not actually attacked but rather kills herself after failing in attack. Cleopatra is very little similar, however, to the sexless political idealist.
Of the two suicides, Cleopatra's is by far more imposing. For Lohenstein, as said, has erased the clear boundaries which gave so simple a picture of a black and white universe. Now he deals with the truth of the human condition. In her hour of defeat, Cleopatra regrets the lost chance for bliss represented in dead Anthony. She reaffirms her inner connection to him and the good he meant. Her suicide not only maintains her greatness; it is at the same time a love-death with all the evocative melancholy of tragic waste of life. Thus Lohenstein returns to his original equation in Ibrahim Bassa. Death emerges in erotic and nihilistic tones as the great redeemer. If in Ibrahim Bassa the extratemporal realm of love was very spiritual and even stoically rational, in Cleopatra it is definitely the wish-dream of an earth where men may enjoy their lives, a world of natural joy far removed from the poisonous influence of a corrupt political and courtly civilization.

The last play of the dramatic spectrum, Sophonisbe, completed the survey of the inspiration generated by freedom. The Carthaginian queen acted for reasons similar to Cleopatra's, in order to oppose enslavement by Rome. But Sophonisbe too was fighting an invincible process of Fate. What enriched Lohenstein's conception of a heroine in her was a strange and unreasonable candor. Sometimes
it expressed itself in opportunistic and immoral manoeuvres, such as entering into a second marriage with the conqueror, Rome's ally Masanissa. Sometimes it burst forth in irrational resoluteness to do anything, even commit savagery, on behalf of her country. But, just as often, it compelled her to acknowledge truths which were both contradictory and dangerous, to act in a manner undermining her own safety. Sophonisbe might set out upon a course of seduction, but she ended in love with the object of her scheming. At the same time, she could not, at advantageous moments, overcome her conjugal love for defeated Syphax. Lohenstein had finally reversed all the positions of his earliest drama. Sophonisbe was torn by passions, as well as inspired by the high goal of serving her country. She was, however, like the lovers in Ibrahim Bassa, always loyal to those whom she loved. To be sure, she had two husbands out of sheer necessity. But she never betrayed either in her heart. On the contrary, she was rejected, misunderstood and put aside by them. The conqueror, Masanissa, finally embarking on the course of reason and of raison d'état, becoming Romanized, surrendered his chance for earthly happiness, which he had discovered in her unreasonable attractions. She made his choice easier by voluntary death. So it turned out that Sophonisbe was not a Cleopatra by any means but rather a victim, tied to
commitments like love all the time and hounded to death by severe Roman policy. Yet she represented like Cleopatra a great civilization in its death agony; she was the high, the queenly sacrifice.

A further difference characterized Sophonisbe. When crushed by Fate, she was permitted a vision of world history. This made her a companion of those ancient saints who through their tragic suffering have insight into the universe or are taken up by the gods. Thus Sophonisbe became Lohenstein's first great heroine who also might be called "holy." Epicharis attained a kind of secular sainthood as political martyr. Cleopatra, through her final insight into the beauty of Anthony's love, had a touch of bliss. But in Sophonisbe the ecstasy was unmistakable, and the sin was evident. This combination of sinner and victim was important. Sophonisbe transgressed moral laws, but she was also good to the extent of a tragic flaw, in so far as she was devoted to her family, her men and her country. Lohenstein had made a striking evolution from the stoic martyr drama, which stood in the shadow of Christian beliefs and rationalistic philosophy, to a tragedy of his own.

Essentially, the problem of human existence had not altered in his view. Man was cursed by mortality, by captivity in time, in nature, in society. But now the
The answer was not simply escape, flight into death and fame. The tragedy was more agonized, since despite all only the earth, only love and joy, offered the real picture of that paradisiacal state which man sought hopelessly on earth. Man had become once more tragically great by his own gesture, and not elevated by the aid of an external redemption. The world was the theatre of man, self-conscious actor doomed by his own role, acting out the mysterious script dictated by Fate.

In its discussion, the essay has sought to correct the misunderstanding toward Lohenstein's theatre of pathos, which cannot be judged from the point of view of contemporary religious or "Ethical" drama, as best represented by Gryphius. Lohenstein has much in common with the secularized Gryphian attitude, exemplified in Papinianus, but is isolated in his work as an historical tragedian. With his figures Agrippina, Ibrahim Sultan, Cleopatra and Sophonisbe, Anthony and Hasanissa, he breaks the pattern set by Gryphius, who knows how to stimulate in us edifying sadness for heroic constancy and suffering. Lohenstein evokes compassion for the human creature alone, for his pitiful captivity, and not merely admiration for his heroism. Lohensteinian Fate changes the theatre from an edifying spectacle into the showplace of purgation. It becomes the literary
altar for a terrifying drama of defeat. Yet this drama serves to keep alive the concept of a higher form of being, buttressed no longer by a dogma of salvation or by a rigid doctrine of rationality but rather by an elusive notion of freedom. Lohenstein became the great secular dramatist of the seventeenth century in the German tongue by expressing this anxious aspiration to be liberated.
FOOTNOTES


2. The reader is directed to the selected bibliography for the list of specialized titles in section two.

3. Laetitia Brede, "Das 'Grosse Gemüt' im Drama Lohensteins," Literaturwissenschaftliches Jahrbuch der Görres-Gesellschaft VIII (1936) connects the vitality and attractiveness of the African queens, discusses their heroic struggle and defeat by fate, and tries to understand their suicides as a "positive" gesture. But she overemphasizes a moralistic commitment and does not explain the role of history.

4. For treatments of Arminius, see Louise Laporte, *Lohenstein's Arminius*, Germanistische Studien, XLVIII (Berlin, 1927) and Max Wehrli, *Das barocke Geschichtsbild in Lohensteins Arminius, Wege zur Dichtung*, XXXI (1931).

5. A recent good anthology taking up poems of Lohenstein is Max Wehrli, *Deutsche Barocklyrik* (Basel 1945).

6. The critical edition has appeared in three volumes, publications number 292-294 of the Bibliothek des Literarischen Vereins in Stuttgart (Anton Hiersemann, Stuttgart 1953-1957). Quotations in the present essay are from Just's edition. References are given as follows: play, act, line; abbreviations are used for play titles as follows: IB (*Ibrahim Bassa*), Cl (*Cleopatra*, 1661), C2 (*Cleopatra*, 1680), EP (*Epicharis*), AG (*Agrippina*), SO (*Sophonisba*), IS (*Ibrahim Sultan*). When the play title
is clear from the context of the discussion, only act and line are indicated. Thus AG II, 7 is Agrippina, act two, line seven; II, 7 may indicate the same citation, when the discussion obviously treats Agrippina.


8. Vol. 2, p. 1568. Kosch is quite correct in stating that Lohenstein meant "Schwulst" to many persons, already in the first half of the eighteenth century. But perhaps the following quotation from the *Critischer Musikus*, May 14, 1737 (reprinted in *Critischer Musikus*, Leipzig, 1745, p. 62) by Johann Adolph Scheibe can demonstrate that even as great an artist as Bach could be so "labeled" because of his lack of appeal to the new era: "Dieser grosse Mann würde die Bewunderung ganzer Nationen sein, wenn er mehr Annehmlichkeit hätte und wenn er nicht seinen Stücken durch ein schwülstiges und verworrenes Wesen das Natürliche entzog und ihre Schönheit durch allzugrosse Kunst verdunkelte....Alle Manieren, alle kleinen Verzierungen drückt er mit eigentlichen Noten aus, und das entzieht seinen Stücken nicht nur die Schönheit der Harmonie, sondern es macht auch den Gesang durchaus unvernehmlich. Alle Stimmen sollen miteinander und mit gleicher Schwierigkeit arbeiten, und man erkennt darunter keine Hauptstimme. Kurz: er ist in der Musik dasjenige, was ehemals der Herr von Lohenstein in der Poesie war. Die Schwülstigkeit hat beide von dem Natürlichen auf das Künstliche und von dem Erhabenen auf das Dunkle geführt; und man bewundert an beiden die beschwerliche Arbeit und eine ausnehmende Mühe, die doch vergebens angewandt ist, weil sie wider die Vernunft streitet." The present essay hopes to show that the here implicitly rejected categories of the "artificial" and the "obscure" are all-important for Lohenstein; indeed, a discussion of irrational traits, of struggle against a mechanistic "reason" will be a principal objective of study of the plays in which provocative heroines will exemplify, finally with suicide, fateful impulses.


13. Compare Walter Reiff, *Die Theorie des Tragischen im 17. Jahrhundert in Deutschland und Frankreich* (Diss., Bern,
In his very critical opinion of Opitz' theories, which he regards mainly as a botched copying, harmfully influenced by Scaliger. According to Reiff, p. 87: "Wenn wir von der Betrachtung Corneilles und Boileaus kommend uns zu Opitz wenden, so haben wir nicht den Eindruck, um nur 50 Jahre zurückgegangen zu sein, sondern wir glauben uns ins tiefste Mittelalter zurückversetzt." Walther Rehm is less deprecatory in his article, "Römis-ch-französischer Barockheroismus und seine Umgestaltung in Deutschland," Germanisch-romani- sche Monatschrift XXii (1934). He sees no direct Franco-German influence; nevertheless, despite an independent development, roots in common with the French as a result of shared Latin tradition. He states, p. 214: "Man muss sich entschlüssen, das deutsche barock-klassistische Drama des Gryphius und Lohenstein als das zeitliche, wenn auch vielleicht nicht ebenbürtige Seitenstück zum französischen zu sehen, das sich wesentlich unabhängig von Frankreich herausgebildet hat." Both critics point to Opitz' preface to his translation of Seneca's Troianerinnen (1625), which Boertag doubtless also has in mind.


16. See the study by Willi Flemming, Der Wandel des deutschen Naturgefühls vom 15. zum 18. Jahrhundert (Halle/Saale, 1931).


18. Ibid., p. 111.

19. Johann Jacob Bodmer, op. cit. (Zürich, 1721-1723), part 3, discourse 14, p. 105ff, is quite entertaining mockery and rather good, and has the further merit of not posing as anything but an outright attack.


21. Two monographs have been dedicated to studies chiefly of excesses or perversions in the Baroque drama. Max Otto Katz, Zur Weltanschauung Daniel Caspars von Lohenstein. Studien zur deutschen Barockliteratur (diss., Breslau, 1933), starts from the assumption that Lohenstein, very realistically oriented, created gigantic villains in order to expose human corruption but that he freed his phantasy, perversely and without hypocrisy, to present his vision. Lohenstein is evaluated as creator of a psychology of sin and vice, derived from the Baroque view of man as a creature of passions. Richard Sexau, Der Tod im deutschen Drama des 17. und 18. Jahrhunderts (diss., Bern, 1905), examines in the art of the times deep-rooted pathological sickness, then concentrates his view upon the theatre. Sexau sees death as the center and self-purpose of the Silesian drama. Both studies are valuable.


24. Ibid. Also, Reiff, op. cit., p. 96, sees the persistance of Baroque influence into the early eighteenth century. Rehm, op. cit., p. 221, regards the theatre of the same period, as for example that of Gottsched, as a conscious deepening of Franco-Roman influences but essentially as no change, which first really occurs with Lessing; when the heroic concept receded, the Roman and political picture of man left the stage and a "Greek humanistic" picture replaced it.


27. Ibid., p. 174. Compare Walter Benjamin, Ursprung des deutschen Trauerspiels (Berlin, 1928), who reveals his direct descent from the Swiss critics, whose works he cites in support of his argument, essentially the same argument which Friedrich also reiterates some years later. With reference to Breitinger's Critische Abhandlung (1740), Benjamin opines, p. 81, that Lohenstein lacks any historical ethos, the term which stands as a page motto over the text: "Kein Dichter hat wie er von dem Kunstgriff Gebrauch gemacht, den auftauchenden ethischen Reflexion durch eine Metaphorik, die Geschichtliches mit den Naturgeschehen analogisiert, die Spitze abzubrechen. Ausserhalb der stoischen Ostentation ist jede sittlich motivierte Haltung oder Diskussion mit einer Grundsätzlichkeit verbannt, die mehr noch als die Greuel eines Vorgangs den Lohensteinischen Dramen ihren gegen die preziöse Diktion so grell sich abhebenden Gehalt verleiht." Thus Benjamin echoes the indignation of past generations.

28. The reader is referred to the works cited, which are listed in the bibliography.


34. Erik Lunding, Das Schlesische Kunstdrama (Copenhagen, 1940), p. 183.

35. Friedrich, op. cit., p. 225.

36. Ibid., p. 229.
37. Wege zur Dichtung XLV; Germanisch-Romanische Monats-
schrift XXIX.

38. Cysarz, op. cit., p. 165, raises Gryphius to the highest
rank: "In Gryphius verkörpert sich die lauterste
barocke Tragik und die letzte Tragik des Barocken: so
ist auch er zugleich Gipfel und Grenze. ...Seine Kunst
ist...ganz überwiegend eschatologisch, oft nichts als
eschatologisch." Schaufelberger's theories will be
soon treated.

39. Lunding, op. cit., p. 31ff, notes a number of similari-
ties between Papinian and the work of Lohenstein, although
he insists on the separation of the two authors on a
basis of their respective ethical orientation. Lun-
ding's opinions of Lohenstein will receive considera-
tion during the progress of the essay.

40. For comparison of factual conditions in Ottoman poli-
tical development and practices with the views of Lohen-
stein see Burhaneddin Kamil, Die Türken in der deutschen
Literatur bis zum Barock und die Sultanengestalten in den

41. See listing by Just, "Register: Lohensteins geistiges

42. A special study has been made concerning the Gryphian
and Lohensteinian philosophies of government. Heinrich
Hildebrandt, Die Staatsauffassung der schlesischen
Barockdramatiker im Rahmen ihrer Zeit (diss., Rostock,
1939), details among other things, various theories of
areas of legitimate resistance to the monarch. Here I
examine what is a radical extreme of resistance without
any basis in a political or religious right, but rather
in absolute rights of the individual as a human being.
As Hildebrandt points out, Lohenstein later developed
in contrast to Gryphius far-reaching examples of dis-
obedience and revolution, against which Ibrahim and
Isabelle are rather pale.

43. The late figure in Gryphius' drama, that of Papinianus,
the stoic, pagan martyr on behalf of divine law, will
be evaluated during the coming discussion of Epicharis.

44. The best condensed description of Baroque dramaturgy,
lucid, broad in scope, yielding interesting definitions
of the chief features, is Willi Flemming's article,
"Drama und Theater des deutschen Barock," Zeitschrift
für Deutschkunde XLVIII (1935). He distinguishes Papinian, of course, for much the same reasons as Friedrich praises Gryphius, ethical substance, p. 463: "Dichterisch wie menschlich am edelsten verkörpert sich in diesem Stück das Ethos der kulturrangenden Schicht des höheren Beamtentums, das nicht aus feilen Hüflingen, sondern aus kraftvollen Persönlichkeiten bestand."

45. See Ibrahim Sultan for an example of a drama where rebellion succeeds, but based on entirely different political premises and in continuance of the same system of state. H. Hildebrandt treats both Epicharis and Ibrahim Sultan as political pieces of special significance.

46. M.O. Katz, op.cit., p. 34 f, sees the motivation of Epicharis as mixed: she is not a pure freedom martyr but is also impelled by personal hatred of Nero and Neronian corruption, and by ambition for renown.

47. The reader is referred once more to the introductory remarks, where in the quotations from the lexicons and other sources the expressions "gelehrtenhafte Präzision," on the more positive side, "lüstern-kühle Künstlichkeit," "in schreienden Farben gekleidete Magd der Polyhistorie," "wahrer Cyniker," "no strength of religion and character," "Mangel an idealem Gehalt," etc. express abhorrence at Lohenstein's ironic historical tendencies. Erik Lunding, Das schlesische Kunstdrama, sees, however, great merit in Epicharis as a drama of conspiracy and in Lohenstein's ironic elevation above his subject, p. 119: "Epicharis ist wirklichKEitstreu bis zur höhnenden Härte, bis zum zynischsten Naturalismus;" p. 122: "Lohenstein ist der kühle und sachliche Beobachter und Beurteiler der Lebenskomödie mit einem unbestechlichen Sinn für die Realitäten."

48. Contrast Fritz Schaufelberger, Das Tragische in Lohenstein's Trauerspielen, Wege zur Dichtung XIV (1945), on the nature of Fate, p. 112: "Das Verhängnis hat in Lohensteins Trauerspielen nichts mit einer jenseitigen, göttlichen Macht gemein. Vielmehr erscheint es stets als geschichtliche Kausalität." I disagree with him, moreover, that this Fate only touches the surface, not the depths of men, p. 80: "Das Schicksal trifft wohl die Epidermis des Menschen, nicht aber seinen Lebensnerv. Es rennt an ihm, ohne Spuren zu hinterlassen, herunter." Schaufelberger persists in the belief that
there is no metaphysical basis of necessity for conflict in Lohenstein, as there is in Gryphius, and therefore that Lohenstein cannot achieve true tragedy (p. 80f; p. 111; p. 122). I should like to renew this argument later in regard to the African plays.

49. We shall have ample opportunity to discuss Rome as the agency of fated enslavement in regard to the African plays.

50. Schaufelberger, op. cit., p. 50, rightly attributes the notion of determinism to Baroque psychology, with its dualism of body and spirit or passion and reason. That Lohenstein was profoundly concerned with the question of man's ability to govern his own destiny is a fact that seems to have escaped earlier critics, who dismiss his anxious searching for an answer as "pathos." We shall go into this problem more closely in our discussion of Agrippina, where the stage is cleared of all ethical props and the naked conflict for existence dominates. Epicharis still shows traits related to the "ethical" dramas of Gryphius, but is already on the dividing line, on the other side of which stand Ibrahim Sultan, Cleopatra and Sophonisbe, as well as Agrippina.


52. Schaufelberger sees most of Lohenstein's figures as masks and speaks of the "Rollenhaftigkeit des Menschenbildes" (p. 116). While this applies to a certain extent to Epicharis, it cannot apply, as Schaufelberger thinks it does, to the queens, Agrippina, Cleopatra and Sophonisbe. Granted the fact of their very pronounced attitudes, gestures and all that, Schaufelberger exaggerates this aspect of Lohenstein's creatures. For example, he says, p. 117: "Die Form des Menschen bei Lohenstein kann daher nicht als Gestalt angesprochen werden, sie bleibt bloss Maske." For those of us who do not comprehend the subtle difference between being a "Form" and being a "Gestalt," he explains: "Denn wo der Mensch nicht in seiner Ganzheit in Frage gestellt wird, wo nur seine Maske, nicht aber sein Wesen gefährdet erscheint, bleibt ihm immer die Möglichkeit, sich dieser
oberflächlichen Bedrohung zu entziehen." I find that this view is wrong entirely, if applied to the queens; wrongly formulated, if applied to Epicharis. We have no right nor can distinguish between Epicharis, the "mask," and Epicharis the heroine. Her very essence, the cause of freedom, is everything that she is, and certainly this is placed in outermost jeopardy. The escape hatch is, of course, suicide. But suicide seals her destiny, does not obviate sacrifice.

53. The reader is referred especially to Agrippina, third chorus, presenting the shipwreck of the heroine; Lohenstein himself gives this reference through Proculus' words (Epicharis I, 319-321).

54. I agree with Lunding's interpretation of the play and especially with his excellent remark, p. 123: "Der Desillusionismus Lohensteins feiert hier Orgien. Er ist aber kein zynischer Leugner aller höheren Werte. Das dramatische Person bildet nämlich eine grosse Stufenleiter von dem Eigenmutz und der Mutlosigkeit etwa eines Natals oder Piros bis zum fanatischsten, unerschrockensten Heroismus Epicharis', deren politischen Aktivismus Lohenstein durchaus als etwas Werthaftes betrachtet." Lunding's interpretation is singular in its perception, the most outstanding part of his book, with which I must elsewhere take exception.

55. But we must not be hasty and deduce a simple mechanism of Fate, which is much more elusive and subtle for Lohenstein. Consider, for example, Epicharis' statement (I, 43-45):

\[\begin{align*}
\text{Itzt ist uns leider alien} \\
\text{Nicht nur das Hertz allein/ auch die Vernunft entfallen;} \\
\text{Er wüttet so viel Jahr/und eine geile Nacht} \\
\text{Hat die Tarquiner umb Reich und Geist gebracht.}
\end{align*}\]

The disorder of the passions, which has drastic consequences, as examples from the past prove, for instance Tarquin's, and which Lohenstein illustrates in Ibrahim Sultan, does not seem to topple Nero, as Epicharis would expect it should. Simply because Fate has not decreed his fall, which it will bring about in its own time by its several agencies within the historical process.

56. I shall reserve my contradictions to Schaufelberger's summation of Lohenstein's drama for fuller discussion in regard to the African plays. But I must note here that I can never share his connotation of what Lohenstein's irony is; Schaufelberger sees a mask in stead of a form, a "play" in stead of exposition of a conflict, irony in stead of tragedy (p. 122). I believe that we need to distinguish between
the mask which an author may assume and the "mask" which is his work, between the supposed state of mind of the author and the matters which he presents to us within his dramas. Because, as with Shakespeare and others, the author may indeed be ironic, while his theme is tragic.

57. Lunding approaches my definition of political nemesis, I believe, in this remark, p. 123: "So müssen sich in Epicharis bestimmte Vorgänge wiederholen, denn ein Schicksal wartet über allen Gegnern Neros, alle verschwören sie sich, alle werden sie entdeckt." Thereby he emphasizes the collectivity of the doom. I try to explain this kind of collective destiny in reference for example to the chorus figures representing continents, cities, etc., and to the prologue figures of the Turkish plays, as part of the author's view of world history as a fated process.

58. Muris complains of the brutal pathos of the suicide, which is not at all done "nicely" as would suit a sentimentalized hero, p. 55: "Wir meinen, dass mehr Unnatürlichkeit und Geschmacklosigkeit in eine Szene nicht hineingelegt werden kann, als es hier geschehen ist. Zu dieser Unnatur gesellt sich meistens noch die Sinnlichkeit in ihrer ganzen Unverhülltheit." He also complains, p. 54, of the "Widerwärtigkeit der Verhör- und Marterszenen in Epicharis". Sexau at least attempts to explain these traits in terms of Lohenstein's personal, and contemporary, interest in human nature's dark aspects.

59. The connection between an absolute state ideal and superhuman efforts to overcome the personal obstacles to serving it is clearer in Epicharis, although in her generous attitude toward her weaker fellow conspirators she glows with a warmth unknown to an Horace. Seneca adheres, of course, to no state ideal in the manner of Epicharis but accepts the status quo of absolutism. Because of his stoic position, we cannot conceive of him as a state personality but only as an individual caught in the necessities of political existence. Thus Lohenstein avoids the harshness of a heroism based on statesmanship itself, on whose behalf the human being dehumanizes himself, as in Corneille's Horace.

60. See chorus five of Cleopatra; or see Arminius (Leipzig, 1689-90), part two, book three, p. 446, where in an
"aria" Queen Germany sings of her ancient role, a role which is destined to be rewon later in history:

Als Rom in Wieg und Windeln lag,
Herrscht ich vom Eismeer bis zu'n Alpen

So Rom als Griechenland verviel in meine Hand,
Und Asien tat mir vergebends Widerstand.

Arminius is a work concerned with the creation of a myth of a political golden age under German aegis. Thus one encounters the imperial emblems in association with the blessed era, as for example, part two, book three, page 444:

Zum Zeichen dieser gütldnen Zeit
Wird dieser Adler wiederkehren.

61. Most interesting are two separated comments by Schaufelberger which for me point the way out of and beyond his own conclusions as to the tragic import of Lohenstein's figures. At the same time, these comments reveal the mistakenly exclusivistic attitudes of criticism which has long demanded "ethics" and little understood the significance of "pathos" in drama: First, Schaufelberger reiterates the traditional line, with a neat variation, p. 56: "Er gründet nicht mehr in einem von Gott gesetzten Ethos, sondern einzig in einer überwältigenden Grösse, der schon in einem diesseitigen Raum Geltung zukommt!" Schaufelberger sees earlier that Lohenstein's pathos and the amoral proposition of greatness in and of itself have their own validity, p. 36: "Dennoch eignet ihnen [Lohenstein's political figures] eine Grösse, die uns für sie einnimmt und die nur in dem Pathos ihrer grossen Gebärde ruht. Vorurteilsfrei von moralischen Schätzungen, sucht Lohenstein den Wert des Menschen einzig in seiner übermenschlichen Heldenhaftigkeit zu gründen. Hier steht nicht der Beweggrund der Entscheidung zur Diskussion; einzig belangvoll ist, dass überhaupt eine Entscheidung aufgenommen und heroisch eingehalten wird."
I propose to show in the case of Agrippina how even her criminality enhances her heroic stature as a woman in desperate struggle.

62. See Schaufelberger, p. 84 ff, for an interesting interpretation of the tyrant, in contrast to the martyr, as a man threatened not from without but from within, by virtue of his political power which allows him to mistake his will for law and leads him into a danger of
self-alienation, a transfer of his self out upon the surrounding world.

63. Lunding sees the new features of "darkness" in the central figures of Agrippina and Ibrahim Sultan, both criminals yet both tragic characters in my view. I think, however, that he misses the point that they live for a role, an image of themselves as rulers. While Lunding looks in vain for an ethical justification for their actions, he misses the tragedy of their futile struggles to maintain a deteriorating position which is synonymous with personal survival. See Lunding, p. 127: "...das erstellte Bild der Lohensteinischen Dramatik durch 'Agrippina' und 'Ibrahim Sultan' um neue, dunklere Züge bereichert wird. In diesen beiden Dramen stehen die vorgeführten Intrigen nicht im Dienste der staatlichen Notwendigkeit oder auch nur eines überpersonlichen, politischen Gedankens, sondern sie gehen auf rein egoistische Macht- und Sinnengelüste zurück und lassen sich deshalb durch keine höhere Staatsmoral rechtfertigen. In 'Agrippina' ist die Machtgier vorherrschend, in 'Ibrahim Sultan' die tierische Sinnengier."

64. Once more I must take issue with the overwhelming body of opinion that Agrippina and Ibrahim Sultan are not heroic, and therefore not qualified even to pretend to tragic stature. Certainly Ibrahim may not be a hero, but Agrippina maintains her heroic struggle, and both figures demonstrate how little Lohenstein can be restricted by narrow categorization of heroic and unheroic. He supersedes these categories and makes even antiheroism into his central subject matter of tragedy. See, for example, Brede, p. 89: "In 'Agrippina' und 'Ibrahim Sultan' fehlt der heroische Typ begreiflicherweise ganz..." Such statements need amendment to indicate that there is a connection between the stature of the African queens and Agrippina, between Abraham and Anthony as "victims" of internal disorder.

65. We have pointed out in Epicharisis the stoic's curse upon the corrupt courtly world as uttered by Seneca. The politically involved figures, excepting the earliest idealists like Epicharisis or Ibrahim Bassa, cannot however dissociate themselves from the real nexus of their existence within the court. Lunding remarks, p. 128: "Er (L.) hat keine Sehnsucht nach dem Rousseauistisch-Primitiven und kann deshalb im Gegensatz zu Tacitus die
66. I wish to contradict explicitly the general opinion that Lohenstein, like other "Baroque" dramatists, saw in reason a guarantee for human existence. Schaufelberger formulates this notion thus, p. 87: "Bei dem vorwiegend rationalen Charakter des Ichbewusstseins kann es nicht weiter verwundern, wenn alles Irrationale, das sich dem Zugriff des Rationalen entzieht, nicht als zum Ich im engeren Sinne gehört empfunden wird und daher im letzten Sinn bedrohlich erscheinen muss. Letzlich vermag nur die Ratio die Existenz des Individuums zu garantieren, da nur in der bewussten und erkannten Sicherheit die letzte Gewissheit, nach der das das barocke Individuum strebt, zu verwirklichen ist." If Schaufelberger would forget about some ideal "Baroque" man, he might be able to see Agrippina, Cleopatra and Sophonisbe, who depart radically from the idealism of an Epicharis and employ their reason, unsuccessfully, in criminally tainted manoeuvring, to survive against crushing historical forces which threaten their extinction. Schaufelberger says elsewhere about irrational tendencies, p. 53: "Grundlegend für die neue Wertung der irrationalen Seelenkräfte ist die Auffassung vom Menschen, der wie eine Maschine, ein Automat gesehen wird." I find in such a view of man the basis already for fatalistic tragedy.

67. M.O. Katz, p. 27 f. indicates the importance of Lohenstein's autonomy from theology and of the existence of new natural explanations for man, especially the Cartesian duality of intellect and matter in place of good-evil or spirit-flesh. I go beyond Katz' notion that Lohenstein portrayed the foundering of reason versus direction by intellect of natural or "material" existence. Lohenstein's extenuation of historical circumstance into mythological origins and his focus upon a race which carries a curse make Agrippina into a play of nemesis. The agencies which bring about the final situation are not subordinate to any human intellectual control; no human planning or effort can avert disaster, since the human faculty of reason has here itself but a subordinate function in the total expression of a super-
individual process, Fate. Nevertheless, Katz is correct in general in espying a portrayal of the failure of reason; this is especially evident in the case of Ibra­him Sultan.

68. Lunding calls the final scene an effect number (p. 158), but then he finds almost everything of this sort to be an effect, without substance, as for example, the erup­tion of spirits in act three of Cleopatra (p. 156) or the entombment of Anthony (p. 158). Muris also thinks that the magician scene is operatic effect without any importance for the story (p. 33).

69. This fact is of extreme importance. As Lunding says, p. 171: "Die tragende Mitte des höfischen Dramas ist der absolutistische Fürst... Ändert sich sein Charakter, so ändert sich das ganze Wesen des Barockdramas." Thus I believe that, through the change by virtue of which the anti-hero becomes tragic, Lohenstein creates a drama which his critics ought to accept under their own terms as "not Baroque." Or, if it is fatuous to describe him as non-Baroque, one must accept him as a great Baroque tragedian.

70. Kerkhoffs, op. cit., p. 7.

71. Martin, op. cit., p. 25.

72. Muris, op. cit., p. 67, emphasizes the dramatic effective­ness of Lohenstein's opening scenes in general and how they lead directly to the core of the action.

73. Lunding, op. cit., p. 115.

This present essay hopes by now to have pointed toward the need for recognizing another legitimacy other than Gryphian.

75. Rütsch, p. 193.


77. Cf. Kerkhoffs, op. cit., p. 29: "Als man nun die Frage aufwirft, was wohl von Augustus Gnade zu erwarten sei, wird unser Interesse im höchsten Grade erweckt, indem uns die hinterlistige Politik des Mannes vor die Augen geführt wird, der, obschon er erst im IV Akte auf tritt, doch von Anfang an als eine der drei Hauptper sonen an der dramatischen Handlung theilnimmt." I believe that this notion fits my description of Anthony's sense of fate as the "invisible" but ever stalking beast of prey. The unseen third party or force takes material form as Augustus in the fourth act.

78. Just, *Afrikanische Trauerspiele*, p. xvii, emphasizes also that the Egyptian animal godheads are not merely details for color but possess deeper significance; namely because of their bestial aspect; "So wird der Bezirk der Götter und Götzen zu einem Bezirk des Todes."

79. Kerkhoffs, p. 27, also notes as an early proof of blindness in Anthony his defense of Cleopatra's dubious conduct at Actium.
While Cysarz, as already mentioned, flatly spurns Lohenstein's theatricality, Rütsch, p. 83 ff., finds that theatricality and the principle of the masked personality are universal in Baroque drama, with resultant problems of distinguishing truth and deception and of dangers in courtly life. He sees the mask, however, chiefly in terms of the inner self protecting its purity through willed control. But elsewhere, for example p. 98 ff., Rütsch shows a certain lack of understanding for the peculiar manifestation of the principle of the masked personality in Lohenstein's drama. He sees in Lohenstein's heroines an impossible duality of hard will and sensuality; he considers their voluptuousness a ridiculous "addition" to the chasteness of the defensive self, which is supposed to characterize the Baroque. Once again we encounter an unfortunate unwillingness by a very good critic to accept the isolated but integral view of the artist at the price of surrendering an inapplicable generality. If one insists on Lohenstein as an exception, it is appropriate first to attempt to define the validity of his exceptionality.

Kerkhoffs, one of the earliest admirers of Cleopatra, sensed also Anthony's particular stature, p. 40: "Dieser Opferwilligkeit des Antonius liegt eine wahre Seelengerund zu Grunde." This, I find, is especially emphasized in act two, scene two.

Muris sees the monolog here as the best of Lohenstein, p. 21 ff.: Wohl am besten, was die psychologische Wahrscheinlichkeit und die Charakteristik anbetrifft, ist der Monolog der Cleopatra (II, 247-80) angelegt. Es ist weniger ein Konfliktsmonolog wie die bisherigen, sondern weit mehr ein echter Offenbarungsmonolog.

Although he passes over Cleopatra, Rütsch mentions, p. 157, especially Agrippina as an example of the actor for whom the theatre itself is the great metaphor of existence ("Das ist das Trauerspiel, das schon mit mir beginnt."

Lunding, despite the excellence of his book, maintains, a shortsighted attitude toward everything weird or exotic in Lohenstein. Apparently he does not take Anthony's feeling seriously; at least he cannot understand these ghosts and the thereupon following pandemonium report. P. 156: "Eine ausgesprochene Effektnummer
ist die grosse Geisterversammlung im dritten Akt der Cleopatra, in der Anthony zum Tyrann und Bluthund gemacht wird, welches mit seinem wahren Wesen, wie es oben geschildert wurde, nicht in Übereinstimmung gebracht werden kann." But as Lunding depicts Anthony, he is not a man of problematic divided ancestry (Bacchus and Hercules) but a unilateral sentimental hero without his factual historical past. One must always remember that Lohenstein went to the trouble to annotate these "facts" about Anthony's career. Kerkhoffs, one of the first commentators who used comparisons with Shakespeare, approved the ghosts, p. 52: "Hier lässt sie der Dichter weder als ein Deus ex machina, noch in der blossen Absicht, ein Gespenst vorzuzeigen, erscheinen; sie gehören zur dramatischen Handlung und ihr Auftreten ist ebenso gerechtfertigt, wie das ihresgleichen in Macbeth oder in Richard III." Kerkhoffs sees even a Shakespearian type of curse, p. 53, "der Selbstmord als eine natürliche Folge der herbeigerufenen Umstände."

85. Just connects Bacchus, deserting Anthony, with the monstrosity of the bestial gods of Egypt but comments only that the desertion leaves Anthony to his fall (Afrikanische Trauerspiele, p. xvii). I see a more intimate connection between the pandemonium here and the berserk omens in the temple, act one, scene two.

86. I consider this love-death to represent a kind of withdrawal from the brutal historical world into the aesthetic realm, into a nihilistically attuned beauty. One notes the basis of religious fervor amalgamated metaphorically with erotic fervor. Muris, p. 30, regards Anthony's lament over Cleopatra, and similarly Masanissa's sorrow over Sophonisbe in the sister African play, as lyric pause in the drama. G. Müller explains that Lohenstein's figures all have their own individual right, which no longer depends on absolute or transcendent standards but comes from themselves. P. 241: "Der Glaube an absolute Werte zieht sich aufs Ästhetische zurück." I like to apply this notion in defining Anthony's stature, which depends on a "beautiful" action, a monumental, aesthetically expressed deed. His self-extinction impresses itself upon us ultimately as a statuesque epitome of sacrificial love.

87. Cf. Kerkhoffs, p. 61: "Die unheilvolle Liebe des Helden, welche sich anfangs als eine blinde Leidenschaft dargethan hat, wird in den letzten Augenblicken durch
ihre Grossmut und Uneigenmützigkeit wie gereinigt und verklärt; versöhnt mit uns und mit der göttlichen Gerechtigkeit scheidet der Unglückselige aus dem Leben." I emphasize not reconcilement with divine justice, but rather aesthetic proof of his valid role and fixation through poetic acknowledgment of his tragedy.

88. Kerkhoffs, p. 62 f., who was so receptive to Anthony's story and to the "Anthonian" phase of Cleopatra, sees the well drawn personalities of the Romans in Augustus' party. But he regards acts four and five as too broad a spread which the playwright tries to fill out with details. Thereby the unity of plot and dramatic interest suffer, so that the play weakens toward the climax. I think that Kerkhoffs was more attracted to a sentimental development and does not understand the larger objective of Lohenstein, to portray an historical development. Thus is act four, fate appears in historical costume, using the mask of Augustus, and in act five Cleopatra answers this direct confrontation. The emotional first climax, Anthony's death, lifts the audience to a high level of awareness; the first three acts serve as the foreplay or fable which give meaning to the single, climactic and operatic, grand gesture by Cleopatra, her suicide. But her struggle against historical fate is the core of the drama, and she cannot, like Anthony, rush so unpoltically to perdition.

89. Lunding gives the cunning figure of Augustus special status, p. 113: "Selbst die virtuose Schauspielerin Cleopatra findet trotz ihren höchst raffinierten, von grösster Lebensklugheit zeugenden, machiavellistischen Plänen, ihren Meister und Besieger. Kaiser Augustus ist die vollendeste Verkörperung des vornehmen, kühlern, lebensgewandten, berechnenden Machiavellisten im deutschen Drama."

90. The application of an overgeneralized "Baroque" psychological category, such as Schaufelberger defines reason, p. 87, is inadmissible in the case of Cleopatra: "Letztlich vermag nur die Ratio die Existenz des Individuums zu garantieren, da nur in der bewussten und erkannten Sicherheit die letzte Gewissheit, nach der das barocke Individuum strebt, zu verwirklichen ist." Cleopatra is an individual, Baroque or otherwise, who commits herself to reason and yet finds no other
security than Anthony, who commits himself to passion. She is undeceived totally.

91. Although in my opinion disenchanted of her rationally provoked "blindness," I agree with Schaufelberger that Cleopatra sees the handwriting on the wall and gathers her resources for a final self-assertion, which is at the same time an acceptance of fate. P. 101: "Agnse-sichts dieser Tatsache, der Unausweichlichkeit des Ver-hängnisses, raffen sich die Menschen wieder auf. Wie Cleopatra haben sie die Unabändlerlichkeit des Schicksals eingesehen: es hat sich ihnen selbst offenbart. Vor dieser Tatsache gewinnen sie ihre Haltung wieder; willig nehmen sie das Schicksal, gegen das sie sich so verzweifelt gewehrt haben, auf sich. Sie geben sich selbst den Tod und erfüllen so das Verhängnis, das ihnen bestimmt war."

92. After one witnesses the emergence of tragic potential in Anthony's character, an ironic progression to the truth now occurs and is well fitting for a clever dissimulating Cleopatra, who perceives herself intellectually and can taste bitterly the contradictions in her own position. Although Cleopatra is not primarily a reflective, introspective, passive heroine, she does possess a penetrating mind and this faculty, which has made her an observer and manipulator, turns upon herself in tragic discovery. Rütsch, p. 106, regards Lohenstein and Racine as belonging to the same generation; this is a thought in the right direction, even though, as has already been pointed out in this essay, Lohenstein makes little attempt to purify his heroic figures and prefers to portray greatness in its own right entirely.

93. C. Müller, p. 79 f., chides in sharpest terms Kerkhoffs' opinion that the choruses are not related to the dramatic action in Cleopatra. This ought to be reiterated emphatically, especially in view of a late negative opinion by Lunding, who does not understand Lohenstein's purpose in having choruses, while he accepts Gryphius' wholeheartedly. Lunding constantly depreciates Lohenstein's choral pieces as amusement without content, mere effect numbers, calling this fourth chorus, p. 134, "Genrebild egyptischer Gärtner und Gärtnerinnen." He is quick to assert it can have no validity: "Die von diesen vertretene antihöfische Lebensstellung ist aber kein Ausdruck Lohensteinis-cher Lebenshaltung; das ganze ist als wirksamer Kontrast gedacht."
94. Martin, p. 29, makes an interesting comment about this entr'acte: "Die Mischung schäfischer und stoischer Reflexion ist bezeichnend für den modisch-pessimistischen Lohenstein. Interessant ist der kleine Umstand, dass die Schäfer und Schäferinnen aus C 1 in C 2 Gärtner und Gärtnerinnen heissen. Das weist in die Weite und zeigt, wie der ernsthafte Lohenstein den Schäferbetrieb als zu spielerisch empfand." Martin is, I believe, correct in at least the sense that Lohenstein takes his chorus seriously, therefore strives to avoid any frivolous courtly association. In my view, the pastorale is divested of the fashionable and aristocratic element of escapism as shepherd(esse)s, whereas a direct connection to nature, to fertile nature, is emphasized distinctly through the changed occupation of the figures in the idyll.

95. Muris, p. 44, recognizes as an important trait Lohenstein's inclination to create pomp and pagentry: "Zu der schwungvoll pathetischen Sprache, die das Ohr des Zuhörers befriedigen soll, kommt auch noch eine Befriedigung des Auges hinzu, indem der Dichter pomphafte Ausstattungsszenen konstruiert." Muris' examples are well chosen, Sophonisbe's marriage, the sacrifice of the Roman prisoners, the conjuring of Dido, investiture of the new sultan, death-bed of Cleopatra, etc. I see in these ceremonial moments Lohenstein's fusion of the traditional costuming of "state actions" with operatic techniques.

96. Kerkhoffs, p. 70 f., arrives at a similar conclusion. He recognizes Cleopatra's release from politics through the realization of Augustus' bad intentions and her turning with affection to the memory of Anthony, "der sie so sehr, und leider einzig geliebt hat." Lunding, who is able to see Anthony's position, will not acknowledge any development or change in Cleopatra's final actions. Lunding misses the point because he thinks of subjectivity in terms of sentimentality, whereas in both African plays, the realm of the queens is ultimately earthly, irrational and cultish. Thus I object when he overlooks her rue and her wish to join Anthony in a love-death, and concludes too generally, p. 116 f.: "Die Helden der Lohensteinischen Staatsaktionen werden nicht in einem Meer von wilden Leidenschaften hin und her geworfen, im Gegenenteil, sie sind völlig vom Intellekt beherrscht." Lunding's definition fits only Augustus and Scipio, but they are hardly the focus of our attention in the African plays. In the stimulating introduction to the African
plays, Just, Afrikanische Trauerspiele, p. xiv, joins Kayser in recognizing Sophonisbe's urge to proclaim the legitimacy of both her marriages, and, p. xii, sees the return to an inner conviction, to a genuine passion, despite the cruel betrayal, on the part of Cleopatra: "Sehr wohl, aber gerade im Scheitern ihrer auf Octavius Augustus gerichteten Energien und Pläne wird Cleopatra wieder auf ihre wahre Substanz zurückgeworfen und erkennt, dass die--bereits zu Anfang der Tragödie in so leuchtenden Worten beschworene--erotische Gemeinschaft mit Antonius unzerstörbar ist."

97. Kerkhoffs does not like Lohenstein's rewriting of the death scene to include the burial rites of the Egyptian kings; he never refers to the possibility of an implication in the cult, which impresses him only as, p. 50, "dieser gelehrte Kram." Half a century later, Lunding still shares the superior attitude of older criticism to Lohenstein's enormous command of factual detail. It is remarkable how haughty the critic is toward signs of scholarship in the poet. If one, however, considers Lohenstein's ability to integrate historical facts into his plays in such a way that he creates the circumstantial aura of actuality, truly his achievement demonstrates an unusual will for historicity aptly suited to his artistic aims. In view of this striving, Lunding grossly underestimates his purposes as a playwright with the caustic remark, p. 158: "Auch Antonius in Cleopatra muss es sich gefallen lassen, zur 'Sache' degradiert zu werden, denn an ihm will Lohenstein den Prozess der Mumifizierung illustrieren."

98. Kerkhoffs sees a didactic tendency toward the end of the play. Cleopatra's desire to die rather than lose her freedom evinces the noble sentiments proper for a queen, p. 73: "Zudem ist Lohenstein auf das tragische Erforderniss bedacht gewesen, indem er die Heldin bekennen lässt, dass sie sich ihrer Schuld bewusst sei." Therefore he approves the effect of Antyllus' accusing appearance and, p. 76, the "versöhnende Strafe" which she takes upon herself.

99. Kerkhoffs, p. 67, is puzzled by the tender farewell to Caesarion, Lohenstein's rewriting has double dramatic intention; first, to emphasize strongly a "maternal" side in Cleopatra's character, attachment to her own sons, to Anthony's son Antyllus, as well as to her people and country, and second, to underscore drastically the eradication of the great Roman-Egyptian images.
100. I have already examined Rütsch's theory of the Baroque theatre in so far as he excludes Lohenstein's peculiarities from the "norms." Yet his exclusions often turn up excellent points for our consideration. For example, after defining very well the "Zweiheit Körper und Seele" in the seventeenth century literature, which certainly Lohenstein shares in general, Rütsch remarks, p. 46: "Befremdend stehen daneben im Werk Lohensteins Ausserungen, die eine innere Beziehung von Leib und Seele, ein Wirken des Einen auf die Form des Anderen andeuten." I believe that the factual beauty of the bodies of Agrippina, Cleopatra and Sophonisbe suggest still, even in death, some connection with the seductively attractive spirits which they housed. Apparently Lohenstein is incapable of pronouncing a rigid condemnation of bodily existence and must pay tribute to the reality of beauty.

101. Kerkhoffs, p. 16 f., advances the theory that Sophonisbe followed the first version of Cleopatra and preceded Epicharia. Hans von Müller is more cautious in setting a similar hypothetical time of composition, p. 197: "In diesem Jahre 1666 scheint die zweite Afrikanische Tragödie unseres Dichters, die Sophonisbe, die wohl schon vorher entstanden war, bei Gelegenheit der Verlobung Leopolds I. mit der Infantin Margarete von Spanien aufgeführt worden zu sein." Conrad Müller, investigator of the early productivity and studies by Lohenstein, does not mention any production of Sophonisbe, a play which he moreover totally ignores in his article. K.G. Just details these possibilities in his introduction; as does Nuglisch, he refers to the diary of Rector Major, an eye-witness who recorded a performance of Sophonisbe in May, 1669, at the gymnasium of St. Maria Magdalena, Breslau. Concerning this document, see Max Hippe, "Aus dem Tagebuche eines Breslauer Schulmannes im 17. Jahrhundert," Zeitschrift des Vereins für Geschichte und Altertum Schlesiens, XXXVI (1902).

102. For a description of this collection, in which the African plays form a separately paginated unit together, see Hans von Müller, pp. 229-234.

103. Before elaborating on my conception of the historical nemesis acted out by Sophonisbe, I must again call attention to the monograph by Wolfgang Kayser, "Lohensteins Sophonisbe als geschichtliche Tragödie," Germanisch-Romanische Monatsschrift, XXIX (1941), in which an
excellent definition is given, p. 27 f.: "Tatsächlich aber ist hinter dem 'realen Nexus', der zwischen den beiden Klugen gekämpft ist, ein idealer Nexus vorhanden. Er trägt und schafft im letzten Grunde die Handlung, und in ihm liegt der tiefste Gehalt des Dramas. Der eigentliche Gegenspieler der Sophonisbe ist nicht Scipio, sondern--das Verhängnis. Sophonisbe selber ist nicht nur ein mächtiger, listiger, kluger Mensch und sie ist nicht nur heroisch und von grossem Gemüt und ewigen Werten zugeordnet, das alles ist sie auch, und ohne das wäre sie für Lohenstein nicht als Heldin eines Dramas denkbar. Aber sie ist darüber hinaus die grosse Herrscherin des Mohrenlandes, dem nun der Untergang bestimmt ist. Dieses Verhängnis ist nicht ein Fatum und nicht die blinde Fortuna, sondern ist die in der Geschichte waltende Vorsehung. Die Stunde des Römerreiches ist in der Weltgeschichte gekommen." Kayser's establishment of historical fate in this drama as something parallel to the Christian theory of providence or a world plan is much more accurate than Schaufelberger's oversimplified view that Lohensteinian fate is some kind of crude, mechanistic predestination in the historical process. Schaufelberger, p. 112: "Das Verhängnis hat in Lohensteins Trauerspielen nichts mit einer jenseitigen, göttlichen Macht gemein. Vielmehr erscheint es stets als geschichtliche Kausalität." He is nevertheless on a path of approach to Kayser's reasoning. It is surprising that Nuglisch, whose analysis of Lohenstein is so clear and convincing in almost all its details, wants to see only the appealing figures of Lohenstein's dramatic creation but not the basis of their tragedy, to see the tragic hero but not his world, p. 64: "Aber Sophonisbe und Cleopatra als den 'Kampf der persönlichen Tat gegen das Schicksal' [P. Hankamer] aufzufassen, geht entschieden zu weit. Darin liegt ihre Aufgabe gewiss nicht, nirgends tritt dieser Gedanke im Drama auf. Sie führen den Kampf immer nur gegen Menschen, niemals gegen ein über ihnen waltendes Schicksal. Die Gestalten Lohensteins sind erdhaft gesehen, daher ihre Farbe, ihr körperliches Dasein gegenüber den Personen vom Gryphius." I hope to prove, in accordance with my previous arguments for Cleopatra, that both Schaufelberger and Nuglisch have mistaken the historicity or historical "realism" of Lohenstein in this regard, whereas Kayser correctly senses an inscrutable ideal level in the drama behind its factuality. I call the operation of this ideal in Sophonisbe historical nemesis, because Lohenstein's chief concern is with the mystery of time, with the unexplainable rise and fall
of nations, with fatal grandeur. Paul Hankamer, *Deutsche Gegenreformation und deutsches Barock* (Stuttgart 1935), p. 108, defines Lohenstein's drama of fate in the following terms: "Die Tragödie Lohensteins gipfelt sakularisierter in dem Erscheinen der historischen Kräfte und Tatsachen als Mittel eines vorgesehenen Verhängnisses, vor dem auch die tapfere Tat des Menschen zur Narretei wird, wie alle Tüchtigkeit aus Selbstliebe und zur Selbsterfüllung vor Gott Frevel und tödliche Sünde ist." Certainly Hankamer goes too far, to the extreme opposite of Schaufelberger, in asserting that "God" enters powerfully into the question. Hankamer regards Gryphius' as an exception to the triumph of a Calvinistically tainted pessimism in the Baroque drama, because of Gryphius' faith in the redeemptive power of religious striving, while Lohenstein tacitly must stand in the ranks of the general attitude! Hankamer shows elsewhere signs of self-contradiction, as when he defines Lohenstein's aim of dramatization as, p. 310, "Wille zu einer rein menschlichen Grossartigkeit." The critic's formulation on p. 311 is superior, brilliant: "Das Trauerspiel des menschlichen Daseins ereignet sich, indem eine rein humane, jenseits von Gut und Böse sich auslebende menschliche Grösse entlarvt wird als zerbrochen unter dem Tritt des unaufhaltsam seinen ewigen Weg schreitenden Weltverhängnisses."

104. See Flemming, Reihe Barockdrama, I, p. 46 f. Kayser rejects this opinion, p. 22.

105. Schaufelberger calls Sophonisbe's death ecstatic and therefore concludes, I believe wrongly, that the fate he himself defines as historical causality has no force for a tragic encounter, p. 111: "Die eigentliche Auseinandersetzung mit dem Verhängnis wird also abgebogen." In other words, because the queen keeps or renews her greatness in death, death cannot be tragic, nor either the historical necessity which drives her toward extinction. Such a conclusion may derive from over-emphasis of the strain of the older martyr tradition in Lohenstein, but if Schaufelberger argues for historical causality, his argument is inconsistent. For, without a Christian redemption, it is exactly greatness in the moment of inevitable doom which characterizes the tragic hero, and it is history accordingly which emerges in place of the ancient Fatum.

106. Muris has pointed out the pagentry and ceremonies in Lohenstein's drama and what he calls, p. 34: "das
beschreibende Element." The ceremonial moments in the plays indicate, I believe, how close the author drew to the play as the performance of a cult act, not in the ancient Greek sense, to be sure, yet also not merely operatically. Details which critics have for long generally scorned as pedantic, polyhistorical ornamentation often reveal surprisingly precise function or meaning. Of course, Lohenstein's historical bent causes him to lay emphasis on the facts which characterize the real and tragic circumstances of the heroes, who are, it is to be remembered, also actors in a role, and conscious of the needed realia, of costing. Lohenstein's queens have intimate connection with the very objects and usages of their countries. In addition, what could be more prefigurative than their obligations, because of sacerdotal as well as regal primacy, to perform sacrifices on behalf of their lands? When it becomes clear that their lands are doomed, they must in keeping with their role perform supreme sacrifice. Thus I must again object to Lunding's opinion that these ceremonies are mere effect numbers, these facts mere curiosities. Lunding remarks, p. 92: "Die Tat­sache allein, dass das Göttliche bei Lohenstein zum Kuriosum entwertet wird, zeigt die tiefe Kluft zwischen ihm und Gryphius." But Lunding, accepting Gryphius as the standard, does not try to explain what he terms a "devaluation."

107. Lunding, p. 103, and Kayser, p. 22, agree that Sophonis­be is primarily motivated as queen by the obsession to save her people or realm. I go further and see her at this moment in the role of a queen-priestess, who must eventually die, the high victim of a people.

108. In his unbalanced and often misleading criticism of Lohenstein's drama, Cysarz, Deutsche Barock-Dichtung, p. 186, does draw together Kleist and Lohenstein but without having much positive to say: "Wer gedenkt hier nicht der sprachlichen Barbarei des stammverwandten Dichters des Kätchen und der Penthesiles? Auch Lohen­stein ist Dialektiker der Leidenschaft--wenn auch einer illusionistischen--, nicht Impressario ihrer Gebärde. Er gehört jedem Schlag von Dramatikern an, die alles andere sind als Schauspieler-Ingenien. Er hat das Wildeste erschaut, und dieses schildert er dann wie nur der härteste der barocken Spanier." The last clause is, indeed, complimentary if one admires the Spaniards. The important fact is that, without spending as much effort
in introspection and psychologizing as Racine does, Lohenstein taps the irrational forces which shape tragedy.

109. See Muris, for a treatment of Lohenstein's language in monologues.

110. Martin, *op. cit.*, p. 26 puts the case about as succinctly as possible for the negative school: "Sophonisbe ist erst ganz Heldin, dann ganz Dirne."

111. Brede, p. 90, finds the ideal Scipio cold next to Masanissa, and thus less human and appealing. Schaufelberger, p. 50, thinks that the figure of Sophonisbe already in itself puts Scipio in the shadows as a dramatic personality. Nuglisch, p. 57, considers Masanissa not only as the greatest masculine figure achieved by Lohenstein but also as the supreme male character of Baroque drama. Nuglisch's claim thus stands counter to Flemming's already cited opinion in favor of Papinianius of Gryphius.

112. For studies of the "Baroque soul" see Flemming, "Die Auffassung des Menschen im 17. Jahrhundert," *Deutsche Vierteljahrschrift VI* (1928), and Julius Rütsch, *Das dramatische Ich im deutschen Barocktheater*, Wege zur Dichtung XII (1932).

113. Concerning Sophonisbe's vision, Schaufelberger, p. 44, recognizes that some sort of penetration of the drama by an embracing system has occurred: "In anderen Werken bleibt sie (d.h.: die geschichtliche Vorschau) auf die Reyen beschränkt, die das ganze Werk wie mit weiterem zeitlichen Rahmen umgeben, es in eine zweite Welt, die der eigentlichen dramatischen übergereignet ist, einfügen....Es scheint sich also nicht um eine einmalige und zufällige Huldigung an das österreichische Haus zu handeln." Brede, p. 95, views the funeral dream of Sophonisbe as an "apotheosis," a very clever idea, for Brede seems conscious that Lohenstein has shifted his grounds for a concept of a higher governing power from a God to fate. Muris, p. 36, gives the following definition, without reaching any further conclusion: "Der Geist der Dido endlich hat nichts mit dem eigentlichen Drama gemein als die historische Vorgeschichte des Schauspielztes."

114. In his introduction to the African plays, Just, p. xviii, emphasizes also that the sacred sphere and
cult are peculiar to the queens: "Wie Cleopatra im Isistempel, so stirbt Sophonisbe im Tempel der Sonne und des Mondes; der heidnisch-heilige Bezirk erscheint als das ureigenste Klima dieser beiden überdimensionalen Frauengestalten, als ihr adäquater Lebens- und Leidensraum. Angesichts grauenerregender Götterbilder magisch-barbarischer Prägung versuchen sie Kraft zu schöpfen, aber schließlich werden sie gerade vor ihnen (und von ihnen) der Vernichtung zugeführt."

115. The essay stands in agreement with Kayser, p. 25, that one must simply accept as fact that Sophonisbe loves two men and that there is no discrepancy thereby in her character: "Nicht das psychologische Problem, wie eine Frau zu zwei Männern gezogen wird, beschäftigt Lohenstein, sondern die beglaubigte Tatsache, dass eine Frau zwei hat. Und darauf gibt er die Antwort klar genug: weil die Frau mit Hilfe des zweiten Mannes ihr Reich retten will. In Sophonisbe selber gibt es keinen Konflikt." Lunding, p. 104, makes the mistake of seeing Sophonisbe too much or too exclusively as a superb actress on the world-stage, an actress who seduces Masanissa in order to save her people, but who does not love him, although she deceives her own husband to win him over: "So hervorragend ist dieses Verführungsspiel eingefädelt, dass sie ihren Gatten, Syphax, von ihrer übermässigen Treue überzeugt gerade in dem Augenblick, wo sie ihn betrügt." Schaufelberger, p. 96, falls into the error of believing that Sophonisbe, being a woman like Cleopatra, overcomes her true love for the sake of personal survival. This opinion may be an unhappy consequence of his general line of thought, as on p. 95, that Lohenstein's characters do not unconditionally identify themselves with a single form of being and ultimately their own form of being; accordingly existence sinks to be a mere role. Against Schaufelberger one can point out the exact opposite; in fact, Sophonisbe accepts even the moral contradictions in her behavior, and Lohenstein does not make her conform to the confessional model, to a "paper" existence, but rather creates her as a provocative flesh-and-blood person. Sophonisbe cannot give up her "contradictions," because she cannot stop being herself! Against Lunding one can point out that Sophonisbe never denies Syphax, when she can derive advantage from treachery, nor Masanissa, even when he sends her the poison. In addition, she
confesses double affection at her wedding to Masanissa, surely the wrong time for such a declaration by a deceiver, and also at the time of her death, when she no longer needs to deceive anyone. It is of interest to jump several centuries to the great ancestor of most negative interpretations of Sophonisbe's character, Bodmer. In his *Kritische Betrachtungen über die poetischen Gemälde der Dichter*, he devotes p. 425 ff to a critical analysis of the play and of the queen "ohne Sitten und Charakter" (p. 425). Bodmer is too perceptive to overlook the fact that Sophonisbe continues to love illicitly, while rueing her misdeeds, or fearing for her personal freedom, while acting as devoted mother of her country and family, etc.; but he is incensed over her persistent unheroic heroics, that is, over her resolute assertion of "contradictions." P. 428: "Sie führt stets fort Masinissen zu lieben, und hält doch ihren Tod für eine Strafe des Meineides, den sie an Syphax begangen. Aus eitler Furcht, dass ihre Kinder durch der Römer Grimm erbleichen müssten, und es mit ihren Leichen sein Kurtzweil-Spiel treiben würde, trinckt sie das Gift-Glas derselben zu. Also treibt sie Entzündung gegen Masinissen, Gewissens-Scrupel darüber, eitle Furcht vor einem schmerzlichen Tode, und eine Übel verstandene grausame Sorge für die Wohlfahrt Numidiens und für ihre Kinder zu unbedachten Entschlüsse, die uns statt einer Heldin einen geflickten und unverknoteten Charakter vorlegen." Thus, while perceiving what Sophonisbe does in fact do, Bodmer disallows it as "deviationism" from his ideal of so-called unified character, i.e., moral harmony. Later critics sometimes unfortunately forget even what Sophonisbe factually maintains to her end.

117. Cf. Brede, p. 90. Nuglisch, p. 31 ff, chooses Sophonisbe as Lohenstein's best play and finds it dramatically tense. Nonetheless he sees the finale in terms of a glorification of the dying queen, p. 35: "Der fünte Akt hebt sich als ein gesondertes Schauspiel heraus; er ist fast ausschliesslich dem Sterben der Sophonisbe gewidmet und bringt in seiner eigentlichen Handlung kaum einen Vorschritt." One need only think of the close of Gryphius' Papinian, and it is clear that Nuglisch's view is justified. He believes that the changes between C 1 and C 2 in the fifth act prove that Lohenstein's intention is to focus upon the feminine protagonist and that he constructs acts one to four largely as a prelude to the final act. P. 37: "Auch der unvoreingenommene Beurteiler wird zugeben müssen: wenn irgendwo, dann lässt sich gerade in der Vergleichung der beiden Cleopatra-Fassungen nachweisen, dass Lohenstein und mit ihm der barocke Tragiker überhaupt den fünften Akt zu einem Schauspiel in sich erhebt und erweitert.

118. For discussions comparing Cleopatra of 1661 (C 1) and Cleopatra of 1680 (C 2) see C. Müller, p. 79 ff, and Martin, p. 26 ff.
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