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EXAMINATION OF THE JOSEPH TETRALOGY.

City University of New York, Ph.D., 1976
Literature, comparative

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1976

THOMAS MANN'S SENSE OF PLACE:
AN EXAMINATION OF THE JOSEPH TETRALOGY

by

SIDDI SCHENKEL

A dissertation submitted to the Graduate
Faculty in Comparative Literature in
partial fulfillment of the requirements
for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy,
The City University of New York.

1976

This manuscript has been read and accepted for the Graduate Faculty in Comparative Literature in satisfaction of the dissertation requirement for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy.

14/5/76
date

E. Allen T. Garrison
Chairman of Examining Committee

5/14/76
date

Helaine Newstead
Executive Officer

Gyette Louria
P. Mein
E. Allen T. Garrison
Supervisory Committee

The City University of New York

Abstract

THOMAS MANN'S SENSE OF PLACE:
An Examination of the Joseph Tetralogy

by
Siddi Schenkel

Adviser: Professor E. Allen McCormick

My dissertation represents an investigation of Thomas Mann's sense of place in its symbolic and fictional context on the one hand and its biographic-psychological on the other. This subject is treated broadly and theoretically in a lengthy opening section; its specific application, however, - which represents the central task and the major part of the thesis -, is restricted primarily to the four novels comprising Joseph and his Brothers. The tetralogy, as it is called, was composed in the years from 1926 to 1942; but at the same time the work reveals itself as highly representative of Thomas Mann's entire oeuvre in several essential ways, the foremost of which is its mirroring in a structural sense of precisely the duality mentioned above.

However, rather than approach the work from this problem of duality (or polarity: Kunst versus Leben), the dissertation uncovers an unusual triangular structure - representing a "first" in Thomas Mann scholarship and suggesting at the same time a possible resolution or synthesis of Thomas Mann's ubiquitous polarity, - and explores it in detail.

The results achieved may be summarized briefly by asserting that the unity of vision in Thomas Mann is a

continuity, i.e. detectable even in his earliest literary attempts. The unity is based on the paradoxical recognition of the necessity of culture and humanism and the equally necessary knowledge of their illusion; this is the essence of Thomas Mann's art.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I am gratefully indebted to the Adult Collegiate Education program at Queens College which made this study possible, and to its director -my first teacher-, Dean Ernest Schwarcz, for his interest and personal guidance through many years.

I am extremely obliged to Professor E. Allen McCormick for his inspiration and generous encouragement during the supervision of this study, and his editorial help which has gone far beyond his professional duty.

My thanks go to Professors Ivette Louria and Rolf Kieser for their valuable suggestions and to all others, too numerous to name, in libraries and offices, for their assistance and guidance in a variety of ways.

I dedicate this study to my husband whose patience, understanding and cooperation were my most valuable assets during this undertaking.

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I.

THOMAS MANN'S SENSE OF PLACE

Thomas Mann's "Sense of Place" results from a fusion of objective reality and his own illusionary perception. In his artistic projections the world is a stage where the same actors perform the same plays in different costumes and masks, using different backdrops according to the demands of the day.

The theatrical perception of the world is mirrored not only in the settings of Mann's work but also in his political position, which changes according to the demands of the day, even while his essential ethical and artistic attitudes always remain the same. Mann definitely believes in the possibility of a new humanism without tragedy.¹ This very modern belief seems to attach no moral value judgment to the future, but simply recognizes the inevitability of change.

Contemporary criticism recognizes the ultimate unity underlying the countless antitheses and contradictions in Thomas Mann's work.² The paradigm of the work is no longer a line that ends in two opposing points but rather a triangle which connects these points with a third one. The triangle is also the basic shape of a man on a see-saw, a figure that essentially expresses Mann's sense of place.

Trying to achieve balance, the legs of the figure are in constant motion while its head is not moving. The quality of the performance depends on the man's ability to maintain balance, and his ultimate achievement gives the illusion of someone moving and standing still at the same time. The plank of the

see-saw is connected to, and elevated from, the ground, so that the man in its center simultaneously depends on, and is distanced from, its concrete reality.

In Thomas Mann's sense of place elements of dependence, distance, and balance fuse into a far-reaching perspective, which enables him to see the immediate importance of parts and at the same time their relation to a more distant whole.³ From this perspective Mann senses the growing danger of a quantitative culture and the future problems democracy will have to face. So out of place in the artistic and intellectual climate of his own time, Mann seems to stand in the forefront of some of today's thinkers.⁴

From this distanced perspective Mann senses the symbolic nature of human existence, the ultimate sameness of things, and the theatric and ironic potential of both. Dependence, distance and balance are the building stones of Mann's world. Artist as well as man depends on the experience of the anti-thetical concrete world, and, distancing himself from it, perceives there the inherent sameness of opposites and the necessity of balance.

"Sense of place" is closely related to, and is determined by, sense of perspective. Perspective operates in the personal and fictional reality of the artist, and, in the case of Mann, also in the political reality, for Thomas Mann the moralist is, in a "supra-personal" sense, always a political man.⁵

For Kahler, Mann is the proto-type of the "man of mind" who feels a personal sense of responsibility towards others. Generally Thomas Mann is referred to as the "diagnostician" of contemporary Europe, who objectively analyzes the concrete reality of his time. However, he is also frequently called

the "Zauberer," the sorcerer, who recreates this reality in his own image.⁶ Mann's sense of place may therefore best be traced in the triangular space of the "diagnostician," the "man of mind," and the sorcerer.

Mann's roots are in the realm of Schopenhauer, Nietzsche and Wagner. Schopenhauer's negation of life and Nietzsche's passionate rejection of the intellect (Geist) in favor of life, becomes in Mann the ironical affection of the intellect for life.⁷ The experience of the philosophy and aesthetic of these three generates in the young Thomas Mann the perception of the world as a "bunte Phantasmagorie von Bildern" (114; 255). The world is a stage from which the actor confronts his public, which is of course composed of other actors. The instinctive tendency toward the world of illusion goes back to the beloved puppet theatre where the child Thomas is ". . . Direktor, S nger, Regisseur, Kapellmeister und Vorhangzieher," (113; 389-90) and even his own enthusiastic public. The feeling of omnipotence and self-importance is essential to the mature artist, who writes that ". . . das Wissen, alles was mir gut und edel scheint, Geist, Kunst, Moral - entstammt menschlichem 'Sichwichtignehmen'" (116; 12). However, this feeling of self-importance is balanced by the simultaneous feeling of being an outsider. The sixteen-year-old leaves home ". . . weil zu Hause kein Platz f r mich war" (119; 224).

Mann's simultaneous feeling of opposing emotions is expressed in his sense of place. Even the simple term "Zuhause" is for him equivocal. His home is L beck on the Baltic Sea. In the essay "L beck als geistige Lebensform" Mann transforms the reality of the city into an attitude of mind that refers to the "Lebensform und Lebensauswirkung eines L beckers, der

. . . als Künstler ein Lübecker geblieben ist" (119; 178). However, his personal relation to the city of Lübeck vacillates throughout his life between disgust for the philistine materialism of most of the natives and a secret love for the womb-like security of the old city.⁸

Lübeck represents for Mann the medieval atmosphere of "Kreuz, Tod und Gruft" (116; 58) and the modern "Patrizisch - Städtische," a place landscaped by its own culture and expressed in its own language: "Die Landschaft einer Stadt ist ihre Architektur," and its dialect is the "Musik der Heimat" (119; 187). In this way Lübeck fuses the gloomy atmosphere of gothic architecture, protestant work-ethic and humorous "Platt" into the spiritual habitat of Thomas Mann. It is indeed his ambition to show that "Lübeck von Anfang bis zu Ende in meiner ganzen Schriftstellerei zu finden ist, sie entscheidend bestimmt und beherrscht" (119; 186).

Mann's definition of "Zuhause" expresses his sense of balance. Living in Munich, he decides to build a vacation home in the northernmost part of Germany as "Gegengewicht zu unserer süddeutschen Ansässigkeit" (119; 252).⁹ But the Italian city of Venice is home for Thomas Mann as is Lübeck. In the essay "Unterwegs" he exclaims:

Venedig . . . mein Gott, mit welcher Bewegung sah ich die geliebte Stadt wieder . . . ich war zu Hause . . . Venedig und Lübeck . . . und ich gebrauche das Wort 'zu Hause' in seinem ganzen vollen eigentlichen Sinn . . . wie die Vaterstadt mir zwiefach stehe: einmal im Ostsee-Hafen, gotisch und grau, doch als Wunder des Anfangs noch einmal, entrückt, die Spitzbogen maurisch verzaubert, in der Lagune (119; 91, 189).

Philistine Lübeck and Venice, the "magical city of ruthless passions"¹⁰ are both "Zuhause" for Thomas Mann in the

sense that the term refers essentially to a cultural sense of belonging rather than to a geographical place.

However, the word has different connotations for the celebrated writer in his native country and for the man who rejects, and is rejected by, Hitler's Germany. Crossing the Atlantic for the first time in 1934, Thomas Mann ponders the meaning of "Zuhause" from a different perspective. A steward's promise to bring the passengers safely home makes Mann question where his home is in terms of concrete reality.

"Zuhause" could refer to the United States, where a passport official once exclaimed: "Are you the Thomas Mann? Welcome home." Mann relates this incident in a letter to Hermann Hesse and continues: "Nun ja home . . . was eigentlich 'home' ist weiss ich längst nicht mehr, habe es im Grunde nie gewusst." ¹¹

The personal thought becomes an existential statement: "Des Menschen Zuhause ist unbestimmt. Es ist ein seltsames, fragwürdig - weitläufiges Ding um des Menschen 'Zuhause'" (119; 287-286). Mann expands its meaning far beyond the city walls of Lübeck to the whole Western hemisphere, and he contracts it into a single writing desk surrounded by books. This desk he calls his real home. ¹²

Mann sees no necessary relation between a working place and the setting of the work. He could work anywhere, except out-of-doors. Under the free sky one can dream about and outline a work; however ". . . die genaue Arbeit verlangt den Schutz einer Zimmerdecke" (120; 152, 86). He feels that a cultured, comfortable, even luxurious atmosphere is conducive to creativity, since the writer, ". . . der es innerlich schwerer habe als andere Leute mit Recht den Anspruch auf

ein wenig Hüsseres Behagen erhebe" (120; 166).

Taste for cultivation is as evident in Mann's preference for Aldous Huxley's intellectualism over D. H. Lawrence's "hektische Sinnlichkeit" (119; 328) as it is in relation to external nature. This relation is not entirely favorable. In a letter to Karl Kerényi Mann expresses ". . . weitgehende Übereinstimmung mit Blake, der meinte: 'Wer an die Natur glaubt, kann nicht an Gott glauben, denn die Natur ist des Teufels.' Recht wahr!"¹³ Mann prefers cultivated out-of-doors to nature in the raw. Nature generally means man in nature rather than nature by and for itself. He enjoys the ocean yet prefers the cultured comfort of a seabath to the immediacy of a crossing of the ocean's "Grossartigkeit" (114; 170). The impact of the ocean is relative to the place from which it is contemplated: ". . . das Meer, vom Schiffe aus erlebt, [macht] bei weitem nicht den Eindruck wie vom Strand. Die Begeisterung, die sein heiliger Anprall an die Feste mir erregt, auf der ich stehe, bleibt aus" (114; 173).

Conscious of its indifference to men, Mann approaches external nature with "Ehrfurcht und ironischer Ablehnung" (114; 170). Characteristically he refers to a man-made semblance of its beauty and not to nature itself when he proclaims ". . . die Welt ist schön . . . es sind Photographien, die zu diesem freudigen Geständnis auffordern" (120; 150).

Most of Mann's essays on travel mirror this attitude: "Der Mensch hat von jeher mein ganzes Interesse in Anspruch genommen, aber nicht etwa . . . die Landschaft, - zum Beispiel auf Reisen" (116; 334). He reacts to the intellectual and artistic climate of a place before he notices its physical attributes or its social order. He admires, for example,

beautiful Switzerland primarily for the achievement of its great poets, and he praises charming Vienna for its intelligence, which produces the best readers of his works.¹⁴ Mann does not share the traditional German love for Italy. He regards Rome, where he lived with his brother Heinrich " . . . als Berge unserer Unregelmässigkeit, und wenigstens ich lebte dort nicht um des Südens willen, den ich im Grunde nicht liebte, sondern einfach weil zu Hause kein Platz für mich war" (119; 224). The exotic beauty of Egypt oppressed him; he had to force himself to observe its scenery (119; 92-4). In Athens Thomas Mann felt at home.

Es ist unbeschreiblich, wie verwandt, wie geistig-elegant, wie jugendlich-europäisch auf einmal, nach den Formen der Nilkultur, diese göttlichen Reste auf uns wirken . . .

--- Wir taten den schwülen Orient ab, unsere Seele ward licht und heiter (119; 96).

Mann's "geistiger Lebensraum" at home and abroad is the culture of Europe. Exile imitates this sense of place. He felt deep sympathy for the United States of America, for its stand against Hitler, for its generosity, for its admiration of his work and his person.¹⁵ Mann writes in 1945 an Walter von Molo that ". . . in dem riesigen freien Land, [America] . . . gab [es] nichts als offene, unverschämterte, deklarierte Freundwilligkeit, freudig, rückhaltlos, unter dem stehenden Motto: 'Thank you, Mr. Hitler!'"¹⁶ However much at home, Mann also felt out of place in America; his place is in Germany, in the center of Europe, in the middle of East and West. It is, as we indicated, in the triangular realm of Schopenhauer, Nietzsche and Wagner, whose music is also "Zuhause" for Thomas Mann (119; 36). Since he considers these three men ". . . nicht intim Deutsche, sondern europäische Ereignisse" (116; 53),

Germany and Europe are his home.

Exile is, like "Zuhause," an attitude of mind rather than a geographical designation; this offers the paradoxical conclusion that the writer who said "Wo ich bin ist Deutschland"¹⁷ regards Hitler-Germany as the most foreign of places and exile as his home. Return to the third Reich was unthinkable.¹⁸ In a certain sense Mann never returned, for the Germany he left no longer existed; it was now divided and changed. But he rejects the recognition of a fractured Germany. For the writer whose home is the German language different zones do not exist.

Aspects of Mann's personal reality are reflected in his work and in his political positions. His symbolical perception of the world is balanced by an acute sense of the reality of his life and time. If his subjective perception of the world and its sociopolitical reality conflict, they are also part of each other, for the world consists of individuals and the individual is to a lesser or greater degree formed by the world. The events of the Russian revolution, as well as the political and social changes in Germany and the Western world after the war of 1918, impinged on Mann's intellectual habitation, so that the "man of mind" who felt a responsibility to mankind was eventually forced to change his position according to the demands of the day. In the essay "Lebensabriss" he describes the violent transition from individual to social consciousness. An examination of Mann's political sense of place must take this struggle into account and probe within the triangle of its contradictions. For the conflict between the artist's illusionary perception of, the "diagnostician's" evaluation of, and the "man of mind's" responsibility to, concrete reality, generate Mann's political sense of place.

Thomas Mann stands rightly accused for the chauvinism of the Betrachtungen. Paradoxically, the Western intellectuals whom he attacks were at the time, at least in France, as chauvinistic as Mann himself. Simone de Beauvoir speaks about their attitude at that time: "En 1914, intellectuels, socialistes, toute l'élite pensante . . . avait donné dans les panneaux du chauvinisme." She further describes the utter lack of political commitment of French intellectuals, including herself and Sartre, in 1932: "Cette année encore nous nous souciâmes peu de ce qui se passait dans la monde . . . rien ne pouvait pas nous écarter de notre apolitisme . . . L'avenir demeurait serein."¹⁹

The political obtuseness of French left-wing intellectuals was matched by that of their colleagues in Germany, where their famous representative Kurt Tucholski writes in 1932: "Hitler's Ton . . . hat etwas Gespenstisches . . . den Mann gibt es garnicht; er ist nur der Lärm, den er macht."²⁰

Thomas Mann, however, understood the inherent danger of Hitler much earlier than that.²¹ From his far-reaching perspective he foresaw many aspects of the future development of our time. He understood that the principles of democracy would not work for the Germany of 1918; while admitting that there was no better form of government (118; 357), he anticipated in 1950 the problems of the "gefährdete Demokratie" (118; 351) whose effects we are experiencing now.²²

Nietzsche, referring to Schopenhauer, remarks that ". . . the errors of great men are venerable because they are more fruitful than the truths of little men."²³ Perhaps this remark may be applied to Mann also. He sees more and further than many of his contemporaries, even in the Betrachtungen

eines Unpolitischen. A renewed reading of this troublesome work illuminates just how much further he sees. In spite of its outrageous passages, which seem even more outrageous in retrospect, the work also contains passages of far-reaching sight. Mann exposes " . . . generöse Zauber- und Schwindelworte, Menschheit, Freiheit, Gleichheit, Revolution . . ." (116; 208) before Russia became a totalitarian State in their name. He foresees with indisputable logic the dilemma of today's intellectual-turned-activist (116; 432) and the problems of the democratic system expressed in today's newspaper.²⁴ The intellectual-turned-activist, if he is to be true to himself, must become a political assassin, and democracy must turn into political tyranny.

For example:

From the Betrachtungen

Die Kunst politisiert,
der Geist politisiert,
die Moral politisiert, -
wer möchte leben in einer
solchen Welt wo Freiheit -
das allgemeine und gleiche
Wahlrecht bedeute und da-
mit Punktum?
(116; 293).

From the N.Y. Times, Editorial
Nov. 23, 1974

P.L.O. vs. UNESCO
In the name of "culture," the
Arab bloc and its obedient
Communist and African allies
have succeeded in politicizing
the heretofore nonpolitical
United Nations Educational,
Scientific and Cultural
Organization.

Thomas Mann realizes that it is " . . . ein undankbares Geschäft den fluchenden Propheten zu machen." (116; 45) He foresaw, however, the tyranny of the majority vote and predicted that the " . . . radikale Revolutionarismus gute Tage sehen wird . . . Brüder werden den herrschenden Brüdern die Köpfe einschlagen . . . Hohn, Bitterkeit und Verzweiflung werden Stimmungen auf Erden sein" (116; 396-97).

More important are the positive aspects of Mann's fore-

sight because they seem to coincide with some of the newest intellectual trends of today. Mann opposes strongly the contemporary "politisch anti-individualistische Tendenz" (116; 73). He insists on the importance of the individual and his right to intellectual freedom, unencumbered by political dogma. The new image of man involves a ". . . self-realisation ethic, placing highest value on the individual" and it stresses ". . . open-endedness rather than ideological dogma."²⁵

For the "man of mind" the humane quality of any action is always the essential question.²⁶ In the Betrachtungen the "man of mind" and the artist were at odds, but, as Kahler says ". . . it was in vain; the artist was irrevocably drawn into the political sphere. . . . The contact with the political arena must have revealed to him where his place was, where he had to look for the concern for humanity, the defense of the mind and the 'future'."²⁷ But the concern for humanity is as complicated in 1954 as is the concern for Germany in 1918. While Mann agrees with Chekhov that the main issue is to change the terms of man's existence, he realizes at the same time the impossibility of drastic change, for everything has its "unheilbare Notwendigkeit" (115; 292). Incurable necessity determined Mann's politics from the time of the Betrachtungen for, as Kahler writes ". . . there is no escape for the man of mind who wants to remain true to himself. He is of necessity a revolutionary. He must aim at the new and espouse its cause . . . because it is the future - that which is to come and which he has to perceive earlier than others."²⁸

Mann foresaw the future, and he certainly did not admire what he saw. This he expresses unequivocally in the Betrachtungen:

Man kann einen Fortschritt sehr wohl als unvermeidlich und schicksalsgegeben betrachten, ohne im mindesten gestimmt zu sein, mit Hurra und Hussa hinterdrein zu hetzen (116; 50).

However, he also realizes that each truth has its own hour and that " . . . jeder, der hiernach fortfahren wollte, wie er bisher gelebt, würde sich selber überleben" (116; 161).

In 1920 he wrote to Count Keyserling:

Die Angelegenheit der Stunde . . . ist - ich beuge mich - nicht, Antithesen zu pflegen, sondern ihre Aussöhnung auf derjenigen Stufe des Bewusstseins herbeizuführen, die der Geist beschr. Auf keiner tieferen, älteren, früheren, 'schöneren.' Man verwechsle nicht Gemüt mit Sentimentalität! Denn alle Reaktion ist Sentimentalität (117; 75-6).

Mann opposed the reactionary within himself, even in the Betrachtungen, and he continued this opposition all through his life and throughout his work. His "Gemüt," however, never changed, and in contrast to many of his more fashionable contemporaries, he never pretended that he had a change of heart; he merely had a change of mind.²⁹ And that presents the great irony that the sorcerer, the master of illusion and pretense, the writer of the questionable middle ground, remains always, and under all circumstances, true to himself.³⁰ This Mann demonstrates symbolically by using the Goethe-award money he accepted from the communist authorities in Weimar in 1949 to establish a fund for the rebuilding of Herder's church there.³¹ The gesture is symbolic, not only in a political but also in a general sense, because it represents in a particular act the general independence of Mann's spirit, its need for balance and its conception of unity. For Mann the geographical division of Germany into East and West could not impinge on the

spirit of Weimar, the spiritual "Zuhause" of the great universalists Herder and Goethe.

The "man of mind," and the "diagnostician," as well as the artist Mann, are deeply conscious of the positivistic political trend of his time and its correlative of artistic decadence. In the Betrachtungen he writes:

Ich gehöre geistig jenem über ganz Europa verbreiteten Geschlecht von Schriftstellern an, die, aus der "decadence" kommend, zu Chronisten und Analytikern der "decadence" bestellt, gleichzeitig den emanzipatorischen Willen zur Absage an sie . . . im Herzen tragen (116; 149).

This will includes a simultaneous rejection of positivistic notions of progress and the existential "Angst" of contemporary "modernism."³²

If the central issue of the Betrachtungen concerns the relation of personal morals to political engagement,³³ it also concerns the relation of Mann's aesthetic to the engaged aesthetic of his time. Mann's reaction to his brother Heinrich's "catastrophic platitudes,"³⁴ which express his belief in a better future, reflects Mann's attitude towards socio-critical Expressionism; its theory represents for Mann "bellaza - Radikalismus," the lack of responsibility on part of the radical artist which signifies for Mann the epitome of decadence (116; 423).

Erich Heller asserts that upon the stage of progress Mann is always in the second, and often in the wrong, cast.³⁵ However, every theater-goer knows that the second cast sometimes gives a more sensitive interpretation of the play than the first. Mann admires Nietzsche's aphorism of "Reaktion als Fortschritt" (116; 371). Reaction does not necessarily

mean that the one who reacts is a reactionary. To react also means to reverse a movement or tendency of which one does not approve. Mann reacted to socio-critical Expressionism as fiercely as he did for several interrelated reasons. First, he foresaw that Expressionism's rejection of concrete reality would lead eventually to the negation of art (116; 422). Secondly, the essence of Mann's New Humanism lies in its realization of dormant human potential. Expressionism rejects this and values existence only for its own sake, and it is therefore basically reactionary. Hans Meyer writes in "The Suffering and Greatness of Thomas Mann: "to be a human being presents possibilities, but is not fulfillment in itself . . . The mere fact of being must be transformed into conscious humanitarianisms. This is Thomas Mann's meaning. This is how he understood his art. . . ." ³⁶ Thirdly, Mann, the artist, projects his world as a stage where the same actors perform the same plays in different costumes before changing backdrops. He cannot accept the Expressionist dogma of the "new man," who is bent on the destruction of all cultural masks and costumes. Natural man, without the masks and backdrops of culture is for Mann aesthetically as unacceptable as untamed nature itself.

Mann realizes that both Impressionism and Expressionism are the components of art, for art can never be "blosses Erdulden." He also appreciates pure aestheticism if it is as forceful as Oscar Wilde's (116; 421).

Expressionism, however, has politicized art to such an extent that its "überaus wahr und überaus wirkliche" aspect has become "ruchloser Aesthetizismus." It has lost its link to concrete reality. In its double aspect of political dogma

and existential "Angst" Expressionism ". . . ohne Impression, Verantwortlichkeit und Gewissen" (116; 422) presents men and circumstances which do in reality not exist.

The "man of mind" cannot accept the irresponsibility of Expressionist dogma that eliminates the concept of the individual, his morals and duties toward society, a dogma which offers instead the "Schwindelworte" of universal brotherhood and "Fortschritt ohne Ende" (116; 208). Finally, the "diagnostician" cannot accept a theory that abandons analysis and psychology and bases human experience solely on intuition, the primitive and the elementary.

The rejection of Expressionism at a time when it was in great vogue in Germany demonstrates again the independence and wholeness of Thomas Mann's vision as well as the honesty he always professes towards it. He cannot accept the fragmentation of Expressionist style; neither can he accept its lack of distance and balance, nor its rejection of concrete reality. For the latter three concepts are the components of Mann's perspective and the building stones of his art.

Mann's art is his own, it did not produce disciples and was never involved in any of the "isms" of his time. The following quote from the essay "Meine Zeit" serves well to sum up the investigation of Mann's political and aesthetic sense of place.

Meine Zeit - ich habe, das darf ich sagen,
 nie ihren Liebediener und Schmeichler gemacht,
 weder im Künstlerischen noch im Politisch-
 Moralischen; indem ich sie ausdrückte, war
 ich ihr meistens entgegen, und wenn ich
 Stellungen bezog, geschah es regelmässig im
 unvoreteilhaftesten Augenblick. Ich war
 national, als der explosive Pazifismus der

Expressionisten an der Tagesordnung war, und ich wehrte mich mit Grauen gegen den Anti-Humanismus und Irrationalismus der Intellektuellen von 1920 oder 25, dessen politische Konsequenzen damals den wenigsten sichtbar waren. . . . Gerade der Anti-Humanismus der Zeit machte mir klar, dass ich nie etwas getan hatte - oder doch hätte tun wollen -, als die Humanität zu verteidigen (118; 329).

Mann is like the figure on the see-saw whose feet are strongly attached to its plank but whose head is free to see both its sides and the more distant surroundings. Attachment and distance allow Mann to be part of, and yet removed from, what occurs around him. From his elevated perspective Mann senses the similar components inherent in opposites. Even in the outrageous Betrachtungen distanced perspective forces Mann to admit that part of himself belongs to the fiercely attacked enemy camp:

Denn Literatur ist Analyse, Geist, Skepsis, Psychologie, ist Demokratie, ist "Westen," und wo sie sich mit konservativ nationaler Gesinnung verbindet, da tritt jener Zwiespalt von Sein und Wirken ein, von dem ich sprach. Konservativ? Natürlich bin ich es nicht; denn wollte ich es meinungsweise sein, so wäre ich es immer noch nicht meiner Natur nach, die schliesslich das ist, was wirkt (116; 436).

Long before this, however, Mann's "selbst ironisierender Kulturkonservatismus" (119; 235) appears in his fictional works. In the realm of the "Zauberer" total unification of opposites is possible, and a true conception of Thomas Mann emerges only from a perspective of this wholeness ³⁷

Bernard Blume asserts that "'direct' statements of a creative writer . . . have a lower, not a 'higher truth

content' than his creative work."³⁸ The highest "truth content" of Mann is contained in the creative realm because here personal and political realities are reflected but cannot impinge. Here is the strongest realization of Mann's innate perception of the world. Mann affirms this in the Storm essay: "Die Kunst nun gar ist das stärkste Mittel zur Bewusstmachung und Verwirklichung des ich" (114; 32). In the fictional reality personal and political sense of place are not only mirrored but are formed by it and form it in turn.³⁹

In the fictional reality Schopenhauer's concept of "Vorstellung" (imagination) takes on its concrete meaning of a theatrical performance. In the creative realm Mann the "diagnostician," who gives detailed analytic descriptions, fuses the meticulous and precise with the misleading and questionable and merges both into the whole of his fictional world. In his creative work Mann illuminates his concept of unification, which is generated by the partial sameness he senses in opposites. This aspect is present in his entire oeuvre.

Mann considers his whole production a "Spielraum" between antithetical poles: "In Wahrheit ist meine Produktion ein Spielen zwischen geliebten und ironisierten Gegensätzen, - wie mir denn überhaupt dieser Zwischenraum recht eigentlich als der Spiel-Raum der Kunst und Ironie erscheint." If art is play, it is also very serious, for artistic creation is for Mann always the creation of morality. The opposing poles are connected in the play concept, which is able to combine aesthetic and moral aspects. Mann is familiar with this concept from his German literary tradition. When he defines

art as "ein sehr ernstes Spiel," he paraphrases Goethe.⁴⁰ He does not analyse Schiller's theory of the play impulse, but accepts it without commentary. It is important for Mann to show that the highest as well as the lowest concept can be represented in a playful manner.⁴¹

The "Spieltrieb" is, like so much in Thomas Mann, doubly motivated. The child's wish to affect an audience by its theatrical performance coincides for example with Schiller's aesthetic with its similar, though educational intent. Hermann Hesse, reviewing Königliche Hoheit, criticizes Mann's self-consciousness, those "Mätzchen und Spielereien" which presuppose a constant awareness of the audience. The "Spiele-reien" produce a certain feeling of superiority in the average reader, who is too limited to comprehend the serious essence of a work.⁴² However, in his theatrical presentation of the world Mann must be conscious of the audience, without whom the presentation would be meaningless. Insight into the serious essence of a work must be reached through humorous and colorful aesthetic production. Mann's own intense desire to understand the essence of things was the strongest motive for his creative labor;⁴³ and his artistic intent is: ". . . ein wenig mehr Freude, Erkenntnis und höhere Heiterkeit zu verbreiten unter meinen Mitmenschen " (118; 350).

This intention reflects the joy which the boy Thomas experienced in his own creations. Mann writes that "die Vorherrschaft des Begriffes 'Spielen' hat das Theater mit der Kindheit gemeinsam " (113; 389-90). The mature writer who, applying his aesthetic views while at the same time recreating the world in his own image, imitates the boy in his "Puppentheater."

Mann's sense of imitation sometimes erases the borderlines between personal and fictional reality; it happens at least once that personal reality imitates fiction. We have indicated already that Mann prefers a comfortable, even luxurious working place, yet he is able to work anywhere except out of doors. However, at one time the writer imitates his poet-protagonist Aschenbach and works at the sea-shore.⁴⁴ Aschenbach in turn both imitates and parodies Mann's fondness for, and his simultaneous indifference towards, luxury. Before he can start to work, Aschenbach must perform a virtual ritual that includes a pair of candles in "silbernen Leuchtern zu Häupten des Manuscripts" (111; 345). Mann treats the same aspect humorously in "Tristan," where the physically healthy Spinell lives in a sanatorium because he feels that the empire style of its furnishings is conducive to his creative genius.

Settings are the visual aspect of Mann's art. In the essay "Über Königliche Hoheit" he discusses the aesthetic importance of places and names derived from reality:

Man beanstandet, dass ich den kleinen Klaus Heinrich nicht ordnungsgemäss nach Berlin oder Potsdam geschickt habe. . . . Das Wort "Berlin," ein einziges Mal in einer einzigen Zeile aufklingend, hätte mit den hundert störenden Ideenverbindungen, die es hervorruft, meine ganze Imagination über den Haufen geworfen. In einer Dichtung gelten noch ein paar andere Rücksichten als die auf die Wirklichkeit . . . (119; 32).

Mann was very conscious of the symbolic potential of actual locations. He describes an unforgettable impression he had in Linderhof, the castle of the crazy King Ludwig of Bavaria. The living- and dayrooms in this castle were small

and relatively insignificant; only one large hall

. . . von verhältnismässig ungeheuren Massen gibt es darin . . . das Schlafzimmer mit seinem Prunkbett unterm Baldachin und flankiert von goldenen Kandelabern, - der eigentliche Festsaal des Königshauses, der Nacht geweiht (114; 149).

In this preference for and dominance of night over day Mann recognizes the essence of Romanticism, for "die Nacht ist Heimat und Reich aller Romantik" (114; 149).

He frequently chooses fictional settings from places well known to him either from his travels or his living quarters. However, he also employs paintings or other reproductions whose origin and quality are not important. For example, the "Aalgaarder Badehotel" in Tonio Kröger is derived from a photograph on a hotel bill.⁴⁵ Hans Meyer, discussing Doktor Faustus, differentiates between three degrees of identities in Mann's description of places: clear identity, slightly disguised identity, and the more complicated forms, where places are composites of different models.⁴⁶

Munich is clearly identified in many of Mann's works, most prominently in Gladius Dei, Tonio Kröger, and Doktor Faustus. In Der Kleiderschrank Mann describes an apartment based on his bachelor quarters in Munich where he lived after his return from Rome. Venice is clearly identified in Enttäuschung and Der Tod in Venedig. Lübeck appears in all three forms of identity throughout the work, most obviously in the Buddenbrooks where, however, the name of the city is never mentioned. The "Lübeck-Lerchenberg-complex" is the setting for many of the early stories, as Der kleine Herr Friedemann, Der Bajazzo, Tobias Mindernickel, and Luischen.⁴⁷ Settings

may be slightly disguised as is the fictional farm Pfeiferling in Doktor Faustus,⁴⁸ or Berlin in Wälsungenblut, where only reference to the "Ministerium" offers a clue that the story is set in Germany's capital. Kaisersaschern in Doktor Faustus is a fictional composite based on Lübeck and several other German cities.⁴⁹ Settings can also be purely fictional, as for example in Der Erwählte;⁵⁰ Mann also transplants specific experiences from one actual place to another; his visit to the Museum of Natural History in Chicago forms, for example, the basis for the Marquis de Venosta's visit to the Museum of Natural History in Lisbon.⁵¹

Settings are used also to express or reiterate the theme of a work. A setting can be analogous to the protagonist, or it can be its adversary; it can stress the irony of a situation or it can be used to set up polarities and refute them. Mann's settings are primarily interiors; external nature is never described for its own sake, only as background, as in the seascape of Travemünde (in the Buddenbrooks) where Toni falls in love with Morton Schwarzkopf.

Mann's system of priorities is reflected in the use of settings. He considers spiritual reality at least as important as phenomenal reality. "Geist" is the creative principle, ". . . der allem Leben, aller Realität zu Grunde liegt" (117; 180). This concept is present in all of Mann's work; it is unequivocally expressed in the setting of Lotte in Weimar when the waiter Mager tells Lotte: "Bei uns in Weimar gibt es dergleichen wie weite Wege nicht; unsere Größe beruht im Geistigen" (103; 15).

The good life also has considerable importance for Thomas Mann. Essays and letters testify to the significance

of friendship and festivities in his life, and also the enjoyment of good food, which Mann mentions for example in "Lebensabriss" and in "Die Psychologie des dichterischen Schaffens." This enjoyment is another aspect of personal reality which assumes symbolic value in the choice of fictional settings. Festive and formal meals play an important part in Mann's fiction. Hotel dining rooms are frequently the neutral ground where "lovers" can expect to meet each other, as Gabriele and Spinell in Tristan and Madame Chauchat and Castorp in the Zauberberg. Aschenbach sees Tadzio for the first time in the dining room at the hotel in Venice, and Felix Krull gets the great chance of his life in a hotel dining room when he waits on the Marquis de Venosta.

Mann frequently gives detailed description of food, as in Wälsungenblut, the Joseph Tetralogy and most prominently in Lotte in Weimar and in the Buddenbrooks. Here Consul Buddenbrook invites friends and relatives to a "ganz einfaches Mittagsbrot," (101; 8) which lasts through the first seven chapters of the novel. Mann describes the tremendous meal in great detail, using each of chapters four to seven to introduce its different parts. The cataloguing of overly rich food in Wälsungenblut and in the Buddenbrooks seems to stress its relationship to decadence. In another part of that novel the diabetic Senator Müllendorf dies, his mouth filled with forbidden pastry.⁵²

Mann frames the novel with two Christmas parties at the Buddenbrooks. The work opens with a festive meal for twenty-two persons: men, women, boys and girls, married and single people of all ages, representing a cross section of past, present and future. The novel ends with another mealtime

gathering of the family and their circle. However, it is now reduced to eight women. Mann does not describe this meal; in fact, he hardly mentions it. While the first feast lasts through seven chapters, the last meal is reduced to one. The theme of the Buddenbrooks, the decay of a family, is thus expressed and reiterated in the settings.

Aspects of the theater and its vocabulary appear in Mann's creative work from Gefallen to Felix Krull. The settings mirror simultaneously Mann's theatrical perception of phenomenal reality and its analytical observation. The settings also reflect his dual feeling of self-importance and alienation. Most prominently they reflect his sense of imitation.

Mimesis expresses the essence of Mann's aesthetic attitude⁵³ as well as his theatrical perception of phenomenal reality. His theatrical vocabulary includes all expressions from play and dance (114; 485) to those concerning religious ritual. He omits theatrical references only in three stories, all of which deal directly with the inimitable fact of death.⁵⁴

Mann's theatrical sense stresses more the staging of the production than the ideas. He once said that the intellectual ideas in his works are never important in themselves but only as parts of the structural whole.⁵⁵ He describes persons, places, and objects in such a manner that the details of the description frequently contradict and negate what a person says or what a place represents. Settembrini in the Zauberberg is the mouthpiece of progressive Western Humanism, and he expresses many of Mann's own views. At the same time the association of his autumn-like name, his good but shabby clothing, and the repeated reference to an organgrinder with

his limited repertoire, demonstrate Mann's relation to western culture and tradition, which he calls "liebepoll und auf-18send" (119; 238). While Mann is dissolving his relation to a beloved culture, this culture itself is in a state of dissolution, to which the description of Settembrini's clothing testifies.

Descriptive detail is thus of extreme importance in Mann's work. While description was always essential for the realistic writer, its place and role have changed completely in modern literature. Robbe-Grillet states in Pour un Nouveau Roman that description once

. . . prétendait reproduire une réalité préexistante; elle affirme à présent sa fonction créatrice. Enfin, elle faisait voir les choses et voilà qu'elle semble maintenant les détruire, comme si son acharnement à en discourir ne visait qu'à en brouiller les lignes, à les rendre incompréhensibles, à les faire disparaître totalement.⁵⁶

Mann most certainly cannot be wholly associated with the Nouveau Roman; rather his work operates as a bridge to it. While he does not use description to "destroy" things, he uses it to balance opposites and therefore to "blur" their distinctions. Description in Mann's work changes from "realism to reality,"⁵⁷ in Robbe-Grillet's sense, for Mann chooses and arranges his descriptions in such a way as to construct and reveal simultaneously a truth and its illusion.

Settings are important in Mann's work because the writer reveals his thoughts not only through the persons ". . . sondern auch durch die Dinge . . ." (113; 12). Mann refused his publisher's request to reduce descriptive details in the

Buddenbrooks in order to achieve a more concentrated narrative. He insists that descriptive and narrative elements are inseparable.⁵⁸

In Gefallen, Das Wunderkind and Wälsungenblut Mann uses settings to reveal the respective themes of deceit, commercialism and decadence. All three stories deal with artistic stage performances, and in all stories Mann blurs the distinction between the performers and the audience by establishing similarities between on- and off-stage settings. Gefallen deals with the concept of moral double standards and the deceitful role it forces on women.⁵⁹ The ambiguous title refers to the promiscuity of the protagonist, but also to her triple role as stage-actress, kept woman, and adored innocence, in which she must please the men she confronts; she must play a role on stage and off. The deceit of her existence and the artificial double standard of the young man who loves her for what she seems, and who detests her for what she is; are expressed in the artificiality of the setting. The story of the actress is not directly told, but set into a frame so that it is thrice removed from reality. The setting of the frame is not an ordinary room but an artist's studio, which is so cramped with tasteless artifacts from all corners of the globe that it gives the impression of a backstage storage area. At the very beginning of the story the attack against all aspects of deceit is launched in the description of the studio, where knick-knacks, odd furniture and carpets ". . . in schreienden Zusammenstellungen gleichsam auf sich selbst mit Fingern wiesen" (111; 7). The description prefigures the story; it suspends the illusion of innocence, spring and the fragrance of lilac long before the

actress herself must reveal that she is not an innocent girl but a kept woman at whom so-called respectable people point their fingers.

In a similar and different manner the illusion of the virtuosity of the Wunderkind is suspended by the gross commercialism of the story's setting. The young artist does not perform in a darkened concert hall but in the ostentatious dining room of a fashionable hotel. The dining room is decorated with

. . . rosig fleischlichen Gemälden an den Wänden, mit Uppigen Pfeilern, umschnörkelten Spiegeln und einer Unzahl, einem wahren Weltensystem von elektrischen Glühlampen, die in Dolden, in ganzen Bündeln überall hervorspriessen und den Raum mit einem weit übertag hellen, dünnen, goldigen, himmlischen Licht durchzittern . . . (111; 259).

The "Wandschirm" which is mentioned four times protects the performing child at intervals from the audience. Here the cynical little boy puts on the modest smile which he presents to his adoring audience. In the audience sits another performer of equal attraction to the public who is the opposite of Bibi, the ". . . runzlige, verschrumpfte alte Prinzessin . . . ein Bild des vornehmen Friedens, die dem arbeitenden Wunderkind zuschaut" (111; 259). Bibi must share the adoration of the public with the old princess as he must share the brightly lit dining room with the public which came to stare at his beauty rather than to listen to his music. The dining hall with its myriad of electric bulbs is certain to attract a money- and sensation-conscious audience which wants to see and be seen rather than to appreciate the music. The gross setting reveals the concert for what it is - a blatantly

commercial venture and a social outing.

Wälsungenblut deals with aspects of decadence: the inseparable twins Sigmund and Siglinde, named after brother and sister in Wagner's Walküre, want to escape from their soft, rich life into the savage world of Wagner's Teutonic opera. The juxtaposition of the twin's elegant home and the primitive dwelling of their operatic namesakes seems highly questionable, for the staged world of the Walküre is as artificial and as decadent as the Aarenhold's luxurious household. The twin's incestuous love-making on the "Bärenfell" in Sigmund's elegant bedroom is a thrice removed imitation, not of the savage world of barbarians, but of the world of legend through the world of opera, which Nietzsche calls the musical expression of decadence.⁶⁰ Mann establishes in Wälsungenblut the opposing poles of life and opera and shows the decadence inherent in both.

The ironic aspects of Mann's ambivalent vision manifest themselves in still other ways in the settings. He arranges a setting with a certain atmosphere only to destroy it by adding something which does not belong or is out of place. These "Fremdkörper" are frequently people, foreigners as Lisaweta in Tonio Krüger or Detlev Spinell in Tristan and sometimes a person, such as Gerda in the Buddenbrooks whose foreign appearance and habits are out of place in the household. In Tristan the almost unbearably sentimental love scene in the music room of the sanatorium is suddenly interrupted by the appearance of Frau Höhlenrausch " . . . jene Kranke, die neunzehn Kinder zur Welt gebracht hatte und keines Gedankens mehr fähig war . . . am Arme ihrer Pflegerin" (111; 196). The juxtaposition of the beginnings of romantic

love with the personification of its extreme results demolishes the romantic scene while staging it.

Sometimes the foreign substance operates as hyperbole, as in Wälsungenblut where the atmosphere of elegance is ridiculed and destroyed by introducing into a private and very rich home a luncheon menu " . . . das in drei Exemplaren auf dem Tische lag" (111; 291). This unlikely object, added to Frau Aarenhold's diamonds which she wears in the middle of the day, is enough to exaggerate the atmosphere of refinement to such a degree that it becomes grotesque.

Another variation of the "Fremdkörper" is the word, phrase, or sentence which does not belong and which either adds a jarring note to a setting or makes it altogether questionable. The phrase "Poussierstengel" belongs specifically to the Berlin of the 1920's and 1930's, and it produces an alienating effect in Lotte in Weimar which is set in Goethe's time and city. In a similar yet different way two words in the fourth part of Der Tod in Venedig change a lyrical description into parody. The section opens with the following sentences:

Nun lenkte Tag für Tag der Gott mit den
hitzigen Wangen nackend sein gluthauchendes
Viergespann durch die Räume des Himmels, und
sein gelbes Gelock flatterte im zugleich aus-
stürmenden Ostwind. Weisslich seidiger Glanz
lag auf den Weiten des träge wallenden Pontos
(111; 370).

The phrases "ausstürmender Ostwind" and "träge wallender Pontos" contradict each other, for when it storms a river cannot flow languidly. The concept of the outsider is the theme of Mann's first stories. It appears in many variations throughout his entire creative work and, as I have shown, it

also appears disguised as props in the settings.

Mann's political sense of place is prominently mirrored in the Zauberberg and its settings. The novel is the playfully artistic result of the polemic in the Betrachtungen eines Unpolitischen. Mann says in the "Einführung in den 'Zauberberg'" that ". . . das Motto der 'Betrachtungen' lautet: 'Que diable allait-il faire dans cette galère?' Die Antwort lautet: den 'Zauberberg'" (114; 331).

The Betrachtungen yielded the recognition of the sameness component in opposites; it appears in the setting of the Zauberberg; Castorp's home, "da unten," in the flatlands, and the sanatorium "da oben" in the mountains, the two opposing locales share some characteristics. For example, the famous mountain air at the sanatorium which is supposed to heal the patients from the flatland has also the potential of provoking the lung ailment. Mann's middle position is reflected throughout the dialectic of the Zauberberg and concretized, for example, in the seance of the chapter "Fragwürdigstes," where occultism represents the questionable middle link between life and death.

The settings also express Mann's sense of balance in a different way, for they are frequently analogous to the protagonist and carry an equal share of the theme. Venice, the locale of Der Tod in Venedig is, like Aschenbach, an aging product of Western culture; its physical decay parallels the protagonist's moral state. Aschenbach is fleeing to Venice to escape the barbarian drives within himself, and the history of Venice shows that the city was build by Romans who were fleeing from barbarian invaders.

The equation of setting and protagonist is simpler in

the case of Felix Krull and his father's wine cellar. The boy Felix, playing in its vaults, addresses the bottles of sparkling wine with what amounts to a fair description of himself:

Da liegt ihr, dachte ich bei mir selbst . . .
 in unterirdischem Dämmerlicht, und in eurem
 Innern klärt und bereitet sich still der
 prickelnde Goldsaft, der so manchen Herz-
 schlag beleben, so manches Augenpaar zu
 höherem Glanze erwecken soll! Noch seht
 ihr kahl und unscheinbar, aber prachtvoll
 geschmückt werdet ihr eines Tages zur Ober-
 welt aufsteigen, um bei Festen, auf Hoch-
 zeiten, in Sonderkabinetten eure Pfropfen
 mit übermütigem Knall zur Decke zu schleudern
 und Rausch, Leichtsinn und Lust unter den
 Menschen zu verbreiten (110; 6-7).

However, the setting can also be antagonistic to the protagonist, as in Die Betrogene. Cultural Düsseldorf with its beautiful parks and famous art academy, in the cheerful Rhein province seems at first to be analogous to the light-hearted protagonist of the story who is a cultured, middle-aged woman. Nature, which she loves so dearly, seems to have given her a second chance for youth. In reality, however, Düsseldorf forms a striking contrast to the protagonist, whose deadly cancer manifests itself as temporary rejuvenation. Mann juxtaposes here culture to one of nature's gruesome manifestations which no human skill can combat. The imitative powers of art and nature are contrasted; both are able to produce pleasant illusions, but the first's are beneficial and the second's deadly.

A variation of this theme of the story from 1953 appears as early as the year 1896 in Der Wille zum Glück. The terminally ill young Pablo is constantly travelling to escape the

gnawing knowledge of his impending death which prevents him from leading a normal life. He tries to escape death by travelling all over the world and involving himself in cultural endeavors. He finally settles in Rome, in this ". . . Überschwenglich reiche Museum aller Kunst" (111; 41). But man's cultural accomplishments, in themselves ripe for decay and death, are no fit opponents for the powers of terminal illness, and Pablo dies on his wedding night. Here again Mann's fictional reality mirrors his personal sense of place, for the very young and the very old writer are not only concerned with similar problems but also express them in similar ways. Mann, the "Zauberer", never changes his position.

Within the sorcerer's timeless conception of his creation the "diagnostician" observes the phenomena of disorder and decay and sees it as symptomatic for the Europe of his time. The concept of disorder, defined as disarrangement of the ordinary, is as essential to Mann's creative work as is his theatrical conception. Without exception his fiction exhibits some aspect of internal and/or external disorder. The settings manifest this in three ways. First, there is disorder in its literal sense, as in the disorderly households of Unordnung und Frühes Leid and Felix Krull. Second, and most important, disorder appears as camouflaged order. Camouflage operates most prominently in the setting of the Zauberberg, where superimposed form and order disguise the chaos of decay and death. Finally, the most complicated aspect of disorder is in a place or situation that represents order and chaos at the same time. Such a place is the theater of war, in which the protagonist of the Zauberberg probably gives his last performance.

In the conventional framework of bourgeois order Castorp's going to war to fight for his country is a glorious deed worthy of every reasonable, high-minded young German at that time. However, from the internal perspective of the novel, which shows nothing but decay and deterioration, war can be considered the apex of the irrational, the epitomy of disorder and chaos.

Another example of a double image of order and chaos is the ocean in Der Tod in Venedig. On the one hand, its cool monotony restores Aschenbach's creative powers and discipline; but on the other, its seductive formlessness undermines his will to create.⁶¹ The double potential of Mann's images is unequivocal in the description of three settings: the actual Venice in Der Tod in Venedig, the fictional Kaisersaschern in Doktor Faustus, and the snow chapter in the Zauberberg. In his dual description Mann at first describes Venice, the tourist's attraction of magnificent beauty, and then the same city as the dirty, smelling city of beggars. Kaisersaschern is described, somewhat more ironically, first as a typical German city, that considers itself " . . . ein Kulturzentrum von geschichtlicher Eigenwürde," (109; 38) but later Mann writes that the composer Wendell Kretschmer " . . . hätte für das geistige, kulturelle Leben von Kaisersaschern einen wahren Gewinn bedeuten können, wenn eben ein solches Leben überhaupt vorhanden gewesen wäre" (109; 51).

Mann aims to reiterate the totality of a work in each sentence and in each image. He intends " . . . [des Werkes] innerer Gesamtheit in jedem Augenblick Präsenz zu verleihen" (114; 327). Kaisersaschern, as the name implies, is itself

a cemetery of past illusions; it cannot benefit from the composer, for in the totality of that novel the benefit of the illusion of culture is questioned.

The necessity of culture and the equally necessary knowledge and acceptance of its illusion is the essence of Thomas Mann's thought. This thought is conveyed unequivocally in the snow chapter of the Zauberberg (105; 493-523). Castorp's double vision of culture and barbarism is expressed in the settings. He first describes an ideal society, " . . . verständig-heitere, schöne junge Menschheit . . ." which works and plays together at a seacoast in joy, peace, and friendship:

Und dieses sonnige Gebiet, und diese züglichen Küstenhöhen, und diese lachenden Felsenbecken, wie auch das Meer hinaus bis zu den Inseln, wo Boote hin und wieder führen, war weit und breit bevölkert: Menschen, Sonnen- und Meereskinder, regten sich und ruhten überall (105; 527).

But soon the scenery changes and a landscape of ruins appears " . . . mächtige Säulen eines Tempeltores . . . aus deren Stufen Moos sprossste . . ." (105; 120). Statues bear witness to a past filled with gentleness and love. These decaying ruins form the backdrop of Castorp's second vision of bestial cannibalism. But the "Sonnenmenschen" live their ethical lives in full knowledge of, or in spite of, the cannibalistic "Blutmahl." For culture and form are the products of what is best in man; they are created " . . . nur aus Liebe und Güte: Form und Gesittung verständig-freundlicher Gemeinschaft und schönen Menschenstaats - in stillem Hinblick auf das Blutmahl" (105; 523). Castorp, "das Kind der Zivilisation" (105; 501) senses the paradox of civilization

which carries within itself the seed of its own destruction, as does any other living thing.

Mann expands this timeless theme throughout the Zauberberg and in fact throughout all his fiction, yet he also contracts it into the image of the perishable snowflake that has its fleeting moment of beauty before dissolving into nothingness. The time-centered theme of the Zauberberg which represents ever growing disorder before the First World War expands through the entire work and likewise contracts into a tiny image. The growing cataract on the housekeeper's eye parallels the growing disorder in Europe, and it breaks out simultaneously with the war. The "Hermetik des Zauberbergs" Mann condenses into the image of a sealed jar of canned fruit.

The Zauberberg is frequently called the highest achievement of Mann's art of integration.⁶² Yet even his first published story shows this same ability to expand and contract a theme. Amid the clutter of the artist's studio in Gefallen are "wächserne Madonnen" (111; 7) whose holy image can melt and disappear as quickly as the image of holy innocence the actress pretends to her young admirer. Both woman and object represent deceiving artifacts which will not hold up under fire.

The image of wax perhaps represents Mann's protean approach to his material. The placidity of wax makes it possible for one to shape and reshape constantly the same material; in a similar manner, the musical scale makes possible limitless variations of a theme.

Mann frequently stresses the musical structure of his work. He feels that people perceive their existence either

visually or acoustically. He is " . . . Ohrenmensch, . . . durch Musik und Sprache gebildet . . ." (120; 41) and he aligns himself with the "Musikern unter den Dichtern" (114; 333). Mann has no close relation to the plastic arts;⁶³ and while his whole concept of art is mimetic he does not find it necessary for the artist to observe nature.⁶⁴

The writer must not see in order to recreate reality, but he must make his public see. Joseph Conrad claims that the "task of realism is to make you hear, to make you feel - it is before all to make you see."⁶⁵

Mann conceives of the novel musically. It is always a " . . . Symphonie, ein Werk der Kontrapunktik, ein Themengewebe, worin die Ideen die Rolle musikalischer Motive spielen" (114; 333). This conception, however, is appreciated only by the literary and the musical scholar, and it is of interest only to them. The average reader sees the ideas as concrete plastic images before, and if, he understands them. Mann's own conceptualization must be preceded by the perception of the inner eye since " . . . jeder, der nur eine Geschichte erzählt . . . weiss, dass er ein Bilddenken der Anschauung treibt" (117; 179). Mann depends on his eye as well as on his ear: " . . . unsere sinnliche Einbildungskraft, unser Erinnerungsvermögen ist schwächer als wir glauben möchten. Wir werden nicht mehr sehen und aufhören zu lieben" (113; 281).

Observation is paramount in Mann's creative production. However, he does not observe in order to reproduce photographically what he sees but in order to abstract its essence. In the essay "Über Königliche Hoheit" he writes:

Wenn ich zwanzig Minuten lang einem Wittelsbacher zugesehen habe, wie er in einem Ballsaale Cercle hält, . . . so habe ich intensivere, wesentlichere, mitteilenswertere Eindrücke von Fürstentum und Repräsentation gewonnen, als irgendein Hofmarschall in zwanzig Dienstjahren gewinnt (119; 33).

For Mann observation of phenomenal reality assumes symbolic value; he asks and answers: "Wer ist der Dichter? Der dem das Leben symbolisch ist" (119; 34). Erich Kahler remarks, ". . . this instinctive tendency to organize all experience symbolically, [is] seen to account for the unique organic inter-relatedness, . . . of Mann's entire work."⁶⁶

Mann's notebooks show how year-long collections of details facilitate the conception of a work. In the original version of the "Vorspiel" to Königliche Hoheit he writes that he likes to observe insignificant scenes so intensely that they become important,⁶⁷ and he later proposes the theory that ". . . nur das Genaue und Gründliche wahrhaft unterhaltend sei . . ." (120; 112).

The fragment of Königliche Hoheit contains the following detailed description of a setting and atmosphere at the castle of the prince.

Gala-Umgebung: Park-Hotel. Lift-Boy mit der Mütze am Oberschenkel . . . Treppen und Korridore mit weissen Marmorböden und Läufern. (Schloss) Bett, Spiegel, Beleuchtung, - Luxus . . . Kein Behagen, nur Würde. Könnte es bequemer, menschlicher haben, verschmäht aber die "Gemütlichkeit" und sucht das Schwere, Fürstliche. - Schlafzimmer: Möbel aus hellgelbem Holz. Tapete graublau, längsgestreift; hellgrauer Teppich durchs ganze Zimmer. Weiss lackierte Doppeltür mit messingnem Griff und Riegel. ⁶⁸

This description mirrors and reiterates the prince's "formale Existenz," which is the essential theme of the work. Doorsteps and (white) doors are details which frequently reappear. In Der Tod in Venedig they often function to localize the meetings of Aschenbach and Tadzio.⁶⁹ In Der Tod Mann describes a room with tall white doors, and the protagonist of the Bajazzo recalls the home of his childhood in which tall, white doors lead to the room where his mother played the piano. Part five of the Buddenbrooks ends with Gerda's appearance at the dining room door, which Mann describes as follows: "Da öffnete sich die Korridortür, und von der Dämmerung umgeben stand . . . Gerda, die Mutter zukünftiger Buddenbrooks" (101; 229).

In this scene the image of Gerda in the door doubly reiterates the totality of the novel (in effect, of Mann's entire oeuvre), for the Buddenbrooks deal with the concept of decay, that transitional state which forms the double link between life and death and between death and rebirth. Mann molds the concept of transition into the concrete image of the door through which things must pass from one state to the other. Gerda is the corresponding agent of change, for she brings the new and deadly element of art into the philistine household of the Buddenbrooks. Both person and object represent the threshold to the future which, surrounded by twilight, does not appear bright but questionable and uncertain.

Gerda is the personification of music, which is one of the most essential elements of Mann's artistic style. His relation to music, and specifically to the opera of Richard Wagner, is generally known. Mann frequently speaks of

Wagner's two-fold influence on his person and his work. He admires Wagner both as "Geniessender und Lernender" (114; 128). While the passion for his music is sometimes fraught with doubt and suspicion, Mann always admired Wagner's craftsmanship and technique.⁷⁰ He learned from him the technique of the "doppelte Optik" (116; 81). He sees Wagner's operas as picturesque, scenic epics and he esteems Wagner, the "Kostümfex," as the great creator of the theatrical epos (113; 10). In Wagner the dramatist's ". . . pictorial imagination [unites] with the purely musical instinct of the symphonist."⁷¹ Mann was fascinated by the structure of Wagner's operas and by his use of epic devices: "Das Motiv, das Selbstzitat, die symbolische Formel, die wörtliche und bedeutsame Rückbeziehung über weite Strecken hin, - das waren epische Mittel nach meinem Empfinden bezaubernd für mich eben als solche" (119; 35). Wagner's "Leitmotiv" is also, according to Mann, an epical device which derives from Homer.⁷²

Erich Kahler writes that for Mann ". . . music [is] the sublime borderline art in which auditory sensation becomes visual."⁷³ In the Zauberberg where Mann developed the verbal "Leitmotiv" to its perfection, he presents it both visually and acoustically in the person of the door-slamming Madame Chauchat. Writing itself is a "combination of tonal and visual elements, and Mann's narrative in particular achieves its magical effect chiefly from that intense precision of description which comes from seeing, from observation."⁷⁴

Precision can acquire the aspects of the fantastic⁷⁵ so that the observing "diagnostician" assumes elements of

the "Zauberer," just as the pictorial imagery of words assumes elements of auditory perception. Lenbach's witty remark to Wagner: "Ihre Musik - ach was, das ist ja ein Lastwagen nach dem Himmelreich," (which Mann quotes in "Leiden und Grösse von Richard Wagner" 114; 136) exemplifies this mutuality.

Mann's "instinctive tendency to organize all experience symbolically . . ." ⁷⁶ interacts with his faculty for analytical observation to create the fictional world of Thomas Mann where description and narration become inseparable.

Sorcerer, diagnostician, and man of mind form, we have seen, the triangular paradigm of Mann's sense of place in which distanced perspective emerges as the essential aspect. The entire gamut of opposites inherent in the phenomenal world find their syntheses in the concept of psychological distance. ⁷⁷

In the Joseph-tetralogy, which will be the central focus of the following thesis, the figure on the see-saw, who essentially expresses Thomas Mann's sense of place, achieves the perfection of its art.

In the tetralogy Mann imitates, develops and intensifies on the grandest scale the attributes and techniques of his sense of place which we have been exploring in some detail. One could in fact say that this novel deals in essence with nothing else, for the techniques operate throughout the entire novel, in some ways intensified and in others developed with such virtuosity that they become almost unrecognizable. The relationship between Mann and his work, is by choice and circumstance also intensified as is the relationship between narrator and reader. The biblical and historical

material lends itself perfectly to the grandiose treatment Mann gives to the Joseph story.

It is generally known that Thomas Mann's descriptions of his fellow men, especially of his fellow artists, are at the same time self-portraits.⁷⁸ Nothing seems better to illustrate the "Zauberer" of the tetralogy than this picture he draws of André Gide:

Es ist da eine dämonische Treulosigkeit, Unzuverlässigkeit und Proteushaftigkeit, ein schlüpfriges Sich-Entziehen, eine vexatorische Weigerung, sich definieren und festlegen zu lassen, ein unverkennbares Vergnügen daran, die Leute zum Besten zu haben, indem man sie mit Ideen bezaubert . . . Aber dies Koboldwesen wird eben doch hoher Ernst als unbedingte Aufrichtigkeit und als eine Ruhe- und Rastlosigkeit des Geistes, die sich sehr wesentlich unterscheidet vom skeptischen Relativismus. . . . Aus jeder Versuchung zur Befriedigung zog er sich schnell zurück in die Unbehaustheit seines schwierigen, stolzen und verschlagenen Individualismus, um, ein Mann allein, der Sphinx ins Auge zu blicken und gegen ihr Rätsel sein eigenes zu setzen (115; 261-2).

II. THE JOSEPH TETRALOGY

1. Preliminaries

The first documented impetus for the Joseph novel comes from the artist Hermann Ebers, who sent Mann (in October, 1924) his illustrations for the Bible story.⁷⁹ After rereading the tale in his old family Bible, he agreed with Goethe that the beautiful story was too short. Goethe had remarked "man fühlt sich berufen sie im einzelnen auszumalen."⁸⁰ Mann first conceived the Joseph story as part of an historical tryptich the other parts of which were to deal with the Reformation and the Counter Reformation.⁸¹ But like the Zauberberg the Joseph story developed its own volume.

Mann's need for and sense of unity must have been seriously challenged and at the same time strengthened by the necessity of perpetually living in different places while new and fearful events were occurring all over the globe. The development of the tetralogy parallels in this respect the development of Mann's life; for only after years " . . . eines 'zerrissenen' Daseins erscheint die Geschichte in ihrer eigentlichen Gestalt" (119; 361).

Mann's preoccupation with the Joseph story dates from about the time of the Eber illustrations. He did not immediately begin to write, but turned his whole attention to the subsequent theme of the tetralogy, the "Problem des

Menschen schlechthin."⁸² The entire period of gestation and composition thus lasted from 1926 to 1942; these years, before Hitler came to power until the beginning of America's entry into the second World War, were a turbulent time for Germany and the world. Mann's literary output during this period (and until his death) manifests his growing involvement with, and his acute understanding of, the times. This understanding is already evident in Der Tod in Venedig, in which, according to Georg Lukács, Mann foresees the future of Germany.⁸³

Contrary to his wishes and against his innermost nature, Thomas Mann became involved in politics by becoming one of the most outspoken voices against Hitler's regime and all forms of totalitarian government. The story of Mario and the Magician is an indictment of the modern intellectual who, understanding everything and doing nothing about it, is as destructive as the powers which he allows to destroy human dignity. Mario is probably the least problematic and most unequivocal piece of fiction Mann ever wrote. Written in 1930, it was an unmistakable warning against Hitler, as were the many political speeches and essays he produced during and after this time.

In a most characteristic manner Mann balanced his involuntary political involvement with the recreation of the biblical Joseph story. In Bürgin's and Mayer's Thomas Mann - Eine Chronik seines Lebens a passage recording the events of this time is headed:

Forderungen des Tages - Der Joseph-Roman⁸⁴

This single line expresses factually and symbolically the constant need of the man on the see-saw to maintain balance

under all circumstances. In this troubled time, which fractured his belief in the rationality of human endeavors⁸⁵ and deprived him of his home and his country, Mann took refuge in his work on the Joseph novel, " . . . das grosse Erzählwerk, das mich durch all diese Jahre des Exils, die Einheit meines Lebens gewährleistend, begleitet hat" (115; 94). The unpublished diaries of the Joseph period (which was also the period of exile) contain the remark: "Was ist Heimatlosigkeit? In den Arbeiten, die ich mit mir führe, ist meine Heimat."⁸⁶

In "Sechzehn Jahre" Mann describes the years during which he wrote the tetralogy. This time of odyssey led him in his visits or in his search for a home through many countries of Europe, to Egypt, Palestine, and the U.S.A. These years were accompanied by a growth of political understanding and an intellectual acceptance and espousal of democracy.

"Sechzehn Jahre," written in 1948 to introduce the English translation of the tetralogy, demonstrates the degree to which Mann felt obligations to the political demands of the day, which often took precedence over his wish to continue the tetralogy, that work which " . . . Stütze und Stab war auf einem Wege, der oft durch so dunkle Täler führte" (119; 360).

Mann was slow to become involved in the fight against Hitler. While he had foreseen and warned against what might happen in Germany, he was apparently unable to believe in his own prophecies.⁸⁷ But since his forced departure from Germany in 1933, his unequivocal fight against Hitler and his help to German emigrées grew in force and velocity.

Mann wrote during these sixteen years (and until the end of the Third Reich) an abundance of political essays, radio-messages and speeches to promote Hitler's defeat.⁸⁸

During the years of work on the tetralogy Mann also wrote a number of literary essays and works of fiction, all of which are related to and (or) refer directly or indirectly to the tetralogy. The relations of the political works, essays and fiction are so intricately enmeshed that they merit future investigation, but will be alluded to only when necessary in the context of this study.

In "Sechzehn Jahre" Mann describes how the worsening conditions in Hitler's Germany and the growing danger of war distracted him from work on the tetralogy; but at the same time the period must have enriched his ideas and give the tetralogy its multi-dimensionality and cosmopolitan flavor.

The Geschichten Jaakobs and Der junge Joseph were written in Germany and published by the Fischers in Berlin in 1933 and 1934; but by 1936 his Jewish publishers had fled to Vienna where Joseph in Ägypten was published. Mann himself lived in Switzerland from 1933, and he wrote Joseph in Ägypten there. The last volume of the tetralogy was written in California, Mann's final home-in-exile before he returned to Germany. The Fischers had meanwhile fled to Stockholm, where they published Joseph, der Ernährer in 1943.

Paralleling the frequent physical changes which the political events forced on Thomas Mann's life are the changes of motivation for the recreation of a biblical tale at such a time. In the very beginning Mann was merely fascinated

by the mythopoeic mode of existence where " . . . Bedeuten und Sein, Mythos und Wirklichkeit ständig ineinander gehen."⁸⁹ Later he finds it amusing to attempt " . . . vermittels einer mythischen Psychologie eine Psychologie des Mythos zu versuchen."⁹⁰ However, in 1934 Mann writes to René Schickele that with the creation of the Joseph-novel he attempted to take the myth out of the hands of the fascists in order to reaffirm its function in the fight for humanism. What he had in mind was a kind of "humanisierter Mythos."⁹¹

This apparent change of motivation seems in reality no change at all but a slow and necessary fusion of Mann's artistic, analytic and political sites into a unified whole; for in this work the personal, political and artistic realities merge in a unique and almost uncanny way.⁹²

2. General Attitude Toward History

Mann's attitude to history is dynamic and static at the same time: dynamic so far as the individual's ability to direct his own life is concerned, but static as to the ever recurring types of men who make human history the deplorable aggregate of events which it is.⁹³

It is said that Mann was at first impressed by Spengler's Untergang des Abendlandes and that he later achieved a distance from him.⁹⁴ Klaus Schröter recently added Spengler to the influences which operated on the tetralogy.⁹⁵ Mann himself rejected Spengler's work as soon as it appeared in 1922. He considers Spengler " . . . geistesfeindlich . . . ein

Snob - und er erweist sich als solcher auch in seinem Attachement an die Natur, das Naturgesetz, seiner Verhöhnung des Geistes." And he continues " . . . und wenn es noch etwas Schauderhafteres gibt als das Schicksal, so ist's der Mensch, der's, ohne ein Glied zu rühren, trägt."⁹⁶

Most of Mann's protagonists try to be stronger than their fate. They either fight their destiny or provoke it. It is in fact often their determination to be stronger than fate that becomes their undoing. Little Herr Friedemann tries to live a normal life in spite of his crippled body. Aschenbach's 'willed' existence is symbolized by the clinched fist, and Leverkühn certainly provoked his paralysis. Paolo in Wille zum Glück even outwits death. Felix Krull determines his own life and realizes that " . . . das, was man Schicksal nennt, sind im Grunde wir selber" (110; 95). In "Freud und die Zukunft," one of the essays so intimately related to the tetralogy, Mann writes, quoting Schopenhauer, that " . . . jeder der heimliche Theaterdirektor seiner Träume ist." (114; 220). All men, including Joseph, succeed and fail to the same degree.

The poet's idealistic conviction of the right-minded individual's power to shape general circumstances is, however, counteracted by the diagnostician's contrary observations of the facts of reality. In "Versuch über Tschechow" (1954), written shortly before his death, Mann quotes the Russian's famous sentence "Die Hauptsache ist, das Leben umzugestalten; alles Übrige ist unnützlich;" but Mann immediately continues "Aber wie soll das geschehen, da doch die Verhältnisse nur zu 'gegeben' sind und alles seine unheilbare Notwendigkeit hat?" (115; 291-2).

Essentially, all of Mann's works deal, in individual or cultural terms, with the incurable necessity of things and the simultaneous rejection of this necessity.

Mann did not need Spengler's influence in order to write the tetralogy. He expressed his view on the growth and decay of culture in the Buddenbrooks, which was published twenty-two years before Spengler's work. Mann's personal attitude towards history balances the "unheilbare Notwendigkeit" of circumstances with the individual's will to change them.

Mann's sense of place seems nowhere less ambiguous but at the same time more intricate than in the Joseph novels. The poet on the see-saw balances Bible and history, past and future, reaction and progress, myth and psychology.

Mann uses an extraordinary amount of historical and exegetic research in the tetralogy.⁹⁷ His treatment of history in this work is similar to his treatment of place in Doktor Faustus, where he uses parts of different cities and relocates them to create Kaisersaschern. He recreates the Joseph story not by changing "facts" in themselves but rather by splitting and re-arranging them in such a way that they often produce startling effects. The biblical tale is molded into the shifting patterns of the tetralogy where everything including time itself, depends as much on Mann's subjective interpretation as on historical and exegetic research.

Mann himself likes to tell those " . . . die sich über meine Gelahrtheit wundern, dass gerade Einzelheiten, die man für studiert halten sollte, in Wahrheit erfunden sind."

The tetralogy is

. . . also kein wissenschaftliches Werk, sondern 'fiction' in der eigentlichsten Bedeutung, ein Werk der Phantasie. Aber wissenschaftlich immerhin in dem Sinne, dass es auf seine fabulierende Art Vorstösse der Erkenntnis wagt, sei es ins Dunkele der Vorzeit oder in die Nacht des Unbewussten, Erkundungen in die Tiefe der Zeit zurück, oder, was eigentlich dasselbe ist, in die Tiefen der Seele hinab. ⁹⁸

However, Mann also repeatedly stresses the importance this scientific research has for the artistic intent of the novel.⁹⁹ But the scientific method is questionable in itself;¹⁰⁰ Mann asserts that ". . . die Geschichtsschreiber einander bis zur Komik widersprechen." (117; 48). And Joseph explains to Benjamin that the principle of timeless presence operates on the uncertainty of all historical assumptions. No man really knows ". . . was für eine Nase der König gehabt und was für Ohrringe die Amme der Königstochter" (106; 339).

3. Treatment of History in the Tetralogy

According to Käthe Hamburger, Thomas Mann's "doppelbändige" art reaches a high point in the description of the historical Amenhotep's epoch, for

. . . hier erleben wir auf der einen Seite das Ägypten der 18. Dynastie in seiner vollen historischen Wirklichkeit und sozusagen um seiner selbst willen, aber zugleich erschliesst sich immer deutlicher, warum es gerade diese und keine andere Epoche der Ägyptischen Geschichte ist, die der Autor

für die Lebenszeit Josephs gewählt hat,
 das heisst: die symbolische Bedeutung
 dieser Epoche für die Joseph-Geschichte.¹⁰¹

Mann's art seems to reach its apex here less by virtue of the fact that it gives a realistic account of Egypt for its own sake than because Mann makes a-historical use of historical Egypt. For he rarely if ever describes landscapes, situations, or ideas for their own sake but only to serve his artistic purpose. In the tetralogy he gives the most accurate descriptions of Egyptian costumes, habits and cities of the time of the eighteenth dynasty while greatly changing the historical situations of the country and the historical characters themselves.

In a unique montage of historical half-truth, allusion and literary fiction, Mann represents facts and characters by leaving them as they are and changing them at the same time. He never alters history completely, but rather fractures it, and, adding some fictional touches, rearranges it to serve his own purpose. To this end the Joseph story is moved 200 years forward in time,¹⁰² a dislocation which serves in many ways to elucidate his ideas.

First, the concept of the eternal sameness of things and their simultaneous change is, as it were, historically substantiated in the sun worship of the Egyptians, one of their oldest religions, which is reborn at the time of Amenhotep IV. This religion originally included no monotheistic concepts. Recreated as Amenhotep's intensified version, however, it regarded the sun as the only deity of heaven and earth and as the exclusive source of all life.¹⁰³

Secondly, when Joseph stands before Pharaoh he does not face a pagan king but a man with a sophisticated, quasi-monotheistic belief who is his intellectual equal. The theological discussion takes place on the same level between two men of similar interests and concerns. Joseph, the Hebrew, whose social background and standing is so different from Amenhotep's, wonders how " . . . unterschiedlicher Menschlichkeit ganz fern and ganz fremd die eine der anderen, die Gottessorge doch auf Erden erscheine" (108; 1057).

In stressing their similarity, Mann also stresses the difference between Amenhotep's materialistic and Joseph's spiritual religion. Amenhotep considers the sun as the only god, and his belief is in this respect monotheistic; but it is still paganism, "glorified materialism" which has nothing to do with the Hebrew God.¹⁰⁴ Joseph does not refrain from expounding this difference, and Amenhotep's cheeks grow pale when he hears it: "Nein, Pharaon, beim Sonnenrund blieb Abraham nicht stehen. . . . Denn des Mannes Hochmut war, dass der Mensch solle allein dem Höchsten dienen. Darum ging sein Trachten über die Sonne hinaus" (108; 1093).

Thirdly, the juxtaposition of Joseph and Amenhotep IV yields yet other relationships which may or may not be of primary importance. Both men have foreign mothers who influenced their lives greatly. While Joseph inherited Rachel's good looks and charm, Amenhotep IV inherited his monotheistic beliefs and its accompanying interest in the arts from his mother.¹⁰⁵

In advancing time 200 years Mann uses temporal

perspective as the plastic artist uses spatial perspective. Both are methods for establishing relationships of parts. In this way poets have the advantage that ". . . uns Macht gegeben ist über das Mass der Zeit und wir es dehnen dürfen und kürzen nach freiem Belieben" (108; 1224-25).

Mann not only contracts time but stretches it as well. This gives him the opportunity to establish a relationship to Nietzsche's concept of "enoblement through degeneration," which is so essential in his work. In Buddenbrooks this concept is illustrated most prominently by the musical Hanno, and in the tetralogy by Amenhotep, Hanno's religious counterpart. For Mann's feverish looking, weakly, intelligent young Pharaoh with his revolutionary ideas personifies (historically, as well as fictionally) the concept of the decadent as prognitor of progress we find in Nietzsche, who says "those who degenerate are of the highest importance wherever progress is to take place; every great progression must be preceded by a partial weakening. The strongest natures hold fast to type; the weaker one help develop it further." ¹⁰⁶

In the tetralogy this idea is demonstrated concretely; in fact it is staged like a polemical play in the confrontation of the parties of the gods Atum and Amun, who represent tradition and progress.

Mann stretches time and ideas even up to his own time. The Egypt of the eighteenth dynasty was at the apex of its cultural and political power and at the same time beginning to decay.¹⁰⁷ It is easily related to Mann's own time and the glory and decay of Western civilization, which, expressed in so many different variations, is the essential theme of

the mature Thomas Mann. He saw himself as observer and recorder of this phenomenon. In 1951 Mann writes to Hermann Weigand:

Ich fühle mich nicht ungern als ein Später und Letzter, als ein Abschliessender und Vollender. Endbücher zu schreiben, scheint seit den "Buddenbrooks" mein Schicksal. Und überhaupt erscheint mir zuweilen unsere ganze höhere Literatur als ein rasches Rekapitulieren des abendländischen Mythos, der abendländischen Kultur im letzten Augenblick, vorm Fallen des Vorhangs und vor dem grossen Vergessen. ¹⁰⁸

More particularly, the Amenhotep period can be related to twentieth century America. It seems generally recognized that in Joseph, der Ernährer the protagonist and his rescue mission carry features of Roosevelt and the New Deal. However the progressive, social minded, sickly and magnetic Pharaoh of the tetralogy also has something of Roosevelt. Amenhotep IV was by no means "hübsch und schön" like Joseph " . . . aber von beunruhigender Anziehungskraft" (108; 1057) and, like Roosevelt, immensely popular with his people.

Mann's sense of history is exemplified in the rendition of Amenhotep IV. To make things even more "doppelbödig" Mann does not picture Pharaoh at the actual time of his succession to the throne (when he meets Joseph in the tetralogy). Monuments of that time represent Amenhotep IV looking exactly like his father and his ancestors. He ordered his official image changed after he himself had changed his name to Khuen-Aten (Echnaton in the tetralogy) in honor of the old-new sun religion.¹⁰⁹ Mann draws Pharaoh closely along the lines of the new, rather strange historical image, adding the changes he required to produce the

" . . . Mischung schmerzlich verwickelter Geistigkeit und Sinnlichkeit auf der Stufe des Knabenhaften" (108; 1057) which seems to be absent in the original. It is interesting to compare the description of the historical Amenhotep with Thomas Mann's version; his Amenhotep's head is set on a long, slender neck, his face

" . . . langgezogen, hochmütig und müde, mit nach unten ausgebildetem, also keineswegs mangelndem und dennoch schwachem Kinn, einer Nase, deren schmaler, etwas eingedrückter Sattel die breiten, witternden Nüstern desto auffallender machte, und tief träumerisch verhängten Augen, von denen er die Lider nie ganz aufzuheben vermochte, und deren Mattigkeit in bestürzendem Gegensatz stand zu der nicht etwa aufgeschminkten, sondern von Natur krankhaft blühenden Röte der sehr vollen Lippen. Er hatte eine schmale weiche Brust . . . und einen etwas hervorstehenden Bauch . . . die Oberschenkel waren entschieden zu voll" (108; 1056-57).

Historically, Amenhotep is portrayed

with a very high, narrow, and receding forehead, a large sharp, aquiline nose, a thin, weak mouth, an a large projecting chin, and his head is set upon a long and extremely slender neck; his chest is rounded, his stomach inflated, and his thighs are large and broad, and in many respects his figure resembles that of a woman.¹¹⁰

Mann obviously borrows some of the historical king's features, omits others, and invents what he needs for his Pharaoh, who simultaneously is and is not the historical Amenhotep IV.

Mann liken's Echnaton's features to those of a young

" . . . vornehmen Engländer von etwas ausgeblühtem Geschlecht . . ." (108; 1056) but in fact this is more descriptive of the historical Amenhotep than of the fictional Pharaoh precisely because the sensual aspect is lacking in the former.

The "blending" of half-truth and fiction is a consistently reoccurring artistic device, which Mann extends to the period and character of Amenhotep IV. A comparison of Mann's rendition of Echnaton and his time with the historic counterpart yields some interesting incongruities. The foreshortening of time which produces coherence and relationships, produces, if considered from another point of view, conflicts and paradoxes. Some of the most important events of the biblical tale could not possibly have taken place at the time of Amenhotep IV. While it was a period of enlightened prosperity it was also a period of fanaticism, revolt and need. Echnaton was no delightful "Königsknabe" not even at the beginning of his reign, but a rather mature man in spite of his youth.¹¹¹ Enamoured of his sun religion, he quickly developed into an intolerant religious fanatic. He neglected his royal obligations to the Empire to such an extent that Palestine and Syria were in open revolt, with the result that caravans bound for Egypt were openly attacked on the road.¹¹² It would therefore have been impossible for Joseph's brothers to travel unhindered back and forth to Egypt.

Mann depicts a gentle, slightly decadent, conscience-plagued child-king, whose perpetual headaches come from the

. . . undeutlichen, aber beunruhigenden
Einsicht in den Widerstreit zwischen der
Hingabe an die geliebte Aton-Theologie

und den Aufgaben eines Königs Ägypten-
landes. Mit anderen Worten: es waren
Gewissens- und Konflikts-Kopfschmerzen.
. . . (108; 1034).

Opinions about the character of the historical Echnaton vary, but it seems to be generally agreed that he was less given to religious ecstasies than to the good life. He seems to have abhorred war¹¹³ but

when all is said on his behalf the fact still remains that he led a life of pleasure . . . whilst the empire . . . was crumbling away piecemeal. . . . The spectacle of the king spending his time in heated disputes with the priests of Amen on a point of doctrine, and living in luxury among artistic surroundings of every kind, whilst his empire was falling to pieces. . . . That such a man ever sat upon the throne of the Amenhats and Usertsens is a fine example of the irony of fate. ¹¹⁴

In view of the above it seems unlikely that Mann is concerned to describe the Egypt of the eighteenth dynasty for its own sake and in its "vollen historischen Wirklichkeit."¹¹⁵ I suggest rather that Egypt serves solely the same artistic purpose as, for example, Gerda in the Buddenbrooks, the ripe strawberries in Der Tod in Venedig, or the snow visions in the Zauberberg: namely to symbolize (at least on one level) a state of cultural perfection that carries within itself the seed of decay. The wax Madonnas in Mann's first story Gefallen seem to imply the same idea: the stuff of human achievement is pliable and subject to change.

The Joseph story seems to have been created especially

for Thomas Mann who, as someone has said, would have had to invent it had he not found the tale in the Bible.¹¹⁶

The "Doppelbödigkeit," which is the hallmark of Mann's art, is mirrored in the biblical *donnée* of the story. He utilizes the questionableness of Egyptians and Hebrews who at once are and are not what they appear to be.

The narrator's professed admiration for Egypt and its culture, which is not necessarily Joseph's or even Thomas Mann's, must therefore be questioned. Mann makes sometimes reference to his childhood attraction to Egypt and its myth.¹¹⁷ More often, however, he voices his indifference, even his aversion, for this part of the world. When he visited the country its exotic beauty oppressed him; he describes in "Unterwegs" ". . . wie unbeschreiblich verwandt, wie geistig elegant, wie jugendlich-europäisch nach den Formen der Nilkultur diese göttlichen Reste der Akropolis auf uns wirken." (119; 96). In "Pariser Rechenschaft," on the subject of a trip to Spain, Mann writes: "Trotz Alhambra hatte der Süden mir nicht das, nicht soviel zu sagen. Das Arabische selbst ist mir lieber in der überall durchscheinenden Andeutung als in Reinkultur" (119; 141).

The general assumption that the mythical age of human existence is represented in the Geschichten Jaakobs and Der junge Joseph and the rational world in Joseph in Ägypten and Joseph, der Ernährer becomes in the light of Mann's view of this world, "fragwürdig," that is, worthy of interrogation. The assumption is questionable because it views the story's movement towards, and in Egypt as, an entirely progressive process. This progress is said to be stylistically expressed in the difference between the natural world

of the patriarchs and the cultural world of Egypt.¹¹⁸ Taking into account Mann's unfavorable relationship to external nature and natural man as well as his high estimate for cultural achievement, this view seems more than tenable. However, seen from another point of view, Egypt's culture is not what it is made to represent. Mann's portrayal of the enlightened rationality of ancient Egypt is as misleading as the mythopoeic frame of mind of the patriarchs: he exchanges, in fact, one for the other.

Joseph see-saws between admiration for Egypt's civilisation and repulsion towards it. On the one hand, because it fulfills his indigenous longing for beauty, refinement, and pomp, this culture attracts Joseph, but on the other hand, because he understands its roots, he recoils from it.

According to Nietzsche, Greek culture was the result of the spiritual despair produced by man's self-destructiveness and of the indifferent cruelty of external nature towards him.¹¹⁹ Thus Greek intellect created beauty in order for man to survive.

Egyptian culture was just the opposite; its beauty resulted entirely from favorable natural, i.e. material, conditions. The self-reliance of the Egyptians at the time of the empire, their sense of power and accomplishment was utterly dependent upon, and resulted from, the particular environment of Egypt. Modern Egyptologists say that it seemed almost as " . . . though nature had deliberately restrained herself, as though she had set this secure valley apart so that man could disport himself unhindered. It is small wonder that a great civilization arising on

such a scene should be filled with a sense of its own power and accomplishments."¹²⁰ This proficiency is achieved not in spite but because of natural conditions. The old man who brings Joseph to Egypt seems to be well aware of this fact because he tells his young foreign slave:

Die Augen werden dir aus dem Kopfe
treten, wenn du die Wunder siehst und
alle Pracht und Erlesenheit des Landes,
das Keme mit Namen heisst, weil's
schwarz ist von Fruchtbarkeit und nicht
rot wie die elende Wüste. Wovon aber
ist's fruchtbar? . . . Es hat seinen
Regen und sein Manneswasser nicht am
Himmel, sondern auf Erden, und der
Gott ist's, Chapi, der starke Stier,
der breitet sich sanft darüber hin
und steht segensreich darüber eine
Jahreszeit lang, zurücklassend die
Schwärze seiner Kraft, dass man drin
säen kann und erntet hundertfältige
Frucht (107; 511-12).

The paradox of Egyptian culture which is rooted in nature and not in "Geist" is expressed in a picture of Mut, its foremost representative: "Sie war wie eine Wasserblüte, die auf dem Spiegel schwimmend unter den Klüssen der Sonne lächelt, unberührt von dem Wissen, dass ihr langer Stengel im dunklen Schlamme der Tiefe wurzelt" (107; 751-752).

Mann's as well as Joseph's ambivalent feelings towards the phenomenon of Egyptian culture seem adequately summed up in the above description. It now appears quite obvious that the brilliant sky which looks down on its fortunate and secure children radiates the light of the sun rather than the light of rationality. The colorful Egyptian cityscape with its exquisite architecture and stylishly attired people and even more stylishly "wrapped" dead bodies seems

the exact opposite of the landscape of Hans Castorp's now vision, where culture is simplicity, naturalness and beauty - in spite of nature rather than because of it.

Mann conjures up a magical confusion of ideas and thought-patterns in order to produce the impression of unity between them; this often has astonishing results when looked at from the perspective of the recorded development of human consciousness. The barbaric situation of the Hebrews in Canaan is therefore just as questionable and paradoxical as the culture of its Egyptian counterpart.

It is recorded in the Bible that humanity was born in paradise, and it seems to merit some thought that Mann sends his narrator on a voyage to hell to find the beginnings of human consciousness.

Mann scholars repeatedly stress the striking difference of style and approach in the description of the mythical nature world of the patriarchs and the civilized world of the Egyptians.¹²¹ As far as their daily life was concerned, the Hebrew shepherds, wandering about with their cattle, were in fact barbarians compared to their civilized Mesopotamian and Egyptian neighbors. Intellectually, however, they had surpassed the pagans, for they refused to worship their nature gods.

Thomas Mann was never one for the "ultra-romantische Verleugnung der Grosshirn-Entwicklung," for the "Verfluchung des Geistes"¹²² and he makes Jaakob the representative of "Geist" which was "von sich aus und ganz wesentlich das Prinzip der Zukunft" (106; 34). From the viewpoint of recorded intellectual history, this is not surprising since

the Hebrews arrived on the historical scene long after Egypt and Mesopotamia had built their great pagan civilizations.

However, Mann constantly conveys the impression that the Hebrews are as old as their pagan neighbors. The "mythical" Hebrews serve his artistic purpose in the same manner as the "rational" Egyptians, who in fact lived as much in a mythopoeic world as the patriarch lived in a rational one.¹²³

The "Undeutlichkeit Gottes" which the narrator transfers to the patriarchs, who were people " . . . die nicht recht wissen, wer sie sind" (106; 94) is but one example of the magical confusion which the "Zauberer" so consistently produces to trick the innocent reader.¹²⁴ In "Freud und die Zukunft" Mann discusses the same patriarchs as " . . . Personen, die alle wohl wissen, was sie sind und in welchen Spuren sie gehen" (114; 228). The narrator also knows that the patriarchs were only too conscious of the telos and therefore of their own identity.¹²⁵ For Jaakob " . . . hatte sein Leben gerettet, sein kostbares Verheissungsleben, für Gott und die Zukunft" (106; 103). The narrator thus retracts his own statement and admits that "Göttliches, die forterbende Arbeit an einem Gottesgedanken war das Band, das bei aller Buntscheckigkeit des Geblütes die geistige Sippschaft zusammenhielt, die . . . eben zu der Zeit, in die wir eingetreten sind, mit einem anderen Namen, dem Israels, zu verbinden und durch ihn zu bedingen begann" (106; 96).

For humorous purposes, "zur endgültigen Klarstellung der Geschichte" (106; 109), and at the same time to project

his most serious idea of the essential sameness of human experience, Mann ascribes an utter mythopoeic mode of existence to the very people who first broke away from it, while giving the appearance of enlightened rationality to the Egyptians whose great civilization was rooted in the worship of nature gods.

It is a historical fact that the patriarchs were the first to break away from the mythopoeic way of thinking, the first to abandon the beliefs in pagan nature-gods. Before Philosophy, a work by four contemporary Egyptologists, describes "how the Hebrews reduced the mythical element in their religion to a minimum."¹²⁶ Describing the emancipation of thought from myth, one of the authors depicts the emergence of the Hebrews from among the peoples of Egypt and Mesopotamia. Discussing the rejection of pagan nature gods and the concept of the immaterial God of the Hebrews he states: "It needs an effort of the imagination to realize their shattering boldness of a contempt for imagery at the time, and in the particular historical setting."¹²⁷

The mythical web of allusions to pagan imagery, the thought pattern attributed to young Joseph as well as the "geistige" atmosphere in Geschichten Jaakobs and Der junge Joseph correspond much more closely to the mythopoeic world of the Egyptians than to the world of the Hebrews. When, for example, Joseph, not yet in Egypt, tells his astonished Egyptian master "Aber siehe, die Welt hat viele Mitten, eine für jedes Wesen, und um ein jedes liegt sie in eigenem Kreise," (107; 497) he expresses an ancient thought, central to the Egyptian myth of creation that should be very familiar

to the olde Egyptian but very foreign to Joseph himself. For the Egyptians had a multiple concept of the origin of the universe,¹²⁸ and also of death.

Thomas Mann tries here to blur the basic and most incisive difference between western and eastern consciousness, that is, between the religions of the western and of the eastern hemisphere, which differ in the importance they assign to the individual.¹²⁹ The eastern concept of multiplicity limits the importance of the individual in life as in death. Mann expresses this through Mut and the ladies of high society: "Eine jede von ihnen war Hathor, die Liebesherrin, in Person, wenn sie in der Maske der Sonnengemahlin, . . . an den grossen Festen für Amun tanzten und sangen" (107; 703). Furthermore, the narrator says that all Egyptians, even the most lowly, become the god Usir after death (107; 721). But coalescence of deities, places and men must have been unacceptable for the biblical Joseph, whose forefathers' lives had only one center and one God and who placed tremendous importance on the individual.¹³⁰

If the concept of plurality points back to myths far older than those of Joseph's people, it also points forward to a distant future in which the individual will accept his own uniqueness simultaneously with the recognition of the uniqueness of other men. When Joseph repeats: "Ja, ich weiss ich habe gesagt, dass sie viele Mittelpunkte habe, die Welt, so viele, wie Menschen Ich sagen auf Erden, für jeden einen," (107; 502) he offers a tolerant and workable formula to all human beings which does not diminish anybody's feeling of self-importance and at the same time

recognizes that of other men.

Thomas Mann performs the art of balancing at its most intricate and highest level in the tetralogy. The above is but one example of his method of borrowing, distancing and balancing. Relying on the biblical source of the Joseph-story, he puts himself at a distance and reinterprets it in both directions, past and future. Mann never does completely change situations and concepts, but he interchanges and reassigns their parts in order to blur established divisions which hinder his belief in the essential unity of human experience.¹³¹

To this end he does not hesitate to relocate or alter the biblical text¹³² or to ascribe unlikely deeds and thoughts to its characters. Mann sends Esau's son Eliphas to kill the treacherous Jaakob, who flees to Laban. This fact is mentioned nowhere in the biblical text. Besides, it is a biological impossibility.¹³³ Esau and Jacob were twins; according to the Bible Esau was forty years old when he married, shortly before Jacob's betrayal (Genesis 34). He therefore could not have had a son old enough to kill Jacob. On the other hand the Bible says that Esau did have a son named Eliphas. The Bible also records the existence of Joseph's uncle Ismael, but there is no evidence of any conversation between him and Esau at the time of the mistaken blessing.

Mann inverts the known development of human thought when Ishmael suggests that the cheated Esau kill his father and then devour him " . . . roh mit Blut und Knochen" (106; 161). This suggestion from one Hebrew to another (even when one is the son of a pagan mother) is as deceiving as

to propose that Helen of Troy pray to the Virgin Mary. Ismael makes, and the narrator retracts, the suggestion. Patricide and cannibalism " . . . kam nicht nur unter den Möglichkeiten seines [Esau's] Denkens, das war nie geschehen, das gab es nicht. Der Vorschlag war ohne Hand und Fuss." The proposal was, in fact, off the mark only in the particular case of Esau. His horror reflects the ethic of his forefather's new religion. Ismael knows this and laughs about his nephew's naiveté. He knew that the

Vorschlag mit Wurzeln war, dass es das sehr wohl gab, dass es vielleicht der Anfang von allem gewesen war und dass Esau im Rückwärtsgehen zu früh stehenblieb und sich mit zu späten Anfängen begnügte, wenn er meinte, das habe es nicht gegeben (106; 160).

According to modern psychology patricide is not only the oldest but also the most persistent of man's desires, which he has sublimated but never completely cast off.

At least one other change in the biblical story (apart from those mentioned by others)¹³⁴ occurs where Joseph tells Pharaoh that his mother Rahel stole the house gods of her father "dem Gatten zulieb" (108; 1070). Jaakob, the Hebrew, had little use for them, in fact he was forbidden to have images of any kind in his house, and he did not know about the theft. But Joseph's remark is in character, for he is in the process of ingratiating himself to Pharaoh, and he feels that parents with house-gods might be more acceptable to the pagan king.

Balancing human experience constantly back and forth in time, Mann stresses its general sameness simultaneously with its particular manifestations. The Old Testament,

which parallels and supercedes pagan myth of primitive brutality with stories of intelligence and cunning is but one of these manifestations. It represents the particular upward movement of a spiral in the generally circular movement of human existence.

However, history in the tetralogy is circular and linear at the same time: circular when contemplated by the man of the see-saw, the "Herr des Überblicks" (108; 1121) whose far-reaching perspective allows or condemns him to see what history really is, and why it seems doomed eternally to repeat itself; but the "man of mind" tries to see history as a spiralling road, for it is his responsibility to help to break the circle of eternal recurrence of human stupidity and greed. Linear movement for and by itself is of no interest to the artist for ". . . die Strecke hat kein Geheimnis" (106; 141). The "Zauberer" therefore fuses the circular to the linear and creates the concept of "zeitlose Gegenwart." In this concept Mann changes from temporal to visual perception, and history loses its time conditioned abstraction and becomes a concrete image, for here "Geschichte" becomes "Geschicht."

Geschichte ist das Geschehene und was
fort und fort geschieht in der Zeit.
Aber so ist auch das Geschichtete und
das Geschicht, das unter dem Boden ist,
auf dem wir wandeln, und je tiefer die
Wurzeln unseres Seins hinabreichen ins
unergründliche Geschichte dessen was
ausser- und unterhalb liegt . . . desto
sinnig-schwerer ist unser Leben . . .
(106; 138).

By equating "Geschichte" with "Geschicht" Mann deprives historic events of their uniqueness, for "Geschicht" is a

geological structure whose different layers must more or less conform to each other. "Geschicht" is past and present, result and process at the same time. This is the greatness of Mann's art. For, as the narrator says, "Geschichte kennen kann jeder. Dabei gewesen zu sein, das ist's" (108; 1265).

Mann's attitude toward the linear progress of history in the tetralogy is therefore questionable. The narrator stands on the see-saw constantly balancing past against future, line against circle. Bent on demonstrating the essential sameness of all human experience and its simultaneous difference, Mann fractures and rearranges recorded intellectual history without actually changing it.¹³⁵ The sorcerer conjures up an illusionary world, where light and darkness are deceptive. It becomes apparent that Joseph is not the middleman between mythical primitive Hebrews and progressive, civilized Egyptians but rather between progressive, primitive Hebrews and civilized but mythical Egyptians. It further appears that Mann rearranges history and the Bible to point backward and forward at the same time in order to show the basic sameness of all human experience.

III.
STRUCTURE AND TECHNIQUE

4. The Timeless Present

Mann's phrase "Denkbild," perfectly expresses his abstract concept of timeless present and its concrete rendition as the rolling sphere which has neither beginning nor end (106; 142). "Denkbild" also expresses Mann's sense of place in the tetralogy, inasmuch as it offers the key to an analysis of the figure on the see-saw, that balances here any imaginable pair of opposites on the abstract as on the concrete level. The tetralogy seems in fact to be the work in which the figure on the see-saw develops its skill to perfection.

Mann constructs the illusion of the timeless present by perfecting several already familiar devices; for example, the use of double vision, extension and contraction of theme, different images for the same theme, blurring of border lines, a composite of allusion, half-truth and fiction. Balance, distance and dependence are the unifying principles of these devices. It becomes apparent that the triangle is an important structural design of the tetralogy, and that imitation is the process of presenting the concept of "zeitlose Gegenwart." Mann uses the devices to strengthen and substantiate the perennial middle position which is analogous to the concept of the timeless present the eternal today between yesterday and tomorrow.¹³⁷

Manns' double concept of the timeless present is more dynamic than Nietzsche's eternal recurrence, for it allows for the up and down of spirals within the circle of eternal sameness:

Denn Wiederkehr ist Abwandlung, und wie im Guckrohr ein immer gleicher Bestand an farbigen Splittern in immer wechselnde Schauordnungen fällt, so bringt das spielende Leben aus dem Selben und Gleichen das immer Neue hervor, die Sohnes-Sternfigur aus denselben Teilchen, aus welchen der Lebensstern des Vaters sich bildete. (107; 621).¹³⁸

Mann's concept is also more ambiguous than Nietzsche's, for he attempts to demonstrate eternal recurrence and change at the same time. In the "Adonishain" where Joseph acquaints Benjamin with the Tammuz myth, Benjamin repeats what he has learned: "Und dem Herrn ist nun also das Haupt erhöht für dieses Jahr, aber er kennt die Stunde, da Ninib ihn wieder schlagen wird im Grünen" (106; 338). But Joseph corrects his younger brother: "'Nicht wieder,' belehrte ihn Joseph. 'Es ist immer das eine und erste Mal'" (106; 338).

Narrator and figures frequently stress the uniqueness of man and his endeavors. Eliezer is Mann's primary example of human adherence to type. He appears and reappears through generations of patriarchs, always teaching and serving, typifying one of those people who do not know who they are. The same Eliezer explains however to Jaakob the uniqueness of all things: "Denn es ist nichts zweimal, und ist alles hier nur sich selber gleich für immer" (106; 486). On the other hand, everything happens according to "Schema" or "Plan." Here the "Undeutlichkeit" of God, the narrator, or

Thomas Mann takes its beginning. Mann blurs distinctions between the static aspect of "Schema" and the dynamic aspect of "Plan," since the narrator uses the two words interchangeably.

Everything happens according to a "Schema;" existence is poured again and again into the same mold, for "Geschichte ist musterhaft und gleich einer Gussform . . . aber in wie seltsame Gussformen vorschaffender Einbildung ergiesst sich nicht manchmal das Leben!" (108; 981). The product of the mold is typecast and individual at the same time. One of the narrator's examples is questionable; he compares Pharaoh with the sun: "Denn Pharao heisst es immer, und immer ist Pharao; zugleich aber kommt und geht er, wie die Sonne immer ist, aber ebenfalls geht und kommt" (108; 1017).

This comparison is true and false at the same time. It is acceptable as a mythopoeic, but not as a modern thought. For the ancient Egyptian the comparison holds; for Pharaohs were indeed considered gods like the sun. But for the modern reader (and for Joseph) the sun is a natural phenomenon that recurs schematically and independently of the existence of anything else. Man, on the other hand, even though he is poured eternally into the same mold, always appears for the first time and his existence is dependent upon his environment as well as upon other men. Therefore the sun will be born and reborn always in the same form, while it takes many kinds of rebirth to make man what he is supposed to be: ". . . denn das Leben des Menschen läuft mehrmals um und bringt wieder Grab und

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Geburt: Mehrmals muss er werden, bis er geworden ist." When his brothers throw him into the well, Joseph, the symbol of man, is " . . . noch sehr im Werden" as the story of man itself is " . . . im Werden und keineswegs schon geworden" (106; 465).

The "Schema" of sun and man is thus different; "Geschehen ist kein Tuen;" (106; 421) the sun has no influence on its own movements; they just happen, but man can give direction to life. The narrator implies this; Joseph's own wishes landed him at the bottom of the well where he " . . . ganz genau gesagt hatte kommen wollen" (106; 430). Joseph, sitting in the well, contemplates his fate, and he realizes that he is its creator as well as its victim. "Geschehen und Tun" merge in the design of his life.

Mann also uses here his perennial and seemingly indigenous method of extension and contraction of the theme.¹³⁹ He contracts the spatial image of the sphere of the universe into the abstract idea of Joseph's mind which contains within itself the characteristics of the sphere which

. . . besteht in Ergänzung und Entsprechung, sie ist ein doppelt Halbes, das sich zu Einem schliesst, sie setzt sich zusammen aus einer oberen und einer unteren, einer himmlischen und einer irdischen Halbsphäre, welche einander auf eine Weise zum Ganzen entsprechen, dass, was oben ist, auch unten ist, was aber im Irdischen vorgehen mag, sich im Himmlischen wiederholt, dieses in jenem sich wiederfindet (106; 141).

In this way Mann unifies man and universe, and myth

and psychology. Joseph is ancient pagan, Hebrew and modern man, whose existence started at a rather random point (106; 15) and whose future is unclear.

There seems to be a marvelous coordination between the telos and Joseph's inclination. They are perfectly balanced, not only with each other, but also within themselves. The mature Joseph's belief in his God is not free from accusation:

Das ist es eben, dachte er bei sich,
'dass Gott alles tut, uns aber das
Gewissen davon gegeben hat, und dass
wir schuldig werden vor ihm, weil wir's
für ihn werden. Der Mensch trägt Gottes
Schuld, und es wäre nicht mehr als billig,
wenn Gott sich eines Tages entschlösse,
unsere Schuld zu tragen (107; 737).

Thus the double aspect of the timeless present, the "Oben" and "Unten" of the sphere and of Canaan and Egypt is present in the most concrete as well as the most abstract expressions of the work, balancing one against the other.

5. Balance

Thomas Mann's sense of place is most clearly summed up by Tonio Kröger (and cited by Mann in the Betrachtungen). "'Ich stehe zwischen zwei Welten, bin in keiner daheim und habe es infolgedessen ein wenig schwer'" (116; 82). In the tetralogy the perennial middle situation of Mann's protagonist reappears in the all-inclusive temporal concept of the timeless present, in the spatial concept of the sphere

and in a multitude of other images. The in-between situation acquires astronomical proportions as the image of the moon circling the sky between heaven and earth; Joseph is the moon's human counterpart, the middle man between countless realms. As Abraham's grandson he is "Gottes Geschäftsmann" who negotiates between God and man, Pharaoh and the nobles. He is, indeed, a very able business man, for he persuades Amenhotep to give him the job:

Du . . . sollst Mittler sein zwischen mir
und den Menschen, gleichwie der Mond Mittler
ist zwischen Sonne und Erde . . . der
Mittler zwischen Oben und Unten . . .
deutlich höre ich im Geiste Pharaos so
sprechen (108; 1078).

Intelligent persuasion, tolerance and patience help Joseph to achieve what he wants. He is the precise opposite of Goethe's parody of a middleman, the one-time pastor Mittler of the Wahlverwandtschaften, whose most prominent characteristics are ignorance, intolerance and impatience. The eloquent Joseph bridges the incompatible worlds of Jaakob and Pharaoh as the inarticulate, stammering Peeperkorn bridges the incompatible worlds of Naphta and Settembrini in the Zauberberg.

Mann introduces the motive of the tolerant man, who contemplates both sides of a situation at the beginning of the tetralogy, where Jaakob entertains the pagan Jeshbe with food and drink:

Er war ihm vorurteilslos begegnet, eingedenk einer altüberlieferten Geschichte von Abraham, der einen greisen Götzendienner im Zorne von sich in die Wüste gejagt, wegen

seiner Unduldsamkeit aber vom Herrn einen Verweis empfangen und den verblendeten Alten zurückgeholt hatte (106; 53).

The motive reappears later in the characters of Mont-kaw, Joseph and Amenhotep.

In his essay "Freud und die Zukunft" Mann writes:

Der Mensch ist 'das kranke Tier'
genannt worden um der belastenden
Spannungen und auszeichnenden Schwierigkeiten willen, die seine Stellung zwischen Natur und Geist, zwischen Tier und Engel ihm auferlegt (114; 216).

In the tetralogy this unpleasant thought reappears in a humorous form. Man stands always between Yes and No. Joseph manages to combine the two opposites. This is evident in the following passage, which also offers a clear example of Mann's unity producing technique. In this part of the conversation between Amenhotep and Joseph, Mann obviously is referring to Faust and specifically to the conversation between God and Mephisto in the "Prolog im Himmel."

'Sind dir die Geschichten des Gottes-Schalks bekannt?' fragte Amenhotep . . .
'Bekannt, höchster Herr?' erwiderte Joseph.
'Ja und nein erlaube deinem Knecht die doppelte Antwort.' [Amenhotep antwortet:]
'All deine Rede ist auf das Ja gestellt, und in einem damit aufs Nein . . . War er dir bekannt oder nicht?' [Joseph gibt zu, dass] ' . . . Geist des Gott-Schalk unter den Meinen immer zu Hause war und mir vertraut ist' (108; 1067-68).

Mann uses the three most important words of the "Prolog": "Herr" which refers to God, "Schalk" which refers to

Mephisto, the " . . . Geist, der stets verneint" (1338), and "Knecht" which refers to Mephisto's counter-figure, Faust. Joseph, who is able to say Yes and No simultaneously, unifies Faust's famous two souls within himself; he is the connecting link between Faust and Mephisto.

The above shows how Mann's method of allusion, half-truth and fiction operates. In this case the half-truth is not historical fact but a literary *donnée*. Put into an entirely different context, the beginning of the above quotation is a fractured and relocated version of these lines of the "Prolog":¹⁴⁰

Der Herr:	Kennst Du den Faust?
Mephistopheles:	Den Doktor?
Der Herr:	Meinen Knecht (299 - 301).

Mann's sense of humor is frequently considered one, or even the, hallmark, of the tetralogy. It attests to the basic unity of Mann's artistic work that Hellmut Haug speaks of "Humor der Vermittlung" even in the early works: "Klösterjahn vermittelt zwischen Ekel und Sehnsucht, Brutalität und warmem menschlichen Gefühl."¹⁴¹

These and the following examples are but a few of the many which mirror the concept of "zeitlose Gegenwart" at all possible levels in all possible categories of human environment and endeavors. Joseph, the "Angeber" is also the middle man between his father and his brothers (106; 75). When he dreams his arrogant dream of lording it over his brothers, Jaakob sees him as "des Schadens Mittler," and he sends Joseph to the brothers to make him " . . . auch

zum Mittler des Ausgleichs" (106; 392). At that time Joseph is seventeen years old and he stands at the exact middle point on the road to his great achievement which will change the youth into "Joseph, den Ernährer."

Joseph's fatherland is middle terrain, "Zwischen- und Durchgangsland," between Egypt and Mesopotamia (108; 540), and Joseph is the middleman between Egypt and Canaan, the old and new, the cultural and the primitive, paganism and Christianity. Kedma, who brings Joseph to Egypt, realising Joseph's penchant for the middle-position, remarks: "Du . . . hast eine Art, dich in die Mitte der Dinge zu stellen, dass niemand weiss, ob er sich wundern soll oder Ärger" (107; 497). Joseph confirms Kedma's statement when he established himself in the city Menfe. He was at that time the right hand of Pharaoh, and Menfe, situated in the middle of Egypt, was " . . . die 'Waage der Länder' das Symbol des ruhenden Gleichgewichts Ägyptenlandes, folglich zum Ort des Überblicks wie geschaffen und der dem Herrn des Überblicks bequemste und dienlichste Aufenthalt" (108; 1126).

At the same time this rational choice was conditioned by Joseph's (and Mann's) natural proclivity; for

die Schritte und Entschlüsse unseres Lebens sind von Neigungen, Sympathien, Grundstimmungen, Grunderlebnissen der Seele bestimmt, die unser ganzes Wesen färben und abfärben auf all unser Tun, so dass dieses sich weit wahrhaftiger aus ihnen erklärt als aus den Vernunftgründen, die wir wohl nicht nur vor anderen, sondern auch vor uns selbst dafür ins Feld führen (108; 1125).

This insight can be extended to Mann's artistic method. His need for balance is so strong and apparent that it can be considered the outstanding characteristic of the entire work. Mann has called the tetralogy his "problematisches Privatvergnügen"¹⁴² and here he satisfies his penchant for balance in the greatest style and in the smallest detail: for example, both wells, Joseph's "Grube" and the well where Jacob meets Rahel, are covered with large, heavy stones (106; 461, 172). The famous ladder of Jaakob's dream reappears as the ladder Ruben brings to the well in the vain attempt to rescue Joseph. Mann apparently invented the episode where Esau sends his son Eliphas after his treacherous brother to establish balance between opposites. In fact Eliphas did not kill Jaakob, but was persuaded to see his point of view.

In "Sechzehn Jahre" Mann explains why he included Tamar, who eventually became the "verblüffendste Figur dieser ganzen Geschichte," into the tetralogy. He did it for the sake of balance: "Ich hatte keine Frauengestalt in Vorrat, die der Rahel des ersten und zweiten Romans, der Mut-em-enet des dritten das Gleichgewicht gehalten hätte" (119; 365).

Herbert Lehnert speaks of Mann's "Humanismus des Gleichgewichts," the beginnings of which are possible in the mythical fairy-tale world of the tetralogy.¹⁴³ Joseph is indeed the personified figure on the see-saw, for in his soul " . . . stehen Sonne und Mond zugleich am Himmel" (107; 613).

In the "Meerfahrt mit Don Quijote" (1934) an essay

that repeatedly refers to the tetralogy Mann seems to depict the same idea as a "überraschende Lebenslage." He describes the experience of sitting on an ocean liner and watching a motion picture. The middle aspect of "zeitlose Gegenwart," between yesterday and tomorrow seems to be analogous to the middle position of the boat, which moves, a static presence, back and forth in time, connecting countless yesterdays with countless tomorrows. The traveller himself and the motion picture he watches on the moving boat reiterate the double aspect of movement and simultaneous stasis.

The picture of the boat in the middle of the ocean reflects the astronomical phenomenon of the moon between sun and earth and the mythical image of man between heaven and hell. Joseph, the prototype of man, stands like Tonio Krüger between the two worlds. But unlike Tonio, who felt its burden, Joseph enjoys the middle position and considers it his natural element. He must maintain balance within himself and in the external world. Joseph's preferred dwelling place is Menfe, in the center of Egypt, and the city's emblem is the scale, which like the man on the seesaw, operates on the principle of balance. Both man and object have the paradigm of the triangle.

6. The Triangular Structure

Mann's seemingly inborn technique of remolding the same idea into different shapes, operates to reiterate the totality of the work in almost every image. The concept of the timeless present is found everywhere in the tetralogy. Mann presents the indivisible trinity of yesterday, today and tomorrow in the image of the sphere, but also in the form of the triangle, which is even more expressive in that the triangle can change its basic components and still remain the same.

Both the rolling sphere and the triangle embody simultaneously eternal sameness and change. The triangle also embodies the principles of polarity and connection. A simple geometrical figure, it becomes a multi-levelled symbol, and Mann uses or refers to all of its levels. The triangle is associated with the Christian concept of the Trinity. Two complete, superimposed triangles are the symbol of Judaism and, when called "Solomon's seal" this star is the symbol of the human soul. The triangle is also related to the Egyptian god Rê-Horachte who was "dreifach von Gestalt: tierisch, menschlich und himmlisch. . . . Aber auch als Himmelsgestirn war er dreifach in seiner Geburt aus der Nacht, im Zenith seiner Männlichkeit und im westlichen Tode" (108; 1021). In addition, the triangle in Gnosticism signifies " . . . fire and the aspiration of all things towards the higher unity - the urge to escape from extension (signified by the base) into non-extension (the apex) or toward the origin of the

irradiating point."¹⁴⁴

That the triangle becomes prominent in the Egyptian part of the tetralogy shows the virtuosity of Mann's technique. The geometrical figure which expresses Mann's trilateral theme is not superimposed on the story but is rather indigenous to it. For the triangle is a symbol par excellence for Egypt, signifying both the natural fertility of the Nile delta and Egypt's greatest human achievement, the Pyramids.

In order to accentuate the trilateral aspect of the novel Mann stresses the number "three."¹⁴⁵ One chapter for example, is headed "Dreifacher Austausch" (107; 792); Joseph, returning to On after three years, walks through the "Dreiecksraum" of the city (108; 1049) where people have "drei Jahreszeiten" (107; 549) instead of four. Joseph explains to Mai-Sachme that there are " . . . drei schöne Dinge und Denkzeichen, sie heissen 'Entrückung,' 'Erhöhung' und 'Nachkommenlassen.'" (108; 1026). The narrator discusses three different kinds of chosen people (108; 1050) and

. . . das Weltall, das himmlische, dreigeteilte, das sich aus oberem Himmel, aus des Tierkreises himmlischer Erde und dem südlichen Himmelsmeer vorbildlich zusammensetzte; denn genau entsprach ihm das irdische, das ebenfalls in drei Teile - Lufthimmel, Erdreich und irdischen Ozean - zerfiel (106; 298).

Joseph is thinking of "Nahrung, Hungersnot und Vorsorge" (108; 1027).

The theory of the triangle, " . . . der schönen Figur der Zusammenschau . . . und der Versöhnung" is taught by

the sages at On:

Aus mehrerem eins zu machen, war ihr Vorzugsbetreiben . . . Das gelang ihnen vermittels der Wissenschaft vom Dreieck. Ob Natur dieses herrlichen Zeichens verstanden? Seiner Spannseite, sagten sie, entsprächen die vielnamig-vielgestaltigen Gottheiten, die das Volk anrufe und deren in den Städten der Länder die Priester pflegten. Darüber aber erhöben sich die zusammenstrebenden Schenkelseiten der schönen Figur, und der so eigentümliche Raum, den sie begrenzten, mochte der 'Raum der Zusammenschau' genannt sein, ausgezeichnet durch die Eigenschaft, dass er sich ständig verengere und die etwa durch ihn gelegten weiteren Grundseiten immer kürzer und kürzer würden, bis sie nur noch eine äusserst geringe Ausdehnung hätten und schliesslich gar keine mehr (107; 550).

In the most ingenious way the Egyptian sages interpret the symbol of the triangle in Mann's sense of reconciliation with life and simultaneously in the sense of the gnostic wish for its extinction. At the same time Mann balances the "science" of the triangle with the tale of the sphere and the story of "Geist," "Seele" und "Materie," which are also gnostic in origin.¹⁴⁶

In the all-important recognition scene between Joseph and his brothers, the triangle becomes on a very concrete level a double symbol of reconciliation. First, Joseph approaches his treacherous brothers " . . . im Geiste des Dreiecks und der Versöhnung" and secondly, the tables are set in a "Dreiecksraum" and Joseph, sitting at a corner becomes the connecting link between the eternally hostile factions of Hebrews and Arabs:

Die Anordnung war so, dass zwischen den umlaufenden Säulen des Ägyptischen Saales die Speiseplatten in einem offenen Triangel standen, dessen Spitze der Tisch des Gastgebers bildete. Rechts von ihm reihten die Tische der einheimischen Herren und links von ihm die der asiatischen Fremden sich schräge dahin, so dass er beiden vorsaß und rechter Hand den Propheten des Ptach, zu seiner Linken aber den Benjamin hatte (108; 1237-38).

The structural design of the triangle appears prominently and in utter symmetry throughout the entire work, displaying Mann's almost uncanny sense of balance. The Bible story itself yields many trilateral situations, such as the triangle of Potiphar, Joseph and Mut.

The story of reconciliation between "Geist," "Seele" and "Materie" (106; 28ff) is the beginning of the constantly reappearing structural design of the triangle. The tale is succeeded by a triangular situation of contention and strife, where the brothers sell Joseph to the Ismalites (106; 477ff). Next follows the science of the "Dreieck der Versöhnung" taught by the sages of On (107; 550-51), which in its turn is succeeded by another triangle of strife, formed by Potiphar, Joseph and Mut (107; 945ff). The last triangular situation of recognition and reconciliation takes place in the "Dreiecksraum" in Joseph's house where he forms the apex of the open triangle between Hebrews and Egyptians.

The above examples could be augmented by countless others, as, for example, the triangle "der heiligen Dreieheit, des Vaters, der Mutter und des Sohnes," (107; 928)

the triangle of deceit formed by Leha, Jaakob and Joseph, or the triangle of love between Jaakob, Joseph and Rahel; and there is also the triangular situation between the dwarf Dûdu, Joseph and Mut, based on suspicion and hostility.

The tetralogy begins and ends in the spirit of reconciliation, symbolized by the "Dreieck der Versöhnung," which is also present in the Jaakob-Joseph-brothers constellation at Jaakob's funeral. The triangle has neither beginning nor end and thus expresses the "zeitlose Gegenwart."

The external organization of the work also reinforces this aspect. The tetralogy is arranged in four parts, all of which are divided into seven chapters. Mann calls these chapters "Hauptstücke," a phrase that indicates a superlative, so that all "Hauptstücke" must have the same importance. Mann obviously alludes to the seven days of the creation, when he arranges each part of the novel into seven divisions. Since all four parts of the novel end with either a death or a death-like situation, implying the eternal sameness of death and rebirth, Mann is able to mirror the concept of timeless present even in the external organization of the work.

The internal trilateral design is also evident in the external arrangement of the tetralogy, where it forms an inverted open triangle. Both the Geschichten Jaakobs and Joseph, der Ernährer have a "Vorspiel." "Höllenfahrt," the prologue to the Geschichten Jaakobs, leads the novel downwards to the questionable beginnings of man, and

"Vorspiel in Oberen Rängen" leads it upward to his equally questionable future. "Höllenfahrt" displays no evidence of either devil or hell, but in "Vorspiel in Oberen Rängen" Samiel seems to be the protagonist. The apex of this triangle is formed by Joseph in Ägypten, the part of the work Mann considers its unquestionable crown (Höhepunkt des Werkes" 119; 365). The triangle is open and thus parallels the open situation in the "Dreiecksraum" of Joseph's palast, where Joseph forms its apex between Hebrew and Egyptian. The open side of the triangles seems to imply that only the future time can provide a unifying component, for " . . . alle Hoffnung heisst Zeit" (119; 364).

7. Distance - The Narrator

Together with the theme of "zeitlose Gegenwart," the narrator's position in the tetralogy reinforces the triangular paradigm of the novel. He is posited on the apex of the triangle, the master of any situation " . . . denn im Wort . . . ist Herrschaft und Überblick" (107; 677). That Mann regards Joseph in Ägypten the apex of the tetralogy seems to indicate that he treats here the most essential issues of the novel with the greatest possible skill. The nucleus of the biblical tale is the particular "Heimsuchung" of Mut, which, considered from Mann's far-reaching perspective, becomes the symbol for the "Heimsuchung" of human endeavor in general.

The narrator imitates Mann's sense of place; he becomes the figure on the see-saw and is thus simultaneously attached to and distant from, the story he tells. He focuses on the most minute details and then looks at them from the greatest distance, in the process changing the meaning of the details. The narrator anticipates the reader's possible objection to this procedure and in order to clarify his position he compares himself to the God of Abraham.

Wie aber ist es mit Gott, den Abram hervordachte und erkannte? Er ist im Feuer, aber er ist nicht das Feuer. Er ist also zugleich in ihm und ausser ihm. Es ist freilich zweierlei: ein Ding sein und es betrachten. Und doch gibt es Ebenen und Sphären, wo beides auf einmal statthat: der Erzähler ist zwar in der Geschichte, aber er ist nicht die Geschichte; er ist ihr Raum, aber sie nicht der seine, sondern er ist auch ausser ihr . . . (107; 616).

The place of the god-like narrator is thus established: he is dependent on the reality of the story he tells, but at the same time he looks from afar upon his own narration so that he can perceive sameness in the multitude of contradictory details he observes. For it is the essential attribute of psychical distance that all opposites find their synthesis in its fundamental concept.¹⁴⁷

Pairs of contradictions, such as subjective-objective, individual-typical are, according to Edward Bullough,

. . . the two ingredients [which] have constantly varied in the history of Art; they represent, in fact, two sets of

conditions to which Art has invariably been subject: the personal and the social factors. It is Distance which on one side prevents the emptying of Art of its concreteness and the development of the typical into abstractness; which, on the other, suppresses the directly personal element of its individualism; thus reducing the antitheses to the peaceful interplay of these two factors. It is just this interplay which constitutes the 'antinomy of Distance.'¹⁴⁸

Distanced perspective, therefore does not deprive the individual of his own importance, on the contrary, it adds to his self-comprehension, for man can only understand himself fully in relationship to the whole of existence.

The Marxist philosopher and critic Georg Lukàcs, who obviously does not favor Mann's independent political point of view,¹⁴⁹ recognizes the author's artistic contribution as a "critical realist." He compares it to the "modernist schizophrenia" of Mann's contemporaries, to whom "modernism means not enrichment, but negotiation of art."¹⁵⁰ Lukàcs' appreciation focuses on Mann's distanced perspective, for "It is the perspective, the terminus ad quem, that determines the significance of each element in a work of art."¹⁵¹ In the same essay, titled "Franz Kafka or Thomas Mann?" Lukàcs juxtaposes Mann to the modernist writer who

. . . identifies what is necessarily a subjective experience with reality as such, thus giving a distorted picture of reality as a whole. . . . The realist, with his critical detachment, places

what is a significant, specifically modern experience in a wider context, giving it only the emphasis it deserves as part of a greater, objective whole.¹⁵²

Critical detachment seems a useful term in a comparison with the utterly subjective involvement of Kafka.

The narrator of the tetralogy is, however, in his own god-like fashion both involved and detached. Mann's detachment is an aesthetic principle of psychical distance, which

. . . does not imply impersonal, purely intellectually interested relations . . . On the contrary, it describes a 'personal' relation, often highly emotionally coloured, but 'of a peculiar character.' Its peculiarity lies in that the personal character of the relation has been, so to speak, filtered. It has been cleared of the practical, concrete nature of its appeal, without, however, thereby losing its original constitution.¹⁵³

There is certainly nothing impersonal in the attitude of the tetralogy's narrator towards his audience. In fact the whole production of "Gottestheaterspielen" (107; 933) is for the benefit of an appreciative audience, whose applause the narrator needs and seeks.¹⁵⁴ The narrator does his very best to evoke the interest and imagination of his listeners. "Höchlich ist es uns darum zu tun, jedermann zur lebendig-wirklichen Einbildung anzuhalten" (106; 430-31). Reinhard Baumgart demonstrates how Mann's narrator, using many exclamations, asides and questions, moves into the center of an imagined audience, so that he becomes the mediator between author and listener, as

well as between story and audience.¹⁵⁵

The narrator strengthens the relation with Mann's "Hörerschaft" by continuously asking questions such as "Wohin soll das führen?", as if hoping to solve the problems of mankind with the listener's help and to the mutual satisfaction of both parties. The work opens with questions: "Tief ist der Brunnen der Vergangenheit. Sollte man ihn nicht unergründlich nennen? . . . Wo liegen die Anfangsgründe der menschlichen Gesittung?" (106; 5,17).

The narrator is contemporaneous with each person he describes, and at the same time with the person's past and future. He portrays, for example, Joseph " . . . den wir hier in Wirklichkeit vor uns sehen" and he contrasts Joseph's "Gegenwart in Fleisch und Blut" with its rendition in "Lied und Legende" (106; 49). On the other hand the narrator frequently refers to Rahel's "heilige Rolle" as "Sternenjungfrau und Mutter des heiligen Himmelsknaben" (106; 276), prefiguring in the person of Joseph the future coming of Christ.

The narrator treats his public with utmost respect, and he anticipates its worries: "Hegt irgend jemand die geringste Besorgnis . . .? . . . Nun seid ihr getröbet" (108; 1299, 988). But he also educates his audience to recognize his own objectivity:

Wiederholt sei hier davon abgemahnt, die Jaakobssöhne für besonders verhärtete Burschen zu halten und ihnen jedwede Teilnahme zu entziehen: selbst die partei-lichste Schwäche für Joseph . . . sollte

sich vor so einseitiger Stellungnahme hüten (106; 445).

Seemingly wishing to foreshorten his distance from the audience, the narrator frequently includes himself in the question. He asks, for example, "Kennen wir denn dergleichen?" (106; 37).

Baumgart shows that this audience-oriented technique is highly questionable. The narrator's professed sympathy and concern for the audience are the precondition for his distanced perspective. For questions and exclamation do not belong to the story itself and indicate therefore the ironically removed attitude of the middle-man and narrator toward the story as well as the listener.¹⁵⁶ Distance affords the objectivity which makes the precarious balancing act of the narrator possible. He is the middle man between author and audience, mediator between Mann and his protagonists, between story and listener; the narrator is the personified "Geist der Erzählung," a character in his own right.¹⁵⁷

But he is frequently also the direct spokesman of the author, whose voice implements Mann's aesthetic views. Mann writes that it is the artist's task to mediate between "Idee und Erscheinung, Geist und Sinnlichkeit" (114; 255).¹⁵⁸

In the Betrachtungen Mann describes as the aim of all art the "Vertilgung des Stoffes durch die Form" (116; 225). The narrator of the tetralogy seems most closely to approximate this goal. The subject matter (Stoff) of a work of art, is, like any other phenomenon, confined to the framework of time and place. In order

to dissolve the Stoff Mann tries to remove it from the confinement of time, since he cannot possibly suspend it from place without entirely destroying the dependence on its given reality. Mann describes the Zauberberg as a work that is

. . . selbst das, wovon es erzählt; denn indem es die hermetische Verzauberung seines jungen Helden ins Zeitlose schildert, strebt es selbst durch seine künstlerischen Mittel die Aufhebung der Zeit an durch den Versuch, der musikalisch-ideellen Gesamtwelt, die es umfasst, in jedem Augenblick volle Präsenz zu verleihen und ein magisches 'nunc stans' herzustellen.¹⁵⁹

He stresses the relationship between the Zauberberg and the tetralogy, and in many respects the latter is an enlarged and intensified version of the former. This is most apparent in the intensification of the magic "nunc stans."

In the tetralogy time and place frequently are interchangeable as in the Zauberberg.¹⁶⁰ "Menfe lag zurück nebst dem Tage, an dem sie von dort gesehelt" (107; 573) is but one of the many examples of the equalization and interchangeability of time and place in the tetralogy. The narrator tries to confuse the commonly accepted differences between time and space, thus apparently establishing indivisible unity between them.

At the beginning of the tetralogy Eliezer explains to Joseph that the borders of the universe are not spatial, but temporal. The world has " . . . vier Seiten . . . : Morgen, Abend, Mittags und Mitternacht" (106; 26). The

narrator reminds us that time is merely a frame, and within its space there is a " . . . gewaltiges Filigran von Leben, an Vorkommnissen Überreich . . . ein Filigran aus Denken, Fühlen, Tun und Geschehen . . ." (106; 201). Time is thus shown as a passive entity; but it is also portrayed as the cannibalistic god Kronos who devours his own children (106; 143). In this portrait time becomes the powerful antagonist of the power of space, "Raumesmacht." Joseph speaks of the "Not des Wortes, das der Zeit gehört und verwiesen ist aufs Nacheinander" (108; 1076). The same goes for any matter which occupies, occupied, or ever will occupy space; it is by necessity subject to time and will eventually be destroyed by it. The wise old man who buys Joseph from his brothers explains this to Juda: "Man müsse sich im Schreiten wie in der Ruhe . . . ohne jede Ungeduld der Zeit Überlassen, dass diese den Raum Überwinde. Irgendwann einmal, und schliesslich ehe man's gedacht, bringe sie es fertig" (106; 451). Naphtali, characterized by his "Boteninstinkt, Melde- und Kommunikationsbedürfnis" considers space his personal enemy:

Der Raum und seine trennende Natur beherrschte Naphtali's Vorstellung. Er betrachtete ihn als seinen vertrautesten Feind und die eigene Person als das berufene Mittel zu seiner Überwindung, nämlich zur Aufhebung der durch ihn bewirkten Unterschiede im Wissen der Menschen (106; 366).

Naphtali, the compulsive runner, tries to overcome space by speed, but he is only as successful as his long legs permit. After the brothers had thrown Joseph into

the pit, each was thinking of the far-away Jaakob. Naphtali felt for the first time " . . . den trennenden und in Unwissenheit haltenden Raum als grossen Segen. Die Raumesmacht jedoch, das begriffen alle, würde nicht aufrechtzuhalten sein" (106; 418).

It seems typical of Mann's technique that the narrator discusses Naphtali's modern notions of time and space in the "mythical" part of the novel and not in the "rational" Egyptian part, where they belonged if the novel were strictly directed upward. This becomes clear when the narrator describes the acuity of the sages at On, who " . . . zuerst die Zeit geteilt und gemessen und den Kalender verfasst, . . . denn vordem hatten die Menschen in blinder Zeitlosigkeit, masslos und unaufmerksam dahingelebt" (107; 549-50).

The mythical, a-rational aspect of the tetralogy is also stressed in the story of Beti, which the Egyptian prison commander, Mai-Sachme tells Joseph and the wardens. Mai-Sachme's three love affairs, with a mother, a daughter and a dream, reiterate the totality of the entire work. For the commander's "alles ableuchtende Erzählung" (108; 788) illustrates the coalescence of dream and reality and of time and place. This coalescence is the theme of the tetralogy and at the same time the essence of mythopoeic thought.¹⁶¹ This way of thinking is according to the narrator of the tetralogy, the only bond between Joseph and Mut:

So drückte ihre Liebe sich aus, in diese Sprache flüchtete sie, - die Sprache des

Raumes und der Zeit, die ihnen beiden, der Ägypterin und dem ebräischen Knaben, gemeinsam waren. Wie hätte er sie nicht verstehen sollen? (107; 838).

Mann invents the term "Zeitentiefe" (107; 809), which is temporal and spatial at the same time; this phrase seems to establish a truce between the two antagonistic concepts, but as far as the tetralogy is concerned, this truce, too, is questionable. In "Meeresfahrt," written during the years of the Joseph novel, Mann contemplates a change in the relationship between time and place.

Gut Ding will Weile haben. Auch gross Ding will das, anders gesagt: der Raum will seine Zeit. Dass eine Art von Hybris, etwas Frevelhaftes darin liegt, ihm eine Dimension zu stehlen oder sie ihm zu verkümmern, nämlich die ihm natürlich verbundene Zeit, ist mir ein vertrautes Gefühl (114; 169).

The great achievement of the tetralogy seems to be that Mann does accomplish the impossible, that he does in fact steal time from place. His narrator, who is inside the story and describes it simultaneously from a very great distance, gives the reader the

. . . unverhoffte Gelegenheit, Joseph, Jaakobs Sohn, mit eigenen Augen im Mondschein am Brunnen sitzen zu sehen und seine leibhaftige Gegenwart, anziehend, wenn auch menschlich mangelhaft, wie sie ist, mit dem idealischen Ruhm zu vergleichen, den die Jahrtausende um seine Gestalt gewoben haben (114; 181-2).

This close view of Joseph momentarily eclipses the thousands of years which life has thrust between the

Bible-story and the present reader. While in the reality of history, time eventually conquers and destroys all human endeavors, in the realm of art the "Zauberer" outwits time and indeed projects the notion of Schopenhauer's "nunc stans" in the concept of "zeitlose Gegenwart."

Distance is thus the means to establish balance, but also to suspend it, for in the tetralogy the balance between, and the interchangeability of time and place, which were apparent in the Zauberberg, are questionable, since the concept of time is completely abolished; it becomes the victim of the "Raumesmacht" of place.

It becomes increasingly apparent that the narrator of the tetralogy uses his distant position in a manner similar to that of a cameraman, alternating between close-ups and distance shots, zooming back and forth between the two.¹⁶² The narrator focuses sharply on a face or figure, leaving the background unclear; then, almost imperceptibly changing the depth of field, he illuminates the large panorama of the scenery, bringing its smallest detail to the reader's attention. Like the great modern photographer, the narrator is able, by focusing on a particular, to project its symbolic value. An apparently superfluous aside of the narrator, which refers to a specific situation or person, can thus express the general theme of the novel.

The narrator asks, for example, the listener's indulgence for Mut's irrational and self-destructive behavior, and he phrases this aside in such a way that it concerns not only Mut, but the irrational and self-destructive behavior of all men at all times:

Dem Betrachter, der die Geschichte kennt
in allen ihren Stunden, sei es verziehen,
wenn er bei der Unwissenheit derer, die
in der Geschichte sind und nicht auch
ausser ihr, einen Augenblick mit Kopf-
schütteln verweilt (107; 620).

Constantly standing in this manner between audience and story, the reader is never allowed to forget the perpetual presence of the narrator, who thus mirrors once more the concept of the timeless present.

This temporal term apparently expresses Thomas Mann's perception of existence. For the reader of the tetralogy "zeitlose Gegenwart" becomes primarily a spatial concept, for he can only understand its philosophical meaning through the pictures the narrator creates for him from his distanced position.

IV.

DEPENDENCE AND FREEDOM:
THE SETTINGS OF THE TETRALOGY

8. Dependence

Dependence is both the first and the third building block in Mann's technique. Mann's artistic orientation relies on the realities of life and that of particular works, for example, the Joseph-novel, upon the Bible. Dependence on myth, as I shall try to show, becomes supportive in a personal as well as in an artistic sense; it leads to the notion of imitation and the theater, which are in turn closely related to Mann's personal reality. Much of this is expressed through the settings of the tetralogy and in the way they are used. Since they are historically given, the settings serve well to analyze the unique interplay of dependence and freedom which characterizes the Joseph novels and Mann's sense of place.

The tetralogy is a "Tempeltheater" created by means of " . . . humoristisch genaue Verwirklichung des Unwirklichen durch Inszenierung und Erörterung" (119; 36). The mimetic aspects of the theater and its vocabulary appear throughout Mann's fictional oeuvre, with the exception of some stories which deal directly with the inimitable fact of death. In the tetralogy, however, where Mann's theatrical sense reaches its pinnacle,¹⁶³

the concept of death supplies the countless metaphors for imitation which control the work. Death appears in the guise of a sorcerer (106; 373), or as the torn god, as decay, deceit and disorder, as the "Totenreich" of Egypt, or in the form of the pit, the prison and the grave. Yet metaphors of death never represent only themselves but are always double images of death and rebirth. Mann deprives death of its grim finality, for here it appears not as inimitable fact, but as a process which perpetually repeats itself as a part of, and a condition for, the subsequent recreation of things.

The circle of eternal death and rebirth is the basis on which the "Tempeltheater" is built. This attitude towards death is quite different from the early work, where, for example, in Tristan (1903) death and birth, personified in Gabriele and her baby, appear as enemies. The baby and its eerie laughter symbolize the sinister victory of life over death, for Gabriele becomes ill and dies as result of the baby's birth.

And yet in the Buddenbrooks, which precedes Tristan by three years, the recognition of death as part of the eternal process of "Imitation und Nachfolge," evident in Thomas Buddenbrook's Schopenhauer encounter, ends for him the notion of the finality of death. He joyfully recognizes the ruling principle of "Imitation und Nachfolge" which seems to point directly to the expression of this idea in the tetralogy.

The concept of "Vertauschung und Stellvertretung" suffuses the personal and artistic realities of Thomas

Mann. I have demonstrated that the notion of interchangeability is an intrinsic part of Thomas Mann's artistic creation.¹⁶⁴ "Vertauschung und Stellvertretung" is the nucleus of Mann's technique, which unifies its building blocks of balance, distance, and dependence. It is related to balance, for the thing or idea to be exchanged ought to be of equal volume and weight. The concept is related to distance, for only a very distanced perspective realizes the basic sameness of things. "Vertauschung und Stellvertretung" are also related to dependence, for they are contingent on a given form or model.

In the tetralogy this concept as such and also in its relationship to personal and fictional reality is intensified; while imitation is only one important aspect of the earlier works, it becomes the basic orientation in the Joseph-novel. Mann handles the three building blocks of his technique here with such virtuosity that it seems in a way preposterous to associate this artistic "tour de force" with his childhood and the games he played as a boy. Yet Hans Wysling confirms the close relationship between child and artist; in "Mythos und Psychologie bei Thomas Mann" Wysling sees the author as a member of a generation of writers for whom mythology becomes a support and salvation. The basic experience of this generation includes the fluctuations of all values, which results in a child-like "Labilität des Ich." Wysling perceives in the young Thomas Mann a pronounced need for this kind of support, which he substantiates

with one of Thomas Mann's rare poems. "Monolog" (1899) starts with the following verse:

Ich bin ein kindischer und schwacher Fant,
Und irrend schweift mein Geist in alle Runde,
Und schwankend fass' ich jede starke Hand.¹⁶⁵

Wysling recognizes this necessity in the dreamy yet conscious play with the given form, which the young Thomas Mann encounters in fairy tales and in Wagner's epic, and the mature artist in ancient myth.¹⁶⁶

Mann himself tells the reader that, as a boy, he preferred mythological tales to those of cowboys and indians.¹⁶⁷ The child's first acquaintance with myth came from Bible stories which his mother read to him along with Andersen's and the Grimm's fairy tales. The boy Thomas also read the fairy tales of Perrault, and the then quite popular Der Kinder Wundergarten; he knew also Nösselt's book of mythology, which his mother had used in her school days.¹⁶⁸ His love of fairy tales is recognizable in many of the earlier works, such as Der Kleiderschrank and Tristan, and of course in the Zauberberg. These works are either structured like fairy tales or allude to them. Herbert Lehnert has analyzed Mann's relationship to myth in the earlier works,¹⁶⁹ and Wysling demonstrates the balance in this regard within the body of Mann's artistic oeuvre.

In the earlier works Mann takes an individual, place, or situation - for example, Aschenbach in Der Tod in Venedig - and transports it to a mythical plane, merely as "episch-plastisches Substrat," as means for pictorializing

his ideas. In the later works, most prominently in the Joseph novels, Mann chooses a mythical subject for its own sake and treats it on the psychological level.¹⁷⁰

Mythos affords support for the writer who lives in a time of transition. Yet the law of balance, which seems to govern every aspect of Thomas Mann, appears even in this connection. While he found support in the father figures of mythology he became himself a supportive father figure for the "Waisenkinder" of the German immigration, whom he protected and frequently rescued from despair with his personal moral strength.¹⁷¹

Conscious of the lack of originality inherent in the choice of a mythical subject, Mann nonetheless does not consider this a detriment to artistic success. On the contrary, he enjoys the challenge of testing his artistic skill in the recreation of the old.¹⁷²

A mythical scaffolding has supported countless artists through the ages, so that the writer's treatment of myth must display a particular kind of originality in order to succeed in yet another reproduction of the same model. Mann's uniqueness consists not in the "what" of the subject, but in the "how" of his language. The narrator of the tetralogy, who anticipates the reader's reaction, expresses Mann's view on the topic.

Man meine doch nicht, dass wir stumpf
 seien gegen den schwebenden Tadel, der,
 ausgesprochen oder nicht, nur etwa aus
 Höflichkeit verschwiegen sich gegen
 diesen unseren ganzen Vortrag, unsere
 Auseinandersetzung mit der Geschichte

richtet, dahingehend, in der Bündigkeit,
 worin sie an ihrem Ur-Orte erscheine,
 sei sie gar nicht zu übertreffen und
 unser ganzes, nun schon so lang hin-
 laufendes Unternehmen verlorene Müh.
 Seit wann aber, darf man fragen,
 nimmt ein Kommentar den Wettstreit
 mit seinem Texte auf? Und dann: Kommt
 nicht der Erörterung des 'Wie' soviel
 Lebenswürde und -wichtigkeit zu wie
 der Überlieferung des 'Dass'? Ja,
 erfüllt sich das Leben nicht recht
 erst im 'Wie'? (107; 748).

Mann thus transforms through language the personal dependence on myth into independence of the writer, or rather he balances the latter with the former. If Mann's "labiles Ich" depends on the form of fairy tale and myth in the early works, the mature artist balances and overcomes this dependence through the playful superiority of his style.¹⁷³ The magic of the word itself is for the narrator of the tetralogy more powerful than the work's dependence on myth. For the magic affords a special kind of freedom which no one seems able to share with the writer.

In the tetralogy, the old man, bargaining with Juda for the slave Joseph, stresses the importance of this freedom: "Wahr ist's: Alle Stände der Menschen werden regiert, nur der Schreiber aus dem Bücherhaus, er regiert selbst und braucht nicht zu schuftten" (106; 456). This exemplifies how Mann transforms dependence on myth and history into the independence of fiction by the use of allusion and half-fact. Mann's belief in the power of

the written word coincides with its appreciation by the ancient Egyptians, which sometimes borders on presumptuousness. The above quotation seems to allude to the following lines of the Aton Hymn, which Mann changes and uses in an altogether different context. In these lines one scribe admonishes a colleague for his arrogance.

"I am astonished when thou sayest: 'I am more profound as a scribe than heaven, or earth, or the underworld!'

. . . The house of books is concealed and invisible . . ." 174

The above quotations partially express Mann's own opinion and partially its opposite. While he strongly believed in the power of the word, he considered writing a difficult, even exhausting task, which he has symbolized in Aschenbach's clenched fist.

For Mann writing means neither dependence on a given reality nor inventing one. It means to find a higher reality which depends on and at the same time transcends reality: "Dichten heisst die Wirklichkeit erfinden."¹⁷⁵

Myth offers Mann the possibility to make operative the sense of imitation, which in his case seems to be inborn. For imitation, like mythology, has personal connotations for Thomas Mann. He remarks in 1926: "Sonderbare und fast geheimnisvolle Beziehungen, Verwandtschaften, Duplizitäten gibt es im Menschlichen über Räume und Rassen hinweg" (119; 151). Except for the omission of the time component this statement could refer to Thomas Mann and Joseph.

Some aspects of Mann's life coincide so strikingly

with the life of the mythical Joseph, that the former actually seems to imitate the latter: both men were born in middle terrains connecting East and West, both were off-spring of a native father and a foreign mother, and both married women outside their own religious heritages with whom they led successful, conventional married lives.¹⁷⁶ Both men were victimized by, and victorious over, their hateful barbaric brothers. While Mann was not, like Joseph, physically pushed into the depth of a well, his German brothers certainly pushed him into the depth of mental despair.¹⁷⁷ Both men were forced to live in exile and both were immensely popular in their adopted countries, and Joseph and Mann admired and simultaneously rejected the achievements of these countries.¹⁷⁸ While Joseph fought famine and provided bread for his hungry world, Mann fought Hitler and sustained his world with his great art. The achievements are comparable, for even today some very modern science-oriented thinkers maintain that "art is a necessity" without which human progress is not possible.¹⁷⁹ Both lives ended on a note of reconciliation and resignation; Joseph was reconciled with his brothers, but he did not receive his father's blessing, as Thomas Mann, finally reconciled with Germany, never received there the general recognition of Kafka or Brecht.¹⁸⁰

Mann's innate sense of imitation finds its grandest expression in the tetralogy. In "Kinderspiele" (1904) he mentions among other beloved toys " . . . Kornspeicher genau von der Art derer, die meinem Vater drunten an der

Trave gehörten - es fehlten nicht die Säcke und Ballen, die man emporwinden konnte" (119; 7). Considering the long roots and the homogeneity of Mann's ideas it is perhaps not too far fetched to associate these imitation silos with the "Kornspeicher" of the tetralogy.¹⁸¹ The relationship between his favorite toy, the puppet theatre, and Mann's entire artistic oeuvre is much more obvious.¹⁸² But the boy Thomas did not need puppets in order to play his favorite game:

Aber ich darf sagen, ich bedurfte zum Spielen des Apparates nicht, sondern war mir mit stiller Genugtuung der unabhängigen Kraft meiner Phantasie bewusst, die nichts mir rauben konnte. Ich erwachte zum Beispiel eines Morgens mit dem Entschluss, heute ein achtzehnjähriger Prinz namens Karl zu sein. Ich kleidete mich in eine gewisse lebenswürdige Hoheit und ging umher, stolz und glücklich mit dem Geheimnis meiner Würde. . . . Übrigens brauchte es nicht immer ein Prinz zu sein, meine Rollen wechselten häufig (119; 8-9).

I have shown above that the play urge in the boy Thomas coincided with and was imitated by the aesthetic point of view of the mature writer.¹⁸³ Mann himself seems to agree with Freud's theory of the infantile character of the artist. But Freud's slightly derogative opinion becomes in Thomas Mann, at least where Joseph is concerned, a positive statement. Freud has unmasked the fact that in a psychological sense "Zustossen" is the same as "Machen;" bad fortune does not thrust itself on man, but man thrusts himself into misfortune. Joseph, the artist,

plays with this psychological insight and also with the myth men have built around it: this "Geheimnis wird leicht, spielhaft, künstlerisch, heiter, ja spiefelfechterisch und eulenspiegelhaft in Joseph; es offenbart in ihm seine 'infantile' Natur . . ." (114; 221-29). Mann, interpreting and/or using Freud for his own artistic purpose, continues:

Infantilismus . . . welch eine Rolle spielt dies echt psychoanalytische Element im Leben von uns allen . . . und zwar gerade und vornehmlich in der Form der mythischen Identifikation, des Nachlebens, des In-Spuren-Gehens! Die Vaterbindung, Vaternachahmung, das Vaterspiel und seine Übertragungen auf Vaterersatzbilder höherer und geistiger Art - wie bestimmend, wie prägend und bildend wirken diese Infantilismen auf das individuelle Leben ein! Ich sage: "bildend;" denn die lustigste, freudigste Bestimmung dessen, was man Bildung nennt, ist mir allen Ernstes diese Formung und Prägung durch das Bewunderte und Geliebte, durch die kindliche Identifikation mit einem aus innerster Sympathie gewählten Vaterbilde (114; 229).

Joseph's 'play' operates therefore also on a conscious level, for he is only too conscious of the choice he has to make in determining his own role and costume. In his pre-cautious way, the seventeen-year-old Joseph teaches his brother Benjamin, "Man muss achtgeben, womit man sich schmückt, und seine Wahl treffen" (106; 331).

Mann seems to combine the two diametrically opposed aspects of the notion of "Imitation und Nachfolge" in the sense of Schopenhauer: schematical recurrence of the procreation urge, shared by all species of life, and in

the particular human sense where man also chooses the model he wants to imitate. Mann balances Schopenhauer's blind will, the "Chimäre sinnlicher Unveränderlichkeit" (107; 555) with human volition and man's ability to choose his role. The narrator of the tetralogy already establishes this balance in "Höllenfahrt," when he says: "Die Geschichte des Menschen ist älter als die materielle Welt, die seines Willens Werk ist, älter als das Leben, das auf seinem Willen steht" (106; 27).

Mann uses "will" in both its opposed meanings, establishing in this way once more his middle position.

Another aspect of imitation is the artistic device of interchanging theme and figures from earlier works to the Joseph-novel and from the tetralogy to later creations. Self-imitation and self-citation in Thomas Mann are discussed in several critical works. Mann himself stresses the Zauberberg; he also considers imitations, the concept of "Wiederholung des Lebens," a main theme of Lotte in Weimar.¹⁸⁴ Käthe Hamburger sees in Vertauschte Köpfe and Der Erwählte prominent relationships to the Joseph novel,¹⁸⁵ and Hans Wysling adds Doktor Faustus.¹⁸⁶ There seems to be an important parallel to Aschenbach, which I shall discuss later, and there is of course Felix Krull,¹⁸⁷ a work which shows a close relationship between Joseph and Felix.

Both novels deal in different ways with the illusionary character of existence. The world is for Joseph and Felix a stage where both very consciously choose and perform their respective roles. Both are "Glückskinder" and

"Lebenskünstler" of similar good looks, charm, discipline and intelligence. Felix is a mundane and Joseph a religious "Hochstapler." Mann had determined Felix's fortune as early as 1910; his life was to include two prison terms with subsequent escapes, which parallel Joseph's symbolic double death and rebirth.¹⁸⁸

The relationship between the novels reflects the see-saw character of Mann's thought-pattern; the tetralogy was written in the middle period between the conception of Felix Krull in 1905¹⁸⁹ and the appearance in 1954 of the unfinished novel, showing how little Mann's essential concept changed during his lifetime.¹⁹⁰

9. "Vertauschung und Stellvertretung"

The notion of imitation is for Mann an indivisible union of personal reality, philosophical orientation and aesthetic point of view. The narrator of the tetralogy expresses the author's mimetic approach when he remarks in answer to his own question:

Darf denn das wohl die Poesie sich herausnehmen, und ist's nicht ein Missbrauch der Gabe, Dinge zu klünden, die gar keinen Bezug haben zum Wirklichen? Einiger Verstand muss doch bei der Schönheit sein, oder sie ist nur ein Spott dem Herzen (108; 1282).

The integration of the personal and the artistic is especially evident in the tetralogy, where Mann seems to imitate a very specific personal experience, projecting

it on to the immensely enlarged screen of myth, thus magnifying the feeling into a statement about general human existence. In "Meeresfahrt" Mann describes how, while crossing the ocean, his thoughts and feelings turned back to Europe while his eyes were directed forward to the United States of America (114; 206). When Mann writes: "Wir wollen auf Deck gehen, um zurückzublicken und vorwärts," (114; 172) he pronounces more or less the formula of the tetralogy, where the narrator, standing above yesterday and tomorrow, looks simultaneously backward and forward in time.

Within the tetralogy Mann employs imitation in its mimetic and in a related metaphorical sense. The phrase "Vertauschung und Stellvertretung" gives a clue to his method. "Vertauschung und Stellvertretung," like "Schema und Plan" may be understood in the same sense, but also as opposed to each other. For "Vertauschung" implies the notion of metamorphosis and/or disorder and deceit, while "Stellvertretung" evokes the connotation of planned formality and order. Mann's self-conscious choice of words reproduces faithfully the movement of the biblical story, in which ordained order seems to be achieved by way of "Täuschung," which has the same root and frequently the same meaning as "Vertauschung," (deceit). Joseph expresses this when he refers to his mother's gown, which was a "Truggewand und ein Kleid der Vertauschung" (107; 668). It was the same dress Leha wore in her deceitful wedding night.

"Stellvertretung" is expressed by the protagonists,

who imitate figures of previous times and/or of different parts of the world. The particular imitations differ from the model yet remain always true to type. The father figures of Isaak, Jaakob, Eliezer, Mai-Sachme, Mont-Kaw and Potiphar, Amenhotep IV, and even Joseph himself, are different in background, occupation, social standing and age, but they all represent authority, wisdom, fairness and kindness. The women Rebecca, Leha, Dina, Tamar and Mut all deceive and/or victimize involuntarily or by design the men involved in their lives. Even Rahel is no exception, for Jaakob was, in his own eyes, a victim of his love for her. The figures perform generally the same functions as their models, as Eliezer, who appears perpetually as servant and sage teacher.

A striking example of Mann's technique, which includes a "unverkennbares Vergnügen daran, die Leute zum Besten zu haben," (115; 261) is the following "straight" but at the same time ironic example of imitation and "Steigerung." The dying superintendant Mont-Kaw relates to Joseph a conversation with Potiphar during which he, Mont-Kaw, had proposed the Hebrew slave as his successor.

"Ja," sprach er, [Potiphar] "schon gut, Mont-Kaw, mein Alter, es ist schon gut. Auf ihn will ich deuten, wenn du wirklich verscheiden solltest . . . er wird mich noch weniger hintergehen als du in deiner Redlichkeit, denn er weiss von Hause aus, was die Sünde ist . . ." (107; 743).

Somewhat later, after Joseph had become Mont-Kaw's successor, Potiphar addresses the Hebrew slave himself, and Joseph

repeats his words to Mut: "'Gut, gut, Osarsiph, mein Freund, es ist schon gut . . . ich nehme an, dass du nicht vorhast, mich zu verkürzen, denn du weisst was die Sünde ist . . .'" (107; 820). Potiphar's almost identical expressions on the same subject, addressed to a man and his successor, and twice related as direct speech, intensify the notion of "Stellvertretung."

Potiphar's words also introduce the new and foreign concept of sin to the pagan world, and show in this manner the development and intensification of human consciousness. In this particular context, however, "Steigerung" is highly suspect. Mont-Kaw the pagan apparently did honestly and by instinct what Joseph had to be taught. What is more, the latter's teacher was the master-thief Jaakob, who stole his father's blessings from Esau. In addition, Potiphar's words, when repeated by Joseph to the seductive Mut, have a new and entirely different connotation, for "sin" alludes here not only to the theft of material goods but to the theft of love as well.

If different figures imitate and substitute each other, identical ideas, principles and objects reappear constantly in different guise. Mann changes them into a profusion of different images, in which the abstract becomes concrete, the natural cultural and vice versa.

The sexual principle, which in the Bible story is confined to the Potiphar-Joseph-Mut triangle, suffuses the entire tetralogy in an intricate profusion of natural and cultural images. The simplest image is the juxtaposition

of the womb-like well, or "Grube," with the tower, which appears as "Ruben-Turm," symbolizing Ruben's virility (107; 632). Associated with Potiphar, the tower becomes a symbol of impotence (107; 667). The Nile river, source of fertility for the Egyptian soil, becomes the essence of male sexual drive in the image of a giant phallus. The androgynous Sphinx, the cultural wonder of Egypt, mysterious, unchanging and so old that it is almost as impossible to determine its beginning as the beginning of mankind itself, becomes the self-created stony essence of sensuality. The "ungeheure Wesen, das immer so dagelegen hatte, so dass kein Mensch zu sagen vermochte, wann und wie es sich aus dem Felsen hervorgetan . . . blickte in wilder und sinnlicher Unveränderlichkeit hoch hinweg . . . Das Rätselhaupt mit . . . der ewigen Stirn, der zerfressenen Nase, die ihm etwas ausgelassenes verlieh" (107; 555-57).

In "On Myself" Mann speaks about his love for relationships which for him are equivalent to the concept of the significant per se: "Beziehung: ich liebe dieses Wort; wenn ich es denke, fällt es mir mit dem Begriff des Bedeutenden zusammen - ja, ich möchte meinen, das Bedeutende sei nichts weiter als das Beziehungsreiche." ¹⁹¹

In the tetralogy Mann establishes relationships which disregard the commonly accepted divisions between the categories of ideas and phenomena, culture and nature; Mut and Joseph are divided from and related to each other and the other figures of the novel by an intricate mirror system of association; they project and reflect child's

play in religious worship, concrete phenomena in abstractions, and the new in the old. Phenomena and ideas, figures and events imitate and change into each other, neither losing their particular identities nor their essential characteristics.

The theme of the tetralogy is "das Problem des Menschen schlechthin."¹⁹² The problem is personified by Joseph, the first artist¹⁹³ and also by Mut in both of whom the primeval endeavors of man are reflected and simultaneously the events of the future prefigured. Joseph's life symbolizes the perpetual principle of death and rebirth, which is expressed in the ancient nature god Tammuz as well as in Christ's death and resurrection. Mann associates Joseph with the fractured, dying and eternally reborn moon, as well as with the circle of death and rebirth of the earth, whose sometimes deceitful character he shares. The narrator refers to the story of Noah and the great flood " . . . damals als . . . selbst die Erde Hurerei trieb und Schwindelhafer hervorbrachte, wenn man Weizen säte . . ." (106; 20), and somewhat later Gad insults his brother Joseph in a similar manner: "Scher dich Laffe und Hürchen, wir brauchen dich nicht" (106; 56). The earth at that time was as idle and deceitful towards men as the idle Joseph was towards his hard-working brothers, whose secrets he betrayed to Jaakob.

Mann also introduces into this analogy the subject of corn, which is so important to the Joseph-story. The relation between the "Hure" earth who deprives the world of food and the "Hürchen" Joseph who provides it,

exemplifies the complex and ironic method of Mann's protean imitation; at the same time this reiterates Mann's basic system of values which posits the conscious action of man above the fortuity of external nature.

In a variation of the same technique, Joseph, who brought the Israelites to Egypt to save their bodies from starvation, becomes the Moses who will lead them from that country to save their spirit from the same fate (107; 591). Joseph imitates the nature god Tammuz, but the narrator also associates Joseph with Homunculus, who is all "Geist" (106; 488). Joseph plays with ". . . allerlei Nachfolge und fromm verblendenden Selbstverwechslungen;" for example, he becomes Jaakob, and Laban changes to Potiphar:

Er war Jaakob, der Vater, eingetreten
ins Labansreich, gestohlen zur Unter-
welt, unmöglich geworden zu Hause,
flüchtig vor Bruderhass, vor des Roten
schnaubendem Eifer auf Segen und Erst-
geburt, -zehnfach wandelte Esau diesmal,
das war eine Abwandlung, und auch Laban
sah etwas anders aus in dieser Gegenwart:
auf feuerwerkenden Rädern und in Königs-
leinen gekleidet war er dahergekommen,
Potiphar, der Rossebändiger, dick, fett
und kühn, dass man um ihn zitterte. Aber
er war es, das litt keinen Zweifel, mochte
das Leben auch mit immer neuen Formen des
Gleichen spielen (107; 614).

These are similar yet different people; they are, however, not invented by Thomas Mann, but described in Genesis. He utilizes them and also given situations to accentuate his point: the same type of men creates essentially the same type of event. Two Hebrews forced by their hostile

brothers to flee their home faithfully serve two pagans in foreign lands. Their motivation is different, however: while Jaakob serves Laban to attain Rahel's love, Joseph serves Potiphar by avoiding Mut's. While Jaakob is hostile and contemptuous toward Laban, Joseph feels kindly and respectful towards Potiphar.

Mut, whom Joseph sees as a "Stück unterweltlicher Hochzivilisation," (107; 619) the symbol of Egypt's beautiful and sophisticated culture, becomes simultaneously the incarnation of primitive sexuality. An invisible cameraman seems to shoot her picture in a series of double and triple exposures; cutting across the different perspectives of several people, he unmasks the frustrated sensuality of the rich and powerful beauty. Mut-em-enet becomes the "Mut-im-Wüstenthal" of passion, and her images frequently reflect its changing character. She becomes the Sphinx who ". . . in wüster Unwandelbarkeit, hinausstarrte in eine Zukunft, wild, tot und bar der Gewährigung, doch Miene machte, die Pranke zu heben und das ratend vor ihr stehende Kind der Verheissung an ihre Brust zu reißen . . ." (107; 849). Mut's image turns into a lisping child-Clytemnestra, intent on killing her husband for the sake of her lover (107; 815), to the "Jammerbild" of a "verschmähte Urschel [und] Schmachtfetzen" (107; 920-21), and back to the picture of the "mondkeusche Priesterin." She is "mother, wife, and sister," twin of Aschenbach (107; 809) in Der Tod in Venedig and also of Diane Houpflé in Felix Krull (107; 812). She is Eve (107; 813), and the "Gottesfrau Em," a lioness and the goddess Isis ". . . fürchterlich

in meiner Liebe" (107; 869). But she is also Potiphar's wife, a great lady " . . . vornehm, überlegen, hochmütig und weltgewandt . . ." (107; 823). Yet for Joseph her elegant beauty is again transformed into the "Hexenschönheit" of Lilith, who is riding on a "Besenstiel . . . zu Berge" to celebrate Walpurgisnight. In order to render Mut even more devilish Mann associates her with Mephisto in his role as black poodle by describing Lilith's beautiful hair (Faust I; 4123) as "schwarzes Pudelhaar" (107; 864-65).¹⁹⁴

Potiphar's wife is the personification of sexual desire, which does not find its match in Joseph, who, no matter for how many reasons, seems to have remained (like Hans Castorp) a virgin for too long. At the time of his wedding to Mut's counterpart, the sexless "Mädchen," Joseph remembers Potiphar's wife as a "Schlange, die ihn für ihr Leben gern gelehrt hätte, was sehr, sehr gut ist, aber böse. Er aber widerstand ihr und hatte die Kunst, zu warten bis es gut war und nicht mehr böse" (108; 1131).

The metamorphoses of the "Gottesfrau" Mut are reminiscent of that part in Kafka's Trial, in which the painter Tintorelli transforms a picture of the goddess of justice first into the goddess of victory and then into the goddess of the hunt. The reader of both novels is actually present and watching while these changes occur. In The Trial they are performed by the painter himself, who stands only an arm's length away from his canvas, so that the transformation of justice into persecution becomes an entirely subjective statement made from a very close

range. Mut's metamorphoses, on the other hand, are produced by an imagined cameraman, who can focus on his subject from close range or from far away. He shoots Mut's pictures from at least five different angles, projecting the narrator's, Joseph's, her in-laws, Tabubu's and Mut-em-enet's own point of view. Tintorelli works in pastels, which are, as he explains: ". . . really unsuited for this kind of thing,"¹⁹⁵ meaning that this medium only allows changes while the work is in progress. Once the pictorial statement is made, it cannot be changed, short of destroying the canvas. The film-maker, on the other hand, can dissolve from one image to another, voiding his original statement. Thus the various images of Mut as the prototype of aggressive sensuality are subsequently voided when she, an ironic figure, reappears as the "Brautmutter" at Joseph's wedding (108; 1138). Her picture as a great lady is restored when Potiphar's wife, clad in a sedate dark dress, gives the bride away in marriage.

I have demonstrated above that the symbol of the triangle is not superimposed on, but rather is intrinsic to the biblical story on which the tetralogy is based. Mann displays the same kind of verisimilitude in the treatment of animal imagery. The image of the cow with which Mann produces the most hilarious effects, is indigenous to Egyptian myth, one of which recounts that the

. . . sun god Rē became tired of humanity, so he seated himself upon the sky-goddess Nūt, who changed herself into a huge cow standing

four square over the earth. Since
then the sun has been in the sky.¹⁹⁶

Mut-em-enet is a name derived from a goddess of procreation called Mut, meaning mother, who is related to Hathor, the holy cow.¹⁹⁷

In the tetralogy the narrator relates Mut's painful and jealous love to the Greek myth of Io, whom her lover Zeus transformed into a cow to save her from Hera's wrath (107; 811). The appearance of Echnaton's mother Eset and her children evokes the enthusiastic exclamations of her people "'Eset! Eset! Mut! Himmlische Mutterkuh! Gottesgebärerin! Die du den Palast mit Liebe füllst, süsse Hathor, erbarme dich unser!'" (107; 726). Potiphar's frustrated and barren wife becomes a comic and ironical figure when addressed in the same manner.

In Egyptian myth the cow is analogous to the mother-earth, in fact to the procreative aspect of woman. Mann's ambiguous relation to the female sex finds its most humorous expression in the exploitation of this image in the tetralogy. As usual he is not satisfied to use the *donnée* as such, e.g. to relate the cow-metaphor to woman only. He succeeds in establishing the unlikely symbolic connection between the proverbially stupid, contented cow and Jaakob, who is the novel's personification of the restless intellect or "Geist." The cow is, however, also a strong, fertile and life-sustaining animal, and Jaakob was a strong, virile man, who sired countless sons and who had lifted with Herculean strength the gigantic stone from Laban's well (106; 172). Furthermore, Jaakob has

great capacity for love, which Mann seems to consider a female prerogative. He remains, therefore, in the realm of psychological verisimilitude when he extends the cow imagery to Jaakob and Joseph. In order to express Joseph's failure to communicate from Egypt with his father the narrator says:

Das Kalb blökte nicht, es verhielt sich
totenstill und liess die Kuh nicht
wissen, auf welchen Acker der Mann es
gebracht, . . . notgedrungen hielt
die Kuh ihr Kalb für tot und zerrissen
(107; 715).

The cow appears as Anup's mother whose "kuhwarme Güte" and "dumpfe Gleichmut" provokes her jackal-headed son to complain about her: "Sie hätte nicht meine Mutter sein sollen, . . . sie war die Unrechte. Die Nacht war schuld. Sie ist eine Kuh, es ist ihr alles einerlei" (106; 215). But the "bezwingende Hathor," the holy cow symbolizes also the "Liebesherrin" who is the escort of the sun, and the ladies of Egypt beautify themselves in her honor by wearing cow horns (107; 703). Jaakob's unlikely comparison of Rahel the "Rechte" to a cow is thus as flattering as Anup's complaint is insulting. Jaakob gallantly tells Rahel that ". . . sie sei reizend wie Hathor von Ägypterland, wie Eset, schön wie eine junge Kuh" (106; 192).

Mann's sense of balance is evident in even the smallest and relatively unimportant detail, and so is his sense of humor. The "Zauberer" does not hesitate to associate the beautiful Mut with the grotesque hippopotamus, whose female half is in German a "Nilpferdkuh" (107; 653), a term

which provides additional connotations for the cow image. However, even this apparent joke is based on Egyptian myth, for the cow-horned goddess Hathor also appears as a hippopotamus.¹⁹⁸

Hans Wysling has demonstrated that Mann often bases his novels on several "Handlungssubstrate."¹⁹⁹ This observation can be extended to the imagery of the novel. Mann manages to relate the emblem of the cow simultaneously to a children's game and to some of Goethe's most profound thoughts. Before Faust begins his mysterious descent to the "Mothers" of all creation Mephisto tells him

Versinke denn! Ich könnt
auch sagen: steige!
's ist einerlei. (6274-6).

Using his customary technique Mann clearly imitates these lines, reproducing them in an entirely different context. He associates this philosophical idea with the game of "Blinde Kuh" which German children play to this day.

. . . hinab oder hinauf, wie man es nehmen und nennen will. Denn wie so vieles hier ihn verwirren wollte, so war's eine Wirrnis auch mit dem 'Hinauf' und 'Hinab'. . . . Das war, als sei's auf Verwirrung angelegt wie im Spiel, wenn man den um die Augen Verbundenen ein paarmal um sich selber dreht, damit er nicht mehr wisse, wie ihm der Kopf steht und wo vorn und hinten (107; 545).

Mann employs different substrata of imagery in yet another connection. The multi-faceted cow is not the only animal through which he renders pictures of the female sex.

There is the snake, the biblical symbol of female carnality and also the symbol of the Egyptian goddess Isis; and the goose, which is another mythical image. Mann utilizes the former throughout Joseph in Ägypten. He introduces the snake in the second "Hauptstück" of this volume, when Joseph travels through the lower part of Egypt which belongs to the " . . . Gau Arabia, dem zwanzigsten des Landes Uto's, der Schlange . . .". The narrator repeatedly refers to Mut's "schlängelnde Mund" or to the "lächelnde Geschlängel" (107; 937) of her mouth and in the chapter "Schlangennot" Mut is fighting the "gottgesandte Schlange," which is the symbol of her desperate desire.

Mann renders this desire also in the image of the goose, a creature which, in contrast to the snake does not usually allude to sexual desire in the tetralogy. It frequently appears as "Gänsebraten," or "Gänsefliegen" or the like. However, Manfred Dierks has shown that in the following conversation between Huij and Tuij the proverbial "dumme Gans" does specifically allude to Mut's sexual frustration. Huij remarks

. . . auch als mondkeusche Priesterin wohl mag das Weib erscheinen in voller Würde. Ich lass' ihr sagen, deiner Eni: sie soll keine Gans sein! Zu den ersten Frauen der Länder zählt sie als unseres Sohnes Erste und Rechte, und seiner Grösse dankt sie's, dass sie Freundin der Königin heisst . . . (107; 653).

This relates directly to Jakob Bachofen's Urreligion und antike Symbole, where he writes:

Denn zu dem weiblichen Mondprinzip,
dem diese Artemispriesterinnen

angehören, steht die wassergetränkte
 Erde und ihr Bild, die erotische
 Gans, welche den einigenden Liebes-
 trieb der Materie andeutet, in
 einem gegensätzlichen Zusammenhang. ²⁰⁰

Mann produces the most intricate association within the animal imagery in the subtle relationships of Jaakob's spotted cattle with the spotted dresses of the ladies in Mut's "Damengesellschaft." The ladies must have looked rather foolish when, overwhelmed by the unexpected sight of Joseph, they cut their fingers and stained their light dresses with blood. The Freudian symbolism of this chapter is much too obvious to provide the only level for its interpretation. Mann clearly uses the two episodes which are both biblical *données* to establish yet another humorous analogy between women and animals, in this case between Mut's lady-friends and Jaakob's sheep and goats.²⁰¹ Jaakob's idea for breeding spotted cattle goes back to the time before his wedding: ". . . da er ein wartend Liebender . . . war . . ." (106; 265). His situation is in this respect similar to Mut's; it is even more so in her "Übertreibung der Gefühle," which parallels Jaakob's and which the narrator discusses in the cattle episode (106; 261). Jaakob's excessive love for Rahel is imitated by Mut's excessive passion for Joseph, whom the narrator refers to as "Rahel's Sohn" (107; 908) at the critical moment of his appearance at the "Damengesellschaft" (107; 908). Mann applies the literal meaning of the phrase "Sich-Versehen," the phenomenon which Jaakob utilizes in the breeding of spotted cattle, to the ladies. Spotting

their light dresses with dark blood, they seem to turn into Jaakob's cattle when they lay their eyes in sheepish expression on the beautiful Joseph. Accordingly it is "Renenutet, die Rindervorsteherin," wife of the "Rinderdirektor" who reproaches Mut for her negligence. How could she have "etwas Männliches" appear in "dem Augenblick des Schälen?"

Ganz Auge war ich, und wahren ich Hugte,
 säbelte ich mir mit dem Schälmesserchen
 in Fleisch und Bein und vergoss mein
 Blut in Strömen, ohne es auch nur zu
 spüren, so anders war mir geworden
 (107; 911).

The "Rindervorsteherin" and her companions in their spotted dresses imitate the cattle in the Jaakob episode: a visual impression causes a similar change in the exteriors of both women and cattle. Many criss-crossed relations and allusions substantiate this "tour de force" of "Vertauschung und Stellvertretung." The animals experience the phenomenon of "Sich-Versehen" on the road to the watering place; the ladies have the same experience while looking at Joseph, the "Schenke des Weines," who is about to offer them wine to quench their thirst. In both episodes it is the "Schälen" of a natural surface (trees and apples) which causes the appearance of spots. The "weissen Streifen" which Jaakob peels from the wooden sticks reappear as "Streifen" of white material covering the wounded fingers of the women. And the juxtaposition of black and white which dominates the cattle episode reappears at the "Damengesellschaft" as the servant girls,

two "Gürtelmädchen, eine schwarz und eine weiss" (107; 909).

While Mann with apparent delight elaborates the mythical animal conception of the female sex, he illuminates at the same time its masculine aspects. He thus suspends the idea of specific female attributes and introduces the very modern concept of androgyny. Mut is not only simultaneously the incarnation of female lust and its opposite, the "mondkeusche Priesterin," but she also is a "Sühnin" and a

. . . Herrin, das ist, körperlich gesehen, ein Herr in Weibesgestalt, geistig gesehen aber ein Weib von herrenhaftem Gepräge, also dass eine gewisse Doppeltheit, in der sogar die Idee des Männlichen vorwiegt, dem Herrinnennamen niemals fehlen kann (107; 841).

Joseph, on the other hand, is ". . . hübsch und schön" and "stark weiblich"; he is

. . . gewiss auf dem Gebiet des Doppelten nicht schlecht zu Hause. Er trug es durchaus im Geiste, dass sich in der Person der Ishtar eine Jungfrau und ein Jüngling vereinigten und dass in dem, der den Schleier tauschte mit ihr, in Tammuz, dem Schäfer, dem Bruder, Sohne und Gatten, dieselbe Erscheinung sich wiederholte . . . (107; 841).

The androgynous sex is represented by the tree, the Sphinx, a bearded goddess, by Israel who is "Braut und Bräutigam" of his God and finally by the world itself:

. . . der Welt Grund und des Lebens Baum sind weder männlich noch weiblich, sondern beides in einem.

Was heisst aber beides in einem?
 Es heisst keines von beidem. Jung-
 fräulich sind sie, wie die bärtige
 Göttin, und sind Vater und Mutter
 zugleich dem Entstandenen . . .
 (107; 667).

Mann thus combines the mythological with the ultra-modern (the tendency towards the uni-sex of our time), or better, he shows how the ultra-modern depends on and goes back to myth.

The above examples of "Vertauschung und Stellvertretung" also clearly demonstrate Mann's musical technique. "Themengewebe," in which ideas play the roles of musical motives which appear, disappear and reappear, reaches its apex in the Joseph novels. The reader, however, first perceives a visual sensation; it is by pictorial associations that he realizes and appreciates the musical structure of the work. The intellectual concept of the tetralogy is musical, but its immediate effect is cinematic; the magic of the work is a dynamic pictorial experience in which an imagined film-maker projects alternately blurred and precise pictures of his theme.

10. The Pictorial Aspect

I have demonstrated above²⁰² that observation is germane to Thomas Mann's work. Precise, almost microscopic rendition of realistic detail, such as Albrecht Dürer exhibits in the portrayal of his famous rabbit, is

the point of departure of Mann's art. What he writes in 1928 about Dürer may be applied to himself and the Joseph novel:

Das Reputierliche vereinigt sich mit jenem Zug von Verwegenheit, den Goethe jedem Künstler zuschreibt. Fleiss wird hier Tiefsinn, Genauigkeit, Grösse. . . . Überlieferungspflege und Zumutung des Ungeahnten, das geht zusammen hier, das wird eins (113; 318).

Frequently accused of the irritating myriads of descriptive detail in his work, Mann, prefiguring many of Robbe-Grillet's statements, explained after the appearance of the Zauberberg that it was the

. . . Exaktheitshang eines Schriftstellers, der durch die naturalistische Schule gegangen. Seither habe aber das Detail an Sinn gewonnen, ja, überhaupt erst Sinn gewonnen. Das Exakte werde heute nicht mehr um seiner selbst willen gepflegt. Seine Vergeistigung habe von Anfang an in meiner Tendenz gelegen (119; 156).

The precise observation of the Zauberberg are balanced by an all pervading sense of "Ungenauigkeit" in the tetralogy.

Between the great scene in which Pharaoh appoints Joseph to the highest position in Egypt and the further continuation of the narrative, Mann inserts the short chapter "Sieben oder fünf." Here the narrator, recapturing once more the essence of the tetralogy, simultaneously attacks and defends his own descriptive method. On one hand, he regards the biblical laconism as "ausgenommener, gesalzener und gewickelter Überrest der Wahrheit" because

of its lack of detailed description of what "really" happened at the time; on the other, this advocate of the accurate and the precise pretends mockingly to extol the virtues of brevity and selection. For where would the "Wahnsinn der Genauigkeit" lead us? "Aussparung" plays an important role in art and

. . . weislich üben auch wir sie auf Schritt und Tritt; denn es ist unsere vernünftige Absicht fertig zu werden mit einer Besorgung, die ohnehin mit dem Versuch, das Meer auszutrinken, eine entfernte Ähnlichkeit hat, aber nicht bis zu der Narrheit getrieben werden darf, wirklich und buchstäblich das Meer der Genauigkeit austrinken zu wollen (108; 1108-9).

"Meer der Genauigkeit" is but another of Mann's self-contradictory images which he introduces only to resolve; for he distills from the limitless ocean of observed detail the essential ones which express his ideas. Observed places, situations, and characters do not actively partake in the formation of these ideas; rather Mann utilizes them to express and re-express existing thoughts. His eyes, like the selective eye of the camera, seem to scan the surface of things in search of pictures with which to concretize his conception of existence.

In Mythopoesis-Mythic Patterns in the Literary Classics, Harry Slochower defines myth as a

. . . pictorial hypothesis about the nature of man. While myths do not have existence, they enter the realm of reality in that they enable us to explain and predict events in the

empirical world. . . . Mythic symbolism,
 . . . is pictorial - the fire of Prometheus,
 the snakes of Orestes, the ketonet of
 Joseph - and is by nature inexact and
 ambivalent. 203

The pictorial character of myth is expressed in Mann's conception of the world as a "bunte Phantasmorgie von Bildern" which are sometimes "undeutlich" and sometimes sharply focused.

Mann frequently visited or revisited a place to compare and confirm his own fictional conception of it. Extremely conscious of the symbolic potential of actual locations, he rejected any sight which interfered with his own ideas. Grappling in his mind with the beginning of the future tetralogy, Mann visited Egypt in 1925. In "Unterwegs," written in the same year, Mann states:

Ich habe nicht viel gesehen. Ich war
 behangen mit Arabern, einem Gelichter,
 gegen das die Soldojäger Südtaliens
 der reinste britische Hochadel sind.
 Sie haben nur einen Gedanken im Sinn:
 das Bakschich . . . amüßant . . .
 aber verächtlich. . . . Das Morgen-
 land. . . . Doch, doch, ich habe es
 aufgenommen. Ich trage zeitlose Bilder
 fort, die unverändert sind seit den
 Tagen der Isis und sperberköpfigen
 Götter. . . . das Morgenland ist doch
 mein geworden (119; 92-94).

He claims that he frequently did not want to see. In a late (1954) letter to Karl Kerényi, Mann compares himself to Schiller, who preferred to rely on his inner vision of things rather than on the external objects themselves. "Auch für mich ist die Welt des Auges nicht eigentlich

meine Welt, und im Grunde will ich nichts sehen - wie er."²⁰⁴
 Though Mann himself sometimes prefers not to see, he is certainly concerned that his audience does. The narrator of the tetralogy explains: "Wer erzhlt, dem muss daran liegen, dass man sich's recht vorstelle und ausmale . . ." (106; 430).

In the tetralogy Mann deals with the disadvantage of the word as opposed to the picture; he talks about the ". . . Not des Wortes, das der Zeit gehrt und verwiesen ist aufs Nacheinander, ungleich dem Bilde, das sich des Nebeneinander erfreut" (108; 1076). However, in this work he produces language which almost contradicts his own statement: he creates a picture-language, displaying to the reader a panorama of concrete images.

In "Rede ber das Theater" (1929) Mann paraphrases Goethe's ". . . grossartiges Diktum, . . . dass alle hchste Kunst ganz usserlich sei und dass die Kunst, indem sie sich in Innere zurckziehe, im Begriffe sei zu sinken." Mann's "Denkbilder" are "usseres im tiefsten Sinne des Wortes" (113; 398), for they represent ideas as concrete pictorial images. Picture language was born in mythological times when the word and its meaning were still analogous.²⁰⁵ It is the aim of modern literature to reestablish this union between the symbol and its signification. The acclaim of the modern writer depends to a great degree on his success in this area. The concrete picture language of Beckett and Ionesco presents ideas or the lack of them through pictures and not with abstract explanations. Mann's goal, however, was more ambitious.

He has tried to create in the Joseph-novels a "Sprache Über den Sprachen" whose "Spiel und Ziel" is humanistic in the last analysis. Mann's secret goal was the rejuvenation of man's spirit through language.²⁰⁶

11. Settings

The notion of dependence becomes especially evident in the visual aspect of Mann's art, which is primarily expressed in the settings. In the tetralogy Mann greatly depends on the utilization of Canaan and Egypt for illuminating, yet at the same time camouflaging, the essential thought of the work.

An attempt to divide the settings into geographical, psychological and symbolical categories proves futile, for it is precisely their intricate combination which characterizes the scenery in the novel. Mann treats the historical settings in the same manner as historical character and history itself. Within the frame of his by now familiar technique he utilizes actual biblical and historical locale to intensify the middle position of the figure on the see-saw.

The "Tatsachen und Fabelgerippe" of a work, relatively unimportant for the young Thomas Mann,²⁰⁷ assumes more and more significance for the maturing writer. In the tetralogy such a perfect union between subject and idea occurs that even the actual locales of the biblical story reiterate

and mirror the philosophical essence of Thomas Mann.

The locales of the story yield so much symbolical value that Mann can utilize the ancient places for artistic purposes without changing names or locations. The concept of the timeless present, based on death and rebirth, is as it were geographically pinpointed in the western "Totenreich" Egypt and the eastern Canaan where three modern religions were born. The "geistige" middle position of Joseph is attested to also by his land of birth, which was a thoroughfare between the ancient Empires of Babylon and Egypt.

The diametrically opposed cultures and geographical environments of the protagonists, and even the very names of some cities, provide the perfect location for the man on the see-saw. Striking examples are Memphis, "die Waage der Lander," and the cities On and No whose names Mann might have invented had he not found them in the Bible.

Thus the Bible story itself provides Mann with the geographical settings which he otherwise chose arbitrarily, as for example in Der Tod in Venedig. If the protagonist Aschenbach and the city Venice symbolize and interpret each other, Mut and Egypt do so on a more intensified and universal plane; and if the pastoral, yet cultivated, countryside of Hans Castorp's first snow-vision is the setting for the dream of a humane society, the pastoral wilderness of Jaakob's Canaan might be seen as the setting at the very beginning of this dream.

Settings occupy an even more important place in the

tetralogy than in the earlier works. Accordingly, Mann intensifies their characteristic treatment to the utmost. He utilizes the similar and opposing attributes of Canaan and Egypt as he used the mountain and flatland settings of the Zauberberg. However, he raises his technique within the universal world of myths to a kind of perfection he could not achieve in the more limited framework of the Zauberberg. In the tetralogy settings are not only indistinguishable from the philosophical nucleus of the work, they are in fact the only means by which the difficult notion of "zeitlose Gegenwart" becomes understandable. While in the Zauberberg the contrasting settings just accentuate the contrary ideologies of Settembrini and Naphta, the settings of the tetralogy offer the only means of concretizing the theme of the work.

The "Oben" and "Unten" of Canaan and Egypt, are at one level static geographical locations like the mountains and the flatland of the Zauberberg. In the latter novel, however, "Oben" always refers to the mountains and "Unten" always describes the flatland. In the tetralogy these designations are dynamic, they change and are relative to the angle from which they are viewed. Joseph's journey through Egypt proves that.

Von der Heimat aus war es wohl mit ihm,
 . . . gen Ägypten "hinabgegangen," in
 Ägypten nun aber ging es "hinauf,"
 nämlich dem Lauf des Stromes entgegen,
 welcher von Süden kam, also dass man
 im Lande gen Mittag nicht länger "hinab-
 zog," sondern "hinauf" (107; 545).

This interchangeability of "Oben" and "Unten" seems like a simple geographical statement, which in fact it is. But at the same time this simple statement reiterates the notion of the basic sameness of all human experience, thus rendering in a most concrete picture the very abstract essence of the work.

12. Theater and Festival

Theatricality, which is the hallmark of Mann's work, reaches its apex in the tetralogy. Mann's perception of the world is grounded in Schopenhauer, and in the Joseph novels this philosopher's concept of "Vorstellung" becomes, in the literal meaning of the word, a theatrical performance. Beginning with the first page, the reader watches the "foppende Spiel" (106; 5) until it is revealed as "Gotteserfindung" in the last sentence.

The tetralogy consists of "Gottestheater spielen" and is, except for the essayistic "Höllenfahrt" and the "Vorspiel in Oberen Rängen" divided into scenes performed in front of everchanging backdrops. Joseph, the first artist, is the main actor; for the actor is "der Künstler im Urzustand, gewissermassen,"²⁰⁸ and the theater is accordingly the "Urheimat aller sinnlichen Geistigkeit und geistigen Sinnlichkeit" (113; 389).

The tetralogy has the form of the novel, but it is also epic theater, not in Brecht's but rather in the literal

sense of the phrase, for it displays simultaneously the characteristics of epic story-telling and of drama. The biblical donnée is sheer drama, and the biblical commentator treats it as such when he writes that the "scene between Isaac and Esau, both shaken and helpless, could scarcely be surpassed for pathos . . . for all actors in this piece are tools of fate."²⁰⁹ The Joseph novels proper conform to all the standard requirements of Freytag's dramatic pyramid, including, from the biblical point of view, a tragic ending - since Jaakob refused the blessing to Joseph. Mann himself was only too conscious of his own function as a dramatist in this work. He writes in "German Letter VIII" in 1928 that ". . . der Mythos selbst neben dem Theatraliker des Mythos [steht] . . ."²¹⁰

More than twenty years before the writing of the tetralogy, Mann states that "Theater ist eine Gegenwart und hat kein Gestern." The presentation of "zeitlose Gegenwart" must then of necessity be theatrical. The "Wirkungssucht des Theaters" whose "heimliche Sehnsucht und letzter Ehrgeiz der Ritus sei . . ." (113; 28-30) was apparently shared by Thomas Mann long before he attempted to write the tetralogy. He wrote "Versuch über das Theater" in 1908, voicing the contemporary need for the decorative, the typical and the symbolic; and he anticipated the return of the ritualistic theatre two decades before Artaud advocates it in Le Théâtre et son Double.²¹¹

Mann expresses his own need for the decorative and

the ritual in the emphasis on stage-performance and the "Fest"²¹² throughout his work. In the Joseph novels these aspects are not only intensified to the highest possible degree, but they virtually express the essence of the novel. In a letter to Karl Kerényi Mann writes:

Das Fest im Sinne der mythischen Ceremonie und in der heiter-ernsten Wiederholung eines Urgeschehens ist ja beinahe das Grund-Motiv meines Romans, und sein Held heisst einmal geradezu "Joseph em Hep," "Joseph im Feste." 213

Structurally the novel proper is framed by two pagan rituals. At the very beginning of the Die Geschichten Jaakobs the young Joseph performs a half-conscious ritual before the moon; he

. . . schien . . . Andacht zu verrichten, denn, das Gesicht emporgewandt, zum Monde, der es voll beschien, hielt er die beiden Oberarme an den Flanken, die unteren aber aufgerichtet, mit offen nach aussen und oben gekehrten Handflächen, und während er sich im Sitzen leicht hin und her schaukelte, gab er halbe, singende Stimme zu Worten oder Lauten, die er mit den Lippen bildete . . . (106; 44).

The novel ends with the burial-ritual of Jaacob, ordered and presided over by the mature Joseph.

In "Freud und die Zukunft" Mann writes:

Das zitathafte Leben, das Leben im Mythos, ist eine Art von Zelebration; insofern es Vergegenwärtigung ist, wird es zur feierlichen Handlung, zum Vollzuge eines Vorgeschiedenen durch einen Zelebranten, zum Begängnis, zum Feste (114; 228).

Joseph lives the "zitathafte Leben" since his youth. His life is filled with festive occasions of every kind, which culminate in the great recognition scene with his brothers. Joseph takes the center of the stage at most feasts, always performing for an appreciative audience, except at the beginning, when he entertains his hostile brothers with his dreams of glory. In "Adonishain," where he plays the role of Tammuz or Osiris in the loveliest pastoral setting, only his little brother Benjamin is there to admire the performance.

However, Joseph plays his greatest role in the famous recognition scene with his brothers. "Gottestheater-spielen" reaches here its apex; Joseph is not only the hero of the play, but also its writer, producer and stage manager. The entire sixth "Hauptstück" of Joseph, der Ernährer, entitled "Das Heilige Spiel," leads up to this scene, and the title prepares the reader for its intrinsic theatricality. Here the tetralogy becomes high comedy, in form as well as content. "Das Heilige Spiel" is a comic drama of a hero and repentent villains, a comedy filled with intrigue, pretense, revenge and magnanimity. In short, it displays many theatrical conventions. In contrast to most actors in the play the audience is aware of past and future threads of the plot and can thus appreciate the irony of remarks such as Juda's to the famous Egyptian Joseph: "Wir erkennen dich in deiner Größe, du aber erkennst uns nicht in unserer Redlichkeit" (108; 1201). This very obvious kind of irony is the stock in trade of play-writing since its very beginnings.

Joseph of course had recognized his brother, and he is utterly absorbed in the staging of the great event where he will reveal his identity. He refuses the faithful Mai-Sachme's help and takes the sole responsibility for "alle Einzelheiten des Festes" and the "Fortgang des Spiels." Joseph is so preoccupied with the role he has to play that he declines his wife's offer to have him entertained; for "ich . . . kann nicht den Zuschauer machen, sondern muss selber gaukeln und mich im Spiele regen, Zuschauer aber sind Gott und die Welt." The narrator caustically remarks that Joseph's " . . . Benehmen erinnert uns sehr an das Herumrennen fertig maskierter Komödianten, bevor es angeht" (108; 1212, 1230, 1253).

The chapter "Sie Kommen" could be transferred to the stage almost exactly as Mann wrote it. The hero (Joseph) enters the library of his home accompanied by his trusted servant-confidante (Mai-Sachme). The detailed description of the room could very well serve as stage direction; it is followed by an uninterrupted dialogue between Joseph and Mai-Sachme which concerns the plotting of future events, focusing on Joseph's role and strategy. Like any theatrical professional, Joseph knows the importance of timing, and he tells his confidante "Keinesfalls werde ich aber so ungeschickt sein . . . dass ich . . . gleich herausplatze mit dem 'Ich bin's', sondern will noch des längeren hinter der Tür bleiben und mich fremd gegen sie stellen" (108; 1192). The theatrical character of the dialogue is accentuated by its vocabulary of mock intrigue and suspicion which refers to foul play and espionage;

Joseph must pretend that the case of his brothers is " . . . sehr verdächtig und dunkel . . ." (108; 1193). Joseph's parting exclamation "Und nun bis Übermorgen!" (108; 1213) is a well-used cliché of the conventional intrigue.

As in the Bible, the recognition banquet in the tetralogy is an all-male affair. Reminiscent of the "Last Supper," Plato's "Symposium" and even a modern stag party, the feast reiterates Mann's notion of the sameness of all human endeavor. The narrator, however, finds it necessary to explain Asnath's absence, which is contrary to Egyptian custom. After the elaborate preparations for the "hochfestliche Sache . . . [denn] die Begegnung von Tat und Ergebnis ist ein Fest sondergleichen, das gefeiert und ausgeschmückt sein will mit allerlei Zierat und heiligem Schabernach" (108; 1191-92), the narrator states that it was "kein Festessen" but "ein Geschäftsfrühstück" (108; 1238) where a wife's presence is not required. The illusion of the elaborate feast is thus suspended, just as the reader's high expectations of a dramatic revelation of Joseph's identity is suspended by Joseph's modest smile and his simple statement: "Kinder, ich bin's ja. Ich bin ja euer Bruder Joseph" (108; 1260).

The comedy of the sixth "Hauptstück" in Joseph, der Ernährer balances the seventh "Hauptstück" in Joseph in Ägypten, where the play is an intense drama. The dramatic technique, only implicit in the scene between Joseph and Mai-Sachme, is explicit at the high-point of Joseph's and Mut's fateful conversation; the external form of these

passages is not that of a novel, but of a script (107; 870-75). The scenes end with the narrator's remark, "Hier schweigt die Geschichte. Das will sagen: Sie schweigt in gegenwärtiger Fassung und Festaufführung" (107; 939). The earlier chapter, "Damengesellschaft" is a staged comedy like the recognition banquet. While Joseph is the hero of the latter piece as well as its originator, director and stage manager, he is merely the silent, albeit very important, hero of the former. The "Damengesellschaft" is directed and staged by Mut, and her injured lady-friends criticize the quality of her "Regie" (107; 910).

The narrator of the tetralogy does not permit the reader to forget that he is watching a performance, for he constantly refers to its backdrops. The ". . . uns schon vertraute Kulissenwirkung . . ." (106; 25) is continually reinforced by phrases like "Küsten-, Dünen-, Vorgebirgskulissen" etc.

The scenery changes drastically and unexpectedly in the chapter "Die Hündin."²¹⁴ Although the narrator merely describes the new "Schauplatz," (107; 919) which is the roof of Potiphar's harem, the astonished reader suddenly seems to face a dark and drafty witches' kitchen. Mut in her desperate failure to seduce Joseph has turned to "Hexenpraxis" (107; 917). The sorceress Tabubu has transported in the dark of night the tools of her trade to the palace roof. Tabubu conjures up a Faust-like atmosphere at the very beginning of the chapter when she explains to Mut that "durch Zauberbann und Behexung ist selbstverständlich nur der Körper . . . in jemandes Arme zu liefern,

nicht auch die Seele . . ." (107; 916). In this manner she "echoes" Mephisto's lack of power over the soul of Faust. In fact, the whole scene seems to be an inverted imitation of "Hexenküche," where Faust falls in love with female beauty incarnate and drinks a youth potion.²¹⁵

The extremely vivid description of Tabubu's dark witches' kitchen provides a grotesque sight in the sunny Egyptian part of the tetralogy; it looks like a still from a different movie, which the editor added to the film by mistake. However, a closer analysis reveals this simple interpretation as insufficient, for the imagery exhibits several other substrata. The chapter provides one of the most intricate bits of "Verschachtelung" in the entire tetralogy. Mann produces simultaneously allusions to the Book of the Dead, voodoo, necrophilia, Aschenbach, Faust I and II, and Seneca's Oedipus. Very conscious of the paradox implied in ancient Egyptian "Hexenpraxis," he remains as always within the realm of verisimilitude by relating it to Joseph's "Körper und Leichnam," which is about to be bewitched. Mann thus associates "Hündin" with the dog-like jackals, whose howling accompanies Tabubu's ritual, thus aligning the "scheussliche Gottheit" also with the jackal-headed god Anpu who presides over the Egyptian death ceremonies. In this manner he creates an added relation between love and death, and reiterates the previous image of the sorcerer as an agent of death. He also alludes to voodoo, for some object belonging to Joseph is required for the successful ritual. Necrophilia is implied by Tabubu's warning that

introducing the ancient Egyptian Sphinx, at once begins to confuse her stony image with its much younger namesake in the Oedipus legend. The narrator contemplates the enigma of the ancient sculpture and the ". . . Dunkelheit seines Ursprunges. Wie lautete sein Rätsel? Es lautete überhaupt nicht. Im Schweigen bestand es . . ." (107; 557). The silence of the stony Sphinx concerned her primordial existence, which puzzles archaeologists but which has no relation to the puzzle of the Greek sphinx.²¹⁶ Mann simultaneously clarifies and confuses the issue when the narrator stresses the Sphinx' "Menschenkopf," which differentiates its picture from the winged monster with the lion's head, whose famous puzzle Oedipus solved. This monster was located near the city of Thebes in Greece, which helps to confuse matters even more, since Thebes in Egypt figures very prominently in the tetralogy.

Employing his familiar technique, Mann fractures legend, augments it with fiction and creates a complex web of relationships between Oedipus, Joseph and Mut; he transforms Tabubu - alias Frau Baubu - alias - the "Nachtgespenst" Erichtho - into the priestess Manto and the scene shifts suddenly to Seneca's Oedipus.

The priestesses Manto and Tabubu employ the same methods for different purposes. Both utilize the entrails of animals for their trade; the former in order to find the truth, the latter to promote falsehood.

Manto:

Alive with blood, no heart
 upon the left;
 I find no folds of fat gently
 enclosing
 The inner organs; womb and
 genitals
 Are twisted and deformed . . .
 The entrails seem to run out
 of my hands. 217

Tabubu:

Nunmehr den Bauch geschlitzt
 und die Hände getaucht
 ins heisse Gedärm, das dir
 entgegendampft in der
 Kühle der Mondnacht.
 Blutig verschmiert, mit
 Kutteln behangen, heb'
 ich sie auf vor dir, meine
 Opferhände . . .(107; 922).

The Tabubu scene is the kind of theater for which no playwright ever wrote, and which no producer could produce. It is a comic and pathetic, eerie and repulsive and altogether fascinating play. Tabubu's comic soliloquy must be unique in world literature. The scene exemplifies at once the theatrical conception of the tetralogy, its humor and the many substrata Mann employs for his imagery.

Physical passions, the realm of the "scheussliche Gottheit," do not fare well in the Joseph novels. Its vapors nauseate Mut; and Tabubu, "ordinär," not in iambs, states matter of factly: "Ich glaube, dich ekelt das hornige Übelruchlein des Brandes? Das ist eur Stoff, meine Feine, Dunst des entflammten Körpers - so riecht die Liebe! - Schluss damit!" (107; 923). Mann does not treat other passions better than love. In the renditions of the scenery of the cities No and On, he juxtaposes the passion for material possessions to those of the intellect.

Geographically known as Heliapolis and Thebes, On and No were the respective seats of the feuding gods Atûm-Re and Anûm-Re. Historically No, or "Wêse," was founded in the Eleventh Dynasty as the royal residence.

During the time of the Empire it was a reservoir of the tremendous wealth which poured in from the conquered lands.

The narrator, seeing No through Joseph's eyes, grudgingly admits its wealth and the beauty of its famous architecture, but he considers the fuss ("Geschrei") about it excessive. He feels that the fame and glory of the city is based on a " . . . Ruhmesübereinkunft, wie die Menschen sie lieben und auf der sie vom Hörensagen mit einmütigem Eigensinn und geradezu von Schicklichkeits wegen bestehen . . ." (107; 577). No, the "himmlische Stadt" is as dirty, foul-smelling and crowded a place as large cities are wont to be. The many destitute quarters of the poor by far outnumber those of the rich. The "Sagenglanz" of the gold is thus removed from this city. Mann both parallels and opposes No to the golden city On, which is equally famous for its ancient schools of philosophy.²¹⁸ But in the narrator's description On seems to be the dwelling place of King Midas himself. On was the

. . . aller seltsamste Stadt . . .
 vorwiegend aus Gold gebaut, wie es
 dem Geblendeten schien. . . . Die
 ganze Stadt gleisste und blitzte von
 Sonnengold. . . . Die Dächer ihrer
 Ringmauern waren aus Gold. . . .
 Eine Stadt zum Blinzeln war On, das
 tausendjährige, nach seinem Äusseren
 Anschein. Es war aber auch eine
 solche nach seiner inneren Eigenart
 und von Geistes wegen (107; 548).

To sight and blindness, which are of great importance in the Bible story, Mann adds here the middle-motiv of "Geblendetsein" or "Blinzeln." "Geblendetsein" can mean to be dazed by the sight of gold or from the sun, but it can also mean to be aesthetically or intellectually dazzled, or just plain hoodwinked. The meaning is more than questionable when applied to the brilliant scholars of On. Moreover, the riches of the intellect rendered in terms of material gold and/or sunlight become here in fact a health hazard. For the scholars at On suffer from constant and painful eye infections, which cannot be conducive to productive study. Therefore they always have to wear large hoods to protect their eyes.

As the cameraman is able simultaneously to project different pictures on to a divided movie-screen, so Mann is able to evoke different pictorial allusions with one single image. The picture on On's sages with their impaired sight simultaneously brings to mind the scholars at Laputa in Gulliver's Travels and the German intellectuals in pre-Hitler Germany. The Laputians are so engrossed in the pursuit of abstract ideas that they cannot see their own concrete environment. Each scholar has to engage a "flapper," a man

. . . employed diligently to attend his master in his walks, and upon occasion to give him a soft flap on his eyes, because he is always so wrapped up in cogitation, that he is in manifest danger of falling down every precipice, and bouncing his head against every post, and in the streets, of jostling

others, or being jostled himself
into the kennel.²¹⁹

Accordingly, Mann seems to imply that the impaired vision of the Egyptian scholars prevented them from perceiving the extreme dangers Egypt had to face in its immediate future; the sages were not able to interpret Pharaoh's dreams about the coming famine. They infuriated him with their vague and pointless interpretations. Through the image of the intellectual's ailing eyes Mann unequivocally shows that any moral philosophy must be based on and interact with the economic necessity of its time. The sages' beautiful theory of the "Dreieck im Geiste der Versöhnung" is by itself insufficient to overcome war, drought or famine. Mann modifies and balances here his own convictions about the absolute priority and superiority of "Geist."²²⁰ He was forced to do so, for the experience of his own time impinged on his convictions.

The German intellectuals of the twenties and early thirties were sitting in the elegant, high-windowed coffee houses of West Berlin, apparently bringing liberty, equality and fraternity to the whole world, while the Nazis marched by in front of their noses. But they could not see, their vision was surely impaired. "Deutschland," wrote Kurt Tucholsky at that time, is an "anatomische Merkwürdigkeit. Es schreibt mit der Linken und tut mit der Rechten."²²¹

One substratum of this scene at On seems to point to Goethe's preoccupation with eyesight, and in particular it seems to be a fractured inversion (or travesty) of Faust II, where the watchman Lynkeus, gifted with

extraordinary eyesight, is so blinded by Helena's sun-like beauty that he forgets his duties.²²² Mann might have found another level of meaning for the chapter in Egyptian hieroglyphics, which, usually composed of several symbols, display the single unadorned eye as the emblem of the Creator.²²³

The phrase "Geblendetsein," however, implies, within the conception of the novel, much more than symbolic impairment of sight. It alludes to Schopenhauer's philosophy, on which Mann constructed the tetralogy. "Geblendetsein" evokes the notions of illusion and the "Blendwerk" of the veil of Maja, which camouflages the reality of phenomenal existence.²²⁴ Very much in contrast to contemporary novelists (for example Jean Paul Sartre),²²⁵ Mann does not insist on the destruction, but on renewal of the veil. Only too conscious of its illusionary and deceitful function, Mann realizes at the same time its necessity. According to Mann's aesthetic, heavy-handed morality and tragic philosophical insights must be camouflaged by humor and playfulness. In Lotte in Weimar, Mann has Goethe reflect on this:

Leichtigkeit, Leichtigkeit . . . höchste und letzte Wirkung der Kunst ist Gefühl der Anmut. Nur nicht die stirnrunzelnde Erhabenheit, die, sei es auch in Glanz und Schiller, tragisch erschöpft dasteht als Produkt der Moral! Tiefsinn soll lächeln . . . Er soll überhaupt nur mit unterlaufen, sich für den Eingeweihten heiter ergeben --, so wills die Esoterik der Kunst. Bunte Bilder dem Volk, dahinter für die Wissenden das Geheimnis (103; 207).

Elegance and charm camouflage Mut's tragic passion in one of the tetralogy's most colorful scenes, Mut's "Damengesellschaft," where Joseph plays another great, albeit, silent role. A whole bevy of adoring ladies comprise his audience. Mann stages this feast with all the humor of his narrative powers. The "Damengesellschaft" is set in the rooms of Petepre's harem; the ladies are invited to

. . . einer Nachmittagsveranstaltung in grösserem Kreise, die durch die Anwesenheit . . . , der Gemahlin Beknechons' und Ersten der Haremsfrauen, erhöhten Glanz gewann, und bei der es an nichts fehlte, weder an Blumen und Salben, noch an kühlen, zum Teil berausenden, zum anderen Teil nur erfrischenden Getränken, noch an vielerlei Kuchen, eingelegten Früchten und fadenziehenden Süßigkeiten, ausgesendet von jungen Dienerinnen in lieblich knapper Tracht, mit schwarzen Hängeflechten im Nacken und Schleiern um die Wangen, - einer Nüance, die man noch nicht gesehen, und die viel Beifall fand. Ein reizendes Orchester von Harfenistinnen, Lautenspielerinnen und Bläserinnen der Doppelflöte in weiten Hauchgehängen von Kleidern, durch welche man die gewirkten Gürtel ihrer Lenden sah, musizierten im Brunnenhof, wo die grosse Mehrzahl der Damen in zwanglosen Gruppen, teils zwischen den hochbeladenen Anrichten auf Stühlen und Hockern sitzend, teils auf bunten Matten kniend sich niedergelassen hatte. Doch war auch der bekannte Pfeilersalon, aus welchem übrigens das Bild Atum-Rê's wieder entfernt war, von ihnen besetzt (107; 906).

The narrator describes the ladies with loving detail: their conversations, lavish hairdos, and jewelry. Their gowns " . . . aus Sonnengold, wie es schien, oder Mondschein gewoben, waren von letzter Kultur" (107; 906). The setting of Mut's exquisite party, which she stages so as to achieve the greatest possible affect for Joseph's entrance, is an especially charming yet typical example of the visual power of Mann's narrative. The description of tableware and of food, which Mann often uses in a symbolic sense²²⁶ assumes here simultaneously exegetic, Freudian and altogether humorous dimensions:

Herrliche Früchte standen in blumengeschmückten Körben bereit: duftende Goldkugeln, die erquickenden Saft in Menge unter der filzigen Schale bargen, indische Blutzitronen, Chinaäpfel, höchst selten gereicht; und reizende Messerchen zum Schälen waren nebenher vorbereitet, mit eingelegten Blaustein Griffen und hochpolierten Bronzeschneiden, denen die Hausfrau ihre besondere Aufmerksamkeit zugewandt hatte. Denn überaus scharf hatte sie sie wetzen und abziehen lassen -- so scharf in der Tat, dass wohl noch nie in der Welt irgendwelche Messerchen es zu solcher Schärfe gebracht hatten. So dünn geschliffen und haarscharf waren die Dinger, dass leicht ein Mann sich den noch so drähtigen Bart hätte damit scheren mögen, . . . Das war ein Schliff, der diesen Messerchen zuteil geworden, -- gefährlich geradezu; . . . Da war noch ein kostbarer Wein aus dem Hafen, kyprisch, von süssem Feuer, zum Nachtschiff geeignet, der zu den Apfelsinen gereicht werden sollte; und die

schönen Kelche aus gehämmertem Gold und aus zinnglasiertem, bemaltem Ton, die ihn umschliessen würden, waren sogar das erste, was auf der Gastgeberin Wink von niedlichen Dienerinnen, welche nichts an hatten als bunte Gürtel um ihre Hüften, im Brunnenhof und im Pfeilersalon ausgeteilt wurde (107; 907).

The vivid descriptions create atmosphere and a delightful backdrop for the cup-bearer's entrance - which they retard at the same time. When Joseph finally appears, Mut's elaborate production proves justified, for at his sight the ladies forgot not only the sharp little knives in their hands " . . . sondern auch sozusagen sich selbst, indem sie nichts anderes mehr wussten, als auf den Schenken zu schau" (107; 908).

The imagined cameraman who shoots the charming scenes of Mut's party zooms in on a very different celebration when he shoots the details of Joseph's wedding. Juxtaposed below is the description of this wedding with Jaakob's, so as to illuminate Mann's thematic use of given situations, for both Jaakob's and Joseph's wedding are mentioned in the Bible. Again, these settings display Mann's copious use of detail, which remained for him always the main thing.²²⁷

For Jaakob " . . . kam der Tag der vollen Schönheit heran und das Fest des Beilagers, und bei Laban, dem glückhaften Schafzüchter, gab es ein Schlachten, Kochen, Braten und Brauen in Hof und Haus, dass es ein Dunst und Geprassel war.

Joseph's " . . . Hochzeit, selbst war eine grosse Lizenz, . . . hatte einen starken Einschlag von Begräbnis. . . . In dem grossen Umzuge gab es ebenso viele, die unter Schallbecken- und Cymbelklang jauchzende Freude an den Tag legten, wie solche,

. . . Herrschaft und Ingesinde, Jaakob mit eingeschlossen, regten die Hände, Bewirtung herzustellen für viele und anzurichten das Dauergelage; denn sieben Tage sollte die Hochzeit währen, und unerschöpflich mussten sich unterdessen, sollte nicht Spott und Schande über die Wirtschaft kommen, die Vorräte an Kuchen, Kringeln und Fischbrot, an Dicksuppen, Musen und Milchspeisen, Bier, Fruchtwassern und starken Schnäpsen erweisen -- der Hammelbraten und Rindskeulen hier nicht einmal zu gedenken. . . . Alle sangen und schafften sie (106; 220).

die sich nach allen Regeln des Ausdrucks klage- und jammervoll gebärdeten, genau als schritten sie in einem Leichenzug. . . . Aber sehr oft - im Laufe des Abends mehr und mehr, nahmen Freude und Lachen einen Charakter an, worin . . . die Idee verfluchten Raubes und Mordes und diejenige der Fruchtbarkeit einander im Punkte des Unzüchtigen begegneten, so dass die Luft voll war von Anzüglichkeiten, Zwinkern schlüpfrigen Verständigungen und lautem Gelächter. . . . Im Festzuge wurden auch einige Tiere mit herumgeführt: ein Schwan und ein Ross. . . eine trüchtige Sau (108; 1137, 1139, 1140).

The "Brautmutter" Mut, well aware of the sexual allusions the presence of these animals implies, is hiding her face in order not to see them. The narrator's detailed description of further obscenities which are part of the traditional wedding ritual brings him, however, to the " . . . Vorsatz über die Einzelheiten von Josephs Hochzeit nicht zu ausführlich zu sein" (108; 1141).

Continuing his inversion of importance, Mann hardly mentions Jaakob's marriage to Rahel, which is, from the logical point of view, the most important of the three weddings,²²⁸ since it produces the main protagonist of the novel.

The above passage on Joseph's wedding is but a very modest sampling from an entire chapter which describes the most primeval mythic ritual in the midst of the most magnificent pomp. The intermingling of human and animal sexuality goes back to the earliest time of human consciousness. If Mann, as is usually assumed, intended progressively to demythologize the Egyptian part of the novel, the detailed description of the most primitive paganism would be utterly out of place towards the end of the tetralogy. Accordingly, the narrator states that Jaakob " . . . wenn er zugegen gewesen wäre, sich über manches entsetzt hätte, was hier geschah" (108; 1139). On the other hand, the joyful description of his own wedding might well serve as a model for the simple, humane society Hans Castorp sees in his first snow-vision; like this vision it has a disastrous ending, while the "disastrous" wedding of Joseph ends pleasantly.

Joseph, who is certainly at the center of the stage at his own wedding, remains curiously aloof from the whole affair. The narrator, forever informing his audience about his protagonist's thoughts and reactions, refers only indirectly to them when he recalls the memory of Joseph's father.

Mann describes other occasions, where Joseph is merely a silent observer. These festivals, situations or cities (like On and No) display always some symptoms of disorder of which Joseph disapproves.

13. Disorder

I have shown that the notion of disorder is as essential to Mann's artistic reality as his theatrical conception;²²⁹ and I have defined disorder as "disarrangement of the ordinary." As such it is heightened to the utmost in the tetralogy; first, because disorder is indigenous to the Bible story itself, and, second, because Thomas Mann, utilizing the story, transports the notion of disorder from the European setting of the Zauberberg to the universal plane of the tetralogy. Accordingly, the three aspects of disorder discussed above reappear here in an intensified form.

Genesis displays a surprising amount of disorder - starting with Abraham's rejection of paganism, an act which openly and defiantly disarranged the ordinary conditions of his time. From Jaakob's covert betrayal of Esau to Mut's overt desire for Joseph, his story offers aspects of open and camouflaged disorder which, however, from the biblical point of view, are at the same time aspects of Divine Order, since they function to fulfill the Will of God. From the literary point of view they function to fulfill Mann's artistic purpose. Explicating, illuminating, blurring, augmenting, evaluating and sometimes rearranging its content, Mann remolds the tale of Joseph and his brothers into a comic epic of man and his endeavors. This is possible because from a strictly technical point of view the tale of Joseph and the story

of man are both theatrical and they are both structured on the premise of disorder.

This notion is expressed in three ways in the settings of the tetralogy. There is on the simplest level actual physical disorder, as, for example, in the harbor-scene in "Stromfahrt," where a silent Joseph watches with his comrades the surrounding confusion.

. . . sie gerieten in den Trubel und das Geschrei der Lände und des Wassers davor, wo viele Schiffe, einheimische und fremde, sich drängten, . . . und "Glänzend durch Schnelligkeit" wurde von Hafengewächtern und Zollschreibern geentert, die Protokolle über Mann und Maus und jederlei Stückgut aufzunehmen begannen, während am Ufer die Dienstleute des Mannes, der seine Gestalt bestellt hatte, mit gereckten Armen nach der Figur schrien auf die sie schon lange gewartet hatten, und ebendort viele Händler, die den Ankommenden Sandalen, Mützen und Honigkuchen verkaufen wollten, ihre Stimmen erhoben, in die sich das Geblök von Herden mischte, die nebenan ausgeladen wurden, und die Musik von Gauklern, die am Kai sich auffallend zu machen suchten. Es war ein sehr grosser Wirrwarr, und Joseph und seine Gefährten sassen still und betreten am Hinterteil ihres Schiffes auf dem Bauholz (107; 575).

This is one of the descriptive passages the single purpose of which is to create atmosphere. The phrase "Wirrwarr," however, is a thematic device which, like "Ungenauigkeit," reappears in one form or another throughout the entire

work. These phrases point not only to a sense of simple disorder but to a blurring of established borderlines, and an inability to perceive what is going on.

Mann portrays the strategic confusion of the tetralogy simultaneously on many levels. The geographic designations of Canaan's "Oben" and Egypt's "Unten" become perplexing when one considers them from a different physical perspective. On his journey through Egypt Joseph is bewildered by the relativity of geographic locations:

Denn wie so vieles ihn hier verwirren wollte, so war's eine Wirrnis mit dem "Hinauf" und "Hinab." Von der Heimat aus war es . . . gen Ägypten "hinabgegangen," in Ägypten nun aber ging es "hinauf" nämlich dem Lauf des Stromes entgegen, welchen von Süden kam, also dass man im Lande gen Mittag nicht länger "hinabzog," sondern "hinauf." Das war, als sei's auf Verwirrung angelegt (107; 545).

On a different level the confusion of "Oben" and "Unten" is demonstrated in Joseph's "Vergoldung" (108; 110 ff). According to a German proverb "Alles Gute kommt von Oben," but the enormous wealth bestowed on Joseph only existed in Egypt " . . . dem unteren Lande . . . des Kotes und der Exkremente, aber auch des Goldes und des Reichtums" (106; 68). So that Joseph is blessed from above, from the God of his Fathers with the wealth of the "Unterwelt," for which these Fathers had nothing but dislike and contempt. However, viewed from within the internal structure of the novel, geographical concepts like "Oben" and "Unten" are meaningless, for they are but

parts of the dynamic sphere whose eternal revolutions negate these static designations.

In the scene "Huij and Tuij" Mann recaptures the notion of disorder in yet a different (but also similar) manner. Joseph observes here, as its silent servant, that culture and beauty camouflage the inner corruption of the House of Potiphar, and this corruption is rooted in the exquisite home of his parents Huij and Tuij. The incest, impotence and frustration of the family, their innuendoes and innermost feelings of hostility are hidden beneath a cultured and pious life style exemplified in the house of its progenitors. The narrator describes the interior of their home in such hyperbolic terms that its beauty and taste become as questionable as their lives. "Lustige und natürliche" wall paintings and friezes display life-like animals, ". . . Leute, die schlachteten und Rindskeulen und Geflügel im Opferzuge trugen, und andere Augenweide mehr" (107; 640). The little house is

. . . ein feiner, heimlicher Aufenthalt,
 . . . eine Art von Himmelsreich des
 hochtragenden Geschmacks. . . . Auch
 die Einrichtung war himmlisch geschmack-
 voll: das elegant gestreckte Ruhbett
 aus Schwarzhholz und Elfenbein, auf seinen
 Löwenfüßen, mit Daunenkissen belegt und
 Fellen von Panther und Luchs; die breiten
 Armsessel mit Rückenlehnen in kunst-
 reicher Pressarbeit des vergoldeten
 Leders, schwellende Fusschemel davor
 und staffiert mit gestickten Kissen;
 die bronzierten Räucherständer, auf

denen K stliches schwelte. War aber das Innere hier eine wohnliche Zuflucht und H uslichkeit, so war es zugleich auch eine Andachtsst tte und Kapelle; denn kleine silberne Teraphim, G tterkronen auf den H uptchen, standen nebst dargebrachten Blumenstr ussen auf einer Bankempore des Hintergrundes, und allerlei Kultger t zeigte an, dass man ihnen diene (107; 641).

However, the ancient owners of this heavenly abode consistently refer to it as a "H hle" and address each other with pet-names derived from the animal-world, such as "Rohrdrommel" or "Sumpfbieder." The portrait of the "heiligen Eltern im Oberstock . . . hochwandelnd im Geschmack" thus changes into a portrait of primeval cave-dwellers and back again. The incestuous marriage, imitating the example of Egyptian gods, becomes like the "Sumpf und der brodelnde Schlamm, der sich selbst umarmt . . . im schl pfrigen Dunkel der H hle" (107; 648). This rotating movement from "Oben" and "Unten" imitates the rotations of the "Sph re" and thus dissolves the conflicting concept of disorder in the philosophical sense. At the same time it dissolves it in the psychological sense, for the inherent decadence of the setting complements the decadence of Huij and Tuij, and camouflaged disorder and culture become one.²³⁰

The conflict of the over-civilized with the primitive is the persistently recurring motive in Mann's work. In the tetralogy he introduces the conflict between natural and cultural order in the rendition of the "Opetfest."

This New Year's festival is of the greatest importance for Egypt, for it celebrates the first day of the rising of the Nile on which the fertility of the country depends. The narrator describes the beauty of the pageant, in obvious irony, stressing the appearance of the impotent Pharaoh who " . . . trat glänzend wie die aufgehende Sonne hervor aus seinem Palast" (107; 928), in order to observe the "Gänsefliegen." This ritual was performed in the most beautiful setting of the square before the temple:

Wie schön und freudevoll allerdings war dieser Ort! Von goldenen, mit dem Kopfschmuck des Gottes gekrönten Mastbäumen flatterten bunte Flaggen. Berge von Blumen und Früchten häuften sich auf den Opfertischen vor den Schreinen der heiligen Dreiheit, des Vaters, der Mutter und des Sohnes, und Bildsäulen, von Pharao's Vorfahren, der Könige von Ober- und Unterägypten, herbeigetragen von der in vier Wachen geteilten Schiffsmannschaft der Sonnenbarke, waren hier aufgerichtet. Auf goldenen Sockeln über das Volk erhöht, die Gesichter nach Ost, West, Mittag und Mitternacht auseinandergewandt, liessen Priester die Wildvögel in die vier Himmelsgegenden fliegen . . . (107; 928-29).

Joseph, however, dislikes the festivities because they celebrated an "unnatürlichen Neujahrstag." The official day of the "Nilschwelle" which was designated long ago did not any longer coincide with the actual rise of the Nile, which occurs months later. Joseph

calculates that it would take 1,460 years to reestablish the natural order of things. For Joseph "order" apparently does not mean a discipline imposed from without, but an internal, organic harmony where cause and celebration coincide. However: "In dieser Beziehung herrschte in Ägyptenland, das sonst die Unordnung so sehr verabscheute, fast immer Unordnung." The Egyptians did not mind this state of disorder apparently " . . . weil eine Unordnung, mit der es noch 1000 Jahre dauern soll, als Ordnung zu gelten hat" (107; 926).

Joseph's silent disapproval of this state of affairs reflects Mann's perennial preoccupation with the measure of entropy which invades established order from the individual to the universal plane. It seems quite likely that he is also alluding to Hitler's vision of the "tausendjähriges Reich," which certainly represents for Mann the epitome of disorder.

"Der Neujahrstag" leads immediately to the awesome scenes of final defeat of Mut's highly civilized person, in which the conflict between natural and cultural order reaches its climax. Accordingly the narrator states:

Es war notwendig, den Verlauf des Opetfestes und des Tages der amtlichen Nilschwelle, wenn auch nur in losestem Umriss, zu schildern, um die Hörserschaft mit dem öffentlichen Rahmen vertraut zu machen, in welchem die Hochstunde unserer Geschichte, der privaten und eigentlichen, sich abspielte (107; 931).

Mann explains here specifically that Mut's "Heimsuchung" is "privat" but also "eigentlich," that it is, in accordance with the essence of the work, at once individual and typifying.²³¹ He explores the notion of "Heimsuchung" in different guises and to differing degrees in every single one of his works, and consequently he has specified it as its "Grund-motiv":

. . . beim Beginn unseres geistigen Handelns gleich, da wir in das Kulturleben eintraten, . . . stossen wir auf eine Anteilnahme und Vorliebe, die uns jene Einheit -- und dass es immer dasselbe ist -- zu heiterem Staunen empfinden und erkennen lässt: es ist die Idee der Heimsuchung, des Einbruchs trunken zerstörender und vernichtender Mächte in ein gefasstes und mit allen seinen Hoffnungen auf Würde und ein bedingtes Glück der Fassung verschworenes Leben. . . . Im Anfang, wie in der Mitte: Vom "Kleinen Herrn Friedemann" zum "Tod in Venedig," der viel späteren Erzählung vom Kommen des "fremden Gottes" spannt sich der Bogen . . .²³²

The half-circle of the bow enlarges into a circle with the creation of the later works, up to Die Betrogene, in which not natural drives but a horrible disease invades and annihilates the life of the protagonist.

In the tetralogy Mann concretizes the defeat of civilization in the defeat of Mut, whose strong but repressed sexuality jeopardizes her over-civilized existence. Potiphar's wife is thus the sister of Aschenbach, with whom the narrator specifically associates her through

Tabubu, the "Vorsteherin der Schminktöpfe." This attribute at once recalls the barber and the cosmetic aids to which Aschenbach resorts in order to become younger and more attractive to Tadzio, who is both his love object and the symbol of beauty and form per se. Aschenbach, pondering the affinity of form and barbarism, typifies the dilemma of the intellectual who

. . . abstumpft . . . gegen den scharfen
und bitteren Reiz der Erkenntnis . . .

decides

. . . das Wissen zu leugnen, es
abzulehnen, erhobenen Hauptes
darüber hinwegzugehen, sofern
es den Willen, die Tat, das
Gefühl und selbst die Leiden-
schaft im geringsten zu lähmen,
zu entmutigen, zu entwürdigen
geeignet ist (111; 346).

Yet, reflecting on this decision, Aschenbach immediately realizes its paradoxical consequences:

Aber moralische Entschlossenheit
jenseits des Wissens, der auf-
lösenden und hemmenden Erkenntnis,
-- bedeutet sie nicht wiederum
eine Vereinfachung, eine sittliche
Vereinfältigung der Welt und der
Seele und also auch ein Erstarren
zum Bösen, Verbotenen, zum sittlich
Unmöglichem? Und hat Form nicht
zweierlei Gesicht? Ist sie nicht
sittlich und unsittlich zugleich,
-- sittlich als Ergebnis und Aus-
druck der Zucht, unsittlich aber
und selbst widersittlich, sofern sie
von Natur eine moralische Gleich-
gültigkeit in sich schliesst, ja

wesentlich bestrebt ist, das
Moralische unter ihr stolzes und
unumschränktes Szepter zu beugen?
(111; 346-47).

Mann is positing here his essential problem in the form of a highly abstract and unanswered question. Hans Castorp receives the answer in the dream-like vision in the snow-chapter of the Zauberberg, an answer which he, however, promptly forgets. Nowhere does Mann depict the paradox of culture in a more concrete and unequivocal manner than in the tetralogy, where he portrays it in the picture of the rolling sphere and exemplifies it in the woman Mut.²³³

The all-important scene in which Joseph becomes fully aware of Mut's feelings toward him takes place in Potiphar's garden, where Joseph and Mut meet by coincidence or design. Mann stages here a scene of magnificent artifice, beauty and sterility which at once serves to camouflage and to throw into relief the burning chaos of Mut's passion.

Ein Wiedersehen, das einem der beiden einander Gegenüberstehenden ernüchternde Enttäuschung hätte zufügen können, war es nicht. Das Licht fiel schräg, farbig und kleidsam, es tauchte die Gartenszene von Kiosk und Schilfteich in Tinten von satter Buntheit, leuchtete das Mennigrot des Weges feurig an, liess die Blumen erglühen, das regsame Blattwerk der Bäume lieblich schimmern und gab den Augen der Menschen einen Spiegelschein ganz wie der Wasserfläche des Teichs, auf dem die in- und ausländischen Enten gleich

himmlischen und nicht gleich natürl-
lichen Enten waren und wie gemalt
und lackiert. Himmlisch und wie
gemalt, gereinigt von Notdurft und
Unzulänglichkeit, nahmen sich in
diesem Licht auch die Menschen aus,
ihre ganzen Personen, nicht nur ihre
schimmernden Augen; sie glichen
Göttern und Grabfiguren, geschminkt
und geschmeichelt von Lichtesgnaden,
und mochten ihre Freude haben der
eine am Anblick des anderen, wie sie
mit Spiegelaugen aus schön getönten
Gesichtern aufeinander blickten
(107; 816-17).

This setting clearly intends to intensify the aspects of Mut's over-civilized countenance at the moment when its illusionary "Spiegelschein" begins to shatter. Mut, whose "Notdurft und Unzulänglichkeit" will surface only too soon, is for the moment " . . . dankbar für jede Begünstigung der Illusion" (107; 817).

However, the deceptive beauty of this setting which is so favorable to Mut's aging looks does not help to overcome the aversion Joseph feels toward this representative of her ancient and civilized country. Mut personifies the beauty but also the "verheissungslose Greise" (107; 849) of Egyptian culture, whose order was now invaded by "des fremden Gottes" demands for worship and sacrifice.

Mann concretizes, in the woman Mut, on the individual and the universal plane the intrusion of natural into cultural order, which results in the paradoxical notion of disorder: order and chaos at the same time. Mut, who from

the biblical point of view exemplifies the epitome of disorderly conduct, behaves not disorderly at all when viewed from the psychological point of view. She symbolizes, in fact, that aspect of natural order which can not be subdued even within the greatest aggregate of culture. Accordingly, viewed from the internal perspective of the tetralogy, which combines myth and psychology, the two aspects of Mut become one, or better they balance each other. Mann transforms the one-dimensional seductress of the Bible story simultaneously into a deeply troubled human being of flesh and blood and a symbol for the "Heimsuchung" of human endeavor itself. For

. . . was ist die Leidenschaft von Potiphars Frau für den jungen Fremdling anderes als abermals der Einsturz, der Zusammenbruch einer mühsam, aus Einsicht und Verzicht gewonnenen hochkultivierten Haltung: die Niederlage der Zivilisation, der heulende Triumph der unterdrückten Triebwelt. 234

Displaying the singular interaction of dependency and freedom, which is the hallmark of the figure on the see-saw, Mann never leaves the supportive plank of the biblical donnée nor that of his personal reality. The defeat of the civilized Mut thus expresses simultaneously the defeat of Mann's Germany, which was invaded and conquered by Hitler's hordes at the very time Mann wrote Joseph in Ägypten. Jaakob's grief at Joseph's apparent death (106; 476) and Egypt's "Heimsuchung" by famine add new dimensions to Mann's perennial theme. His genial idea to advance Egypt's history two hundred years adds yet

another level of defeat, for the great Egyptian empire ended with the corrupt government of Echnaton. In this way Mann projects the "Niederlage der Zivilisation" on a multiple screen, without ever leaving the realities he depends on.

V.

THE THEME OF PROGRESS

In the Joseph novels Mann adds the concept of progress to the notions of theatricality and "Heimsuchung," thus forming another structural triangle. The tetralogy displays essentially the spectacle of progression and "Heimsuchung" which the actors perform again and again on the timeless stage of humanity. Mut personifies on this stage the chaotic, self-destructing instinct of culture, while Joseph, opposing and balancing this instinct, represents its prudence, discipline and order. He not only prevents Mut's final defeat, but also saves Egypt from famine. How personal the notion of "Heimsuchung" became during the creation of the tetralogy Mann demonstrates in the way he relates the concept to the famine.

Es geht uns Menschen bei solchem ausserordentlichen Verhalten der Natur immer gleicherweise: zu Anfang täuschen wir uns, alltäglich gesinnt wie wir sind, über den Charakter des Vorkommnisses, verstehen nicht, worauf es hinaus will. Gutmütig halten wir es für einen Zwischenfall gewöhnlich-mässiger Art, und es ist seltsam, an diese Blindheit, dies Missverständnis zurückzudenken, nachdem wir allmählich gewahr geworden, dass sie uns selbst, zu unseren Lebzeiten zustossen werde. So auch die Kinder Ägyptens (108; 1181).

Mann's attitude toward progress is intimately related to this quotation, for it was only after the immediate events in Germany remedied his political tolerance that Mann unequivocally sided with democracy and progress.

The term progress, however, does not necessarily imply a qualitative statement, but frequently it means merely progression of events in time, events which Mann neither wanted nor applauded.²³⁵ Mann realizes the "unheilbare Notwendigkeit" of things. He rejects, however, Spengler's fatalistic axiom, "Wir müssen das Notwendige wollen oder nichts."²³⁶ Mann refers to progress so frequently throughout the tetralogy that the meaning of the word becomes "fragwürdig" for this reason alone. The narrator who constantly alludes to, or is complaining about, the "Undeutlichkeit Gottes" is very specific on that one point: God detests reactionaries: "Es ekelt den Herrn das Überständige . . . das Alte, Überlebte wird von Gott verflucht" (106; 354-55).

In the Betrachtungen - and ever since, up to his last works - Mann fought the reactionary within himself.²³⁷ This struggle was intensified in the tetralogy because the creation of the work coincided with the traumatic experience of Hitler-Germany, which forced the final change of Mann's political position.

He frequently stated that human concern is time and place-conditioned. In 1934, confined on an ocean liner, he contemplated problems of other passengers, which may not have concerned him at another time and place, for "Es ist nicht unsere Sache, aber wenn man mit solchen

Vorkommnissen in denselben Horizont eingeschlossen ist, so macht man sich Gedanken darüber" (114; 180). Politics were never really Thomas Mann's genuine concern. But the events in Germany impinged more and more on his personal and artistic reality, forcing him to participate in the fight against Hitler.

Accordingly, the countless allusions to progress which dot the tetralogy express to a great degree Thomas Mann's struggle to stand on the side of democracy, in which he never wholeheartedly believed but to which he nevertheless gave his active and ardent support. Mann recognized in democracy the only hope for the immediate future. Hope for progress was for Mann hope in the progression of time: "Dauern, Beharren, Fortleben ist alles, und alle Hoffnung heisst 'Zeit'" (119; 364).

In the essay "Der alte Fontane" (1908) Mann mentions for the first time the future formula for the tetralogy. He alludes to his own complex and never changing attitude towards politics. Fontane's political philosophy was a fascinating compound of radicalism and orthodox conservatism, about which Mann writes:

. . . Mythos und Psychologie:
 Das sind zwei Dinge; und wo sie
 in ein und derselben Brust bei-
 einander wohnen, wo Sanger- und
 Schriftstellertum sich paaren,
 da kommt es usserlich zu Wider-
 spruchen. . . . Der Dichter ist
 konservativ als Schutzer des
 Mythos, Psychologie aber ist das
 scharfste Minierwerkzeug demo-
 kratischer Aufklrung. . . .
 Geister wie er mussen in ihrem

politischen Verhalten kompliziert und unzuverlässig erscheinen, denn die Widersprüche, zu denen die Tagesdebatte sie drängt, finden ihre Ausbühnung und Auflösung erst in der Zukunft (113; 54-55).

An analysis of Mann's attitude towards progress in the tetralogy is necessary for a final assessment of his sense of place. Positivistic progress is a linear, upward moving concept which may upset the balance of the figure on the see-saw - my paradigm for Thomas Mann. The examination of progress best takes place within the character of Joseph who, in general critical opinion, progresses from mythical to rational consciousness. His character parallels the structure of the tetralogy, which in that kind of interpretation must be one-dimensional; for Joseph, after Die Geschichten Jaakobs, is led on the straight and narrow path of chronology from Canaan to Egypt.

This critical interpretation is exemplified in an unpublished dissertation by Kenneth Hughes, in which he states that Abraham "is the closest to that uninspired mass of men who were content to think of themselves as nothing more than flies to wanton gods," while his descendant "Joseph has become a human savior and is therefore . . . in the humanistic symbolism of the novel, truly divine."²³⁸ This naive interpretation utterly disregards Joseph's character, and it forces the novel into the narrowness of single-minded positivistic thinking, which, to say the least, is insulting to Thomas Mann, who describes

Joseph as

. . . "tâm," . . . Er war zwei-
deutig, doppelgesichtig und ein
Mann des Zugleich, schön und mächtig,
ermutigend und beängstigend, göttig
und gefährlich. Man wurde nicht klug
aus ihm, wie man eben aus der Eigen-
schaft "tâm" nicht klug wird, in der
Ober- und Unterwelt sich begegnen.
. . . [Er war] ein Mann des Wende-
punktes und der Vertauschung der
Eigenschaften, der oben und unten
zu Hause war. Ein Handelsmann war
er ja auch, und ins Kaufmännische
war schon der Diebstahl einschlägig,
was ganz zur Zweideutigkeit stimmte
(108; 1208-09).

One cannot really ascertain Joseph's character, for it is "doppelbödig"; and far from being a "mythical 'Heilsbringer'" he is a shrewd and charming businessman who plays with the "imitatio Gottes." Joseph, like most other mortals, see-saws between moral and amoral actions and, being a great "Lebenskünstler," he manages to keep his balance.²³⁹ As businessman Joseph is an analyst of the prevailing situation in Egypt, as dreamer he is a poet who charms men with his language. But he is also a "man of mind" and as such he takes on himself the difficult task of saving Egypt and his family from famine, an act which at the same time brought him power and worldly glory.

The fiber of his character is analogous to the "doppelbödige" art of the tetralogy, which at the same time elucidates the double meaning Mann attaches to the

notion of progress. In a way, Joseph, the religious "Hochstaplerchen," is an opportunist like Felix Krull, with whom he shares most of his other attributes.²⁴⁰ Felix, however, is blissfully unaware of his society's moral code, while Joseph, son of Jaakob, was well aware of the meaning of sin.

Loved and preferred by his father, Joseph knowingly uses this love for his own advantage; he charms Jaakob into giving him the many-colored coat which intensifies the brothers' hatred. He is very conscious of his own behavior:

Das Kleid, das die Brüder ihm abgerissen,
 . . . spielte eine hervorstechende Rolle
 dabei. Dass er sich nicht hätte darin
 vor ihnen spreizen . . . dürfen, leuch-
 tete ihm Überwältigend ein. . . . Aber
 da er nicht vergessen hatte, für sein
 Verderben zu sorgen - warum hatte Jaakob
 vergessen ihm vorzubeugen? (106; 433).

Joseph realizes that he is the creator of his own misery, but at the same time he associates his father (and God) with it by imbuing his misfortune with a higher purpose. When the brothers throw Joseph into the well, the narrator explains:

. . . verfehlt wäre die Annahme, dass
 Joseph unter so tödlich ernstest Um-
 ständen aufgehört hätte zu spielen
 und zu träumen. . . . Er war Jaakob
 wahrhafter Sohn, . . . der in allem
 irdischen Wandel . . . immer sein
 Leben ans Göttliche knüpfte . . . mit
 der Überzeugung, dass ein Leben und
 Geschehen ohne den Echtheitsausweis

höherer Wirklichkeit . . . überhaupt
kein Leben und Geschehen ist: . . .
dass das Untere gar nicht zu geschehen
wüsste . . . ohne sein gestirnhafte
Vorbild und Gegenstück (106; 435).

Joseph was never attracted to the simple pastoral and religious existence of his forefathers, but rather to the cultured life in the cities of the ancient countries which surrounded Canaan. The seventeen-year-old Joseph " . . . der nicht ohne Sinn für das weltlich Stattliche, ja das Pomphafte war" asked himself often " . . . warum [er] nicht mit den Seinen als besitzender Bürger in einer der Städte [lebte]. . . . Er blickte gern auf die Stadt, in der so viele Menschen wohnten" (106; 37, 56). Joseph's love of material things does not diminish when he matures. In the contrary, as Pharaoh's servant he contemplates the progress he made in this aspect: "Petepre's Sklave war ich, von ihm gekauft. Nun bin ich Pharao's Sklave, nach seinem Spruch. Da bin ich doch mehr geworden als ich war, und habe zugenommen!" (108; 971). Far from being a "mythical 'Heilsbringer'" Joseph was an utter materialist, whose personal goal in either of its double meanings was not spiritual:

Dass sich der Mensch unterhalte und
nicht sein Leben hinbringe wie das
dumpfe Vieh, das ist doch schliesslich
die Hauptsache, und wie hoch er's
bringt in der Unterhaltung, darauf
kommt's an (108; 972) (120; 47).²⁴¹

Joseph played for high power stakes and for even higher material gains. Long before he became a great

and successful man he dreamed of material wealth and power. In his first "Himmelstraum" he stands before God, who gives him "Schlüsselgewalt" and appoints him " . . . Befehlshaber . . . über alle Scharen, denn der Herr hat Wohlgefallen an dir" (106; 347). Joseph dreamed frequently of worldly power and glory (106; 374, 385), and he is very adept at interpreting his and others' dreams to his own advantage. Very much in contrast to Hans Castorp, whose extraordinary snow-vision left no impression on him, Joseph is deeply influenced by his dreams.

Joseph's talent for ingratiating himself does become more complex as he matures. The youngster's spying on his brothers and thereby strengthening Jaakob's authority over them, is paralleled by the mature Joseph who deprives the nobles of their fortunes and thereby solidifies the king's power. Whereas the youngster charmed his father into presenting him with the famous colored dress, the mature Joseph can get whatever he wants from Pharaoh; he twists him around his little finger (108; 1264). Furthermore, the "Volkswirt" remains by choice as aloof from the people of Egypt as the youth remained from his brothers at home. The narrator finds it necessary to comment on this fact:

Nebenbei gesagt ist es der Anerkennung wert und fast eine Sache zum Wundern, dass jemand bei so viel kritischer Abgerücktheit von der Welt, in die er versetzt ist, unter Kindern, deren ganzes Gebaren ihm im Grund eine

Narrheit ist, dennoch so viel Lebens-
ernst aufbringen mag, um unter ihnen
so weit voranzukommen, wie Joseph kam,
und so Dankenswertes für sie zu
leisten, wie ihm bestimmt war (107;
926-17).²⁴²

The above analysis of Joseph's character demonstrates that basically he always remains the same. The examination is partial, in both meanings of the word, for any attempt to discuss an ambiguous work such as the tetralogy cannot be anything else. However, since the focal point of this thesis is on the figure on the seesaw, a one-dimensional interpretation of Joseph's character would be self-defeating.²⁴³ Joseph is a complex man, and the less pleasant aspects of his character are balanced by magnificent qualities. He had not only the gift of language, persuasion, intelligence and prudence, he was not only good-looking, charming and disciplined, but he was also loyal, fair-minded, discreet and farsighted; he was a first class administrator and wise politician. Nevertheless, Joseph was not made of the stuff the traditional "Heilsbringer" is made of. If he appears as such to the people of Egypt and to his brothers, Joseph himself knew very well who he was; what he accomplished was

. . . eine zwar leiblich wichtige,
aber ganz einfache, praktische Sache
und ist weiter kein Hosiannah dabei.
Denn euer Bruder ist kein Gottesheld
und kein Bote geistlichen Heils,
sondern ist nur ein Volkswirt. . . .
Denn für Brot sagt man "Recht schönen

Dank" und nicht "Hosiannah." Muss
 aber freilich sein, das Brot. Brot
 kommt zuerst und dann das Hosiannah
 (108; 1261-62).

These are not the words of a socialistic "Heilsbringer" but of a humanist-intellectual turned "Volkswirt," the words of one who has realized the importance of primary needs, but who does not over-estimate them. This line of thought is introduced much earlier by the ancient Huij:

Es gibt nichts Erregenderes in der Welt als die Gedankensorge um die Tagesordnung und um den Aon, sie ist das Allerwichtigste, und höchstens dass der Mensch esse, das steht noch voran. Erst muss er essen und satt werden, das ist wahr, aber sobald er satt ist und dieser Sorge ledig, tritt die Gedankensorge ihn an. . . (107; 647-48).

It is typical for the structure of the tetralogy that the aristocratic, decadent and corrupt Huij is pre-occupied with the spiritual demands of the day, which do not concern Joseph at all. Joseph was enamoured of the material culture and the pomp of Egypt, whose religious practices he abhorred, but nevertheless observed whenever he deemed it necessary. He was much too prudent to do, or not to do, things which might harm his image and his position, and he proved this in his rejection of Mut's love. Joseph was also far too intelligent and disciplined not to shed characteristics which would harm his career. He lost his childish narcissism and "Schwatzhaftigkeit" and became instead a more social minded man, and an

observer. But basically he always remained the same: a normally egotistic yet extraordinarily talented individual who knew what he wanted and who missed no opportunity to achieve his goal.

If Joseph's character develops at all it intensifies his love for pomp and power, which is as much at odds with the "savior" image as Leo Naphta's love of power and luxury is with his. The beautiful Joseph, who obviously is the direct opposite of the ungainly Communist-Jesuit is also very much like him, for like Naphta, he is radical and conservative at the same time. In the chapter "Vom schelmischen Diener" Mann gives "Eine zuverlässige Klarstellung von Josephs Verwaltungstätigkeit. . ." (108; 1314) which mainly consists in the consolidation of Pharaoh's power. The narrator, a man of balance and integrity, admits:

An den faktischen Angaben des [Bibel] Textes ist nicht zu rütteln. Joseph verkaufte an die, welche Schätze besaßen, namentlich an die Gaubarone und Grossgrundbesitzer, die sich Königen gleichhielten, zu unverfrorenen Konjunkturpreisen und zog . . . Tauschwerte in die königliche Kasse . . . (108; 1317).

Joseph, like the most ardent revolutionary, deprived the aristocracy of their land and consequently of their political power. He rid the new state of

. . . altmodisch trotzige Feudalherren, deren rückständige, der Gesamtheit unnützliche Existenz dem neuen Staate längst ein Dorn im Auge war. Diese

stolzen Herren ins Zeitgemässe zu
 nütigen, nahm Joseph, der Staatsmann,
 die Gelegenheit wahr. Um sie in erster
 Linie handelte es sich bei den Enteig-
 nungen, den Umsiedlungen, von denen wir
 hören: was sich unter diesem weisen und
 entschlossenen Minister ereignete, war
 die Auflösung des noch vorhandenen
 Grossgrundbesitzes und die Besetzung
 kleinerer Gutsgebiete mit Pachtbauern,
 die dem Staate für eine auf der Höhe
 der Zeit stehende Bewirtschaftung,
 Kanalisierung und Bewässerung des
 Bodens verantwortlich waren; es war
 also eine gleichmässigerere Verteilung
 des Landes unter das Volk . . .
 (108; 1319).

His land reform might have done honor to any kind of
 Marxist. Joseph, however, was no socialist by any name.
 His reforms were conducted as much in the interest of
 Pharaoh's absolute power as out of concern for the welfare
 of Egypt's people. In fact, Joseph, like Bismarck,²⁴⁴
 was wise enough to realize that the former could only
 be achieved through the latter. Joseph caters in practice
 to the absolute power of Pharaoh's "Gottheit" in a similar
 manner as Naphta promulgates in theory the absolute power
 of the "Gottesstaat." Naphta, a prophetic figure in 1924,
 is too close for comfort to our own experience; he saw
 in absolutism

. . . den absoluten Befehl, die
 eiserne Bindung, um Disziplin,
 Opfer, . . . Nicht Befreiung und
 Entfaltung des Ich sind das Ge-
 heimnis und das Gebot der Zeit.
 Was sie braucht, wonach sie

verlangt, was sie sich schaffen
wird, das ist -- der Terror
(105; 422).

Naphta, however, is fanatic in his convictions, while Joseph does not even believe in the "Gottheit" he serves. Neither does he believe in terror, he prefers friendly persuasion to force. Joseph believes in himself, for he is the beloved hero in a "Märchenoper," and the people of Egypt laughed about his benign despötism; they admired

. . . wie Joseph unter gelassener Ausnutzung der Preis-Lage im Umgange mit den Grossen und Reichen, für seinen Herrn, den Hor im Palaste, sorgte und ihn golden und silbern machte, indem er gewaltige Kaufwerte für das Korn, womit er die Besitzenden versah, in Pharaos Schatzhaus strömen liess. Darin erwies sich die geschickte Dienertreue einer Gottheit, die der Inbegriff alles ergebenen, Gewinn zuschanzenden Dienertums ist. Hand in Hand damit aber ging die Frei- verteilung von Brotfrucht unter die hungernde Kleinbevölkerung der Städte im Namen Jung-Pharaos, des Gottes- träumers, dem damit ebensoviel und noch mehr Nutzen geschah als mit seiner Vergoldung (108; 1316).

Notwithstanding the social merit of Joseph's actions it must be said that his motivation was not altruistic and progressive, but rather egotistical and conservative. As a result Pharaoh gained absolute power and Joseph himself the kind of fame and popularity for which he strove from his earliest youth:

Diese mythische Popularität, die Joseph gewann, und auf deren Gewinnung sein Wesen wohl immer ausgegangen war, beruhte vor allem auf der irisierenden Gemischtheit, der mit den Augen lachenden Doppelsinnigkeit seiner Massnahmen, die gleichsam nach zwei Seiten funktionierten und auf eine durchaus persönliche Weise und mit magischem Witz verschiedene Zwecke und Ziele miteinander verbanden (108; 1315).

Joseph functioned in both directions, and in his protean character favorable and unfavorable attributes balance each other as befitting one who is blessed from above and below. His social and political actions are ambiguous, for they are at once progressive and conservative. Viewed from the internal perspective of the tetralogy, however, the differentiation of the term is meaningless, for they express together, in Kerény's words, the "Uralt-Fortschrittliche," which is the essential characteristic of the work.²⁴⁵

From an external perspective the countless allusions to progress in the tetralogy appear like an exercise in auto-suggestion. The "man of mind" felt that the demands of the day required a positive attitude towards the future. Thomas Mann produced this attitude more by will-power than by conviction. What he said about Nietzsche applies to himself as well. He achieved " . . . eine Form der Lebensbejahung . . . die nicht primär und naiv, sondern eine Überwindung, ein Trotzdem, dem Leiden abgewonnen ist" (114; 284). At a time of Germany's moral

defeat he saw hope not so much in positivistic progress but in the progression of time itself. Accordingly, the narrator of the tetralogy explains: "Denn Zukunft ist Hoffnung, und aus Güte ward dem Menschen die Zeit gegeben, dass er in Erwartung lebe" (107; 727).

I have demonstrated throughout the discussion of the Joseph novels the "Unzuverlässigkeit und Proteushaftigkeit" of the sorcerer who, however, always remains true to himself and to the see-saw movement of the tetralogy. My analysis has revealed that Mann inverts the development of human consciousness in order to align it with the symbolism of the rotating sphere, which has neither beginning nor end. Fracturing, augmenting, fictionalizing and psychologizing the story of Joseph and his brothers, Mann nevertheless always remains within its biblical framework. The question arises why Joseph, who from the mythic as well as from the psychological point of view, was a benefactor of mankind, did not receive his father's blessings.

The investigation of Joseph's character reveals the ironic fact that, in a novel which apparently moves in the direction of progress, the protagonist seems to be a reactionary. From the beginning of Der junge Joseph up until the very end of the work, Joseph is more attracted to the ancient paganism of the Egyptians than to the brand new, immaterial beliefs of his Fathers. In his first scene Jaakob surprises him when he performs a pagan ritual of moon-worship - and in the last scene of the work, Joseph has his father buried with all the pomp of pagan

ceremony. While on the one hand Joseph despised certain lewd Egyptian customs, he ardently admired on the other the beautiful civilization of this people. But as I have demonstrated, this ancient civilization, in contrast to the Greek's, was not built on the newly emerging principle of "Geist" but on the fortuity of nature itself.

Near the end of Der junge Joseph the narrator describes the vehemence of Jaakob's grief for his apparently dead son. Jaakob has lost all of his shame, which the narrator defines as

. . . einsilbige Umschreibung jenes Grauens, das entsteht wenn das Ur-tümliche die Schichten der Gesittung durchbricht . . . [und er fährt fort] Jaakob aus tiefstem Schmerz . . . tat "was man nicht mehr tut." und das ist, recht bedacht die Quelle alles Grauens (106; 473).

Employing his familiar deceptive technique, Mann permits Jaakob to slander the principle of "Geist" which he personifies in the novel, in order to reaffirm the affinity of intellect and barbarism which Jaakob experiences in his "Heimsuchung." Mann, however, opposes and balances Jaakob who, in his immoderate grief regresses to the very beginnings of human existence, with his sophisticated son who does a similar thing for exactly opposite reasons.

Joseph was a materialist who charmingly and shrewdly exploited the given situation as a means for reaching the extraordinary power he dreamed of since his earliest youth. He was a pragmatist who liked to live in ease and luxury without the burden of his spiritual heritage. For Jaakob's

son " . . . Gott ist eine Anstrengung, aber die Götter sind ein Vergnügen" (108; 1281).

Joseph rejected Mut's love²⁴⁶ because she symbolized the ancient and decadent civilization of Egypt:

Es graute dem Joseph vor dem, was Mut, das Ägyptische Weib, in seinen Augen verkörperte: . . . die Greisheit des Landes, . . . die Dauer welche verheissungslos, in wüster Unwandelbarkeit, hinausstarre in eine Zukunft, tot und bar der Gewärtigung. . . . Denn das verheissungslos Greise, das war das Geile zugleich . . . womit sein Blut zu vermischen ein erbstolzes Reinheitsgebot ihn warnte (107; 849).

But he nevertheless marries another Egyptian woman and lives with her in pomp and splendor in the midst of her old and decaying culture. Embracing this culture, he, like Jaakob, " . . . tat, was 'man nicht mehr tut'" (106; 473). Far from "being removed from and advanced above the spiritual niveau of his contemporaries"²⁴⁷ Joseph, viewed from the perspective of his own time, had no "spiritual niveau" at all.

He was a reactionary because he preferred the ancient fleshpots of Egypt to "seiner Erwähltheit zur Zukunft" (107; 849) in the realm of "Geist." The future at that time was at the new frontier of human consciousness which separated Joseph's father from the pagans. Joseph received the blessings of the "Mittlertum"; he had achieved the rare thing: "Gunst zu finden vor Gott und den Menschen. . . . es ist ein lieblicher Segen, aber der höchste und

strengste nicht" (108; 1349). The highest blessing, viewed from the biblical perspective, could only be bestowed on one who was concerned foremost with spiritual, and not with material problems.

Viewed from a modern perspective Mann balances the progressive Joseph, the "Bringer einer neuen Zeit" who brought social reforms to Egypt, with Joseph, the reactionary who was enamoured with Egypt's ancient culture, which he knew to be condemned.²⁴⁸

Joseph, while living like an Egyptian, did not deny his original heritage, for it accompanied him all through his life. However, he did not carry its new banner into the ancient pagan country in which he lived. He was very conscious of this fact, for he settled his brothers in Gosen " . . . dass ihr nicht viel zu schaffen habt mit den Kindern Ägyptens und ihrer Altklugheit und eure Originalität nicht leide" (108; 1264).

Having gotten to know the Egyptians, Joseph realized that "Nicht Jaakob allein sorgte sich in der Welt. Das geschah überall unter den Menschen, und überall gab es den Gram, ob man sich denn auf den Herrn verstehe und auf die Zeiten . . ." (107; 656). Jaakob's son came to understand that all human concern and experiences are basically the same. At the same time, however, he was very conscious of the uniqueness of his father's faith. Jaakob's was the God of

. . . Gescheitheit und Verschönerung . . .
[die] wohl gar einen gemeinsamen Namen
trugen: den Namen der Güte. Gott hatte

den Abraham versucht, ihm den Sohn zu bringen, dann hatte er ihn aber nicht genommen, sondern lehrhafterweise den Widder untergeschoben. Die Überlieferung dieser Leute hier [in Ägypten], so hoch sie wandelten im Himmelsreich des Geschmacks, ermangelte leider so gescheiter Geschichten (107; 656-57).

Joseph, who greatly admired the culture of the country that had adopted him, remained at the same time a stranger to it. The narrator reminds the reader that ". . . man darf nicht vergessen, dass des Reiches Herrlichkeit ihn . . . im Grunde nichts anging" (108; 1120). While the narrator advertises the necessity of progress and while he condemns in no uncertain terms "das Alte und Überständige" Joseph himself admires it and is at the same time indifferent towards Egypt, in fact even repelled by it. The co-existence of opposing feelings which I discussed above²⁴⁹ is thus as evident in the tetralogy as it is in all previous and subsequent works. For it is the outstanding talent of the man on the see-saw, of the "Herr des Überblicks," to be subjective and objective at the same time.

Joseph's inherent opportunism is balanced by a deep concern for his own time, a concern which exceeds the material needs of the moment. Far from being a mythical "Heilsbringer," Joseph, the dreamer is also the "man of mind" who takes responsibility not only for his own dreams but for Pharaoh's as well. He feels responsible for his world: "Bist du doch auch Gott Verantwortung schuldig dafür, dass es auf Erden halbwegs nach seinem Willen geht

und nicht ganz und gar nach den Köpfen der Mordbrenner" (108; 1086). Joseph believed in the power of the individual to influence general circumstances even if they seem as compelling as his prison term in Egypt does: "die Umstände waren mächtig; woran aber Joseph glaubte, war ihre Bildsamkeit durch das Persönliche, das Übergewicht der Einzelbestimmung über die allgemein bestimmende Macht der Umstände" (108; 976). This belief in the ability of man also to shape circumstances and not be entirely and helplessly shaped by them is the essence of Mann's attitude towards progress. Mann's complex relation to its manifestations has nothing to do with the political trend of his time " . . . an der jeder Esel teilhat." He sees progress not as forthcoming from a political system or party but as a future when, as he hopes, man will realize the positive potential of his intellect as well as the necessity of civilization.

Als Erzähler bin ich zum Mythos gelangt -- indem ich ihn freilich, zur grenzenlosen Geringschätzung der nichts als Seelenvollen und Mächtgern-Barbaren, humanisiere, mich an einer Vereinigung von Mythos und Humanität versuche, die ich für menschheitlich zukünftiger halte als den einseitig- Augenblicksgebundenen Kampf gegen den Geist, das Sich-beliebt-Machen bei der Zeit durch eifriges Herumtrampeln auf Vernunft und Zivilisation. Um der Zukunft vorarbeiten zu können, muss man nicht nur "zeitgemäß" im Sinn der aktuellen Bewegung sein, . . . man muss seine Zeit ganz in ihrer Komplexheit und Widersprüchlichkeit in sich haben, denn

Vielfaches, nicht eines nur,
bildet die Zukunft vor --
(114; 196-97).

Mann apparently pours Joseph's character into the same mold of revolutionary innovators of their time as Moses and Jesus or Marx and Roosevelt. Joseph, however, sharing some of their characteristics, is at the same time their very opposite. While these men were fighters in the real world of politics, and while they express and answer the real needs of their times and/or their people, Joseph expresses the needs of his own time, but also the general utopic dream of man, which transcends dependence of either worship or material needs. For Joseph is foremost the hero in a "Märchenoper," which, while depending on reality is also far removed from it. His character contains within itself all the possibilities of a fairy prince when he sets out on his quest; and it contains at the same time all the negative and positive aspects of modern man and his endeavor, which is so complicated that, ". . . man weiss nicht ob man es grausam oder gütig nennen soll" (108; 1183). Joseph's character is as enigmatic and complicated as human existence itself. In as far as no exact appraisal of human existence is possible, Joseph's character cannot be exactly appraised either: "Man wurde nicht aus ihm klug" (108; 1209).

Jaakob's son on one hand epitomizes Mann's concept of "Sichwichtignehmen" and on the other "Echtheit" and "Humor," which are by definition self-depreciating (108;

1182). From the perspective of the humorist, the fairy-tale aspect of the novel is germane for in the realm of "Make-believe" the "Zauberer" and the humorist are most at home. Here man does not necessarily have to be nourished by bread; he can be sustained by illusions and humor. In 1926 Mann writes in "Pariser Rechenschaft:"

Das Komische als Labsal, der Humorist
als wahrer Wohltäter der Menschheit,
-- je älter ich werde, desto inniger
empfinde ich es so, und ich habe es
sehr früh so empfunden (119; 149).

The humorist has " . . . ein unverkennbares Vergnügen daran, die Leute zum Besten zu haben, indem er sie mit Ideen bezaubert . . ." (115; 261).

In the tetralogy the narrator frequently refers to fairy-tales. For example he alludes directly to elves (108; 1265, 1269), magicians, witches, as well as to "Snow White and the seven Dwarfs" (108; 799) (two dwarfs play prominent parts in the tetralogy²⁵⁰). Indirectly he alludes to "Rumpelstilzchen," an allusion typical of Mann's technique in that it projects in one picture utterly strange and disconnected images, whose only relation is in their mutual expression of Thomas Mann's thoughts.

The narrator describes how

. . . Pharao . . . glänzend hervortrat
aus dem Horizont seines Palastes und
in voller Pracht über allem Volke er-
strahlte, welches einhellig dabei vor
Freuden auf einem Bein herumsprang,
wie es Vorschrift war und auch den
Landeskindern von Herzen kam (107; 721).

This vivid portrait of a multitude of people jumping around on one leg under the sunny sky of Egypt simultaneously conjures up the image of the elf "Rumpelstilzchen" who, in the secret of northern night, dances around on one leg and sings

Ach wie gut, dass niemand weiss,
Dass ich Rumpelstilzchen heiss.

The little ditty seems to be one of the keys to the great and difficult art of Thomas Mann, whose essence I have tried to explore by examining his sense of place. Mann's art is comparable to the image of the figure on the seesaw; a perfect master of his craft, Mann balances humor and deepest seriousness in a manner which is uniquely his own. He is the advocate of the third humanism which knowingly and unromantically²⁵¹ insists on the necessity of illusions, those deceptions which Mann, suspending the old ones with one hand, recreates anew with the other. No single-minded critical approach fashioned by the dictates of the hour can completely conquer Thomas Mann's " . . . vexatorische Weigerung, sich definieren und festlegen zu lassen . . ." (115; 261) which expresses at the same time the essence and perfection of his art.

NOTES

- I. Thomas Mann's Sense of Place
- 1 Samuel Szemere, Kunst und Humanität (Berlin: 1966), p. 147. Szemere sees the new element in Mann's humanism of the future in the ". . . Erlebnisfreude die . . . sich uns als eine seiner Grundüberzeugungen einprägt."
 - 2 For example Ernst Nündel, Die Kunsttheorie Thomas Manns (Bonn: 1972), p. 162.
Erich Kahler, The Orbit of Thomas Mann (Princeton: 1969), p. 69.
 - 3 Georg Lukács, Realism in Our Time, trans. John and Necke Mander (New York: 1964), p. 57.
 - 4 Ruth Nanda Anshen, "World Perspectives," in Realism in Our Time, p. 142. "This generation is discovering that history does not conform to the social optimism of modern civilization and that the organization of human communities and the establishment of freedom and peace are not only intellectual achievements but spiritual and moral achievements as well, demanding a cherishing of the wholeness of human personality . . .". This seems to reexpress the essence of Mann's humanism, and especially what he writes in the Betrachtungen of the "unanständigen Optimismus der Jetztzeit - und - Fortschrittsdemagogen" (116; 61).
 - 5 "The Responsibility of the Mind" in Orbit, p. 3 ff.
 - 6 Monika Mann relates in Vergangenes und Gegenwärtiges - Erinnerungen (München: 1956), p. 78, how the nick-name "Zauberer" was born when Mann appeared at the Munich carnival dressed as magician: ". . . Papa in einem Talar angetan von bunt-glühendem Glanze - schwarze Schulterlocken, gewaltige Augenbrauen und silberne Spitzpantoffeln - so zeigte er sich, Zauberstab in der funkelberingten Hand, mit hämischem Grinsen bei uns . . .".

- 7 Mündel, p. 160.
- 8 Gustav Lindtke, Die Stadt der Buddenbrooks (Lübeck: 1965), p. 7. cf. letter to Hermann Hesse: "Es sind gewisse Empfindungen, mit denen man auf die Vaterstadt blickt, komische, peinliche, gerührte." Anni Carlsson, ed., Hermann Hesse - Thomas Mann - Briefwechsel (Frankfurt a.M.: 1968), p. 69.
- 9 In 1929 Mann purchased some property at Nidden in Lithuania Memelland. Hans Bürgin and Hans-Otto Mayer, Thomas Mann - eine Chronik seines Lebens (Frankfurt a.M.: 1965), p. 85.
- 10 Henry Hatfield, ed., Thomas Mann: A Collection of Critical Essays (Englewood Cliffs, N.J.: 1964), p. 50.
- 11 Carlsson, pp. 142-43.
- 12 Related by Erika Mann in the film Frau Katja erzählt, cf. Karl Kerényi, ed., Thomas Mann - Karl Kerényi: Gespräch in Briefen (München: 1967), p. 87. "Habe ich erst meine Bücher und meinen Schreibtisch aufgeschlagen, . . . so wird alles gut sein."
- 13 Kerényi, p. 166.
- 14 cf. "Gruss and die Schweiz" (119; 290), "Verhältnis zu Wien" (119; 195). Mann calls Munich in 1926 "die dumme Stadt . . . Hort der Reaktion, . . . Sitz aller Verstocktheit . . . und München wird einer schönen Frau gleichen, die jedoch im Rufe so verdriesslicher Beschränktheit steht, dass sie keinen Liebhaber findet" (117; 160-63). Berlin, on the other hand " . . . das ist Energie, Intelligenz, Straffheit, Unsentimentalität . . ." (120; 130).
- 15 The frequently voiced admiration of American writers for Thomas Mann is expressed collectively in Charles Neider, ed., The Stature of Thomas Mann (New York: 1947). This admiration was again expressed at the "Thomas Mann Symposium" at Rutgers University, April 10 - 12, 1975.

In a similar manner France's admiration for Mann, expressed in Hommage de la France à Thomas Mann (Paris: 1955), was recently reexpressed in Thomas Mann et la France (Paris: 1973), p. 29. The chapter "Thomas Mann vue en 1937" contains remarks by several famous French writers which are summed up by Marguerite Yourcenar: "Thomas Mann demeure pour moi l'un des plus grands écrivains de ce siècle . . . un grand peintre de la destinée humaine, capable de situer l'homme aussi bien du point de vue social et psychologique que dans ses rapports avec l'univers et avec les forces obscures de son être. Il reste beaucoup à explorer parmi les ombres et les lumières de son oeuvre."

Such admiration is (typically for Mann) balanced by the ambiguous and predominately hostile feeling of his native Germany. The writer of the Betrachtungen was first attacked for his nationalism, later for being a nihilist, socialist, and Marxist (cf. A Collection of Critical Essays, pp. 155-169). The first discussion of Mann's work came after the war, from Fritz Martini in 1952, cf. Thomas Hollweck, Thomas Mann (München: 1975).

Herbert Lehnert sees the reason for the Mann-controversy in his "Nicht-Festlegbarkeit auf eindeutige philosophische Grundbegriffe." Thomas Mann Forschung (Stuttgart: 1969), p. 57.

But ironically, and again typical for the man on the see-saw, Fritz Strich writes as early as 1925: "Thomas Mann hat mit allem, was ihm zu Gedanken und Gestalt wurde . . . vom Standpunkt des deutschen Europäers, des deutschen Weltbürgers das eigene Leben durchforscht und vermehrt. . . . Wer mit ihm darin übereinstimmt, dass alle in . . . den zivilisatorischen und politischen Erscheinungen fortwirkenden Probleme in uns selbst am nächsten und sichersten zu greifen sind, und dass sie durch möglichst klare Erkenntnis . . . gereinigt und gefördert werden können, der besitzt in ihm einen starken Führer" (italics mine). Die Neue Rundschau, 36, no.1, (1925), p. 561.

In this connection there is a letter to Agnes Meyer about the "Verzweiflung über das Nicht Wissen und Nicht Wissen Wollen" of people who refuse to be led in the right direction. Briefe II, (5/25/1940), p. 142.

- 16 Erika Mann, ed., Thomas Mann: Briefe 1937 - 1947 (II) (Frankfurt a.M.: 1963), p. 442. cf. letter to Hermann Hesse, where Mann writes that he keeps for Roosevelt " . . . eine unsterbliche Dankbarkeit. . . . Als ich zum ersten Mal das Weisse Haus verliess, wusste ich, dass Hitler verloren sei." Carlsson, p. 124.
- 17 Bürgin, p. 131.
- 18 Carlsson, p. 88.
- 19 Simone de Beauvoir, La Force de L'âge (Paris: 1960), pp. 153, 116.
- 20 Kurt Tucholsky, Lerne Lachen ohne zu Weinen (Reinbeck/Hamburg: 1932), p. 350.
- 21 Ernst Bisdorf in Thomas Mann und die Politik (Luxemburg: 1966), pp. 65-66, substantiates this, writing " . . . dass man, bis 1922 zurückblickend, zugeben muss, dass er das kommende Unheil als einer der sehr wenigen vorausgesehen und davor gewarnt hat."
- 22 Mann writes in 1950: "Die Grundprinzipien der Demokratie divergieren: Freiheit und Gleichheit. Sie widersprechen einander und können nie zu idealer Vereinigung gelangen, denn Gleichheit trägt in sich die Tyrannei und Freiheit die anarchische Auflösung. Die Aufgabe der Menschheit ist heute, ein neues Gleichgewicht zwischen ihnen zu finden" (118; 335).
- 23 Walter Kaufmann, ed. and trans., The Portable Nietzsche (New York: 1954), p. 30.
- 24 The New York Times, (12/12/1974), "Arabs and Africans at U.N.," p.1.
- 25 Ibid., (12/16/1974), "The New Image of Man," p. 33.
- 26 Orbit, p. 19.
- 27 Ibid., p. 6.
Many other scholars stress Mann's feeling of

responsibility toward his fellow men, for example Joachim Maas, "Thomas Mann - eine Liebe im Geiste" in Die Neue Rundschau, (6/6/1945), pp. 91-111.

- 28 Orbit, p. 9.
- 29 Mann writes to Hermann Hesse (2/8/1947) that he never did change if one " . . . zwischen Gesinnung und Meinung unterscheidet nach Goethe's Wort: 'Er hat wiederholt seine Meinungen gewechselt, aber nie seine Gesinnungen.'" Carlsson, p. 123.
- 30 Orbit, (trans., K. and R. Winston), ch.4, pp. 75-76. "From start to finish he remained both a burgher and an artist."
- 31 Bürgin, p. 221.
- 32 Georg Lukács deals with this aspect of Thomas Mann in "Franz Kafka or Thomas Mann?" in Realism in Our Time, pp. 47-92.
- 33 Erich Heller, Der ironische Deutsche (Frankfurt a.M.: 1959), p. 128.
- 34 Ibid., p. 139.
- 35 Ibid., p. 140.
- 36 Hans Mayer, "The Suffering and the Greatness of Thomas Mann" in Exile Literature 1933-1945 (Internation - Bad Godesberg: 1968), p. 61.
- 37 Nündel, p. 162.
- 38 A Collection of Critical Essays, p. 160.
- 39 cf. Herbert H. Lehnert, "Fictional Orientations in Thomas Mann's Biography," PLMA, 18, 5, (1973), pp. 1146-1161.
- 40 "Einführung zum Zauberberg" (114; 331).

- 41 Mündel, p. 58.
- 42 Carlsson, p. 20.
- 43 Orbit, ch. 4, p. 70.
- 44 Mann relates this incident in "Lebensabriss" (119; 252). Herbert Lehnert writes: "Ein Übergreifen von der fiktiven Ebene auf die der Wirklichkeit . . . unterläuft Thomas Mann nicht selten." Herbert Lehnert, "Thomas Mann Forschung," (Ergänzung zum 1. Teil), in DVJ, v. 41, (1967), p. 604.
- 45 Paul Scherrer/Hans Wysling, Quellenkritische Studien zum Werk Thomas Manns, (TMS I) (Bern/München: 1967), p. 277.
See Hilde Zaloscer, "Ägypten in Thomas Manns Josephsroman: Zum Problem des 'Bildzitats'," in Seminar, 10, 2, (1974), pp. 112-130. "Das Material, das der 'poeta doctus' verwendet, ist meist höchstes Kunstgut, nur die grössten und repräsentativsten Meisterwerke der Vergangenheit figurieren als Zitat im Oeuvre von Thomas Mann." p. 119. Zaloscer was apparently not aware of Wysling's earlier findings, since she asserts the precise opposite.
Wysling's Bild und Text bei Thomas Mann (Bern/München: 1975), became here available only when this dissertation was almost finished. Generally my findings and statements coincide, however, with Professor Wysling's introductory remarks.
- 46 Related by Gunilla Bergsten in Thomas Mann's "Doctor Faustus", trans. Krishna Winston (Chicago/London: 1969), p. 18.
- 47 Herbert Lehnert, Thomas Mann: Fiktion, Mythos, Religion (Stuttgart/Berlin/Köln/Mainz: 1965), p. 45.
- 48 Pfeiferling is the thinly disguised farm of the Mann family to which one can travel to this day according to Zeitblom's directions. Bergsten, p. 16.
- 49 Bergsten, p. 17.

- 50 Notebook pages show, however, that Mann tried to localize historically the setting for the Gregorius legend. TMS I, p. 260.
- 51 Carlsson, p. 172.
- 52 Buddenbrooks (101; 308).
- 53 Nündel sees "Beseelung" as the determining factor in Mann's mimetic attitude, pp. 80-81.
- 54 "Tobias Mindernickel," "Der Weg zum Friedhof," and "Der Tod."
- 55 Betrachtungen eines Unpolitischen (116; 170). See also The New York Times (6/7/1975), "Mrs. Mann recalls that Mann in conversation was uninterested in ideas but eager for anecdotes and descriptive detail," p. 56.
- 56 Alain Robbe-Grillet, Pour un Nouveau Roman (Paris: 1963), pp. 159-160.
- 57 Ibid., pp. 157-168.
- 58 Hans Wysling, Dokumente und Untersuchungen, (TMS III) (Bern: 1974), p. 79.
- 59 Lehnert, p. 38.
- 60 Friedrich Nietzsche, Die Geburt der Tragödie, Werke in 3 Bänden, Karl Schlechta, ed. (München: 1966), v. I, p. 103 ff.
- 61 Fritz Martini, Das Wagnis der Sprache (Stuttgart: 1954), p. 182.
- 62 For example by Erich Heller and Hermann Weigand.
- 63 Mann frequently stresses his lack of feeling for the plastic arts; most prominently in "Der Holzschneider Maserel."

- 64 Mann tells in "Meeresfahrt mit 'Don Quijote'": "Iwan Gontscharow wurde während eines Sturmes auf hoher See vom Kapitän aus seiner Kajüte geholt: er sei ein Dichter, er müsse das sehen, es sei grossartig. Der Verfasser des 'Oblomov' kam an Deck, sah sich um und sagte: 'Ja, Unfug, Unfug!' Dann ging er wieder hinunter" (114; 169-70).
- 65 Morton Zabel, ed., The Portable Conrad (New York: 1954), p. 708.
- 66 Orbit, (trans. Francis C. Golfing), p. 26.
- 67 TMS I, p. 95.
- 68 Ibid., pp. 65-66.
- 69 Hans-Bernhard Moeller, "Thomas Manns Venezianische Götterkunde, Plastik und Zeitlosigkeit" in Deutsche Vierteljahreszeitschrift für Literaturwissenschaft und Geistesgeschichte, v. 40, (1966), p. 187.
- 70 Mann writes in 1911: "Zu keiner Zeit aber, . . . wäre mein Bekenntnis über Wagner eigentlich ein Bekenntnis zu Wagner gewesen. Als Geist, als Charakter schien er mir suspekt, als Künstler unwiderstehlich, wenn auch tief fragwürdig in bezug auf . . . die Gesundheit seiner Wirkungen . . ." (119; 35).
- 71 Joseph Machlis, The Enjoyment of Music (New York: 1955), p. 220.
- 72 "Versuch über das Theater," (113; 10).
- 73 Orbit, ch. 4, p. 79.
- 74 Ibid., p. 79.
- 75 Robbe-Grillet: "Rien n'est plus fantastique, en définitive, que la précision." p.180.
- 76 cf. n. no. 66.

- 77 Edward Bullough, "Psychical Distance as a Factor in Art and an Aesthetic Principle," in British Journal of Psychology, v. 5, (1912), part 2, p. 90.
- 78 cf. Jonas Lesser, "Geheime Selbstbildnisse," in Thomas Mann in der Epoche seiner Vollendung (München: 1952), pp. 275-328. Also see Heller, p. 179. Mann is frequently compared to André Gide, most prominently by Kenneth Burke who stresses the comparison of Der Tod in Venedig and Gide's The Immoralist. "Thomas Mann and André Gide," in The Stature of Thomas Mann. pp. 253-264. In this connection see Briefe I, letter from 9/18/1931, p. 306.
- II. The Joseph Tetralogy
- 79 a) TMS III, p. 195. But it was not the only stimulus, cf. Briefe II, p. 57.
b) In a letter to Ernst Bertram, 2/4/1925, Mann mentions for the first time his secret plans for the Joseph-novels. Thomas Mann an Ernst Bertram, ed. Inge Jens (Pfullingen: 1960), p. 136; cf. Bürgin, p. 68.
- 80 Ibid., p. 96.
In the "Josephssektion" of Mann's library there is a work Joseph, Goethes erste grosse Jugendedichtung, wieder aufgefunden und zum ersten Male herausgegeben von Paul Piper: W. Gente, 1920. (Faksimile-Ausgabe.) Related by Herbert Lehnert in "Thomas Manns Vorstudien zur Josephstetralogie," Jahrbuch der deutschen Schillergesellschaft, 7. Jahrgang, 1963, p. 520.
- 81 Lehnert, p. 146.
- 82 TMS III, p. 95.
- 83 In Die Entstehung des Doktor Faustus, Mann approvingly quotes Lukács "' . . . Thomas Mann's 'Tod in Venedig' kann man bereits als grosse[N] Vorläufer jener Tendenz betrachten, die die Gefahr einer barbarischen Unterwelt

innerhalb der modernen deutschen Zivilisation, als ihr notwendiges Komplementärprodukt, signalisiert hat '" (115; 159).

- 84 Bürgerin, p. 70.
- 85 Letter to Agnes E. Mayer, 5/25/1940, Briefe II, p. 142.
- 86 Herbert Lehnert, The Germanic Review, 38, no.4, (November 1963), p. 291.
- 87 Helmut Koopmann, "Dr. Faustus, The Devil and the Nazis," lecture given at the Thomas Mann Symposium at Rutgers University, 4/10/1975, 11 a.m.
- 88 For example "Appell an die Vernunft," "Achtung, Europa!," "Deutsche Hörer!" (25 radio messages for Germany).
- 89 Erika Mann, ed. Briefe 1889-1936, Briefe I (Frankfurt a.M.: 1961), p. 292 ff.
- 90 TMS III, p. 97.
- 91 The phrase "Umfunktionierung des Mythos" to which Mann so frequently refers comes from Ernst Bloch. Briefe II, pp. 262, 579.
- 92 In 1943 Mann writes to Reinhold Niebuhr about his "conversion to politics": "Ich weiss ja, dass es sich dabei ganz einfach um ein organisches Wachstum handelt, das sich nur nebenbei im Politischen, viel besser in den drei künstlerischen Haupt-Denksteinen meines Lebens, den Romanen 'Buddenbrooks,' 'Zauberberg' und den Josephsgeschichten manifestiert." Briefe II, p. 301.
- 93 Mann frequently speaks of the general obtuseness in political affairs, for example of the "Dummheit und menschliche Unwissenheit der Machthaber." TMS III, p. 162, or of "politische Dummheit" (117; 178).

- 94 Klaus Hermsdorf, Thomas Manns Schelme (Berlin: 1968), p. 360.
cf. Willy Berger, Die mythologischen Motive in Thomas Manns Roman "Joseph und seine Brüder" (Köln/Wien: 1971), pp. 21-22.
- 95 Klaus Schröter, "Mann's Political Writings during the Thirties and Forties," lecture given at the Thomas Mann Symposium, 4/11/1975, 3 p.m.
- 96 TMS III, pp. 23, 21.
- 97 This research is discussed in many works, most prominently in Herbert Lehnert's "Vorstudien" and Manfred Dierks' Studien zu Mythos und Psychology bei Thomas Mann, TMS II (Bern/München: 1972). Also Berger, whose work seemed to have coincided with Dierks'.
- 98 TMS III, p. 96.
Mann confessed in 1951 that he was a lazy youngster in school who later developed " . . . Bienenfleiss, wenn es galt ein dichterisches Werk wissenschaftlich zu fundieren, d.h. positive Kenntnisse zu sammeln, um literarisch damit zu spielen, streng genommen also, um Unfug zu treiben." Briefe III, p. 218.
- 99 Heller, p. 275.
- 100 a) Manfred Dierks, speaking of Mann's research habits, writes: "Thomas Mann las selektiv und assimilatorisch, ihm kam es auf das 'Wiedererkennen' eigenen primären Gedankenguts im fremden Werk an, wobei er dessen eigenständige Tendenz häufig genug ignorierte." TMS II, p. 61.
b) Herbert Lehnert shows " . . . wie ein bestimmtes Element des Materials oft grade darum zur 'Quelle' wird, weil es sich einem schon vorhandenen Ideenkomplex amalgamiert." Vorstudien, p. 515.
c) Mann writes in "Sechzehn Jahre" that the " . . . Orientreise [1930] nach Ägypten und Palestina . . . kaum noch als Studienreise gelten konnte, sondern nur der Nachprüfung meiner von fern bewerkstelligten Versenkung in diese Sphäre an Ort und Stelle diente" (119; 362).

- 101 Käte Hamburger, Der Humor bei Thomas Mann (München: 1965), p. 105.
 a) Julius Bab writes " . . . Thomas Mann's historical portraiture, which in in point of accuracy and perfection comparable only to Flaubert's Salammbô . . ." "Joseph and His Brothers" in The Stature of Thomas Mann, p. 198.
 b) Ignaz Feuerlicht asserts in Thomas Mann (New York: 1968) that Mann occasionally quotes the Bible verbatim. But his version often differs from the standard translations. For instance, he does not have Jacob make a special garment for Joseph, nor does he have the brothers take Joseph out of the well. At times he justifies his 'correction' of the Bible, as in the question when Dinah was born (p. 98), or how long Jacob serves Laban (p. 161). Once he corrects the German translation of the Bible (p. 47).
- 102 Ibid., p. 103.
- 103 Ernest A. Wallis Budge, A History of Egypt (The Netherlands: Anthropological Publications, 1968), v. 4, p. 172.
- 104 Ibid., pp. 120-121.
- 105 Ibid., pp. 172, 114.
- 106 Kaufmann, pp. 54-55.
- 107 Budge, p. 183.
- 108 PMLA, 87, 2, (1972), pp. 307-308.
- 109 Budge, p. 126.
- 110 Ibid., p. 26.
 Hans Mayer states, however, that " . . . der Echnaton ist nun grade in genauer Rekonstruktion der geschichtlichen Gestalt dargestellt worden." Thomas Mann: Werk und Entwicklung (Berlin: 1950), p. 242.
 See also Zaloscer, p. 121.

- 111 Budge, p. 114.
- 112 Ibid., pp. 134-136.
- 113 Ibid., p. 128.
- 114 Ibid., pp. 140-141.
- 115 cf., n. no. 101.
- 116 Heller, p. 276.
- 117 For example in "Pariser Rechenschaft" (119; 143).
- 118 Hamburger, pp. 97-99.
- 119 Nietzsche, p. 44 ff.
- 120 Henry and Mrs. H.A. Frankfort, John A. Wilson, Thorkild Jacobsen Before Philosophy (Baltimore: 1964), last ed., p. 138.
- 121 Most prominently K. Hamburger, p. 59.
- 122 TMS III, p. 96.
- 123 In this connection H. Frankfort: "In Memphite Theology . . ., the Egyptians, at one point, reduced the multiplicity of the divine to a truly monotheistic conception. . . . Nevertheless, they spoke the language of myth" p. 17.
- 124 a) Henry Hatfield writes: " At his best, Mann is indeed 'the old magician'; we sense perhaps that clever tricks have been used, but are diverted from looking into matters too closely." Thomas Mann (Norfolk: 1951), p. 5.
 b) P.J. van der Schaar refers to Thomas Mann as the "grosse Täuscher" Dynamik der Pseudologie (München/Basel: 1964), p. 49.
- 125 While most critics take the opposite point of view, Paul Altenberg substantiates this: "Die Personen stehen

mit unverlierbaren Individualbestimmungen in ungebrochenem Zusammenhang zu ihren Urmustern, und diese Urbilder sind personal. Deshalb wird nicht etwa Joseph erst zu einer Individualität, das ist er so gut wie Jaakob . . . von der 'Gründung' her." Die Romane Thomas Manns (Homburg: 1961), p. 155.

- 126 Frankfort, p. 8.
- 127 Ibid., p. 242.
- 128 Ibid., p. 30.
- 130 This importance is very evident in Genesis XVIII where Abraham pleads with God not to destroy Sodom and Gomorrah for the sake of even ten righteous men.
- 129 Among Mann's notes for the tetralogy is the remark "Vermischung und Verwischung." TMS II, p. 82.
- 131 In a letter to Rabbi Jakob Horowitz, 11/6/1927, Mann addresses countless questions concerning the biblical, or historical Joseph to the Rabbi, and he feels that his " . . . Bedürfnis nach Sicherung des Bodens durch gelehrten Beistand wohl zu begreifen ist." But his questions are as "selective and assimilative" as his reading and the use of sources. (cf.n.no.100). For example: "Wie steht es zum Beispiel mit der Etymologie des Namens Joseph? . . . Ist 'Jo' wirklich oder annehmbarer Weise 'Jeho' und Gottesname und der zweite Teil 'Sefer' im Sinne von 'Buch', 'Schreibzeug' . . .?" Briefe I, p. 272. Mann apparently must have used any information in this "selective and assimilative" fashion, for according to K. Hamburger he sometimes relocates or alters the biblical text. p. 85.
- 132 Jaakob's cowardly and unmanly behavior at this invented occasion (106; 101) is a psychological impossibility; it is generally accepted that "there is, in fact a Herculean as well as a shrewd, quality about Jacob." Joseph Frank, ed., Literature from the Bible (Boston/Toronto: 1963), p. 15, and it is precisely this combination which Nietzsche admires.

- 133 For example Ignaz Feuerlicht, p. 47.
- 134 Jürgen Hochmeyer titles one chapter of his Thomas Manns Roman 'Joseph und seine Brüder' (Marburg: 1969), pp. 92-96, "Die Vermischung der fictional erzählten und der historischen Wirklichkeit," and he shows how fiction is frequently built into recorded history.
- 135 To the various middle concepts discussed above Erich Mater adds "Wortmischung," which is one more technique for stressing the middle position and at the same time for changing and camouflaging meanings. "Zur Wortbildung und Wortbedeutung bei Thomas Mann" in Vollendung und Größe Thomas Manns, ed. Georg Wenzel (Halle/Saale: 1962), p. 144.

III. Structure and Technique

- 137 "Erkennen und Einsicht, hörte ich sagen, seien im Hebräischen des selben Wortstammes wie 'Zwischen'" (113; 216).
- 138 a) cf. Marcel Proust, À la Recherche du Temps Perdu (Paris: 1954), 1, p. 517. "Mais pareille aux kaléidoscopes qui tournent de temps en temps, la société place successivement de façon différente des éléments qu'on avait crus immuables et compose une autre figure."
 b) During the work on Joseph in Ägypten Mann read À la Recherche du Temps Perdu. Bürgin, p. 117.
 cf. letters to René Schickele, Briefe I, pp. 397, 402.
- 139 cf. ch. I, p. 34.
- 140 a) Meno Spann, "Goethisches in Manns Josephzyklus," Modern Language Quarterly, 5, (1944), pp. 259-273, quotes eight phrases from Faust II which recur in the tetralogy. My examples are, however, not mentioned by him.
 b) Among the many other critics who relate Goethe to the tetralogy is Walter Berendsohn, who says that "dieser biblische Roman ist Thomas Manns Goethe-nächstes

- Werk, ohne dass er konkrete Einzelheiten übernommen oder nachgeahmt hätte." Thomas Mann: Künstler und Kämpfer in einer bewegten Zeit (Lübeck: 1965), p. 98.
- 141 Helmut Haug, Erkenntnisekel: Zum frühen Werk Thomas Manns (Tübingen: 1969), p. 141.
- 142 TMS III, p. 90.
- 143 Lehnert, pp. 92-93.
- 144 J. E. Cirlot, A Dictionary of Symbols, trans. Jack Sage (New York: 1962), p. 332.
- 145 a) cf. Christine Pritzlaff, Zahlensymbolik bei Thomas Mann (Hamburg: 1972), pp. 55-56.
b) Feuerlicht observes that "certain numbers are strongly in evidence throughout the tetralogy." He mentions, however, only 7, 17, and 70 and omits the importance of the number 3. p. 47.
- 146 It is generally claimed, for example by Hamburger, p. 72, that "Der Roman der Seele" is of gnostic origin. Dierks asserts, however, that "Soweit wir sehen haben gnostische Ideen keinen Platz in Thomas Manns Denken eingenommen . . ." Dierks produces other sources for the "Roman" and, more important for our study, he writes: "Was sich im 'Roman der Seele' als kosmogonische Fabel verkleidet, ist der Entwurf von Thomas Manns ureigener Bildungs- und Denkwelt." TMS II, pp. 251, 108.
- 147 Bullough, p. 90.
- 148 Ibid., pp. 107-108.
- 149 cf. ch. I, p. 15 f.
- 150 Lukács, p. 46.
- 151 Ibid., p. 55.
- 152 Ibid., p. 152.

- 153 Bullough, p. 91.
- 154 cf. ch. I, p. 18.
- 155 Reinhard Baumgart, Das Ironische und die Ironie in den Werken Thomas Manns (München: 1966), p. 57.
- 156 Ibid., p. 58.
- 157 Ibid., pp. 56-57.
- 158 Peter Pütz, however, asserts that Mann's ironical middle position is suspended by the principle of choice: "Ironische Vermittlung vermag nicht mehr im Sinne einer begrifflichen Synthese das Getrennte in einer höheren Einheit aufzuheben. Fortschreitend schafft sie Beziehungskreise und versucht, auf diese Weise der festgestellten Wirklichkeit Herr zu werden, aber sie leistet keine mythische Identität mehr. Der Künstler steht nämlich nicht ausserhalb der Realität, er ist tief in ihre Widersprüchlichkeit verwickelt . . ." Peter Pütz, ed., Thomas Mann und die Tradition (Frankfurt a.M.: 1971), p. 58.
- 159 TMS III, p. 91.
- 160 Rudi Prusok, "Science in Mann's 'Zauberberg': The Concept of Space," PMLA, 88, 1, (1973), pp. 52-61.
- 161 Frankfort, p. 20.
- 162 In 1954 Mann discusses plans for a film to be made from the tetralogy. Briefe III, p. 328.

IV. Dependence and Freedom:
The Settings of the Tetralogy

- 163 The theatrical aspect of the tetralogy is frequently discussed; very prominently, for instance, by Gunter Reiss in Allegorisierung und moderne Erzählkunst (München: 1970), p. 152. For Reiss, however, theatrical representation is a "'Medium' die 'Selbstbesinnung' des Erzählens darstellbar zu machen." The notion of the theatrical is, as far as I can see, much more than a "medium"; it is closely connected to Mann's philosophical sense of place and can be detected in all but three of his fictional works. cf. pp. 23-24 above.
- 164 cf. ch. I, p. 25 ff.
- 165 TMS III, p. 169.
- 166 Ibid., p. 170.
- 167 "Gesang vom Kindchen" (112; 814).
- 168 TMS III, p. 170.
- 169 Herbert Lehnert, "Thomas Mann's early Interest in Myth and Erwin Rohde's 'Psyche,'" PMLA, 79, (1964), pp. 297-304.
- 170 TMS III, pp. 172-177.
- 171 Martin Gumpert, "Für Thomas Mann," Die Neue Rundschau, Sonderheft 1945, pp. 137-139.
- 172 TMS III, p. 178.
- 173 TMS III, p. 169.
- 174 Frankfort, p. 69.
- 175 TMS III, p. 99.
- 176 Joseph's mother Rachel came from Mesopotamia, and he himself married the pagan Asnath. Mann's mother,

Julia da Silva-Bruhns, came from Brazil, and he married Katja Pringsheim whose parents were converted Jews.

- 177 a) There is of course also the hostility and subsequent reconciliation between Thomas Mann and his older brother Heinrich which, as Feuerlicht suggests, might have provided the stimulus for the entire work. p. 57.
 b) Hans Wysling, discussing the ambiguous relationship between the two brothers, stresses their basic intellectual proximity. He cites a sentence from Doktor Faustus which best describes that relationship: "Man kann sagen, dass an seiner schöpferischen Quelle dieser Gegensatz eine persönliche Einheit hatte und erst in der Zeit streitbar auseinandergefallen war." Thomas Mann - Heinrich Mann: Briefwechsel (Frankfurt a.M.: 1969), Introduction, p. XXXI, Hans Wysling, ed.
- 178 Joseph's ambiguous feelings towards Egypt are discussed later on in our study; Mann's admiration and affection for the U.S.A. are, typically for him, quite frequently balanced by negative feelings; for instance in Kerényi, pp. 87, 97.
- 179 This is for example the thesis of Morse Peckham's Man's Rage for Chaos: Biology, Behavior and the Arts (New York: 1965).
- 180 In this connection a letter from Sigmund Freud to Thomas Mann (11/29/1936) is of interest. It concerns another imitation of the biblical Joseph, in this case by Napoleon. "Napoleon had an elder brother named Joseph whom the young Napoleon hated intensely. He later identified himself with Joseph and this hatred changed into intense love . . . He married a young widow named 'Josephine' and was never able to turn against her even though she treated him badly. The Egyptian expedition may have expressed a desire for the realization of the Joseph fantasy which was later fulfilled in Europe: 'He takes care of his brothers by raising them to princes and kings.'" Related by Philip Rieff in Freud: The Mind of the Moralizer (New York: 1959), p. 236.

- 181 a) Mann writes in 1932: "Ich glaube, dass die Erlebnisse der Kindheit . . . in jedem Künstler eine grosse Rolle spielen und das Lebenswerk gerade jedes Dichters mit Motiven und Eindrücken versorgen. Jedenfalls trifft es durchaus zu, wenn man dergleichen bei mir glaubt feststellen zu sollen." Briefe I, p. 315.
 b) And he writes in 1940: "Die Konzeption reicht meist sehr weit zurück in meinem Leben; meine Stoffe haben meist sehr lange Wurzeln. Das Interesse für den Joseph-Komplex geht bis in die Kindheit zurück." Briefe II, p. 139.
 c) In a letter (1942) Mann refers to America as the future " . . . Kornkammer der Welt und buchstäblich der 'Ernährer' aller Völker . . ." Briefe II, p. 275. This is a simple but striking example of the associative mind of Thomas Mann at work: The silos of his corn-merchant father fuse with their toy imitations, with Joseph's in Egypt and with the entire U.S.A. into an indivisible whole.
- 182 cf. p. 22.
- 183 cf. pp. 21-22.
- 184 Kerényi, p. 43.
- 185 Hamburger, p. 24 ff.
- 186 TMS III, p. 177.
- 187 Hamburger, Hermsdorf, and Marc Van Doren see Joseph primarily as a Krull figure. Four Parts in Collection of Critical Essays, pp. 96-108.
 Mann says of Felix and Joseph: "Dieser war prae-existent in jenem, und nun ist jener Joseph redivivus."
Briefe III, (11/6/1951), p. 228.
- 188 TMS III, p. 150.
- 189 Ibid., p. 178.
- 190 Mann writes in 1932: "Er [der Künstler] wird . . . meistens einen Zusammenhang zwischen seinen einzelnen

Produktionen feststellen können, wird beobachten, dass Keime des nächstfolgenden Werkes immer schon im vorhergehenden vorhanden sind, und mehr und mehr gewahr werden, dass alles Einzelne aus einem persönlichen Zentrum stammt und zuletzt eine natürliche Einheit bildet. Briefe I, pp. 314-315.

- 191 TMS III, p. 85.
- 192 Ibid., p. 95.
- 193 Thomas Mann, Sieben Manifeste zur jüdischen Frage, Walter A. Berendsohn, ed. (Darmstadt: 1966), p. 40.
- 194 Faust I: 4123.
- 195 Franz Kafka, The Trial, trans. Willa and Edwin Muir, revised by E. M. Butler (New York: 1968), p. 147.
- 196 Frankfurt, p. 27.
- 197 Hamburger, p. 127.
- 198 E.A. Wallis Budge et al., ed., trans., The Egyptian Book of the Dead (New York: 1967), p. 368.
- 199 TMS III, p. 174.
- 200 TMS II, p. 198; cf. Berger, p. 212.
- 201 In this connection Lotte in Weimar: " . . . als er [Goethe] einige Damen einmal auf einer Gartenwiese Blumen pflücken sah, äusserte er, sie kamen ihm vor wie sentimentale Ziegen" (103; 96).
- 202 cf. pp. 29 f.
- 203 Harry Slochower, Mythopoesis - Mythic Patterns in the Literary Classics (Detroit: 1970), pp. 19, 21.
- 204 Kerényi, p. 215. (*italics mine*).
- 205 Frankfurt, p. 21.

- 206 TMS III, p. 179-180.
Mann writes in 1943: "Dass aber das Sprachliche nur Gleichnis, Ausdruck, Zubehör seines eingeborenen Humanismus ist, versteht sich . . ." Briefe II, p. 296.
- 207 TMS I, p. 26.
- 208 Ibid., p. 130.
- 209 E.A. Speiser, ed., trans., The Anchor Bible (New York: 1964), p. 213.
- 210 This letter concerns the four hundredth anniversary of Dürer's death. Mann, in his typical manner, speaks not only about Dürer but includes his entire, familiar thought-complex: "Dürer, Goethe, Schopenhauer, Nietzsche, Wagner, . . . die deutsche Welt mit dem ambitiösen Schauspielertum ihrer selbst, der zauberisch-intellektualistischen Zersetzung am Ende - und nicht am Ende. Denn neben dem grossen Gaukler und Beschwörer steht der Seher und Überwinder, der Mythos selbst neben dem Theatraliker des Mythos, er, Held und Opfer, Verkünder neueren, höheren Menschentums." TMS III, pp. 60-61.
- 211 Antonin Artaud, "Le Théâtre et son Double" first published by Gallimard in Collection Métamorphoses, 4, (1938).
- 212 cf. ch. I, p. 22 ff.
- 213 Kerényi, p. 93; cf. n. no. 163.
- 214 Lehnert assumes that the strange chapter featuring a "Hundegöttin" is derived from ". . . Bachofens Darstellung des Hundes als Symbol der freien Geschlechtsmischung." Vorstudien, p. 495.
- 215 Faust I, 2429.
- 216 Wolfgang Schneditz, quoting from a letter (1949), relates that Mann combined the Egyptian Sphinx with associations to her Greek namesake because he wanted

- " . . . den jungen Joseph als rätselratenden Oedipus vor ihr stehen lassen." "Das Bild der Ägyptischen Landschaft im Josephsroman," Die Neue Rundschau, 64, (1953), p. 314 f.
- 217 Seneca, Four Tragedies, trans. E.F. Watling (Baltimore/Maryland: 1966), p. 223.
- 218 On, the center of sun worship, was the location of the shrine to which Joseph's father-in-law was attached (Genesis 41, 45, 50, 46.20).
- 219 Jonathan Swift, Gulliver's Travels (New York: 1957), p. 153.
- 220 In this connection Bisdorf: "Während der Zeit des Exiles haben sich Thomas Manns politische Ansichten . . . nicht wesentlich entwickelt. Bemerkenswert ist . . . dass, zu Zwecken des Gleichgewichts, das Materielle jetzt eine Vorzugsstellung einnimmt, damit ihm endlich der Platz zukomme, der ihm früher zu Gunsten der Seele vorenthalten worden war." p. 58.
- 221 Tucholsky, p. 347.
- 222 Faust II, 1198-9245.
- 223 Book of the Dead: ari = Creator, p. 2.
- 224 Mann's notes show that among the projects he considered for future works (between 1900-1911) the most "fascinating" was the project for the "Maja-Roman" which was to deal with the illusionary character of life, with the world as "Blendwerk des principii individuationis." TMS I, pp. 23-38.
- 225 For example, Sartre's famous episode with the chestnut tree. Jean-Paul Sartre, La Nausée (Paris: 1938), pp. 175 ff.
- 226 cf. ch. I, p. 22 f.
- 227 In a letter from 1902 Mann writes: "Ich bemerke dabei,

dass die Details mir die Hauptsache sind. Sie sind so anregend." Briefe I, p. 32.

- 228 In Dér Tod in Venedig a similar inversion of importance occurs: The most important aspect of the story, Aschenbach's moral death, takes effect when he decides not to inform Tadzio's mother of the epidemic which ravaged the city. Mann expresses this in four words: "Er schwieg und blieb" (111, 392).
- 229 cf. ch. I, p. 31 f.
- 230 Reading of Bachofen's "Sumpfleben" symbol, which refers to the interaction of marriage and temple prostitution, Mann makes a note concerning Egypt: "Papyros-Sumpf und Dickicht." Vorstudien, p. 492.
- 231 Referring to Mut, Mann writes to Agnes Meyer: "Ich gebe zu, dass ich mehr auf das Menschliche, als auf das speziell Weibliche aus bin." Briefe II, (1939), p. 92.
- 232 TMS III, p. 76.
- 233 In this connection see Kahler's letter to Mann in which he writes that the ". . . evolution which lies between Death in Venice and Joseph is nothing less than the development of the "Zeitgeist" and its potentialities for artistic expression:" (12/18/1944). In An Exeptional Friendship: The Correspondence of Thomas Mann and Erich Kahler, trans. R. and C. Winston (Ithaca/London: 1975), p. 92.
- 234 TMS III, pp. 76-77.
- V. The Theme of Progress
- 235 cf. ch. I, p. 11 f. Mann speaks of the "Schadenfreude des Fortschritts" (120; 47).
- 236 TMS III, p. 19.

- 237 cf. ch. I, p. 18 ff.
- 238 Kenneth Hughes, Thomas Mann's Joseph as a symbolic "Erziehungsroman." Diss. Rutgers, (1967), p. 153.
- 239 Mann writes to Käthe Hamburger (5/4/1934): "Sie haben eine so grosse Art, von meinem Erzählwerk zu sprechen, dass ich . . . ein wenig bedrückt davon bin; denn werde ich mit der Weiterentwicklung des religiösen Hochstaplerchens, das der kleine Joseph im Gegensatz zu seinem biederem Erzeuger doch eigentlich ist, Ihre menschlich und geistig so hochgespannten Erwartungen erfüllen können?" (*italics mine*) Briefe I, pp. 358-59.
- 240 Both are disciplined, intelligent, prudent, good-looking, charming, and attractive to both sexes. Both realize that people like to be fooled. Both men's opportunities come from persons in elevated positions. Joseph and Felix do not create their good fortunes, but they very subtly exploit a given opportunity and at the same time benefit others. Both decline to prostitute themselves and prefer to make their fortunes with their brains rather than their bodies.
- 241 cf. Mann's "Der autobiographische Roman" (1916) and letter to Agnes Meyer (1941): "Ich bin ein Künstler, das heisst: ein Mensch, der sich unterhalten will -- darüber soll man kein feierliches Gesicht ziehen." Briefe II, p. 216.
- 242 cf. n. 241; in the same letter, Mann thanks Mrs. Meyer for her friendship " . . . in der Fremde (die aber im Grunde nicht fremder ist, als die Welt immer schon war) . . ."
- 243 R. J. Hollingdale, bent on proving that Mann was and remained a nihilist and a decadent, chooses to show only one side, the negative one, of Joseph. Thomas Mann: A Critical Study (Lewisburg: 1971) pp. 113-17.
- 244 Otto von Bismarck was wise enough to institute important social services for the German workers though he feared and resented the Socialist party which represented them.

245 Kerényi, p. 188.

246 Peter Dettmering sees in Joseph's behavior toward Mut a sensible solution to the Oedipus complex: in the interest of his own masculinity Joseph abandons the wish to possess the mother and to eliminate the father. Dichtung und Psychoanalyse (München: 1969), p. 54.

247 Hughes, pp. 160-161.

248 It is the thesis of this study that the key to Thomas Mann, the tetralogy, and Joseph is the author's artistic, human, and political need and creed of balance. Except for a few examples, referred to on these pages, the one-sidedness of Thomas Mann criticism in general, and of the Joseph novels in particular, is, as far as I can see, simply amazing.

Following are a few, almost at random, selected examples of contemporary tetralogy-interpretations to make my point:

1. God

E. Murdaugh bases her interpretation of the tetralogy entirely on the presence of a "morally demanding God." Salvation in the Secular (Bern: 1976), in the process of being published, introduction.

G. Reiss, however, sees the work only as a comedy with a "Lustspiel-Gott" p. 168.

2. Perspective

R. Baumgart sees Mann's irony as distance-producing technique, yet Pütz sees it as involving the writer with life.

3. Joseph

The Marxist critic G. Lukács sees Joseph as an elitist. Thomas Mann (Berlin: 1953), p. 58.

Inge Dierksen, another Marxist critic, sees him as a fighter for social justice and progress, as enemy of the feudal-elitist system. Untersuchungen zu Thomas Mann (Berlin: 1965), p. 190.

For most critics Joseph is a symbol of humanism, but for Anna Hellersberg-Wendriner he is an anti-humanist symbol. Mystik der Gottesferne (Bern/München: 1960), p. 97.

The double-edged essence of Mann's art proves these, and similar one-sided interpretations, to be right and wrong at the same time. Involuntarily they all prove my initial assertion that it is impossible to pin-point the "Zauberer." Mann has said as much in a letter to Harry Slochower in which he thanks the critic for two essays on the Joseph-novels: "Im ganzen fühle ich mich ein bisschen zu sehr beim Worte genommen." (italics mine), Briefe II, (1940), p. 163.

249 cf. p. 3 f.

250 Dûdu and Gottliebchen, the dwarfs who play a prominent role in the tetralogy, are modelled after Alberich and Mime in Wagner's Siegfried. cf. Briefe II, p. 261.

251 Typically for Mann even this - perhaps his only constant, the never changing will to believe in a better future for mankind - is balanced by doubts for its realization. In 1947, in a generally more hopeful world, parts of which just had defeated Hitler, Mann writes: "Der neue Humanismus, von dem ich so gerne rede, und an dessen Kommen ich glauben möchte . . . wird er überhaupt Zeit haben sich in die Gemüter zu senken? Wird nicht die Menschheit in Katastrophen rennen, von denen man sie täglich mit unheimlichem Leichtsinn schwatzen hört . . ." Briefe II, p. 563. In this connection see also Michael Mann, Die Neue Rundschau, 86, 2, (1975), p. 255.

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