

Klaus Mann and the Weimar Republic
Literary Tradition and Experimentation in his Prose
1924 - 1933

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Contents

Introduction	1
Chapter One	
From Aesthete to Polemicist? Klaus Mann's Essayistic Prose 1926-1931	14
1.1 The Main Concerns of the Essays - an Overview	15
1.2 Art in an 'Artless' Age	24
1.2.1 Testimony to aestheticism - 'Fragment von der Jugend' (1926)	26
1.2.2 The period of transition - 'Heute und Morgen' (1927)	30
1.2.3 The 'use' of art - Mann's confrontation with Bertolt Brecht (1926 - 1927)	34
1.2.4 'All art is propaganda' - 'Die Jugend und Paneuropa' (1930)	45
1.3 The Writer in Society	49
1.3.1 Political responsibility and the writer	51
1.3.2 The denial of pure aestheticism - Klaus Mann's critique of Gottfried Benn (1930)	57
1.3.3 The writer's responsibility to reason	66
1.3.4 The reconciliation of <i>Anmut</i> and <i>Vernunft</i>	67
1.3.5 'Talent dictates responsibility' - Klaus Mann and Ernst Jünger	70
1.3.6 The writer and the future	78
1.4 'Der synthetische Typ' - The Reconciliation of Aestheticism and Polemicism	84
Chapter Two	
Klaus Mann and the German critical press.	
The reception of his fiction between 1924 and 1933.	89
2.1 The literary review in the Weimar Republic	92
2.2 Harald Braun in <u>Eckart</u> 1924-1926	95
2.3 Writers on the political left and Mann's prose	106
2.3.1 Friedrich Burschell, 'Vor dem Leben' (1925)	106
2.3.2 'Der Fall Klaus Mann' - Erich Mühsam, August 1927.	115
2.3.3 Reviews of <u>Alexander. Roman der Utopie</u> by Rudolf Arnheim and Ernst Schwenk	121
2.3.4 Fiction and the adaptation of historical fact.	125
2.4 Criticisms from the right	129
2.4.1 Fritz Rostosky, 'Der fromme Tanz'	130
2.4.2 Walter Heinsius, 'Kindernovelle'	136
2.4.3 Karl Rauch, 'Treffpunkt im Unendlichen' (1932).	138
2.5 Reviews by those favourable to Klaus Mann	140
2.5.1 Erich Ebermayer and Herbert Schlüter.	141
2.5.2 W E Süskind (1926-1930)	148
Conclusion	156

Chapter Three

Klaus Mann and literary tradition.

<u>Der fromme Tanz. Abenteuerbuch einer Jugend</u> as a modern <i>Bildungsroman</i>	. 158
3.1 The characteristic features of the <i>Bildungsroman</i>	. 161
3.2 The development of the genre through time.	. 166
3.3 The significance of Mann's subtitle 'Abenteuerbuch einer Jugend'	. 169
3.4 The structure of the novel	. 174
3.5 The use of time	. 178
3.6 The narrator	. 180
3.7 The protagonist Andreas Magnus	. 187
3.8 The secondary characters Paulchen, Niels and Franziska	. 196
Conclusion	. 206

Chapter Four

A novelist's interpretation of history and adaptation of legend. Alexander. Roman der

<u>Utopie</u> as a personalised study of Alexander the Great & the Macedonian Empire	. 208
4.1 The historical novel in the Weimar Republic	. 210
4.2 The historical background to <u>Alexander. Roman der Utopie</u>	. 211
4.3 The investigation of homosexuality in <u>Alexander</u>	. 215
4.4 The age of Alexander as a parallel to Germany 1928 - 1929	. 234
4.5 The definition of utopia in the subtitle 'Roman der Utopie'.	. 250
Conclusion	. 266

Chapter Five

Klaus Mann, André Gide and the modern, 'European' novel. A comparative study of

<u>Treffpunkt im Unendlichen</u> (1932) and <u>Les Faux-monnayeurs</u> (1925).	. 267
5.1 Klaus Mann and France.	. 269
5.1.2 Klaus Mann and André Gide 1925 - 1949	. 276
5.2 <u>Les Faux-Monnayeurs</u> as the paradigm for Mann's interpretation of the modern, 'European' novel	. 281
5.3 <u>Les Faux-monnayeurs</u> and <u>Treffpunkt im Unendlichen</u> , a comparison	. 283
5.3.1 Structure of the novels	. 283
5.3.2 Narration in the novels	. 297
5.4 The themes of <u>Les Faux-monnayeurs</u> and <u>Treffpunkt im Unendlichen</u>	. 302
5.4.1 Édouard and Sebastian	. 302
5.4.2 The illusion of freedom.	. 307
5.4.3 Sincerity and the authentic self	. 310
5.4.4 The nature of evil - a study of the contrasting roles of Strouvillhou and Dr Massis	. 325
5.5 Conclusion	. 337
Conclusion	. 339
Bibliography	. 345

Abstract

This study developed from an initial interest in the literature of the German exiles in which canon Klaus Mann's work between 1933 and 1945 figured prominently. This in turn evoked a curiosity toward this still relatively unknown son of Thomas Mann, intensified not least by the pathos of a life characterised by early promise, fame and prominence that ended in obscurity, despair and suicide. Yet these aspects of Klaus Mann's life appeared to have been overlooked by British scholars and with them the early and later years of Mann's career.

The years of Mann's exile have been well documented and researched and place Mann's fiction of this time within the canon of *Exilliteratur*. Those texts which went before, however, have received only scant attention. Yet it is precisely in the novels and essays from the Weimar Republic that Mann developed and refined the techniques and themes that would define his later works. To overlook them is to suggest that the decisive moment of exile represented a caesura in Mann's career, thus masking the underlying continuity within Mann's oeuvre. For this reason, this study concentrates primarily on the early years of Mann's career, on the period from 1924 to 1933, to illustrate the progression and development within his work that would culminate in the novels of his exile.

While Mann's prose dictates the approach I have taken, this is not exclusively 'literary' to the exclusion of all other concerns and potential external influences on his work. It assesses the complementary characteristics of Mann's fiction and his essayistic prose, much of which has only become readily available in the last five years, against the context of their creation during the Weimar Republic. In consequence, this work embraces the cultural, political and social context of this age, embracing its contradictory nature where progression and experimentation battled against the endemic regression and reaction of the Republic's institutions. However, it does not intend to provide a detailed discussion of the complexities that underlie this period of German history. For this I refer the reader to the body of research which deals specifically with this topic.

Abbreviations

A	<i>Alexander. Roman der Utopie</i>
AG	<i>André Gide und die Krise des modernen Denkens</i>
AL	<i>Anthologie jüngster Lyrik</i>
BA	<i>Briefe und Antworten 1922 - 1949</i>
EL	<i>Escape to Life</i>
FM	<i>Les Faux-monnayeurs</i>
FT	<i>Der fromme Tanz. Abenteuerbuch einer Jugend</i>
KdZ	<i>Kind dieser Zeit</i>
KMG	<i>Kaus Mann zum Gedächtnis</i>
M	<i>Mephisto. Roman einer Karriere</i>
MS	<i>Maskenscherz. Die frühen Erzählungen</i>
NE	<i>Die neuen Eltern. Aufsätze, Reden, Kritiken 1924 - 1933</i>
S	<i>Auf der Suche nach einem Weg. Aufsätze</i>
SE	<i>Der siebente Engel</i>
SLKI	<i>Schriften zur Literatur und Kunst I</i>
TbI	<i>Tagebücher, Vol I, 1931 - 1933</i>
TiU	<i>Treffpunkt im Unendlichen</i>
TP	<i>The Turning Point. Thirty-five Years in this Century</i>
WM	<i>Das Wunder von Madrid. Aufsätze, Reden, Kritiken 1936 - 1938</i>
WP	<i>Der Wendepunkt. Ein Lebensbericht</i>
ZD	<i>Zweimal Deutschland. Aufsätze, Reden, Kritiken 1938 - 1942</i>
ZK	<i>Zahnärzte und Künstler. Aufsätze, Reden, Kritiken 1933 - 1936</i>

Introduction

Klaus Mann's career spanned some twenty-five years, beginning in 1924 during the Weimar Republic and ending with his suicide in 1949. These years are characterised by a frenetic pace of life, a restlessness expressed in constant journeying, a prodigious work-rate and the emotional extremes of buoyant optimism and total despair. They are also years of constant change and reappraisal of his role as a writer and the responsibility that his talent bestowed upon him. At the start of his career, between 1924 and 1927, he had been a controversial *enfant terrible* of German literature courting publicity by deliberately flouting convention and espousing the ideals of *l'art pour l'art* at a time when his intellectual peers demanded utilitarianism and functionalism in art. He soon metamorphosed, however, into a vociferous and early campaigner against fascism as it began its insidious rise across Europe in the late 1920s, emerging in 1933 as a leading force amongst the German emigrés, to raise in exile an incessant and unequivocal voice of protest against the Third *Reich* and the atrocities perpetrated in its name.

With the exception of two years spent at boarding school¹ Mann grew up in Munich where he was born in November 1906, the eldest son of Thomas and Katia Mann. In September 1924 he left the parental home to take up the post of theatre critic for the Zwölf Uhr Mittagsblatt in Berlin² but left here in March 1925 for the first of a series of foreign tours. 1925 saw the publication of his first volume of short stories Vor dem Leben, the

¹ Klaus Mann attended the Bergschule Hochwaldhausen from April to July 1922 and the Odenwaldschule Oberhambach bei Heppenheim (Bergstraße) from September 1922 to summer 1923 both of which were the products of the movement within Germany to reform its educational system and to move from an over-emphasis in the state sector on academic attainment. In his short biography Klaus Mann (Reinbek: Rohwolt, 1991), Uwe Naumann sketches the characteristics of these schools when he writes. "Unter dem Anspruch einer Reformpädagogik praktizierten diese Internate schon damals fortschrittliche Prinzipien wie Koedukation und Kurssystem mit Wahlfreiheit und gaben musischer wie praktisch-körperlicher Betätigung breiten Raum; die Schule wollte man als eine demokratische Gemeinschaft organisieren" (19). Mann incorporated his experiences at school into his earliest stories, some of which were written whilst he was a pupil at the Odenwaldschule. He captured the spirit of these schools in two essays written during the Weimar Republic. In 'Die freie Schulgemeinde', first published in 8-Uhr-Abendblatt, 21 February 1924, reprinted in Klaus Mann, Die neuen Eltern. Aufsätze, Reden, Kritiken 1924-1933, ed. by Uwe Naumann, and Michael Töteberg (Reinbek: Rowohlt, 1992), 16-18, he sketched the general ideals of the schools, emphasising the responsibility imbued in their pupils. "Man erwartet," he wrote, "daß die Freiheit, die hier herrschte, nicht ausartet zur Anarchie, sondern bezweckt, daß jeder, in Freiheit erzogen zur Selbstzucht, das Rechte, das ihm Gute tue - ungezwungen" (17). Six years later, to mark the twentieth anniversary of the Odenwaldschule in October 1930, he expanded on these early remarks in 'Jubiläum der Odenwald-Schule', first printed in Berliner Tageblatt 8 October 1930, reprinted in Die neuen Eltern 301-304, emphasising in particular the school's humanist ethos in promoting pacifism and internationalism in contrast to the aggressive nationalism he perceived within the state sector. For an introduction to the aims of the *Landeserziehungsheime* and the *reformpädagogisch* movement see Wolfgang Scheibe, Die reformpädagogische Bewegung 1900-1932: eine einführende Darstellung, 4th edn (Weinheim: Beltz, 1974).

² In his autobiography The Turning Point Mann wrote self-deprecatingly of his role as theatre critic, commenting: "I was the 'second-string theatrical critic,' which means that I had to cover the minor theaters in the suburbs, the music halls, and some of the vanguard experiments [...]. It tickled me to find out how far I could actually go [...], my lyrical outbursts were published in their entirety and no one seemed to find them objectionable or ridiculous. Nor did anyone question my right to attack a popular vedette or celebrated mime [...]. Had they known how I inwardly chuckled! The big hoax! It worked!", Klaus Mann, The Turning Point. Thirty-five Years in this Century (New York: Marcus Wiener, 1984), 105.

premier of his play Anja und Esther and his first novel Der fromme Tanz. Abenteuerbuch einer Jugend. These were followed a year later in 1926 with the publication of his novella Kindernovelle. From 1927 to 1933 he published an extended essay 'Heute und Morgen zur Situation des jungen geistigen Europas', a travelogue Rundherum (1929)³, a second novel Alexander. Roman der Utopie (1929), two further plays Gegenüber von China and Geschwister (both 1930), a collection of essays Auf der Suche nach einem Weg (1931), an autobiography Kind dieser Zeit, written at the age of 26, a third novel Treffpunkt im Unendlichen and a fifth play Athen (all 1932).

In March 1933 Mann left Germany for exile in France. Beginning a new career as a fierce campaigner against National Socialism he launched one of the first journals for exiled writers, Die Sammlung which was published by the Dutch-based Querido Verlag between 1933 and 1935. He produced four novels each referring to aspects of his own experience in exile: stressing the need for action, putting political responsibility above personal considerations in Flucht in den Norden (1934), the pain and hardship of exile in Symphonie Pathétique. Ein Tschaikowski-Roman (1935) and the indictments of the regime in Mephisto. Roman einer Karriere (1936) and Der Vulkan. Roman unter Emigranten (1939). Through numerous speeches and essays he alerted his foreign audience to not only the danger of National Socialism but also the existence of a 'true' German culture in exile⁴. With the

³ Mann co-wrote Rundherum with his sister, Erika Mann. In it they detailed their experiences when travelling round the world between 1927 and 1928, a journey which took them to North and South America, to China, to Russia and then back to Germany.

⁴ In Literature and Society in Germany 1918-1945 (Bury St Edmunds: St Edmundsbury Press, 1980), Ronald Taylor notes that the exiles regarded themselves as "custodians of the cultural tradition" (293) of German literature which National Socialist literary politics threatened to debase. Klaus Mann shared this desire to protect his cultural heritage. In September 1933, for example, he clearly distinguished between literature by those in Germany and that by those in exile. In his first editorial for the journal Die Sammlung, he stated in his opening paragraph: "Diese Zeitschrift wird der Literatur dienen; das heißt: jener hohen Angelegenheit, die nicht nur ein Volk betrifft, sondern alle Völker der Erde. Einige Völker aber sind so weit in der Verirrung gekommen, daß sie ihr Bestes schmähen, sich seiner schämen und es im eigenen Land nicht mehr dulden wollen. In solchen Ländern wird die Literatur vergewaltigt; um sich der Vergewaltigung zu entziehen, flieht sie ein solches Land." 'Die Sammlung', first printed in Die Sammlung, September 1933 reprinted in Zahnärzte und Künstler. Aufsätze. Reden. Kritiken, 1933-1936, ed. by Uwe Naumann, and Michael Töteberg (Reinbek: Rowohlt, 1993), 38-40 (38). That he wrote specifically of Germany and the emigrés became obvious in his next words: "In dieser Lage ist nun die wahre, die gültige deutsche Literatur, jene nämlich, die nicht schweigen kann zur Entwürdigung ihres Volkes und zu der Schmach, die ihr selber geschieht", (ZK, 38). In May 1939, Mann developed this theme in an address to the international PEN-Club in New York entitled, 'Wie kann die deutsche Kultur das Exil überleben?', first printed in Deutsches Volksecho, May 27, 1939, reprinted in Zweimal Deutschland. Aufsätze. Reden. Kritiken, 1933-1936, ed. by Uwe Naumann, and Michael Töteberg (Reinbek: Rowohlt, 1994), 91-94. The exiled German writer, he told his American audience, had a specific duty to perform in his adopted homeland: "Da alle Welt sich entsetzt und wundert über den Niedergang der Kultur im Reich, wird es unsere Sache, zu beweisen, daß die vornehme deutsche Tradition - die schöne Überlieferung Lessings, Goethes und Heines - noch immer schöpferisch am Leben ist" (ZD, 93). As proof of his fellow exiles performing this task, he had co-written in 1939 with Erika Mann Escape to Life. Deutsche Kultur in Exil (Munich: edition spangenberg, 1992). They explained their aim in writing in the introduction: "Was wir versucht haben, ist: einen Querschnitt durch die Vielschichtigkeit der deutschen Emigration, ein möglichst lebendiges Bild von der Vielschichtigkeit der deutschen Emigration, ein möglichst lebendiges Bild von der Vielfalt ihrer Gesichter und ihrer geistigen Kräfte zu geben. Wir wollten zeigen und anschaulich machen: es sind nicht einzelnen Personen, die aus irgendwelchen Gründen vertrieben wurden. Opfer

situation for exiles deteriorating in Europe, Mann emigrated to the USA in September 1938 where, in 1942, he became an American citizen⁵ and enlisted in the US Army. Participating in the Italian campaign as a member of the Psychological Warfare Branch he nevertheless continued writing, contributing to the American army journal, Stars and Stripes. In September 1945 he was demobilised. Subsequently, between 1945 and 1949 he travelled frequently to Europe addressing writers' conferences and meetings across the continent. Depression and increasing drug dependency, both of which had haunted him since youth, intensified during this time until, on 21 May 1949, he died in Cannes of a drugs overdose.

The assumption of power by the National Socialists in March 1933 brought Mann's career in Germany to an abrupt end. Exile isolated him from his audience; in his homeland his books were banned then burnt and their author, his citizenship revoked, declared a traitor and an enemy of the people⁶. In common with many of the emigré writers, once the war was over, Mann attempted to re-establish the links with Germany that exile had severed by contacting publishers and authors alike in an attempt to reawaken interest in his work and to reintroduce it to a German readership. Where such as Bertolt Brecht, Alfred Döblin, Johannes R. Becher or Thomas Mann, for example, succeeded with apparent ease, Klaus Mann failed.

There are three main reasons for this failure. When he left Germany at the age of 26, Mann was still too young to have truly established himself as writer of renown; twelve years in exile with his work unobtainable by his former readership effectively removed his name

des Nazi-Fanatismus ist vielmehr eine komplexe Kultur - die wahre deutsche Kultur, die immer ein schöpferischer Teil der europäischen Kultur und der Welt-Kultur war" (EL, 10).

⁵ Mann lost his German citizenship on November 1 1934 for signing the *Saarlandaufruf* published in the *Volksstimme* of September 21 1934. Heinrich Mann, Lion Feuchtwanger, Leonhard Frank, Johannes R. Becher, Ernst Toller, Anna Seghers, Erwin Piscator, John Heartfield and Alfred Kantorowicz, amongst others, also put their names to this document. It called upon the people of the Saarland, which had passed from German control in 1919, to vote for status quo, to remain a mandated territory of the League of Nations, in the forthcoming plebiscite of January 13 1935. This was one of three options open to the inhabitants of the Saarland, the others being to return to government by Germany or to become part of France. The result, with over 90% voting in favour of reunification with Germany, overwhelmingly returned the Saarland to German administration. A facsimile of the appeal is included in Wilfried Dirschauer, *Klaus Mann und das Exil* (Worms: Heintz, 1973), 132. Details of the Saarland plebiscite can be found in Wiliam Carr, *A History of Germany 1815-1985* 3rd edn (London: Arnold, 1987), 342, Gordon A. Craig, *Germany 1866-1945* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1981), 683 and Jost Döffler, *Nazi Germany 1933-1945. Faith and Annihilation*, trans. by Dean Scott McMurray (London: Arnold, 1996), 67. With the loss of his German passport, Mann first travelled with Dutch documents before taking Czech citizenship with his brother Golo Mann and his parents in 1937.

⁶ When Mann's citizenship was revoked in 1934, in a list that included his fellow signatories to the *Saarlandaufruf* Leonhard Frank, Helmuth Herzfeld (John Heartfield) and Erwin Piscator, it was accompanied by a denunciation of all those on the list as "Volksverräter", "Lumpen" and "Volksfeinde", *Völkischer Beobachter*, 6.11.34, 8.

from the public consciousness. After the war, Mann did not seek to publish new material, he devoted much of his time to translating texts he had originally written in English⁷ and attempted to republish the two major novels from his exile, Mephisto. Roman einer Karriere and Der Vulkan. Roman unter Emigranten, both of which were powerful indictments of National Socialism. In choosing these texts to relaunch himself, Mann did not consider the climate in Germany, the desire of a nation to look to the future rather than reflect on its immediate past. Finally, the threat of litigation in 1949 by Gustaf Gründgens, Mann's former brother-in-law and his model for the careerist actor Hendrik Höfgen in Mephisto⁸, prohibited a reprint of that novel and effectively consigned Mann to an obscurity in the Federal Republic that persisted until the 1960s⁹.

In the 1960s a generation too young to remember the war but old enough to recall its aftermath began to confront its nation's recent past. The desire to come to terms with this past, subsumed under the generic title *Vergangenheitsbewältigung*, awakened an interest in those writers who, in exile, confronted in their work the reality of National Socialism as perceived by its victims. As a direct result of this interest, the Spangenberg Verlag in Munich, began publishing a series of novels written in exile, choosing as one of its titles Klaus Mann's Mephisto. On publication Gustaf Gründgens's adopted son, Peter Gorski, immediately filed for its prohibition on the grounds that it defamed his deceased father's memory. This single act, which began six years of complex litigation and resulted in the

⁷ This includes his translation and revision of his autobiography The Turning Point (1942), published posthumously in 1952 as Der Wendepunkt. Ein Lebensbericht by the Amsterdam-based Querido Verlag, and a biography of André Gide, André Gide and the Crisis of Modern Thought (New York: Creative Age Press, 1943) which was reprinted in 1948 by the Steinberg Verlag, based in Zurich as André Gide. Die Geschichte eines Europäers, republished by the Nymphenburger Verlagshandlung, Munich in 1966 as André Gide und die Krise des modernen Denkens.

⁸ In a letter to the publisher Julius Deutsch from May 14 1949, a week before his suicide, Mann referred directly to this threat, asking rhetorically: "Wissen Sie, daß es mir Deutschland unmöglich ist, den natürlich längst vegriffenen, aber keineswegs veralteten MEPHISTO neu herauszubringen, weil die Verleger zugegebenermaßen Angst vor Gründgens haben? Er ist schon wieder so mächtig, daß niemand sich mit ihm anlegen will", Klaus Mann Briefe und Antworten 1922-1949, ed. by Martin Gregor-Dellin (Reinbek: Rowohlt, 1991), 615. Mann had known and worked closely with Gründgens in the Weimar Republic, starring with him in Mann's play Anja und Esther (1926) and Revue zu Vieren, a play Gründgens also directed. In 1926 Gründgens married Erika Mann, although the couple separated soon after and eventually divorced. Gründgens' tacit support for National Socialism during the Weimar Republic contributed to the breakdown in the relationship between Klaus Mann and Gründgens. Mann first drew on Gründgens as a model in Treffpunkt im Unendlichen (1932), in the figure of the actor/dancer Gregor Gregori who exploits all around him for his own advantage. The detail of this characterisation is discussed in Chapter Five. In 1935 Hermann Kesten suggested, in a letter dated November 15 1935, that Mann write "[ein] Roman eines homosexuellen Karrieristen im dritten Reich", then continuing "zwar schwebte mir die Figur des von Ihnen künstlerisch schon bedachten Herrn Staatstheaterintendanten Gründgens vor", (BA, 238).

⁹ In contrast Klaus Mann was well-known in the former German Democratic Republic where Mephisto was reprinted in 1956, its author regarded as a campaigner against fascism.

book's ban in 1971¹⁰ accomplished that which Mann had not; it returned his name dramatically to the public domain.

The nature of Mann's posthumous return to prominence, which placed him within the canon of *Exilliteratur*, determined the approach that early Klaus Mann scholarship took to his work. Beginning in 1973 with Wilfred Dirschauer's study Klaus Mann und das Exil¹¹ and continuing in 1974 with Armin Kerker's informative work Ernst Jünger - Klaus Mann¹², in which he took each writer as representative of those in Germany and in exile respectively, characteristically this research touched only briefly upon his texts prior to exile (Dirschauer devotes a mere twenty-two pages to this) to focus on the middle period of Mann's career, from 1933 to 1945, and defining him primarily as a writer against fascism. Of this early scholarship, Elke Kerker alone considers Mann's Weimar work in her study Weltbürgertum - Exil - Heimatlosigkeit¹³, once more the primary focus of this work is to emphasise Mann's anti-fascism.

Early research was restricted by the relative scarcity of Klaus Mann texts. In 1980, however, the Rowohlt Verlag began the systematic reprinting of these texts including translations of those written and printed in English, an undertaking that was completed in 1996 with the reissue of the collection of essays Auf der Suche nach einem Weg, originally published in 1931. The complete works now encompass his essays, novels, short stories and plays as well as his diaries, letters and autobiographies.

With more information becoming available during the 1980s Klaus Mann's work received fresh critical attention although extensive examinations of his work are still few in

¹⁰ This ban was not lifted until 1981 when the Rowohlt Verlag openly flouted it and reprinted Mephisto. Copies were nevertheless available to the West German audience, imported from East Germany and from Switzerland. For details of the trials and the legal issues they raised see: Eberhard Spangenberg, Mephisto. Karriere eines Romans. Klaus Mann und Gustaf Gründgens (Munich: Ellermann, 1984).

¹¹ Wilfried Dirschauer, Klaus Mann und das Exil (Worms: Heintz, 1973).

¹² Armin Kerker, Ernst Jünger - Klaus Mann (Bonn: Bouvier, 1974).

¹³ Elke Kerker, Weltbürgertum - Exil - Heimatlosigkeit. Die Entwicklung der politischen Dimension im Werk Klaus Manns von 1924 - 1936 (Meisenheim am Glan: Anton Hain, 1977).

number. An ongoing assessment and introduction to Klaus Mann's work is given in the Klaus Mann Schriftenreihe edited by the American scholar Frederic Kroll¹⁴. Begun in 1979 with a bibliography that is now, admittedly, outdated, this series of six volumes to date offers a critical analysis of Mann's work alongside the biographical detail of the author's life. Klaus Mann 1906 - 1949 the first detailed biography of Mann's life written by the French scholar, Michel Grunewald¹⁵ appeared in 1984; it is complemented by Grunewald's detailed bibliography of Mann's texts kept in the *Klaus-Mann-Archiv* in Munich¹⁶.

The majority of critical texts available, a selection of which I mention here, have focussed on single aspects of Mann's work. Bernd Weil, for example, returned to Mann's status as a writer in exile in his study Klaus Mann: Leben und Werk im Exil, printed in 1983, a work which expands upon Wilfred Dirschauer's earlier observations¹⁷. Stefan Zynda was the first to consider the impact of Klaus Mann's homosexuality on his literature, illustrating in Sexualität bei Klaus Mann¹⁸ with a small selection of the author's work, the correlation between Mann's life and his fiction. Susanne Wolfram, in a more detailed study, Die tödliche Wunde¹⁹ pursues these issues, focussing in particular upon Mann's association of homosexuality with death. Homosexuality is also the main concern of Gerhard Härle's study of both Thomas and Klaus Mann's work Männerliebe²⁰, in which he applies modern psychoanalytical practice and theories to his consideration of these texts. Axel Plathe gives an insight into Klaus Mann's affinity with France and, particularly, his admiration for the work of André Gide in André Gide und Klaus Mann²¹.

¹⁴ Frederic Kroll, Klaus-Mann-Schriftenreihe, 6 Vols (Darmstadt: Blahak, 1979-1995).

¹⁵ Michel Grunewald, Klaus Mann 1906 - 1949, 2 Vols (Frankfurt: Peter Lang, 1984).

¹⁶ Michel Grunewald, Klaus Mann 1906 - 1949. Eine Bibliographie. Verzeichnis des Werks und des Nachlasses von Klaus Mann mit Inhaltsbeschreibung der unveröffentlichten Schriften. Namenregister und Titelvezeichnis (Munich: edition spangenberg, 1984).

¹⁷ Bernd Weil, Klaus Mann: Leben und Werk im Exil (Frankfurt: Fischer, 1983).

¹⁸ Stefan Zynda, Sexualität bei Klaus Mann (Bonn: Bouvier, 1986).

¹⁹ Susanne Wolfram, Die tödliche Wunde. Über die Untrennbarkeit von Tod und Eros im Werk von Klaus Mann (Frankfurt: Peter Lang, 1986).

²⁰ Gerhart Härle, Männerweiblichkeit. Zur Homosexualität bei Klaus und Thomas Mann (Frankfurt: Athenäum, 1988).

²¹ Axel Plathe, Klaus Mann und André Gide. Zur Wirkungsgeschichte französischer Literatur in Deutschland (Bonn: Bouvier, 1987).

Mann's work during the Weimar Republic features in these texts primarily as an introduction to his later work in exile. Mann's awareness of the cultural environment of which he was a part, his knowledge and application of German literary tradition and his experimentation with novel forms during the 1920s and early 1930s has received no detailed attention. This study addresses these issues.

Throughout his career Mann sought literary mentors and models for his work. The most powerful influence, as acknowledged in Mann's autobiography The Turning Point (1942), was his father with whose work he was intimately familiar. "The very vocabulary I employed" he wrote,

was imbued with the savor of his intellectual personality. His psychology of the artist [...] has essentially influenced my own views of the artistic mission and conflict. It is useless to offer resistance to this gentle persuasion. I had his terminology in my fingertips, his images in my blood²².

This influence is latent in all his work, as is that also of his uncle, Heinrich Mann, of whom Klaus Mann wrote in The Turning Point: "I was truly impressed by the dynamic élan of his essayistic prose; enchanted by the colorful grandeur of his vision" (TP, 197). Politically, they shared similar views. Each was an ardent and committed supporter of the Weimar Republic. Each recognised the dangers of nationalism whilst it was still in its infancy and proposed European union as the only political and democratic means to effect its defeat. On a more personal level, each regarded France as their spiritual home, and advocated the need for Franco-German co-operation to ensure the survival of Europe²³. In exile they drew close in their shared fight against National Socialism a bond strengthened when Heinrich Mann agreed, with André Gide and Aldous Huxley, to be patron of Klaus Mann's journal Die Sammlung.

Mann's praise for Thomas Mann and Heinrich Mann is found in The Turning Point in a chapter entitled "Olympus". In it Klaus Mann also listed those writers away from his

²² Klaus Mann, The Turning Point, 197. Further references are given in the text after quotation.

²³ These issues shall be discussed in more detail in Chapter One.

immediate family circle that had profoundly affected him and, as a result, his writing. As he noted in his autobiography:

I [...] was, and, for that matter, still am, a loyal follower, fervently devoted to those, living and dead, who molded and enriched my intellectual life. It is from the example of my saints and heroes that I draw the strength for my own endeavors (TP, 196)

He cited no fewer than twenty-two different authors, an eclectic mix ranging from writers of antiquity (Plato, Socrates) to the philosophers Nietzsche, Schopenhauer and Marx, together with such renowned German writers as Novalis, Stefan George and Heinrich Heine, and drawing the names André Gide, Huysmans, Hermann Bang and Walt Whitman from the ranks of world literature²⁴. These lists reveal not only Mann's familiarity with the literature of his own country, his curiosity towards world literature and his readiness to seek inspiration from cultures and countries other than his own. Possibly more importantly, they suggest his awareness of the strong literary tradition in which, as a young author, he wrote.

As early as 1926 Mann publicly formulated his view of writers' responsibility to their literary heritage. In an essay entitled 'Fragment von der Jugend' he wrote generally of his own literary idols:

Einen Dichter lieben, heißt nicht, ihn sich als Vorbild nehmen, ihm nacheifern wie der letzten Erfüllung, es bedeutet weit eher, wie mir scheint, weitergehen wollen da, wo er aufhörte, immer zu ihm zurückschauend, immer hängend an ihm²⁵.

In his choice of 'weitergehen' Mann demanded progression within the discipline of literature. However, he did not demand progress at the expense of the literary tradition in which he and all writers worked. He clearly did not believe the writer should mock or reject works from

²⁴ Klaus Mann, 'Olympus', *The Turning Point*, 196-229. In a diary entry from August 14 1933 Mann was more discriminating, identifying Stefan George, Frank Wedekind and André Gide as key influences on his early work, Klaus Mann, *Tagebücher*, Vol. 1 1931-1933, ed. by Joachim Hermannsberg, Peter Laemmle, and Wilfried F. Schoeller (Reinbek: Rowohlt, 1995), 165. France, represented in his 'olympus' by Gide and Huysmans but to which the names of Jean Cocteau, Rene Crevel and Arthur Rimbaud could be added, occupied a central place within this constellation, on a level with German literature. The importance of France as his 'spiritual' home and of French literature as a model for German writers shall be discussed in Chapters One and Five respectively.

²⁵ Klaus Mann, 'Fragment von der Jugend', first published in *Die neue Rundschau*, March 1925. Reprinted in *Auf der Suche nach einem Weg* (Berlin: Kiepenheuer, 1931) 3-20 (15). This essay is discussed in detail in Chapter One.

an earlier age²⁶. Nor did he propose that authors merely imitate in their work that which had gone before. Rather, Mann advocated that authors seek inspiration in this heritage, learn from it but then most importantly further develop the literary traditions that they as writers had inherited from the past.

Mann's emphasis on tradition appears to run contrary to general perceptions of the Weimar Republic and its culture. The Republic has passed into popular history as a series of images caught in the collective imagination - the bloodshed and unrest, poverty and high inflation that marked its beginnings; the glitzy, decadent and hedonistic culture of excess of its 'golden twenties'; the collapse of its economy, the failure of its government, and the rise of National Socialism which together destroyed democracy in Germany. Of these, only that of the 'golden twenties' is reflected in the popular view of Weimar's artistic life. As Peter Gay summarised in one of the first studies to address the culture of the Weimar Republic: Weimar Culture. The Outsider as Insider:

When we think of Weimar, we think of modernity in art, literature, and thought; we think of the rebellion of sons against fathers, Dadaists against art, Berlin against beefy philistinism, libertines against old-fashioned moralists; we think of the Threepenny Opera, The Cabinet of Dr Caligari, The Magic Mountain, the Bauhaus, Marlene Dietrich²⁷.

As Gay correctly noted, Weimar culture is now identified with modernity, with experimentation and innovation, as writers questioned convention and rejected the traditions and values of an earlier age with the legacy of a past discredited by war and overthrown by revolution. It is regarded as a period of challenge - the challenge of a new state where politics, culture and society were in close interaction; the challenge of new media with radio and cinema demanding new styles of writing; the challenge to the writers to participate in society and reflect its concerns in their work. In the cosmopolitanism of its artistic environment, with Berlin quickly establishing itself as the cultural heart of Europe, attracting writers and artists from across the globe, it epitomised internationalism. Yet the culture of

²⁶ In the essay 'Die neuen Eltern', also from 1926, Mann associated this approach to art and literature exclusively with the Expressionist movement that had dominated German cultural life in the first years of the Weimar Republic noting that their 'revolution' had been nothing more than a rejection of the past. Klaus Mann, 'Die neuen Eltern', first printed in Uhu, August 1926. Reprinted in Die neuen Eltern, 84-88. The issues raised in this essay are discussed in Chapter One.

²⁷ Peter Gay, Weimar Culture. The Outsider as Insider (Harmondsworth: Penguin, 1974), xi.

the Weimar Republic also represents a culture of the irreconcilable where a counterculture of reaction confronted this progression. Sponsored by the far right, it rejected modernism in art as decadent *Asphaltliteratur*, the literature of contemporary urban life, and denounced internationalism as fundamentally 'un-German'. In their place, they proposed a model that returned literature to its roots in the German 'Volk' and that was based upon a corrupted and falsified interpretation of German literary history²⁸.

This study examines Mann's place within this context and asks to what extent his awareness of the literary heritage in which he wrote and its misappropriation by the far right influenced the texts he produced. It considers Mann's status as a 'Weimar writer' and anticipates the major novels, Mephisto and Der Vulkan of his exile. Divided into five chapters it considers his essays collected in 1932 in the volume Auf der Suche nach einem Weg, the critical response to his work in the literary journals of the day, and then focuses on his three novels Der fromme Tanz, Abenteuerbuch eine Jugend (1926) Alexander, Roman der Utopie (1939) and Treffpunkt im Unendlichen (1932). Reference shall be made as necessary to his short stories, published in Vor dem Leben (1925) and Abenteuer (1928) and to his plays Anja und Esther (1926), Revue zu Vieren (1927) and Athen (1932); a detailed analysis of these texts, however, is beyond the parameters of this work.

Mann is remembered today primarily as a writer of fiction; yet, he began his career as an essayist submitting three essays anonymously to the eminent Weimar journal Die Weltbühne²⁹. Throughout his career, he combined the dual roles of fictional and essayistic prose writer. Chapter One analyses a selection of his essays from the period which are taken from Auf der Suche nach einem Weg (1931) and supplemented by others reprinted in Die

²⁸ This study does not permit a detailed study of the issues raised here. An introduction to the diversity of Weimar culture is found in: Peter Gay, Weimar Culture. The Outsider as Insider (Harmondsworth: Penguin, 1974), Anthony Grenville, Cockpit of Ideologies: the literature and political history of the Weimar Republic (Berlin: Lang, 1995), Jost Hermand, and Frank Trommler, Die Kultur der Weimarer Republik (Munich: Nymphenburger, 1978), Thomas W. Kniesche, and Stephen Brockman, eds, Dancing on the Volcano. Essays on the Culture of the Weimar Republic (Columbia: Camden House, 1994) and Walter Laqueur, The Weimar Republic. a cultural history 1918-1933 (London: Weidenfeld and Nicolson, 1974). Specific aspects of Weimar culture are discussed in more depth in relation to Klaus Mann.

²⁹ The essays on Arthur Rimbaud and Georg Trakl (the third on Huysmans was not published) appeared in Die Weltbühne in September 1924 under Klaus Mann's name. Mann regretted this decision to sacrifice his anonymity, defining it as "the pivotal mistake" (TP, 104) of his career, explaining this further in Der Wendepunkt. "Von nun an" he wrote "war ich in den Augen [der] 'literarischen Welt' [...] der naseweise Sohn eines berühmten Vaters, der sich nicht entblödet, den Vorteil seiner Geburt geschäftstüchtig und reklamesüchtig auszunützen" (Wp, 149). The impact of this decision on his reviewers' approach to his work is discussed in Chapter Two.

neuen Eltern Aufsätze, Reden, Kritiken 1924-1933 (1992). It focusses specifically on four, 'Fragment von der Jugend' (1926), 'Heute und Morgen. Zur Situation des jungen geistigen Europas' (1927), 'Wie wollen wir unsere Zukunft?' and 'Die Jugend und Paneuropa' (both 1930). Through them, I investigate Klaus Mann's views of art and literature, his perception of the place of art in a modern society where it competed for an audience with cinema and radio. I outline his growing conviction that the writer had a responsibility towards society, and a duty to work for the greater good of others. I shall indicate how this led to his early condemnation of National Socialism, unusual at a time when many believed it did not pose a serious threat to German democracy, and illustrate how his hatred of nationalism resulted in a commitment to the ideal of European union. I place these views within the context of the time and show how they brought him into conflict with Bertolt Brecht, Gottfried Benn and Ernst Jünger.

Chapter Two outlines the reception of Mann's work during the Weimar Republic. It illustrates Mann's scepticism and distrust of the German critical public and asks to what extent this distrust was valid. Taking a selection of reviews from the years 1924 to 1933, I examine the criticisms made and their validity. The chapter investigates the importance of external influences on the judgements made by Mann's reviewers. This addresses specifically the significance of the age of the critic and the impact of Mann's kinship with Thomas Mann in determining the conclusions reached. Subdividing the reviews, I address the significance of the respective writers' personal political beliefs on the conclusions they reach, to demonstrate how the views of his political opponents, those on the far right and far left, were informed by a defined ideal of literature to which Mann did not conform. As a balance to these I have included reviews from the journal Eckart written by Harold Braun, whose words reveal his artistic neutrality, and those by Mann's friends and mentors, whose articles show their shared desire to defend Mann's work from what they believed to be unfair criticism.

With Chapter Three the focus of this study changes to concentrate on Mann's three novels from the Weimar Republic. Mann's fiction has a strong autobiographical basis, with

the author's experiences influencing and informing his writing. For example, Mann's childhood and adolescence coincided with World War One and the social upheaval and instability of the years 1919 to 1923 during which the morals and conventions of the earlier Wilhelmine era were challenged. He reflected this in the stories of Vor dem Leben, in Anja und Esther and in Der fromme Tanz, interpreting it in the insecurity of his youthful protagonists as they sought a direction and purpose to their lives in a world of uncertainty. In the novels Symphonie Pathétique. Ein Tschaikowski-Roman (1935) and Der Vulkan (1939) he addressed the plight of the exile, the fear and financial and emotional hardship it brought that was based on his experience in exile. It is tempting, and possible, to view each of his texts as either *romans à clef* or autobiography³⁰. Whilst acknowledging the undoubted connection between Mann's personal life and his fiction. I shall concentrate, however, on the novels as examples of specific genres, although I shall make reference to the detail of his life as pertinent to the issue under consideration.

Chapter Three examines his first novel Der fromme Tanz. Abenteuerbuch einer Jugend, published in 1926. It takes as its starting point the subtitle 'Abenteuerbuch einer Jugend', to suggest that this places his book in the canon of the *Bildungsroman*. It summarises the defining characteristics of this genre, its evolution during the Weimar Republic and, in so doing, places the work within the context of the *Bildungsroman* in Germany in the early 1920s. The analysis of the text that follows this contextualisation investigates Mann's mastery and application of the techniques demanded by the genre.

Concentrating on Alexander. Roman einer Utopie, Mann's fictionalised biography of Alexander the Great, printed in 1930, Chapter Four examines Mann's adaptation of the genre of the historical novel. It outlines the use of the genre of the historical novel in the late 1920s, the reasons for its re-emergence as a novel form favoured by writers and audience alike, then considers the opportunity and freedom it afforded its practitioners. In examining Mann's text, I illustrate how he offers first a psychological study of the Macedonian leader's

³⁰ An early study of a few of Mann's texts, Peter Hoffer's Klaus Mann (Boston: Twayne 1978) adopts this approach throughout; it is also implicit in Stefan Zynda's study Sexualität bei Klaus Mann. Similarly Elke Kerker in Weltbürgertum - Exil - Heimatlosigkeit makes specific reference to the "autobiographische Grundstruktur" (45) to his fiction.

descent into tyranny, and indicate how Mann adapts historical fact to address two specific yet unrelated issues - homosexuality and the rise of nationalism in Germany.

My discussion of Mann's approach to the issue of homosexuality and his appeal for tolerance and acceptance of it as a legitimate expression of human sexuality includes its context - the criminalisation of homosexual practice in Paragraph 175 of the Weimar Penal Code, public protests against this legislation, campaigns for better understanding of homosexuality and its entrenched public perception as "unnatural" and "immoral". Latent within its discussion is the impact of Klaus Mann's own homosexuality. In investigating his reply to the rise of the far right. I suggest that in Alexander he raised a voice of warning against the divisive and destructive politics of nationalism. I show how he uses the language of nationalism to establish the parallel between his fictional age of Alexander and his modern day; I then demonstrate that he enforces those parallels by introducing the concepts of the superhuman leader and the idealised, racial community (the *Volksgemeinschaft*), undermining these by emphasising their failure. The final part of the chapter considers Mann's definition of Utopia in his subtitle 'Roman der Utopie'.

In Chapter Five, the final chapter of this work, I turn to Treffpunkt im Unendlichen (1932). After briefly considering Klaus Mann's relationship with France and his knowledge of French culture, I then examine the novel as an 'Ideenroman', a novel of ideas. I trace Mann's interest in this genre to André Gide's work Les Faux-monnayeurs (1925) and indicate how this text defined Mann's interpretation of the genre. From the investigation of his essays, I outline Mann's definition of the 'Ideenroman' and put both his definition and interest within the context of the literature of the late Weimar Republic. Gide's Les Faux-monnayeurs provides the basis for my analysis as I compare Treffpunkt im Unendlichen with Mann's paradigm to suggest its initial influence on Mann's novel. However, in my investigation of the nature of evil in Treffpunkt im Unendlichen I illustrate Mann's divergence from the French novel, to return to an older German tradition of the Faust legend; this, I suggest, anticipates his more detailed study in Mephisto. Roman einer Karriere of 1936.

From Aesthete to Polemicist?

Mann's Essayistic Prose 1926 - 1931

In 1931 the Transmare Verlag, Berlin published Auf der Suche nach einem Weg¹, a wide-ranging selection of all Mann's essayistic prose written between 1924 and 1930 and the only collection of Klaus Mann's essays to appear in his lifetime. Mann was a prolific essayist throughout the whole of his literary career and a brief glance at the contents page of Auf der Suche nach einem Weg reveals the breadth of his interests - literary review jostles with political polemic, cameo portrait with personal reminiscence. The title succinctly expresses Mann's search for a purpose and direction to his life, the key concern of both essays and fiction of these years. This search was made more difficult by the social and political chaos in Germany in the wake of World War One.

From the fifty-three pieces included in Auf der Suche nach einem Weg I shall focus on just four: 'Fragment von der Jugend' (1926), 'Heute und Morgen' (1927), 'Die Jugend und Paneuropa' and 'Wie wollen wir unsere Zukunft?' (both 1930). There are three reasons for their selection. They account for approximately one third of the volume in which all four essays were given a prominent position. They encompass the main years of Mann's career during the Weimar Republic, embracing the years 1926 to 1930, and each offers a distinct approach both to art and literature and to the political and literary debates of the 1920s.

These essays provide, as I shall demonstrate, the parameters to Mann's own literary production. They trace his development: from his early position as an apparent aesthete with little or no interaction with the outside world, to the dawning of a sense of civic duty which increased during the Weimar years, until its culmination in Mann's fierce opposition to National Socialism - the role for which he is perhaps best remembered today. A reappraisal of the purpose and form of literature accompanied this changing perception of his role and responsibility as a writer. The underlying development is reflected in the title of the

¹ Klaus Mann, Auf der Suche nach einem Weg. Aufsätze (Berlin: Transmare Verlag, 1931).

concluding essay in the collection, 'Woher wir kommen und wohin wir müssen'; which not only gives an overview of Mann's previous work but also outlines his programme for the years to come².

1.1 The main concerns of the four key essays - an overview

Auf der Suche nach einem Weg opened with a revised version of 'Fragment von der Jugend', first printed in Die neue Rundschau in March 1926³. In the essay Mann covered a number of diverse and seemingly unrelated topics. Mann had reflected, for example, on the disorientation of youth growing up in a Germany devastated by both war and revolution. He had explained to a potentially uncomprehending older generation that the eccentric lifestyles of the young were merely expressions of their ongoing search for a voice, a direction and a meaning to their lives. He considered the relationship between generations divided irrevocably by the shared experience of war⁴. He focussed specifically on a new generation of writers, amongst whom he counted himself, who were isolated within society and fearful that their work had no place within the emerging post-war society. At the centre of his general concern with youth was Mann's preoccupation with the nature of art and its place in a society characterised as intrinsically hostile to culture itself. 'Fragment von der Jugend' thus was an attempt by Mann to define his place within the cultural diversity of the Weimar Republic and to give, albeit in general terms, his views on art and literature. In 1926 he still publicly identified with the ideals of the aesthetic movement of the late nineteenth century, believing that literature should neither question the world around it nor convey any message other than that art exists in and for itself.

² Michel Grunewald indicates in Klaus Mann 1906 - 1949. Eine Bibliographie und Verzeichnis des Werks und des Nachlasses von Klaus Mann mit Inhaltsbeschreibung der unveröffentlichten Schriften. Namenregister und Titelverzeichnis (Munich: edition spangenberg, 1984), 53, that there is no date of first publication for this essay. However, given its place at the end of Auf der Suche nach einem Weg and its content (an overview of Mann's work and beliefs during the twenties) I suggest that 'Woher wir kommen und wohin wir müssen' was specially written by Mann as a conclusion to this volume of essays.

³ Klaus Mann, 'Fragment von der Jugend', Die neue Rundschau 37 (1926), 3. March 1926, 285-295. Reprinted in Auf der Suche nach einem Weg, 3-20. Further references are to this edition. Michel Grunewald notes in Klaus Mann 1906 - 1949. Eine Bibliographie, 29, that the essay was republished with only one, minor revision, the omission of a contemporary, 1926 reference to the poetry of Bertolt Brecht and Klabund; the significance of this omission shall be discussed later in this chapter.

⁴ In his selection of these themes 'Fragment von der Jugend' continued essentially the themes of Mann's early fiction and drama. Indeed Mann emphasised the close correlation between these and his essays through his extensive quotation from his first novel, Der fromme Tanz (1926) his first play Anja und Esther (1925) and reference to his interpretation of the story of the foundling Kaspar Hauser that Mann had written to conclude his volume of short stories Vor dem Leben (1925).

'Fragment von der Jugend' was followed in Auf der Suche nach einem Weg by 'Heute und Morgen. Zur Situation des jungen geistigen Europas'. Published in the autumn of 1927 as a pamphlet by the Gebrüder Enoch Verlag, Hamburg⁵, this extended essay expanded upon many of the themes which had already been present in 'Fragment von der Jugend'. Once more, Mann addressed youth's disorientation, emphasising in particular its vulnerability to destructive ideologies⁶. He again discussed the role of literature in a modern era, in which the arts competed with sport and cinema for their audience, and offered words of encouragement to the isolation of the artist within contemporary society. 'Heute und Morgen', in contrast to 'Fragment von der Jugend', however, combined these literary concerns with more general social, political and historical issues. The essay contained, for example, observations on the appeal of the communist ideology, on the rise of militant nationalism and Mann's personal condemnation of the Francophobia exhibited, he believed, by many of his contemporaries⁷. He wrote critically of the aestheticism of 'Fragment von der Jugend', in 'Heute und Morgen', marking his gradual move towards his advocacy of the writer's duty to society.

In letters to Pamela Wedekind in March 1927 and to Stefan Zweig of November 1927 Mann termed the essay a 'manifesto', a term resonant with political overtones⁸. In essence, 'Heute und Morgen' was a rallying call to German and European intellectuals. Whilst, without doubt, it was a very personal testimony to his own commitment to Europeanism and

⁵ Klaus Mann, Heute und Morgen. Zur Situation der jungen geistigen Europas (Hamburg: Gebrüder Enoch Verlag, 1927). Reprinted in Auf der Suche nach einem Weg, 21-56. Further references are to this edition. Grunewald notes that the essay was written by 1927, 11-14, in Das neue Deutschland, ed. by Jacques Mortane (Zürich: Orell Füßli, 1928), 166-170 and as 'Sur la situation des jeunes intellectuels européens' in Sous les tilleuls - La nouvelle Allemagne, (Paris: Editions Baudinière, 1928), 207-213, Michel Grunewald, Klaus Mann 1906-1949 Eine Bibliographie 33-34.

⁶ In 'Fragment von der Jugend' Mann had written of this in the abstract and without critical comment, stating merely: "Meister sind wohl genug da und haben ausführliche Lehren, mit denen sie uns verführen wollen, sie stehen förmlich an allen Straßenecken. Jeder weiß etwas andres, jeder behauptet, daß er das Neue wisse" (S, 7). By 'Heute und Morgen', however, Mann indirectly identified such 'Meister' and their goals primarily with the forces of reaction when he commented: "Manche glaubten ja sogar schon ein Ziel gefunden zu haben. Nationalismus und Militarismus haben größere Anziehungskraft denn je für die Jugend" (S, 24).

⁷ "Wir vergessen [...], daß es deutsche Jugend gibt, die mit Inbrunst und Überzeugung einen Krieg gegen Frankreich will" Mann wrote, then emphasising his own position with the words "Es ist so toll, so unwahrscheinlich, daß wir nicht oft daran denken" (S, 24). His comments intimate the affinity Mann felt for France, a country he regarded as his spiritual home and to which he fled in March 1933. The bond he believed existed between Germany and France shall be discussed later in this chapter. The specific influences of French literature, in particular that of André Gide, shall be examined in Chapter Five in relation to Mann's 1932 novel Treffpunkt im Unendlichen.

⁸ He referred to the essay in this way when he wrote to Pamela Wedekind: "Ich mache [...] noch einen Vortragsabend in München [...] und lese mein neues Manifest" (7.3.27, BA, 44). Later in the same year, following the publication of the essay, Mann then referred, in a letter to Stefan Zweig, to his "Versuch eines Manifests" (1.11.27, BA, 52).

the ideals of the *Pan-Europa-Bewegung*⁹, Mann used the essay to encourage his contemporaries amongst Europe's literary circles to unite in the defence of their continent by using their work to fight against nationalism in all its guises. Whereas in 'Fragment von der Jugend' Mann's perspective had been limited to Germany alone, a mere year later, in 1927 - as his choice of subtitle, 'Zur Situation des jungen geistigen Europas', intimated - it broadened into a concern with an ideal of European union, based on close economic, political and cultural ties to combat the threat to peace in Europe posed by the rise of nationalism and its attendant xenophobia¹⁰. Indeed, his decision to preview the essay in Munich can be interpreted as deliberate provocation, for he delivered a speech against nationalism in the home of German reaction, the seat of the NSDAP and, since the 'Hitlerputsch' of 1923 firmly identified with the extremes of nationalism¹¹.

'Heute und Morgen' was a pivotal text in Mann's development as a writer for in it he gave a clear signal to his reader that his understanding of the role of art, and with it the role of the writer, was undergoing change. Yet it was essentially a work of transition. Whilst Mann avoided much of the abstraction of 'Fragment von der Jugend' he had yet to find the more confrontational and aggressive style that would characterise his later essays, 'Die Jugend und Paneuropa' and 'Wie wollen wir unsere Zukunft?'. In retrospect, Mann himself criticised the stance he had adopted initially. In his second autobiography The Turning Point, published in 1942, he offered a dispassionate assessment of his youthful pronouncements. "In theory I recognized and stressed the political responsibility of the man of letters", he wrote, and then commented "instead of facing the issues squarely and tackling them realistically, I contented myself, in most of my political statements, with vague complaints

⁹ The *Pan-Europa-Bewegung* was founded in 1923 by the Austrian, Richard Coudenhove-Kalergi, to call for, ultimately, a United States of Europe based upon economic and political union. It received support, primarily, from writers of the centre and moderate left who were attracted to the pluralism and internationalism it proposed.

¹⁰ Mann clarified his understanding of 'Europeanism' retrospectively in his autobiography The Turning Point (1942): "To be a young European - it was an attitude, an ambition: it almost became a program [sic]. the concept of Europe was meant, and accepted, as a protest against German nationalism" (TP, 122. Marcus Wiener 1984). Mann's understanding of the concept of Europeanism and the influences on it shall be discussed later in this chapter. For a general discussion of the appeal of Europe amongst German intellectuals see Dieter Schiller, 'Europa-Ideen der literarischen Linken. Demokratische Europa-Konzepte und deutsch-französische Beziehungen in der deutschen Literatur der zwanziger und dreißiger Jahre', Weimarer Beiträge 37 (1991), Vol 2, 186-195, and Jost Hermand and Frank Trommler, Die Kultur der Weimarer Republik (Munich: Nymphenburger, 1978), 45-49.

¹¹ For a study of the links between Bavaria and nationalism see Paul Bookbinder, Weimar Germany. The Republic of the Reasonable (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1996), 73-83.

and even vaguer suggestions" (TP, 168). His approach throughout 'Heute und Morgen' was indeed 'theoretical'. Although there are more specific contemporary references in the essay than had been present in 'Fragment von der Jugend' whilst in 'Heute und Morgen' Mann referred, for example, to the rise of the *Action française*¹² in France and of fascism in Italy and reflected, in general terms, the divisions within the world of culture, but he did not expand upon them or discuss them in any depth; rather he used them merely to give him a more concrete basis to his essay than had been apparent in 'Fragment von der Jugend'. Mann did not address specific, political and social issues of the day; nor did he truly define the precise role that the modern German or, more broadly, the modern European intellectual was to embody within society; whilst in his advocacy of a vague ideal termed 'Europe', he proposed merely a possible, 'theoretical' alternative to the nationalistic reality of the age in which he lived¹³.

The three essays which followed 'Heute und Morgen' - 'Die Jugend und Paneuropa', 'Wie wollen wir unsere Zukunft?' and 'Die Jugend und Radikalismus' - were republished in Auf der Suche nach einem Weg under the collective heading 'Zur Situation 1930'. Together, these essays covered approximately nine months from spring to autumn 1930. As the heading implied, they examined Germany, and with it Europe, during the first year of crisis that followed the Wall Street Crash of October 1929. Common to them all were Mann's vehement denunciation of fascism, his rejection of calls, made primarily by the right, for the radical overthrow of democracy and his intolerance of the increasing xenophobia in German society.

Mann's first response to the deteriorating political and social climate in Germany came in the speech 'Die Jugend und Paneuropa' delivered in spring 1930 to the youth section of

¹² The *Action française* was founded in 1898 as an anti-democratic, anti-Republican, anti-semitic organisation which campaigned for the return of the French monarchy and of authoritarian, dictatorial rule. The organisation found widespread support amongst French iboom years between 1923 and 1926, with increased support at the ballot box. For a detailed discussion of the rise of the *Action française* and its place within French political history of the early twentieth century, see Samuel M. Osgood, French Royalism since 1870,

¹³ In The Turning Point published in 1942, some fourteen years after 'Heute und Morgen', whilst he was an exile in America, Mann conceded the inadequacies of his youthful approach. Analysing his early involvement in politics he commented: "My fundamental error was that I ventured on those tremendous issues without having them in my heart and blood, without having suffered from them. I took it for granted that a writer can cope with any conceivable topic, no matter how involved and crucial it may be: if only he commands a sufficient amount of skillfulness [sic] and pluck. Out of a naive sense of duty, rather than out of ambition, I devoted my 'spare time' to the pivotal questions of our epoch. How could my contribution be solid and effective? It was not paid for with suffering" (TP, 169).

the Pan-Europe movement. In this speech Mann publicly reaffirmed his commitment to the ideal of European union, which he had first expressed in 1927 in 'Heute und Morgen' and analysed alternatives on which to model unification¹⁴. However, his primary concern was the commitment of youth to this goal. He spoke of a generation divided between the opposing ideologies of fascism and communism, united only in their hatred of the right to freedom, of reason and of Europe¹⁵, and compared his compatriots negatively with the young in France and America¹⁶. In this essay his comments were more distanced than they had been in his earlier texts. In 'Fragment von der Jugend' and 'Heute und Morgen' Mann had written as one of the younger generation. His desire to reflect the concerns of this generation had determined the content of both essays. However, when he wrote "Die Jugend und Paneuropa" in 1930, although he was still only 23, he no longer identified with the young generation he addressed.

Arguing that, by deliberately attempting to provoke conflict between nations, fascism and nationalism threatened to destroy Europe, Mann urged his contemporaries to promote co-operation and reconciliation between the nations of Europe. He appealed, in particular, to his fellow writers and men of letters. Expanding upon his conviction in 'Heute und Morgen' that writers should involve themselves in society generally, Mann argued that they had the power to influence and convince the public of the rightness of their cause. He therefore urged writers to address, in their work, contemporary issues and concerns, relevant to all. He reserved particular criticism for those writers who condoned and even advocated the

¹⁴ Mann drew specific attention to the concept of Europe proposed by the French author Henri Massis. His critique of these views shall be discussed later in this chapter.

¹⁵ 'Die Jugend und Paneuropa' opened with Mann's realisation: "Wo die Jugend steht, ist nicht festzustellen. Klar ist leider nur, wo sie nicht steht. Was Gewalt über sie hat, sind scheinbar einander sehr entgegengesetzte Mächte und Richtungen; verwandt sind sie sich alle in einem: in ihrem Haß gegen die Freiheitsidee, gegen die Vernunft selber, gegen Europa" (S, 59).

¹⁶ In his essays, fiction and drama Mann portrayed American and French youth as models for his own compatriots, perceiving in them those qualities that he felt to be lacking in the youth of his own country. French youth, he believed, demonstrated an openness to influences different from their own culture. He praised this in 'Die Jugend und Paneuropa': "Was ich an dem besten Teil der französischen Jugend bewundere, ist aber gerade die Elastizität, die Sicherheit, die Eleganz, mit der sie nach dem Kriege ihr Weltbild und ihr Lebensgefühl erweitert und verändert hat, ohne daß es ihr eigentlichstes, französisch-europäisches Wesen verletzt hätte" (S, 71). In contrast, American youth embodied a freshness and naivety that contrasted with world-weary, cynical European youth. He had portrayed this in his play *Gegenüber von China* (1930). Mann relied on this contrast in his portrayal of a young European's experiences at an American college "Krankheit der Jugend, jene Krankheit, die problematisch und produktiv macht", *Gegenüber von China*, reprinted in Klaus Mann, *Der siebente Engel Die Theaterstücke*, ed. by Uwe Naumann and Michael Töteberg (Reinbek, Rowohlt, 1989), 135-192, (146). He explained his concept of 'Gesundheit' in 'Die Jugend und Paneuropa,' from spring 1930 where he drew attention in particular to American "Körperlichkeit" and 'Naivität' (S, 72) to argue that European youth had much to learn from them.

nationalist ideology, believing that this contradicted their intrinsic responsibility to work for the good and for the benefit of all.

In 'Die Jugend und Paneuropa' Mann had speculated on a potential threat that fascism and nationalism posed to democracy both in Europe and his homeland, Germany, but which had yet to materialise. Whilst German democracy had been severely tested by the after-effects of the Wall Street Crash, in spring 1930 it was nonetheless still in place¹⁷. In consequence, whilst his uncompromising opposition to fascism was clearly in evidence, he had still to develop the more confrontational approach to his subject matter which would characterise, for example, the slightly later speech 'Wie wollen wir unsere Zukunft?' and the essays from his exile¹⁸.

In spring 1930 Mann had spoken of nationalism in its infancy, as a force that had still truly to attain power in Europe and yet, he emphasised, possessed the potential to do so; in 'Wie wollen wir unsere Zukunft?', delivered to a conference held by the Austrian *Kulturbund*, he responded directly and unequivocally to recent electoral successes by the NSDAP in both national and local elections held between June and September 1930. These had radically altered the political landscape in Germany. Following the national elections of 14. September 1930 the NSDAP had increased its representation in the *Reichstag* from 12 to 107 seats gaining in excess of 18% of the total number of votes cast. This had made it the second largest party after the SPD, the party of the moderate left and thus guaranteed the

¹⁷ This is not to assert that the Republic's future survival was guaranteed, for it was not. It was under considerable and constant threat. The clearest and most public of these came from the parties of the far right and left. The Nationalist right opposed the Republic for the democratic ethos it embraced. Democracy, they argued, was an alien political system that was intrinsically 'un-German' and thus should be overthrown. The Communist left followed Marxist thought and regarded democracy as an interregnum between autocratic rule by an élite and an ideal of rule by the people, agitating therefore for the overthrow of the Republic as a prerequisite in creating a German communist state. Away from the rarified political domain, the judges, civil servants, academics, officers, landowners and farmers who represented the German Establishment posed a hidden threat to the Republic. By nature conservative, they were opposed to the Republic from its inception, perceiving it as undermining their status and material standard of living. Although they did not exercise direct influence on government, they used their positions of authority to hinder democratic rule and to lend indirect support to the Nationalist right. Amongst Germany's intellectuals and writers, supporters of the Republic were few in number, of whom perhaps Gerhart Hauptmann, Thomas and Heinrich Mann were the most notable. The majority of writers chose to remain neutral, maintaining the apoliticism of years gone by, although this can be perceived as a political statement, as an expression of their reluctance to identify with the new state. A significant number, however, lent their active support to the anti-democratic ideologies of nationalism and communism, giving them public respectability and status.

¹⁸ The essays from Mann's exile have been collected and republished in four volumes edited by Uwe Naumann and Michael Töteberg: *Zahnärzte und Künstler. Aufsätze, Reden, Kritiken 1933-1936* (Reinbek: Rowohlt, 1993); *Das Wunder von Madrid. Aufsätze, Reden, Kritiken 1936-1938* (Reinbek: Rowohlt, 1993); *Zweimal Deutschland. Aufsätze, Reden, Kritiken 1938-1942* (Reinbek: Rowohlt, 1994) and *Auf verlorenem Posten. Aufsätze, Reden, Kritiken 1942-1949* (Reinbek: Rowohlt, 1994).

NSDAP political influence on the legislative process¹⁹. This election result had two consequences for Mann - it made exile an ever more imminent necessity and confirmed him in his conviction to continue the fight against the scourge of nationalism²⁰. In the speech 'Wie wollen wir unsere Zukunft?' he anticipated the fate of Germany, and also Europe, under nationalist government. He condemned, unequivocally, the dramatic increase in support for the NSDAP, a support he could only view as leading Germany to certain ruin, focusing in particular on that given to National Socialism at the ballot box by the young²¹.

In its key points Mann repeated, although with greater urgency, the concerns aired in 'Die Jugend und Paneuropa' and, indeed, in modified form, throughout his early career as an essayist. In 'Wie wollen wir unsere Zukunft?' he referred once more to fundamental divisions within the younger generation, denouncing, in particular, nationalist youth which, he believed, had been led astray into supporting the forces of reaction²². He restated his call for understanding amongst the European nations and challenged writers to condemn National Socialism for the threat it posed to the future of the Weimar Republic. Yet in the intervening months between the speeches, Mann's emphases had altered. In 'Die Jugend und Paneuropa' Mann had spoken to a young audience united in its commitment to European unification. His primary concern had lain, therefore, in examining both the form such unification might take

¹⁹ The NSDAP gained in excess of six million votes. This result had already been anticipated in regional election results between 1929 and 1930. The elections held in summer 1930 to the Saxon *Landstag* offers a close parallel to the national result. The NSDAP gained some 14.4% of the total vote cast, corresponding to 50,000 votes from a possible vote of more than 3.5 million to become the second largest party in local government. This contrasted with the 5% (or 17,500 votes) they had gained a year previously in 1929. For a detailed analysis of these results see Karl Dietrich Bracher, *Die Auflösung der Weimarer Republik. Eine Studie zum Problem des Machtverfalls in der Demokratie*, 5th edn (Villingen: Ring, 1971) 323-328 and E.J. Feuchtwanger, *From Weimar to Hitler. Germany, 1918 - 1933*, 2nd edn (New York: St Martin's Press, 1995), 224 - 233.

²⁰ In his autobiography *Der Wendepunkt* Mann criticised his role at this time, reflecting: "Was tat ich selber zur Besserung und zum Schutz unserer so sehr schutz- und besserungsbedürftigen Demokratie? Wo war mein eigener Beitrag zur Rettung der gefährdeten Republik? Welcher kämpferischen Tat oder sozialen Leistung konnte ich mich rühmen? Unbestreitbar, ich war gegen Hitler - von Anfang an, unbedingt, ohne irgendwelche Vorbehalte psychologisch-pazifistischer oder diabolisch-paradoxe Art [...]. Die ganze Richtung paßte mir nicht, war mir ein Greuel und Ekel, durchaus verhaßt und wider die Natur. Das ist immerhin etwas, ein Argument, welches sich denn doch für meinen moralischen Instinkt und meine politische Urteilsfähigkeit ins Feld führen läßt. Aber es ist nicht genug" (Wp, 252). Yet his essays from the years 1929 to 1933 testify to his dedication in defending the Republic and democracy against the rise of nationalism. In succeeding years his essays and reviews increasingly included overtly political statements with direct attacks on the National Socialist ideology in particular.

²¹ Mann based his argument on a common misconception, held by many at the time, that the increase in support for the NSDAP was directly attributable to first time voters, the youth to whom Mann referred. However, there is little evidence to substantiate these claims; whilst support for the NSDAP was strong amongst the young, with the NSDAP creating designated youth groups and organisation, their vote, a mere 1.7 million voters, fell far short of the total votes cast for the party. For a detailed analysis of the election results throughout the Weimar Republic see Thomas Childers, 'The Social Base of the National Socialist Vote', *Journal of Contemporary History* 11 (1976), 17-42.

²² Mann referred to youth, "die nur lebt" and to youth "die gleichzeitig *denkt*" (S, 92). He criticised the first, who lived for the moment with no thought for the morrow, as susceptible to the ideology of the far right. "In Wahrheit", he wrote, "brauchen sie [...] außer dem Lächeln und Atmen auch sehr oft noch das Radaumachen, Unruhstiften und alle Art der provozierendsten Gaudi. Das ist nicht sosehr die Schuld dieser schlichten Jugend, als die Schuld derer [ie: the nationalists], denen sie leider häufig in die Hände fällt" (S, 93).

and the necessity for the nations to unite. When he had mentioned the role of writers and intellectuals in combating the divisive nationalist ideology, it had been towards the end of the speech and had been made almost in passing. 'Wie wollen wir unsere Zukunft?' was, by contrast, a forthright call to an audience primarily of writers and men of letters to become involved and participate in the political process. He called upon them to modify their perception of their role and to abandon the belief in the autonomy of the writer to which he had himself ascribed in 1926 in his essay 'Fragment von der Jugend'. He now maintained in 1930 that writers had to recognise the dual role they performed as political essayists and artists and argued that the polemic of the political essayist need not compromise artistic integrity.

The third text published in Auf der Suche nach einem Weg under the heading 'Zur Situation 1930' was an open letter to Stefan Zweig written by Mann in November 1930. Entitled 'Jugend und Radikalismus. Eine Antwort an Stefan Zweig', it criticised Zweig, whom Mann admired greatly and with whom he otherwise closely identified²³, for apparently condoning the increasing nationalistic and reactionary intent of the young. Mann's comments referred to an article, 'Revolte gegen die Langsamkeit', submitted by Zweig for the first issue of Die Zeitlupe, published in November 1930. Zweig had stated that in voting for the NSDAP in the recent September elections, youth had acted positively, for the result had been an emphatic rejection of the boredom and lassitude which in recent years had pervaded German political culture²⁴. The result, Zweig had claimed, should therefore be welcomed. Whilst this reply plays little role in my analysis of Mann's essayistic work, it did contain one telling passage. Mann wrote: "Es ist also so, Stefan Zweig, daß ich meine eigene Generation vor Ihnen preisgebe, oder wenigstens den Teil der Generation, den Sie gerade entschuldigen. Zwischen uns und denen ist keine Verbindung möglich [...]. *Ich will jene*

²³ Throughout his early career, Mann regarded Stefan Zweig as his mentor, calling upon him frequently for reviews and advice. It is, perhaps, indicative of the respect he felt for Zweig as a writer and friend that Mann wrote to forewarn him of the publication of 'Jugend und Radikalismus'. His letter, dated 15.11.30 contained the following message to Zweig: "Ihr Verständnis für die 'Radikalisierung' der Jugend - das heißt: Für ihre reaktionäre Radikalisierung - scheint mir zu weitgehend. Ist denen gegenüber solche psychologische Langmut am Platze? Da kann ich nicht mit. Die 'Zeitlupen' - Leute wollten von mir auch einen Beitrag, und ich habe ihn als eine Art Antwort an Sie abgefaßt" (BA, 70). The journal Die Zeitlupe, to which Mann referred here, had requested articles from both Zweig and Mann for their first number, published in August 1930.

²⁴ Stefan Zweig, 'Revolte gegen die Langsamkeit', Die Zeitlupe (August 1930). From Zweig's original, Mann quoted, in particular, Zweig's assessment of the recent election result as "eine vielleicht nicht kluge, aber im Innersten natürliche und durchaus zu bejahende Revolte der Jugend gegen die Langsamkeit und Unentschlossenheit der hohen Politik" (S, 115).

nicht verstehen, ich lehne sie ab" (S, 117)²⁵. Here he publicly testified to an irrevocable division amongst the younger generation and, in his rejection of them, forcibly rejected the nationalism with which they were identified²⁶.

The remainder of this chapter examines in greater depth some of the themes and concerns outlined above, selecting those which are common to all four essays and which best reveal the progression in Mann's thought. It discusses his perception of art, its nature and role within society, illustrating how his growing realisation that literature should confront contemporary issues compelled him to revise his early understanding of the writer exclusively as aesthete. It examines Mann's commitment to the ideal of European unity, proposed as a counter-balance to the excessive nationalism of his age, as evidence of an early involvement within the political arena, and assesses his utopian vision of a future based upon the cooperation and fraternity between nations that 'Europeanism' sponsored, as an attempt to evade the potential distopia that nationalism offered. The chapter concludes by evaluating Mann's theory of synthesis, the means by which he reconciled his view of the artist as creative spirit with his role as polemicist, committed to fighting through both essay and fiction first the threat of fascism and then its realisation in the Third *Reich*.

Throughout the Weimar Republic Mann refined and developed his ideas. There is a fundamental correlation between Mann's thought, with regard to the role of literature and of the intellectual, and his redefinition of himself as a socially committed, political author to

²⁵ Michel Grunewald's interpretation of this comment reveals a common misconception: "il renonce, en effet, à se présenter comme une sorte d'ambassadeur de sa génération", Michel Grunewald, *Klaus Mann 1906 - 1949* Vol. 1 (Frankfurt: Peter Lang, 1984), 76. It is a view paralleled in Kroll's comment on the impact of 1930 on Klaus Mann's public life: "Klaus Mann mußte zu seinem größten Schmerz endgültig von der Illusion Abschied nehmen, daß er die Jugend [...] vertreten durfte", Fredric Kroll, *Klaus-Mann-Schriftenreihe* Vol. III (Wiesbaden: Blahak, 1979), 108. Mann's frequent use in his essays of 'wir' may tempt the reader into believing that he did act as spokesman for his generation. Yet this was a role assigned to Mann by others; it was not a role he chose himself. Indeed, Mann disputed that he was a spokesman at all, stating this quite clearly in an open letter to *Die literarische Welt* in 1927. Referring to scathing criticisms made of him by the left-wing writer Axel Eggebrecht in the journal, Mann emphasised: 'Ich [habe] nicht einmal, sondern zehnmal öffentlich geäußert, daß es nie in meiner Absicht lag, eine 'Gruppe zu führen'; daß ich vielmehr des festen Glaubens bin, Gruppenbildung sei heute in der Jugend unmöglich" (BA, 49).

²⁶ Mann's realisation here of the divisions amongst his generation is recalled when, shortly after his exile, he was forced by circumstances to accept that he had been mistaken in his belief that the division ran *between* the generations, realising that, as the younger generation's support for National Socialism demonstrated, this division ran *through* the generations.

which his work in exile, both as a writer of fiction and a publicist, testifies. To this end, each of the areas of discussion is placed in the context of Mann's early career, between his debut in 1924 and his exile in March 1933, and his development as a writer.

Whilst concentrating on the four key essays from Auf der Suche nach dem Weg, I shall also draw on other relevant essays. Mann's concerns will be placed within the wider framework of Weimar culture, its literary and political debates, to assess its impact on Mann's own views. As a result, the chapter discusses the conflict between Mann and Bertolt Brecht of 1926 and 1927 as characteristic of opposing aesthetic principles and of the wider debate on the 'function' of art in modern society. It compares Mann's condemnation, in 1930, of Ernst Jünger as the archetypal nationalist and militarist whose work posed a threat to German youth, with the general reception of Jünger's work amongst writers of the moderate and far left. It explores how his public criticism of Gottfried Benn, also in 1930, testified to Mann's conviction of the author's moral and ethical responsibility to society and contributed to the widespread repudiation by republican and left-wing writers of Benn's belief in the autonomy of art.

1.2 Art in an 'Artless' Age

When, in the 1926 essay 'Fragment von der Jugend' Mann asked: "Was ist heute die Kunst?" (S, 5) he signalled his participation in the much broader debate concerning the role of art and its relevance to the modern age that dominated German cultural discussion from the mid-twenties until the Republic's demise in March 1933. Whilst in the popular imagination 'Weimar culture' is identified with the cultural vibrancy of the 'golden twenties', those most directly involved, the writers and artists, perceived the new era in, broadly speaking, one of two ways. It was deemed to be either a period of crisis, in which the broad social base of 'popular culture', represented by sport and the new mass media of film and radio, threatened to undermine the more traditional preserve of the arts - literature, poetry and the theatre, or as a period of challenge, which offered the opportunity to create an art form which reflected

the modern, technical age whereby technological innovations would revitalise the cultural world by revolutionising it as it had already revolutionised society²⁷.

The Weimar Republic, as many commentators have noted since, also witnessed a hitherto unprecedented level of interaction between the spheres of politics, society and culture with many artists believing that, through their work, they had an active role to play in shaping Germany's democratic future²⁸. Thus, the desire to address issues formerly held to be alien to art, such as the political and social needs of the German people, informed much of the cultural discourse on the purpose and nature of art in the modern age. The debate was wide-ranging. It asked, for example, if art ought to address the immediate concerns of society or preserve its independence and autonomy. It discussed the relationship between art and politics and questioned whether art could still retain its status as art if it served specific political goals by advocating the aims and aspirations of a particular political ideology. The discussion addressed the impact of the new media on the conventional perception that art was intended for a minority audience amongst the affluent élite, and examined whether writers needed to widen their own appeal by writing for film and radio. The most fundamental question raised during the debate, however, challenged the very existence of artistic life by asking whether art ultimately had a place in modern society²⁹.

These issues and the underlying mood of crisis which lay behind many of them, particularly as the Weimar Republic was engulfed in social and political chaos in the last years of its existence, were echoed in Klaus Mann's contributions to the discussion of the nature of art, and its place within society, in each of the four essays, 'Fragment von der Jugend', 'Heute und Morgen', 'Die Jugend und Paneuropa' and 'Wie wollen wir unsere

²⁷ For a discussion of these issues see Jost Hermand and Frank Trommler, *Die Kultur der Weimarer Republik* 261-298. For an overview of the rise of mass media in Germany see Joachim Paeck, 'Massenmedien', *Deutsche Literatur, eine Sozialgeschichte*, ed. by Horst Albert Glaser Vol 9 *Weimarer Republik - Drittes Reich: Avantgardismus, Parteilichkeit, Exil, 1918-1945* (Reinbek: Rowohlt, 1983), 225-234. For contemporary reaction to the new media see Anton Kaes, ed., *Weimarer Republik, Manifeste und Dokumente zur deutschen Literatur 1918-1933* (Stuttgart: Metzler, 1983), 159-239.

²⁸ For a discussion of the interaction between the political, social and cultural life of the nation see John Willett, *The New Sobriety 1917-1933. Art and politics in the Weimar period* (London: Thames and Hudson, 1978). For a selection of contemporary essays on the writer and the state from an initial enthusiasm and positivism to the disillusion of later years see Anton Kaes, ed., *Weimarer Republik*, 3-111.

²⁹ Indeed this forms the basis of Walter Benjamin's argument in his 1935 essay 'Das Kunstwerk im Zeitalter der technischen Reproduzierbarkeit'.

Zukunft?'. He offered a highly subjective and, at times, even pessimistic assessment of contemporary German cultural life that was predominantly based on, and influenced by, personal experience. He did not speak in relation to *all* culture; rather he spoke about the area of artistic endeavour with which he was most intimately acquainted - the related disciplines of fiction and drama - restricting his comments to the specific context of young writers, of whom he was one, and their potential audience amongst the younger generation. On each occasion, when discussing the form and direction art might take to meet the demands of the modern age, his starting-point was different.

1.2.1 Testimony to aestheticism - 'Fragment von der Jugend' (1926)

When Mann wrote on literature in 'Fragment von der Jugend' it was with the profound conviction that art, as he understood it in the traditional sense of poetry, prose and drama, was, at the very least, at risk, threatened by the disillusion of its exponents, the indifference of its potential audience and its increasing commercialisation, particularly through the medium of film. Mann drew upon his personal experience in the theatre which he knew both as an actor and dramatist³⁰. Attributing his key remarks to anonymous young actors³¹, Mann commented:

Junge Schauspieler kommen aus ihren Garderoben - nicht die ohne Erfolg, die Verbitterten, Kleinen und Mißmutigen, nein, die Anerkannten vielmehr und beinahe Gefeierte - aber sie fragen sich trotzdem, leise und hoffnungslos:

³⁰ Mann's first play, *Anja und Esther*, had been premièred in 1925 with the author in a starring role alongside his sister Erika. He repeated this dual role two years later in his second play *Revue zu Vieren*, premiered in 1927. Although he did not act again, after that, he continued writing, premièring *Gegenüber von China* in 1930. Publication of his final play from the Weimar Republic, *Athen*, written in 1932 and submitted to publishers under the pseudonym Vinzent Hofer, was prevented by his exile in March 1933. He also contributed sketches to his sister's cabaret *Die Pfeffermühle* which first opened in January 1933 and whose work was directed against the rise of National Socialism, continuing, after exile in March 1933, as a vehicle through which to attack the National Socialist regime.

³¹ Mann frequently attributed many of his remarks in his essays to anonymous third person interlocutors in this manner. It enabled him to detach himself from these comments and, on occasions, to lessen the overt didacticism of some of his statements. Possibly the most well-known occurrence is found in Mann's final essay, 'The Ordeal of the European Intellectuals', completed shortly before his suicide in May 1949. The essay discussed, once more, the role of the intellectual, this time in the age of Cold War stalemate that followed the end of World War Two, and reflected Mann's pessimistic viewpoint: "The struggle between two great 'antispiritual' powers - American money and Russian fanaticism [sic] - does not leave any room in the world for intellectual integrity or independence. We are compelled to take sides and, by doing so, to betray everything we should defend and cherish", *Die Heimsuchung des europäischen Geistes. The Ordeal of the European Intellectuals. Ein literarisches Testament*, trans. by Erika Mann, ed. by Hans Stempel (Berlin: Transit, 1993), 56. He placed these words in the mouth of "a young student of philosophy and literature" (56) to whom he then ascribed the real message of the essay, a call for the mass suicide of the intellectuals, found in the closing lines: "things have reached a point where only the most dramatic, most radical gesture has a chance to be noticed, to awake the conscience of the blinded, hypnotized masses. I'd like to see hundreds, thousands of intellectuals follow the examples of Virginia Woolf, Ernst Toller, Stefan Zweig, Jan Masaryk", 58.

Warum geben wir uns denn aus? Warum tun wir denn das? Und wenn wir uns die Seele ganz aus dem Leib spiel'n: kein Mensch interessiert sich im Grund mehr für uns [...]. Die Theater machen bald zu - man verdient auch beim Filmen viel mehr (S, 5).

Mann echoed this negative assessment of theatre's future, expressed in the actors' lament 'kein Mensch interessiert sich im Grund mehr für uns' and 'Die Theater machen bald zu', in his general depiction of the contemporary literary scene. He ascribed these observations once more to unnamed third parties, on this occasion young writers, remarking "Bald wird niemand mehr Bücher kaufen" (S, 6).

These observations recall the opening lines of 'Fragment von der Jugend'. The essay began with Mann's report of the death of the French author Anatole France and his belief, as interpreted by Mann, that "unsere Kultur sei jetzt völlig am Ende, das riesenhafte Fiasko stände ganz nahe bevor". Mann shared the underlying despair of that conviction; his belief that it pertained also to the German context became clear when he then commented:

dieses sein endgültiges Glaubensbekenntnis [...] berührt uns wunderbarlich, macht uns nachdenklich. Wenn nämlich einer, der viel gelebt hat und schon im Fortgehen ist, als letztes Wissen grausam formuliert, was wir alle dunkel empfinden und immerfort ahnen, dann kann man darüber nicht leichthin hinweggehen (S, 3).

The mood of cultural pessimism that Mann implied here pervaded his essay. It was reflected, for example, in his melodramatic description of young writers as "voll Bedenken und Sorge" (S, 5) oppressed, he believed, by the need to create something new - "weiß eigentlich *einer* etwas Neues zu sagen?" (S, 5) he asked - and by the search for a distinctive, unifying style. This was implied in the rhetorical questions: "Wer hat ihn gefunden, den 'Stil unserer Zeit'? Wer singt denn von uns ihr Lied? Wer singt es denn so gewaltig, daß alle hinhören, alle dran glauben, daß alt und jung erschüttert die Gesichte senkt?" (S, 5-6). It reappeared once more toward the end of the essay in the words of doubt "gesetzt den Fall, [die] Jugend brächte überhaupt welche hervor" with which Mann qualified his question "Wie müßten unsere Bücher sein" (S, 18).

'Fragment von der Jugend' posed the question of what the role of literature might be in an age of, and amongst, a young generation, which exhibited extreme indifference towards artistic endeavour. Mann defined his generation as *unliterarisch*³², more willing to participate vicariously as spectators in the thrill and excitement of the boxing ring and race track than actively in the aesthetic experience of creative art. He noted for example:

Die jungen Leute sind bei den Boxern und Automobilwettfahrern. Wenn Samson und Breitensträter³³ sich schlagen, regen sich sechzehntausend Menschen darüber auf. Wer regt sich darüber auf, wenn wir Goethe spielen oder Berthold [sic] Brecht? (S, 5)

Such mass adulation for sport isolated the writer, as Mann conveyed in his remark: "Die jungen Literaten sitzen abseits" (S, 6). However, Mann did not speak here of all writers. His choice of *Literat* was deliberate; selected to suggest to Mann's reader, the governing principle of the author's personal ideal of art at this time.

On its own, as in this context, *Literat* is open to two opposing interpretations. It could be intended as a deliberate insult, identified with the presumed superficiality of the professional scribe, a definition which brings it close to the term 'litterateur'; alternatively, however, it may also be used more positively in its much earlier sense of the aesthete. When Mann used *Literat* it referred to his earlier description: "die jungen Literaten sitzen [...] beieinander [...]. Was für einem unmodernen Gewerbe sie sich ergeben hätten, überlegen die Feinfühligere[n] [unter ihnen] sich bedrückt" (S, 5). Here Mann identified some of the *Literaten* unmistakably with the descriptive phrase 'die Feinfühligere[n]', whereby the comparative distinguished them from, presumably, the mass of their contemporaries and, indeed, amongst the *Literaten* themselves. The term *feinfühlig* was not, however, without its own (literary) connotations for it evoked the sensitivity and intuitive insight of aestheticism and implied that when Mann used the term *Literat* in 'Fragment von der Jugend' it potentially identified the writer with the aesthete.

³² In the essay, Mann reflected on the problem facing writers in the post-war period; he expressed this with the words: "Man zweifelt, ob es möglich sein könne, das Erlebnis dieser denkbar *unliterarischen* Generation im literarischen Worte auch nur festzuhalten" (S, 10).

³³ Mann referred here to two of the leading boxers of his day - Paul Samson-Körner and Hans Breitensträter. Samson-Körner found particular fame for his collaboration with Brecht on a short story 'Der Kinnhaken'.

The approximation of the writer and the aesthete appeared to originate with society's indifference towards art and its marginalisation of the young artist, as implied in the two phrases 'die jungen Literaten sitzen abseits' and 'die jungen Literaten sitzen [...] beieinander'. This apparent lack of interest on the part of society as a whole, then determined Mann's approach to the question of art's role and purpose in society. He appeared to suggest that if society was not interested in art then, in response, art should not be interested in society. Discussing the content and nature of the literature he expected to be written by youth, Mann stated quite clearly "Ohne Lehre müßten diese Bücher sein, ohne Anklage, ohne Moral, fast ohne Frage" (S, 19). This could read almost as a manifesto for the aesthetic movement of the late nineteenth century which advocated that as art existed for its own sake, it should not concern itself with the material concerns of its audience. *Lehre*, *Moral* - these implied both a pedagogic, or at its most extreme, didactic relationship between author and reader and an overt message or intent within the work; *Anklage*, *Frage*, in contrast, suggested the writer's interaction with the empirical world. By rejecting all of these, Mann intimated that art had no other role or purpose in society than its own autonomous creation.

However, Mann's discussion of literature in 'Fragment von der Jugend' assumes a more personal character when placed within the context of his debut years and the hostile critical response to which he and his work were subjected. When 'Fragment von der Jugend' appeared in Die neue Rundschau in March 1926 Mann's career as a writer of fiction and drama totalled less than twelve months. It began with the publication, in May 1925, of his collection of short stories, Vor dem Leben. This had been quickly succeeded by a play Anja und Esther (also 1925), in which he had also starred, and a first novel, Der fromme Tanz published in December 1925. On issue, each of these had met with fierce criticism, both of the work itself and the author. The precise nature of these attacks and the ideological and political factors that informed them shall be discussed in the next chapter. In general terms, however, Mann had been criticised for the supposed immorality of his subject matter, with specific reference being made to his open portrayal of homosexuality. He had been denounced, particularly by his reviewers on the political right, as a potentially corrupting

influence on the young, again, primarily, because of the recurring theme of homosexual love. At the same time, his work had been dismissed by the left as regressive and contrary to the experimentation in art that was the prerogative of the young. Finally left and right had united in condemning him for purporting to speak in the name of youth³⁴. His call for no demands to be made of art by the external world, implied in his testimony to the ideals of aestheticism, must also be placed within this context, for they suggest a much deeper and personal desire to defend his own work against such criticism in the face of open hostility.

1.2.2 The period of transition - 'Heute und Morgen' (1927)

In the autumn of 1927 Mann appeared to distance himself from the aesthetic principles that had characterised his discussion of contemporary art in 'Fragment von der Jugend' from the previous year. In 'Heute und Morgen' he wrote of this first stage in his development as a writer:

Wo etwas 'im Strom' war, liebten wir es, wir liebten jede Bewegtheit, jedes Fließen, jedes Geheimnis. Wir liebten das Leben [...], wir liebten den atmenden Körper als die göttlichste Form [...]. Das Atmen war schön, das Lachen war wunderschön [...]. Sinkender Abend, Sturm in der Nacht, rennendes Kind, Weinen, ohne zu wissen warum, Verzweiflung, so tief wie Wollust. Menschliches Gesicht, uns entgegengeneigt, Lippen und Haar, Geruch der Haut (S, 39)³⁵.

He now wrote of this period in his life as at an end; indeed the very next page revealed an indirect criticism of the aestheticism he had previously advocated. Reflecting on his realisation that writers could not abdicate their responsibility to society, as he had implied was their right in 'Fragment von der Jugend', Mann commented of his early stance: "So haben wir über unseren einsamen Abenteuern gar zu sehr das andere vergessen, das uns zusteht [...], unsere

³⁴ In 'Fragment von der Jugend' Mann did not repudiate this assertion. However, a year later in 'Heute und Morgen' he attempted to distance himself from the assumption that his views applied universally to all youth when he commented: "Einer [ie: Klaus Mann], der spricht und bekennt, gebraucht, im Drange sich einzugliedern, ein oder das andere Mal die kollektivistische Form 'Wir', wenn er von den Nöten und Beängstigungen seines 'Ichs' erzählt [...]. Vielleicht hatte der Beichtende schon vorher gewußt, wie allein er war, vielleicht war solches 'Wir' nur eine erhoffte, gewollte, erträumte Form der Gemeinschaft und er hatte sich keine Augenblick eingebildet, 'repräsentativ' zu reden" (S, 23-24).

³⁵ Mann's praise of movement, love of nature and, in particular, his adoration of the body as 'die göttlichste Form' suggests Stefan George's idealisation and adoration of the perfect human form, in the figure of Maximin. Mann regarded George as one of his literary mentors and included him in his 'Olympus' of writers in his autobiographies The Turning Point and Der Wendepunkt. The influence of George on Mann's early work shall be discussed in detail in Chapter Three.

strenggeforderte, notwendig zu erfüllende Aufgabe, als geistiger Nachwuchs Europas" (S, 40).

It is, however, debatable whether Mann truly rejected the early aesthetic principles that dominated his work at the start of his career and which had characterised 'Fragment von der Jugend'. In his next statement in 'Heute und Morgen', for example, Mann used the language of the aesthetic movement, *Träumereien* and *Selbstgespräche* to refer to art. "Wehe uns, vernachlässigen wir [...] unsere Pflicht [to the ideal of a united Europe]!", he began, before continuing:

Dann bleiben unsere Träumereien ohne Bedeutung, unsere munteren und verzweifelten Selbstgespräche wären uninteressant, wenn wir auf dieser anderen Seite versagen. *Die andere Seite ist unsere soziale Verpflichtung* (S, 40)

Träumereien and *Selbstgespräche* each carry the overtones of introspection and isolation from society, characteristic of autonomous aesthetic art, yet these are balanced by the extroversion of *soziale Verpflichtung*. Nevertheless, implicit in this statement was Mann's growing realisation that literature, and with it, the writer, could perform two contrasting roles. Literature, in the form of the polemical essay such as 'Heute und Morgen', he suggested, could interact with society; as shall be discussed shortly, this understanding of its role intensified throughout the Weimar Republic and would be particularly emphasised by Mann in the spring and autumn of 1930³⁶. Alternatively, literature could retain its autonomy, addressing exclusively the personal and spiritual concerns of the author. This had been the role with which he had identified in 'Fragment von der Jugend' but for which, as I shall demonstrate later in this chapter, he later heavily criticised Gottfried Benn. When Mann commented in 'Heute und Morgen' 'unsere Träumereien [bleiben] ohne Bedeutung, unsere [...] Selbstgespräche wären uninteressant, wenn wir auf dieser anderen Seite [der sozialen Verpflichtung] versagen' he gave an early indication of his own belief that the roles of

³⁶ In his essay 'Wie wollen wir unsere Zukunft?' from autumn 1929 Mann suggested this duality when he told his fellow writers: "Wir müssen, wie die Dinge liegen, unsere tiefsten und eigentlichsten Geistesinteressen hintansetzen und Stellung nehmen" (S, 94). Here *Geist* suggests a stance removed from the concern of society whilst, in his phrase *Stellung nehmen* he suggested a more interactive position applicable to the historical moment, the force of 'wie die Dinge liegen'.

activist and aesthete could be amalgamated without compromise, for the message of one role complemented that of the other.

Thus, whilst Mann did not reject the principles of aestheticism as a basis to art and literature, the emphasis he placed on the *social* duty of the writer gradually distanced him from the exclusive identification with these principles that had been found in 'Fragment von der Jugend'. This in turn had a profound effect on his discussion of literature in the contemporary age. At its most basic, he had attempted in his earlier essay to define, in general terms, the *content* of modern literature; in 'Heute und Morgen', in contrast, he was more concerned with the *direction* of modern literature. Admittedly he had already raised this issue in 'Fragment von der Jugend' where he asked: "Wo soll es denn hin mit der Literatur?" (S, 5). However, he had introduced this merely as an aside, as part of his attempt to evoke the concerns of the new generation of writers and, in consequence, had neither discussed it further nor proposed a specific answer. In 'Heute und Morgen' Mann once more returned to this question, not by demanding a specific style of literature which would determine its direction, for Mann insisted that this was not possible³⁷, but by recommending indirectly the path it should not take.

As in 'Fragment von der Jugend', in his discussion of literature in 'Heute und Morgen' Mann concentrated, ostensibly, upon the mistrust society exhibited towards art. In 'Fragment von der Jugend', however, Mann had stated this merely as a matter of fact and then proposed an artform that reacted to its indifference, namely aestheticism; in 'Heute und Morgen' he confronted this indifference when he summarised the situation in Germany:

Zudem kommt das Mißtrauen gegen den Geist, das nach und nach so stark geworden ist. Von böartiger *Geistfeindschaft* bis zur *Übersättigung an Geist* geht dieses Mißtrauen stark und unverkennbar durch die ganze Generation. Es ist tief begründet, man hatte ja, während all der Jahre, ein gar zu gründliches Versagen des Gedankens erlebt (S, 25).

³⁷ In 'Heute und Morgen' Mann noted the absence of a common, unifying style and direction evaluating this positively when he noted: "Es ist kein Zufall, sondern von strenger Notwendigkeit daß im jungen literarischen Deutschland sich eigentlich keine 'Gruppe' mehr zu bilden vermochte, seitdem der Expressionismus abgewirtschaftet hat. Wir haben nicht einmal einen einheitlichen 'Stil', die Lage, in der wir sind, ließe es geradezu lächerlich scheinen, wollten wir uns aufmachen, nach einem 'Stil' zu suchen. Sind wir endlich unserer *Richtung* sicher, wird der neue 'Stil' bestimmt von selber kommen" (S, 23).

Here Mann drew attention, specifically, to the anti-intellectualism of his age which, he maintained, manifested itself in the popularity of sport. Referring to the unsubstantiated 'failure of thought' Mann commented "So erklärt sich die ungeheuere Bedeutung des Sportes, der beinah uneingeschränkt in der Jugend herrscht" (S, 25). Here Mann clearly associated 'Sport' with 'Geistfeindlichkeit'.

This association was carefully selected by Mann and his comment has to be seen within the context of the time in which it was made. The concept 'sport', Jost Hermand and Frank Trommler note, was not without its cultural resonance³⁸. As reduced working resulted in more leisure time, they explain, sport lost its status as the preserve of the leisured classes with more of the population involved, either as participants or spectators in some form of sporting activity. The cultural world responded to this social trend.

The emergence of sport as a mass phenomenon in the mid-1920s coincided with the emergence of *neue Sachlichkeit* as the dominant artistic form. It promoted dispassionate art, in which factuality and the provable were advocated; functionalism and objectivity were offered in the place of the evocations of eternal, spiritual values which had typified traditional art³⁹. For its proponents, *neue Sachlichkeit* found its apotheosis in sport, for sport concerned itself with provable fact measured by stopwatch and record. By criticising the rise of sport generally, Mann denied its cultural value, a point he clarified when he commented:

Geistfeindlichkeit wurde Mode, unter Berliner Literaten ist es keineswegs schick, sich um Literatur zu kümmern. Wer Gedichte macht und sie handeln nicht vom Sechstagerennen, ist bürgerlich und wird vom Literaten verhöhnt (S, 25-26).

Although unnamed, Mann referred indirectly here to Alfred Döblin, the film and theatre critic Herbert Jhering and Bertolt Brecht. In fact, his comment related quite specifically to criticisms made by them, particularly by Brecht, in their capacity as judges of a literary

³⁸ Jost Hermand, and Frank Trommler, *Die Kultur der Weimarer Republik*, 148.

³⁹ For a detailed study of *Neue Sachlichkeit* see Helmut Lethen, *Neue Sachlichkeit 1924 - 1932. Studien zur Literatur des 'Weißen Sozialismus'*, 2nd edn (Stuttgart: Metzler, 1975).

competition held by the journal Die literarische Welt in 1926. To mark the first anniversary of its publication, young writers had been invited to submit work within the categories of poetry, prose and drama. For the judges, however, the results had been disappointing. "Die Reaktion der Preisrichter", Jost Hermand and Frank Trommler summarise, "war Erschrecken über 'Zeitunkenntnis und Rückwärtsbewegung' (Döblin) der Jugend, über ihre unberechtigte Selbstzufriedenheit und die 'Stubenluft der dramatischen Texte' (Jhering)"⁴⁰.

Brecht, the judge of the poetry section, had adopted a more controversial approach than either of his colleagues, and it was to his comments in particular that Mann made oblique reference in 'Heute und Morgen'. However, this indirect attack in the autumn of 1927 represented merely Mann's parting shot in his critique of Brecht begun some six months earlier with his postscript to the Anthologie jüngster Lyrik⁴¹. In this postscript, dated spring 1927, Mann responded to Brecht's criticism of the entries to Die literarische Welt. Further analysis of this confrontation, and of the aesthetic principles involved, will shed light upon the concept of literature which Mann applied in 'Heute und Morgen'.

1.2.3 The 'use' of art - Mann's confrontation with Bertolt Brecht (1926 - 1927)

Brecht had awarded the poetry prize in the competition held by Die literarische Welt to a 'song' entitled 'He! He! The Iron Man', written by the editor of the theatrical journal Der Scheinwerfer, Hannes Küpper, in praise of the champion cyclist Reggie MacNamara. This song had not been entered in the competition but had been found by Brecht in a specialist magazine devoted to cycling. He had announced his decision on February 4 1927 in a short article, 'Kurzer Bericht über 400 (vierhundert) junge Lyriker'⁴², justifying his decision to reject all the submitted works by claiming that they had been uniformly poor and implying that they were anachronistic; he had suggested a close similarity between them and the Impressionist and Expressionist poetry "deren Inhalt aus hübschen Bildern und aromatischen Wörtern bestand" (SLK1, 69) of the recent past. He had then openly attacked the poets

⁴⁰ Jost Hermand, and Frank Trommler, Die Kultur der Weimarer Republik, 148.

⁴¹ Klaus Mann, and Willi Fehse, eds, Die Anthologie jüngster Lyrik (Hamburg: Gebrüder Enoch, 1927).

⁴² Bertolt Brecht, 'Kurzer Bericht über 400 (vierhundert) junge Lyriker', first published in Die literarische Welt, 4.2.27. Reprinted in Schriften zur Literatur und Kunst I 1920 - 1932, ed. by Werner Hecht (Frankfurt: Suhrkamp, 1967), 68 - 74. Further references are given in the text after quotation.

themselves, writing "Ich habe hier eine Sorte von Jugend kennengelernt, auf deren Bekanntschaft ich mit größerem Gewinn verzichtet hätte" (SLK1, 70), before dismissing them as sentimental, artificial and unworldly, as "diese stillen, feinen, verträumten Menschen, empfindsamer Teil einer verbrauchten Bourgeoisie" (SLK1, 71).

Klaus Schuhmann notes that Brecht's decision had been calculated to provoke the literary world and was, in return, much criticised in literary circles⁴³. His critics, amongst them Gerhart Pohl, editor of *Die literarische Welt*, questioned the validity of placing Küpper 'above' such eminent poets as Rilke, George and Werfel, as Brecht had deliberately done in his rejection of them, and the advisability of using his report to attack and disparage, as inadequate, the young poets for whom the competition had been intended. On the central question that Brecht's report had raised - the nature of contemporary poetry and the relationship between it and the real world - Schuhmann illustrates how the literary world divided into two opposing and, ultimately, intransigent camps. Brecht's supporters welcomed his intention, signalled by his selection of 'He! He! The Iron Man!', to break with the traditional perception of poetry as expressive of some inner or eternal truth, regarding this as campaigning for greater realism in the genre. His critics, in contrast, challenged such a summary dismissal of *Gefühlslyrik* for they believed that poetry primarily addressed the 'inner life' of the emotions, spirit and the soul.

One of those who shared in this second definition was Klaus Mann; it was from his personal commitment to the belief that poetry and, by extension, art in general was, by its very nature, distinct from the real world, that he criticised Bertolt Brecht and the views with which he was identified. Mann first took issue with Brecht's comments in the *Anthologie jüngster Lyrik*, which he edited with Willi Fehse and published in the spring of 1927⁴⁴. As Stefan Zweig said in his introduction, the volume was intended for young poets whose work

⁴³ Klaus Schuhmann, *Der Lyriker Bertolt Brecht 1913 - 1933* (Munich: DTV, 1974), 179-181.

⁴⁴ Klaus Mann, and Wili Fehse, eds, *Anthologie jüngster Lyrik*, with an introduction by Stefan Zweig (Hamburg: gebrüder Enoch Verlag, 1927). Further references are given in the text after quotation.

would otherwise remain unpublished⁴⁵. It contained texts by some eighteen writers, many of them relatively unknown⁴⁶. In the main, their verses were traditional, as Kroll summarises: "Die Lyrik ist durchgängig romantisch, ihre Formen fußen auf Rilke und George [ie: precisely those poets whom Brecht had dismissed], die überall durchklingen, und die Wahl der Stoffe auf der Bibel, der Antike, dem Kinderkreuzzug und Kaspar Hauser"⁴⁷. In short, these poems corresponded in almost every respect with those that Brecht disparaged in February 1927. In consequence, Mann's attacks on Brecht, first in his postscript to the anthology, which is also dated February 1927, and then in an article, "Zum Erscheinen der Anthologie jüngster deutscher Lyrik"⁴⁸ from April of that year, were a defence of the verses he and his co-editor Willi Fehse had selected.

In his postscript, Mann developed the theme of the poet's isolation in society that Stefan Zweig had explored in his introduction to the anthology⁴⁹. Mann noted, for example, "Wer [...] überhaupt Muße findet, Gedichte zu schreiben, tut es beiseite, schamhaft versteckt, es kümmert sich beinahe niemand darum" (AL, 161). The postscript, however, was also constructed as a warning to young poets of the potential hostility toward their work, not

⁴⁵ In this introduction Stefan Zweig pointed to the problematical situation of the poet in contemporary German culture when he noted "Die lyrische Generation von heute steht vor verschlossenen Türen. Keine einzige Zeitschrift mehr, die dem Lyrischen Wert und Wichtigkeit gibt. Kein Verleger, der nicht vor einem Versuche erschrickt. Kein Jahrbuch mehr, kein Sammelpunkt, keine Förderung" (AL, 3). He therefore welcomed the Anthologie jüngster Lyrik for the opportunity it offered young writers, commenting towards the end of his introduction: "dies Buch [ist] [...] nicht als Manifest einer Theorie, nicht als ein pathetisches 'Wir sind's', als Züchtung einer Gruppe [gedacht] - nur ein Durchbruch durch die Eisdecke der Anonymität oder des Halbbekanntseins sollte für ein paar junge Menschen versucht werden, eine Gelegenheit sollte geboten sein, endlich einmal eine für die lyrische Jugend in Deutschland" (AL, 5-6).

⁴⁶ Mann declined the opportunity to publish his own work in the anthology, explaining his decision to his co-editor Willi Fehse in a letter dated 16 December 1926 "ich glaube es hat nicht viel Zweck, von mir etwas mit in ihm aufzunehmen, es kämen eigentlich nur die beiden Kaspar-Hauser-Lieder aus meinem ersten Novellenband [Vor dem Leben] in Frage, und in Büchern gedruckte Arbeiten scheinen mir wieder nicht sehr zu wünschen" (BA, 41-42). He did propose, however, that they include verses by two of his friends, W.E. Süskind and Wolfgang Hellmert. The other poems included in the anthology were selected from some 8,000 verses submitted to them in response to an advertisement in Die literarische Welt. Of the sixteen poets finally selected at least half went on to pursue careers either as writers or editors. The anthology included poems, for example, by the Austrian writer Erika Mitterer (1906 -) whose first collection of poems, Dank des Lebens (1930) won the prestigious Julius Reich prize in 1930, and eight texts by Günter Eich (1907-1972), under the pseudonym Erich Günter, who in the succeeding years concentrated on radio plays and fiction and became a founder member of the Gruppe 47. The volume also included poems by Martin Raschke (1905 - 1943) who subsequently edited the Dresden-based literary/poetry journal Die Kolonne with which Eich and another contributor, Jürgen Eggebrecht (1898-1982), were also associated in the last years of the Weimar Republic. At least two of the contributors, the left-wing writer David Luschnat (1895-1984) and Joachim Maass (1901-1972), had their careers interrupted by exile. For a full list of the contributors see Fredric Kroll, Klaus-Mann-Schriftenreihe, Vol. II, 1906-1927 Unordnung und früher Ruhm (Wiesbaden: Blahak, 1977), 162.

⁴⁷ Fredric Kroll, Klaus-Mann-Schriftenreihe, vol. II, 162.

⁴⁸ Klaus Mann, 'Zum Erscheinen der Anthologie jüngster deutscher Lyrik', first published in Neue Zürcher Zeitung, 17.4.27. Reprinted in Die neuen Eltern, 121-122. Further references are given in the text after quotation.

⁴⁹ In Zweig's delineation of contemporary German culture he had portrayed the poet as isolated and without an audience, commenting, for example, "niemals fand eine lyrische Jugend in Deutschland mehr Stummheit und abweisende Indifferenz als die gegenwärtige. Sie hat keine Verleger. Sie hat keine Zeitschriften. Sie hat keine Förderung [...]. Sie hat keine materielle Möglichkeit. Und sie hat [...] kein Publikum" (AL, 2).

merely amongst the wider public but also from within the artistic community itself. "[Der Dichter] muß gewärtig sein", Mann wrote,

daß sogar Dichter, die sich unserer Generation zurechnen, ihm die geschmacklosesten Grobheiten sagen, ihn sentimental und bürgerlich schelten, es sei denn, seine Verse handeln vom Sechs-Tage-Rennen und gefallen durch einen möglichst phantasielosen amerikanischen Refrain (AL, 161).

Whilst he did not mention him by name, it is unmistakable that Mann referred here both to Brecht and his selection of the poem 'He! He! The Iron Man' the title words of which are the 'American refrain' that end each verse. Mann further directed his reader into making this connection by inverting Brecht's own criticisms, *sentimental* and *bürgerlich*, both of which Brecht had used negatively, into an attack on the author himself.

Mann intensified his criticism of Brecht in April 1927 in his article 'Zum Erscheinen der Anthologie jüngster deutscher Lyrik'. On this occasion, he named Brecht and accused him of abusing his position as judge in the recent poetry competition held by Die literarische Welt. Alluding to the public debate that had resulted from Brecht's decision to award the prize to Hannes Küpper, he commented critically: "Bert Brecht [...] benutzte das schöne Amt [...], um seine freche Person in Szene zu setzen, auf Kosten derer, die sich bemühten und die er, weil sie Gefühle kannten, ekelhaft fand" (NE, 121). This censure of Brecht's behaviour, however, was not the main thrust of Mann's essay; rather, he used the essay to deny Brecht's model of poetry, at the same time distancing himself from contemporary demands for functionalism and factuality in the arts, and to propose in its place his own.

Brecht had clearly defined his position in 'Kurzer Bericht über 400 (vierhundert) junge Lyriker.' He stipulated "Lyrik muß [...] etwas sein, was man ohne weiteres auf den Gebrauchswert untersuchen können muß" (SLK1, 69), expanding upon this by declaring "Alle großen Gedichte haben den Wert von Dokumenten" (SLK1, 70). In his study of *Gebrauchslyrik* (functional poetry) written during the Weimar Republic, J.J. White notes that

this was merely "one among a whole series of compound words using 'Gebrauch-' that came into being in the 1920s to capture the functionalism of contemporary culture"⁵⁰. He draws a direct parallel between the mood of sobriety in the arts inspired by the stark and dispassionate art of *Neue Sachlichkeit* and the rise of functional poetry noting that it was characterised by such features as a "cultivatedly disenchanted tone" and a "directness of presentation"⁵¹, and that, in short, it was "simple, down-to-earth and functional"⁵².

When Brecht used the term *Gebrauchswert* (functional value) in relation to his ideal of poetry able to meet the demands of the modern age, he implicitly subscribed to the notion of *Gebrauchsliteratur* which denied esotericism in poetry. Schuhmann indirectly alludes to this perception when he summarises Brecht's criticisms in "Kurzer Bericht über 400 (vierhundert) junge Lyriker" of the young poets in the title with the short explanation: "Ihr Kontakt zur Wirklichkeit ist unterbrochen, sie haben nicht einmal gewußt, daß sie im Zeitalter der großen Städte leben"⁵³. When Brecht asserted that 'great' poetry, and by extension 'great' art, possessed an undefined 'documentary value', his comment revealed his desire to use the poetic form to interact with the political and social issues of the day, by drawing inspiration, not from the spiritual, inner life of the individual, but from the harsh reality of the material world.

The term '*Gebrauchswert*' implied utilitarianism and functionalism, in keeping with Brecht's rejection of poetry as 'mere' expression, but it also implied, as Edmund Licher has argued, an underlying didacticism. Brecht exhorts the reader of his collection of poems *Die Hauspostille* "diese Hauspostille ist für den *Gebrauch* [my italics] der Leser bestimmt. Sie soll nicht sinnlos hineingefressen werden"⁵⁴, Licher comments: "Sie zeigt [...] daß er sich gleichsam aus der Position eines Kanzelredners oder mitunter eines Bänkelsängers an ein zu

⁵⁰ J.J. White, 'The Cult of 'Functional Poetry' during the Weimar Period', *Weimar Germany. Writers and Politics*, ed. by A.F. Bance (Edinburgh: Scottish Academic Press, 1982), 91 - 109 (93).

⁵¹ J.J. White, 'The Cult of 'Functional Poetry' during the Weimar period', 91.

⁵² J.J. White, 'The Cult of 'Functional Poetry' during the Weimar period', 102.

⁵³ Klaus Schuhmacher, *Der Lyriker Bertolt Brecht 1913 - 1933*, 177.

⁵⁴ Bertolt Brecht, 'Hauspostille', *Werke XI, Gedichte I* (Berlin & Weimar: Aufbau, 1988), 39. Whilst this 'instruction' was, to a large extent, ironic in tone and played upon the tradition of the breviary, it nevertheless intimated both the utilitarianism Brecht desired and the implied didacticism inherent to the concept of *Gebrauchsliteratur*.

belehrendes Volk [...] wandte"⁵⁵. To what use, then, were art and poetry to be put and towards which goal was the reader to be instructed?

In his survey, White refers, in particular, to Erich Kästner, Kurt Tucholsky, and Brecht as the chief exponents of functional poetry; Klaus Schuhmann adds Hannes Küpper to this list⁵⁶. This suggests that functional poetry was associated primarily with writers on the political left, although White qualifies this assumption by noting that the term became so broad that it embraced many poets of differing political persuasions⁵⁷. Kästner, Tucholsky and Brecht were united in their belief in socially and politically committed art, and Brecht in particular subscribed to the view, formulated in retrospect by Hermann Kasack: "der Schriftsteller [lebt] nicht mehr in beschaulicher Idylle oder poetischer Resignation neben der Zeit dahin, sondern [fühlt] sich als Gewissen und Ausdruck der Zeit"⁵⁸. By extension, this view of art saw all art as an extension of the political domain.

In both the postscript to the Anthologie jüngster Lyrik and the essay 'Zum Erscheinen der Anthologie jüngster deutscher Lyrik', Mann rejected Brecht's perception of modern poetry. He drew attention to the lamentable situation of the poet within a world demanding utilitarianism: "er [...] hat das blamable Gefühl, als fröne er einer unnütz altmodischen Liebhaberei" (AL, 161). His choice of the terms *unnütz*, *altmodisch* and *Liebhaberei* all suggest an initial interaction with Brecht's views, for he captured in these three words the underlying message of Brecht's critique. Mann's position as diametrically opposed to Brecht became clear when he appealed in the anthology: "Seien wir unserer Verantwortung bewußt, verraten wir nicht den Geist an irgendeine Mode, die sich in böartiger Dummheit, in brutaler Muskel-Protzerei gefällt" (AL, 162). Mann's derogatory reference to 'Muskel-Protzerei' is an allusion to Brecht's praise of Küpper's 'The Iron Man'. The poet's first priority

⁵⁵ Edmund Licher, Zur Lyrik Brechts. Aspekte ihrer Dialektik und Kommunikativität (Frankfurt: Peter Lang, 1984), 160.

⁵⁶ Klaus Schuhmann, Der Lyriker Bertolt Brecht, 179.

⁵⁷ J.J. White, 'The Cult of "Functional Poetry" during the Weimar Period', 95.

⁵⁸ Quoted from Klaus-Peter Hinze, 'Gruppe 1925 Notizen und Dokumente', Deutsche Vierteljahresschrift 54 (1980), 334-346 (340).

and responsibility, lay with the *Geist*, the autonomous spirit of artistic creation and inspiration that transcended time. Mann dismissed Brecht's approach as 'Mode', a term which both suggested transience and a reaction to external influence⁵⁹.

Mann expanded upon his perception of art in the essay 'Zum Erscheinen der Anthologie jüngster deutscher Lyrik'. He captured in two related statements the aesthetic principle that determined his own work, and his selections in the anthology. The first expressed concisely his forcible rejection of Brecht's *Gebrauchswert* in poetry. Drawing attention, in his phrase 'sozial nützlich und unentbehrlich', to Brecht's desire for utility and its attendant connotations of interaction with contemporary society, Mann denied the validity of this view; a poem, he wrote, "kann sich [...] niemals beteiligen an den entscheidenden Diskussionen, um sich dadurch sozial nützlich und unentbehrlich zu machen, es hörte denn auf, Gedicht zu sein" (NE, 121). In his second statement Mann gave a clear indication of his own position:

Jede Zeit muß, jenseits ihrer sozialen Problematik, den Ausdruck ihres geheimsten Erlebens im Lied, im Gedicht finden. Behauptet einer [ie Brecht] im Ernst, das Erlebnis unserer Zeit sei so dürftig und dumpf, daß man es mit einem holprigen englisch-deutschen Song aussagen könnte, und alles anders sei blöde Sentimentalität? Bemitleiden wir Engstirnigkeit, die so urteilen mag - sie ahnt nicht von der tausendfach verschlungenen Melodie, die wir hören (NE, 122).

Believing that poetry transcended the transient concerns of the day, the 'soziale Problematik', Mann shared the traditional perception of verse as the expression of hidden truths and emotions, when he described it as the 'Ausdruck des geheimsten Erlebens'. The descriptive phrase 'tausendfach verschlungene Melodie' enforces that point.

This debate with Bertolt Brecht continued a critique of Brecht that dated from the previous year. The public debate between the authors had begun in August

⁵⁹ Brecht would agree, but would regard it positively, for from his perspective, art should not be for all time, should not be 'ewig'.

1926⁶⁰ when, in his article, 'Wenn der Vater mit dem Sohne mit dem Uhu ...', published in Das TageBuch⁶¹, Brecht delivered a scathing, personal attack on Klaus and Thomas Mann. His title referred to an interview with Thomas Mann 'Die neuen Kinder'⁶² and an article by Klaus Mann 'Die neuen Eltern'⁶³ published in the journal Uhu. Whilst he had ostensibly merely taken issue with the assertion, made in the editorial preface to the articles, that Klaus Mann and his views were representative of his generation, which Brecht had disputed⁶⁴, the conflict between them, as implied in Brecht's essay, had, at its core, not merely personal enmity but, more significantly, two conflicting perceptions of art.

Initially, Klaus Mann's essay 'Die neuen Eltern' appears to be little more than a general call by the author for mediation between the generations following an assumed breakdown in the relationship between them in the revolutionary aftermath of World War One. Within this message, however, the essay contains a clear signal of Mann's approach to literature. He had divided his generation into two extremes - "das brave Kind" and "das revolutionäre Kind" (NE, 84) which he had identified with trends within the cultural world. The 'revolutionary child', for example, denoted the immediate post-war era with its rejection of everything associated with the parental generation. Mann had summarised its attitude in his comment:

⁶⁰ Elke Kerker is mistaken when she dates this dispute as already present in 'Fragment von der Jugend' of March 1926. She interprets Mann's lines 'Wenn Samson und Breitensträter sich schlagen, regen sich sechzehntausend Menschen darüber auf' as an attempt to hoist Brecht with his own petard. "Im Fragment von der Jugend' (1926)", she notes, "findet sich bereits ein indirekter Angriff auf Brecht, vermittelt durch eine unterschiedliche Bewertung des Zeitphänomens 'Sport' [...]. Mann beschäftigt sich in diesem Zusammenhang insbesondere mit der Rolle des Boxsports, was eindeutig als Spitze gegen Brecht zu verstehen ist, dessen Engagement für den Boxsport bekannt war [...]. Dem Versuch, Brecht mit seinen eigenen Waffen zu schlagen, liegt ein sich ausschließendes Verhältnis von Sport und Kultur zugrunde; Sportbegeisterung bedeutete für Klaus Mann Desinteresse an der Kulturproduktion", Elke Kerker, Weltbürgertum - Exil - Heimatlosigkeit. Die Entwicklung der politischen Dimension im Werk Klaus Manns von 1924 - 1936 (Meisenheim: 1977), 89. Whilst her assessment of Mann's perception of sport at this time is undoubtedly correct, Kerker fails to take note of the lines omitted by Mann when 'Fragment von der Jugend' was republished in Auf der Suche nach einem Weg. In its original form he had written of Brecht's early, Expressionist poetry: "Und was das Beste und Zukünftigste in neuer deutscher Dichtung ist, ist eben darum gut, darum zukünftig, weil es wieder gläubig ist, ohne Gedanke, ohne den kleinen Zweifel, nahe dem Rauschen", quoted from Michel Grunewald, Klaus Mann 1906 - 1949. Eine Bibliographie, 29.

⁶¹ Bertolt Brecht, 'wenn der Vater mit dem Sohne mit dem Uhu ...', first published in Das TageBuch, 14.8.27. Reprinted in Schriften zur Literatur und Kunst I, 53-56. Further references are given after quotation in the text.

⁶² Thomas Mann, 'Die neuen Kinder' first printed in Uhu 2 (1926) vol. 11. Reprinted in Klaus Mann, Woher wir kommen und wohin wir müssen. Frühe und nachgelassene Schriften, ed. and with a postscript by Martin Gregor-Dellin (Munich: edition Spangenberg, 1980), 31-35.

⁶³ Klaus Mann, 'Die neuen Eltern', first printed in Uhu 2 (1926), vol. 11. Reprinted in Die neuen Eltern, 84-88. Further references are given in the text after quotation.

⁶⁴ The articles by Thomas and Klaus Mann had been prefaced with the editorial comment: "Es sind wenige Jahre her, da die junge Generation 'die 'Söhne von heute', begeistert Beifall klatschte, wenn auf der Bühne Vaternord aus Weltanschauung verübt wurde. Die 'Väter' schienen die Ursache aller Übel zu sein, unter denen die junge Generation litt. Ohne jedes Zutun der am Leben gebliebenen Väter schienen die Söhne abzurufen. Wie man aus der Unterhaltung zwischen Thomas und Klaus Mann, zwischen Vater und Sohn, erschen kann, kommt die junge Generation, als deren typischer Vertreter der Sohn des Dichters vom 'Zauberberg' gelten darf, der älteren mehr als auf halbem Wege entgegen, während Thomas Mann als Vater sieht, welche schweren Schicksale dieser jungen Generation noch harren". Quoted from Woher wir kommen und wohin wir müssen, 280. It was with the description of Klaus Mann as a 'typical representative' of the younger generation, that Brecht took issue.

"Das 'revolutionäre Kind' abenteuer auf den Wegen, die ihm am allerverbotensten vorkommen, es tut prinzipiell nur, was die Eltern für echt absurd und abstoßend halten" (NE, 84). Contrasted with this extreme was its polar opposite, the 'good child' who had rejected Expressionism and who stood for the growing reactionary tendencies within society which Mann inferred in his description:

Rein äußerlich und quantitativ ist das 'brave Kind' sehr obenauf. Von einer böartigen Bravheit ist es geworden, von aggressiver Bravheit sogar, von einer gefährlichen Tugend, die zum Beispiel antisemitisch ist und alles, was sie für moderner als Felix Dahn⁶⁵ halten muß, mit Gummiknütteln bedroht (NE, 85).

In these sketches of his generation Mann had also drawn attention to the extremes within the cultural context. The revolutionary ethos amongst the young in the years following the war, for example, had manifested itself, within German culture, in the rise to dominance of Expressionism⁶⁶; whilst the emergence of reactionary youth had counteracted their revolution in the arts with regression, implied in his reference to Felix Dahn. Mann had sought to mediate between the two positions. He had desired neither the radical overthrow represented by Expressionist art nor the retrogression of reactionary art. He had defined his position clearly in the statement:

Es kommt darauf an, daß wir nicht mehr alle Brücken hinter uns abbrechen wollen, nicht mehr, in triumphierendem Übermut, verspotten jegliche Tradition und alle Formen verächtlich finden [...] Das Werk des Vaters steht vor uns, und wir bilden uns und lernen von ihm (NE, 87-88).

When, in his essay 'Wenn der Vater mit dem Sohne mit dem Uhu ...', Brecht subsequently criticised Mann's model of literature, he did so as a former Expressionist whose work Mann had, in his general description, disparaged. Brecht spoke as a writer and

⁶⁵ Felix Dahn (1834-1912) achieved fame during the nineteenth century for his populist historical novels in which he drew upon early German history and Nordic mythology, with emphasis on his belief in a new *völkisch* religion. By identifying 'das brave Kind' with Felix Dahn, Mann highlighted the aggressive reaction amongst the younger generation.

⁶⁶ In 'Die neuen Eltern', Mann had commented on the revolutionary ethos in the immediate post-war years: "Zwischen 1918 und 1921 etwa war eine Zeit, die groß für sie war. 'Vatermord' hieß die Devise, und das Gräßlichste schien noch nicht kraß genug. Den Vater mit dem Hackbeil zu erschlagen war ein Geringes, Spott und Haß auf ihn schrien sich in unartikulierten, wilden Sätzen in die Welt. 'Vatermord' und 'Expressionismus' waren ein und dieselbe Losung: einem Artikel gebrauchen vorm Substantiv, normal einen Satz konstruieren, hieß ebenso schandbar, wie einem Papa zu gehorchen" (NE, 84-85).

playwright who denounced the models of art inherited from Germany's imperial past as outdated, who challenged convention within the arts and who, ultimately, sought their fundamental revision. In short, he attacked Mann from a position diametrically opposed to Mann's own, censuring him as "ein Reaktionär" (SLK1, 52) who aimed merely to emulate the outmoded examples of a bygone age. Brecht stated his opposition clearly, and referred indirectly to his 'revolutionary' Expressionist past, in his closing lines:

Sollten sie sich aber wirklich erdreisten, etwa gar ebenso stille und feine Menschen werden zu wollen wie ihre Opapas [...], so werden wir unserem umstrittenen Ruhm als Vtermörder den ganz unbestreitbaren als Kindesmörder hinzufügen. Damit wir jung bleim [sic] (SLK1, 54)

Yet Brecht based his criticism on a fundamental misconception. Whilst Mann certainly had not advocated revolution in the arts, he had also not called for mere emulation of the works from the past. In his critique Brecht had failed to take into account the closing lines of Mann's essay in which he had intimated his perception of art: "Wir halten zu denen, die, neuen Zielen zustrebend [...] zu dem Vorigen, zu den Vollendeten, zu den Vätern trotzdem zurückschauen - getrennt von ihnen, immer weiter wegstrebend von ihnen, aber lernend dabei, [...] vor dem, was diese gelebt und gebildet" (NE, 88). As Mann had emphasised in his choice of *zurückschauen*, with its overtones of distance between the observer and the observed, and more so in his selection of *wegstreben*, this had not been a call to the young to simply copy what had been, as Brecht assumed; rather, it had been a call for evolution within the arts in which the new developed naturally from the old⁶⁷.

Underlying Mann's perception of art in 1926, and influencing his critique of Brecht and his view of art in the essay 'Heute und Morgen' of 1927, had been the knowledge that he himself, as a young writer, followed in a long tradition of German and European literature. This is what he had meant when he had appeared to speak merely of the relationship between the generations in 'Die neuen Eltern'. He reiterated his position in December 1926

⁶⁷ Brecht's criticism that Mann and his generation merely 'followed in the footsteps' of their parents is characteristic for those made by the left in general of Mann's work. This shall be discussed in the next chapter.

and simultaneously re-emphasised the distance between himself and Brecht when in the review article 'Jüngste deutsche Dichtung' he⁶⁸ commented: "ich glaube nicht, daß Dichter von der Art der Brecht und Bronnen [...] für die Jugend die eigentlichen Sprecher und Stellvertreter noch heute bedeuten können, ich glaube nicht, daß die Jugend in ihnen sich wiedererkennen soll"⁶⁹. Youth, Mann believed, shared with him his belief in an ongoing tradition. He justified this by reference to comments by Brecht which signalled his rejection of the cultural values of the past. "Bert Brecht, über seine Stellung zur vorigen Generation befragt", Mann wrote, "antwortete kürzlich: 'Ich gebe zu, daß mir die Werke der letzten Generationen mit wenig Ausnahmen wenig Eindruck machen. Ihr Horizont scheint mir sehr klein, ihre Kunstform roh und blindlings übernommen, ihr kultureller Wert verschwindend'". Mann's own view was apparent in his statement: "Ich glaube nicht, daß in solchen Pöbelsätzen eine deutsche oder europäische Jugend ihre Meinung ausgesprochen findet" (NE, 101).

With this tradition of literature, however, Mann had also inherited its attendant precepts on the essence of artistic creation and the source of its inspiration. In December 1926, in a review article, 'Jüngste deutsche Autoren', Mann had defined the precise nature and his understanding of this when he cited from one of the texts, Martin Raschke's Wir werden sein!, the lines:

'So sind alle die Dichterlinge, Industrieromantiker, Zukunftspropheten, Stückemacher, die eine Maschine für Gott halten, das fünfzigste Geschöß eines Wolkenkratzers für den Himmel, ein Hochhaus verzückt einem Dom gleich erachten und vor allem Mechanischen, Erklärbaren ihre elende Andacht verrichten, die ewigen Werte mit dem Geifer, der ihrem schundigen Munde immer entströmt, besudeln, daß sie unfähig sind, ihre Umfänge zu ahnen' (NE, 106)

In these lines Raschke had vehemently denounced the contemporary cult of technology which had, with the arrival of *Neue Sachlichkeit's* praise for the functional and modern,

⁶⁸ Klaus Mann, 'Jüngste deutsche Autoren', first printed in Neue Schweizer Rundschau, December 1926. Reprinted in Die neuen Eltern, 100-109.

⁶⁹ This is a direct response to Brecht's comments in August 1926 in Das TageBuch for in 'Wenn der Vater mit dem Sohne mit dem Uhu ...' Brecht had spoken as one of the younger generation.

invaded culture. Implicit in his words had been the belief that these were unsuited to literature and the eternal values that it expressed. That Mann agreed with Raschke's position had been conveyed in his preface to the quotation: "wir [kommen] zu hochgespannten Wutausbrüchen gegen Typen, die uns allen verhaßt sind und immer verhaßt sein müssen" (NE, 106). Mann's 'Typen' referred to those artists who embraced the modern era and praised it in their work. Whilst Mann's assessment of technology altered between the winter of 1926 and the autumn of 1927 and the publication of 'Heute und Morgen'⁷⁰, his underlying perception of art as drawing upon and expressing inner values with little relationship to the world outside, had been instrumental in his concurring with Raschke, remained unchanged throughout 1927. It was demonstrated in his critique of Bertolt Brecht and his rejection, in the form of his association of sport with *Geistlosigkeit* in 'Heute und Morgen', of the basic proposal that modern literature should interact with the world. Between 1927 and 1930, when Mann delivered the speech 'Die Jugend und Paneuropa', his views gradually evolved and with it the realisation that art both could and should involve itself in society without sacrificing any aesthetic principles.

1.2.4 'All art is propaganda' - 'Die Jugend und Paneuropa' (1930)

In his discussion of the development of Mann's political thought both during the Weimar Republic and in the early years of his exile, Dieter Schiller notes: "Fast alle seine literarischen Arbeiten vor 1930 schrieb er von einem individuellen, scheinbar apolitischen Standpunkt aus"⁷¹. Within Mann's ongoing development as a writer Schiller points to 1930 as the pivotal year defining it as "ein Jahr der Entscheidung"⁷². Mann was forced to take sides. He could either continue with the intrinsically apolitical, indifferenceed stance that had characterised his concept of art in 'Fragment von der Jugend' and which, to a great extent,

⁷⁰ In 'Heute und Morgen' Mann had clearly signalled this changing evaluation of technology in his exhortation: "*Glauben wir an die Technik, als an die einzige Lösung!* Sie allein kann zugleich den Fluch der Sklaverei brechen und die Kultur trotzdem retten, ihre welthistorische Sendung ist es, die Verdammnis der materiellen Armut von der Menschheit zu nehmen, das Glück dieser Welt zugänglich zu machen den Massen. Glauben wir an eine Kultur, die erwachsen muß aus dem technischen Zeitalter und die sich so hoch, so unvergleichlich über die Kulturen des Mittelalters und der Antike erhebt, wie diese über die dunklen Kulturen der Steinzeit" (S, 46-47).

⁷¹ Bernd Weil, *Klaus Mann: Leben und Werk im Exil* (Frankfurt: Fischer, 1983), 19.

⁷² Dieter Schiller, 'Geistige Differenz und politische Disziplin. Klaus Mann zwischen 1930 und 1935', *Wer schreibt, handelt. Strategien und Verfahren literarischer Arbeit vor und nach 1933*, ed. by Silvia Schlenstedt (Berlin & Weimar: Aufbau, 1983), 163-198 (167).

had still fundamentally informed his understanding in 'Heute und Morgen'. This approach, which regarded art as expressive of profound, hidden truths for which there could be no substantiated claim, distinguished clearly between the spheres of art and society. However, identification with this position ran the risk of denunciation within the literary world as a nationalist for the appropriation of this interpretation of literature by the political right which gradually transformed it into a grotesque parody whereby it became a form of propaganda for their goals⁷³. This prohibited Mann, whose opposition to nationalism in all its forms had been vocal throughout the Weimar Republic, from continuing with his unqualified identification with it.

The second option open to Mann was to subscribe to the view of literature defined as *Tendenzliteratur*; that written in the name of one political ideology where 'art' represented an extension of the political domain and whereby it was merely another medium through which to convey a specific political message to the public. It was associated specifically with literature by writers on the left. In February 1930 Mann appeared at first glance to ascribe to this view when, in answer to a questionnaire on the political direction of his work, he replied: "In einem erweiterten und überlegenen Sinn muß heute jede, ausnahmslos jede Kunst 'politische Propaganda' sein"⁷⁴. However, Mann's use of 'politische Propaganda' here has to be seen within the context of Mann's thought as a whole.

Mann had first raised the question of the relationship between art, with specific reference to literature, and politics in 1926 when he had asked in 'Fragment von der Jugend': "Darf sie denn [...] wirksame Dienerin, lautes Propagandaorgan des radikalen Staates werden?" (S, 6). He had answered in the negative, claiming: "man hat Angst vor dem Dogma, die begrenzte Meinung kann niemals erlösen" (S, 7). Each time, subsequently, that Mann considered the

⁷³ For an introduction to National Socialist literary practice see J M Ritchie *German Literature under National Socialism* (London: Croom Helm, 1983) and Ronald Taylor, *Literature and Society*.

⁷⁴ Klaus Mann, 'Antwort auf eine Umfrage bei jungen Dichtern über Tendenzen ihres Schaffens', first published in *Die Kolonne. Zeitung der jungen Gruppe Dresden*, 2 (February 1930). Reprinted in *Die neuen Eltern*, 253-254 (253).

validity of writing in the name of one political belief he came to the same conclusion - it was neither desirable generally nor suitable for him. Although Mann frequently professed envy of those writers and intellectuals who found no contradiction between identification with one political ideology and artistic freedom, as Grunewald has indicated, Mann regarded this position throughout his life as compromising artistic integrity. For Mann, subscribing to one political view limited the individual's scope as a writer and, as a result, sacrificed individual creative freedom⁷⁵. When in 1930 Mann referred to 'political propaganda', he did not mean one written in the name of a political ideology; it meant: "Auseinandersetzung mit dieser Zeit, zu dem Zwecke, sie besser zu machen und die Menschheit näher zu bringen ihrem unbekannten, doch ersehnten Ziel" (NE, 253). 'Propaganda' in this context implied a critique of existing circumstances in human interaction in society, approaching them not with a specific, political objective in mind but rather from the point of view of an unknown utopian ideal, the implication of 'das unbekannte, doch ersehnte Ziel'.

In this reply Mann had firmly dissociated himself from a close, interdependent relationship between literature and politics: "Sicher ist es ein modisches Mißverständnis [...] einem Kunstwerk nur dann Daseinsberechtigung zu geben, wenn es etwa einen veralteten Paragraphen⁷⁶ befiehlt. Mit ihrem propagandistischen Wert entschuldigt sich gern die krasseste Unkünstlerischkeit". He clarified his own position in his next statement: "Mir scheint aber, je passionierter, bekenntnishafter, 'künstlerischer' ein Kunstwerk ist, desto intensiver wird auch seine ethisch-zeitverbessernde Wirkung sein" (NE, 253). In this statement Mann had sought to mediate between his early aesthetic stance of 'das künstlerische Kunstwerk', and a more socially committed perception of art, implied in 'die

⁷⁵ Michel Grunewald, *Nachwort, Mit dem Blick nach Deutschland. Der Schriftsteller und das politische Engagement* (Munich: Ellermann, 1985), 139-156.

⁷⁶ Given the date of this remark, February 1930, it must be assumed that Mann refers here to the play *Cyancali* by the doctor and socialist writer Friedrich Wolf which was premiered in September 1929 and filmed in 1930. Wolf directly attacked Paragraph 218 which prohibited abortion in Germany except in cases of medical necessity and, in so doing, intensified an ongoing campaign for the law's repeal with his closing line, "A law that turns 800,000 mothers into criminals every year is no longer a law" (quoted from Atina Grossmann, *Reforming Sex. The German Movement for Birth Control and Abortion Reform, 1920-1950* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1988), 84), becoming the rallying call for the movement. A detailed account of the movement is found in Atina Grossmann, *Reforming Sex*, 78-87, while a more general overview is given in James Woycke, *Birth Control in Germany 1871-1933* (London: Routledge, 1988).

ethisch-verbessernde Wirkung' which presupposed the writers' interaction with the society of which they formed a part. This is the perception of art and its relation to the modern age that Mann developed in his speech 'Die Jugend und Paneuropa' from spring 1930.

'Die Jugend und Paneuropa' revealed a closer correlation between events in society and the perception of art that Mann advocated, as he signalled his awareness of the need for artistic creation to ignore individual concerns and concentrate on the greater issues. He still did not accept the claim primarily made by writers on the extreme left that "Gute Bücher sind sachliche, schlechte Bücher sind persönliche", explaining: "diese These [...] vereinfacht in einem Grade, daß sie lügt. Die Vorstellung, ein persönliches Buch könne nicht sachlich sein, ist grotesk; ebenso wie die, ein sachliches Buch könne gut sein, ohne persönlich zu sein" (S, 64). Here Mann distinguished between the two extremes, aesthetic art, the force of his 'persönliches Buch', and socially committed art, Mann's 'sachliches Buch'. Mann aimed to mediate between these positions when he noted: "Sachlichkeit gehört zu den Zutaten, die, wie heute die Dinge liegen, unentbehrlich geworden sind" (S, 64). For Mann, *Sachlichkeit* assumed a more embracing meaning than merely 'factuality'; it denoted the writer's duty to address contemporary issues, implied by Mann in the phrase 'wie die Dinge liegen'; here he referred to the deteriorating social and political climate in Germany which, following the Wall Street Crash in October 1929, returned the nation to the civil unrest and bloodshed of the immediate post-war years as the rival political factions of left and right undermined democracy by actively seeking its overthrow⁷⁷.

In 'Die Jugend und Paneuropa' Mann appeared to have finally rejected the aesthetic stance of his earlier essays, and with it the belief that, as an autonomous entity, art could exert little or no influence on society. He increasingly emphasised art's *responsibility* to

⁷⁷ For detailed accounts of this turbulent period in German history see Erich Eyck, *A History of the Weimar Republic*, Vol. 2 *From the Locarno Conference to Hitler's Seizure of Power*, trans. by Harlan P Hanson, and Robert G L Waite (London: Oxford University Press, 1964), 226-487, E J Feuchtwanger, *From Weimar to Hitler. Germany, 1918 - 33* 2nd edn. (New York: St Martin's Press, 1993), 203-315 and Detlev J K Peukert, *The Weimar Republic. The Crisis of Classical Modernity*, trans. by Richard Deveson (Harmondsworth: Penguin, 1991), 247-273.

society and this later became the main thrust of his argument in his speech 'Wie wollen wir unsere Zukunft?' where Mann's discussion of the role of art can no longer be divorced from his discussion of the nature and responsibility of the artist. It is questionable whether at this time, in 1930, he conceived his move towards the more aggressively interactive viewpoint, that would later typify his work in exile, as a permanent rejection of his earlier perception of literature. Although the phrase 'wie die Dinge liegen' referred to the social context, to the changes within German society, it might also suggest that Mann's 'conversion' to this interactive position was merely temporary in nature, a response to events beyond his control. Mann clarified that this was, indeed, the case in his discussion of the model of the writer as both aesthete and polemicist.

1.3 The Writer in Society

As Mann's perception of art developed throughout the Weimar Republic so too did his understanding and interpretation of both the role and the responsibility of the writer within society. Initially, in 'Fragment von der Jugend' there appeared little contradiction between his perception of art as autonomous and his perception of the artist as alienated from society. He did not call in 'Fragment von der Jugend' for writers to be involved within society, portraying them in contrast as alienated and isolated within this society. Increasingly, however, Mann developed a dualistic perception of the writer and intellectual (the terms appeared interchangeable to him⁷⁸) as both artist, with close similarities with the aesthete, and polemicist whose essayistic work had to interact with events of a particular historical moment. To do otherwise, to fail to act should the need arise, Mann implied, would risk the retrospective censure of future readers⁷⁹. This change in perception can be traced back to 1927 and Mann's advocacy in his essay 'Heute und Morgen' for the ideal of a united Europe. Here, he held writers responsible for protecting European society from the potentially hostile and destructive forces internally, posed by the threat of nationalism, and externally in the

⁷⁸ Mann explained his choice of the term 'intellectual' in *The Turning Point* when he wrote concisely "the term intellectual defied the fashionable idolatry of 'blood and soil'" (TP, 122).

⁷⁹ Mann suggested this as early as 1927 in 'Heute und Morgen' when he condemned the active participation of German intellectuals between 1914 and 1918 in advocating the need for war and glorifying its bloodshed. The significance of his words shall be discussed shortly.

shape of the military and economic might of America to the West and Russia to the East⁸⁰. Over the next three years, to the pivotal year 1930 Mann refined his views. "Das Jahr 1930", Bernd Weil states correctly, "deutete [...] einen 'Wendepunkt' im Leben Klaus Manns an: er begann tagespolitische Ereignisse bewußter aufzunehmen"⁸¹. From this point Mann's comments became less abstract as he strove to confront real political issues and events, primarily associated with the rise to power of the right both in Germany and across Europe. His approach was determined by the deeply held belief that writers, through the example of their work, could effect change in society.

Grunewald has claimed that "Bis zum Ende des zweiten Weltkrieges glaubte Klaus Mann an die Macht des Wortes. Seine Überzeugung, es sei dem Schriftsteller tatsächlich möglich, die Entwicklung der Welt positiv zu beeinflussen, veranlaßte ihn schon 1930, scharfe Kritik an Gottfried Benn zu üben"⁸². Although admiring him, Klaus Mann felt himself unable to accept Benn's desire for the autonomy of the artist⁸³. The attack on Benn in 1930, in the speech 'Wie wollen wir unsere Zukunft?' enabled Mann to state publicly his changing position on the function of art. However, Mann did not simply reject the convictions he had held until 1927; rather, he sought to develop a new stance by broadening his earlier views. He developed his concept of the artist from the mere rudiments in 'Heute und Morgen' of 1927, an abstract and predominantly theoretical attempt to define the nature of the artist, to a far more pragmatic and practical approach to the subject in 'Wie wollen wir unsere Zukunft?' of autumn 1930. In Mann's opinion, the artist could address the issues of the day as activist, intellectual or critic whilst still maintaining the isolation and introspection essential to artistic creation. He still regarded the irrational as the source of artistic creation,

⁸⁰ He expressed this threat indirectly in 'Heute und Morgen' when he wrote: "Das ist Europa, kleiner, durch Krieg geschwächter Erdteil, gelegen zwischen dem ungeheuer reichen kapitalistischen Amerika und dem ungeheuer weiten, kommunistischen Rußland, hinter dem, über kurz oder lang, ein kommunistisches Asien stehen wird. Zu Ende Europas Weltherrschaft, zertrümmert sein Imperialismus, über sein Haupt weg fällt die Entscheidung" (S, 44).

⁸¹ Bernd Weil, *Klaus Mann: Leben und Werk im Exil*, 20.

⁸² Michel Grunewald, *Nachwort, Mit dem Blick nach Deutschland*, 148.

⁸³ Between 1929 and 1930 Gottfried Benn published three key essays: 'Über die Rolle des Schriftstellers in dieser Zeit', first published in *Die neue Blücherschau* VII, 10 (1929), 531-535, reprinted in *Gesammelte Werke IV. Autobiographische und vermischte Schriften* ed. by Dieter Wellershoff (Wiesbaden: Limes, 1961), 205-212, 'Können Dichter die Welt ändern?' first published in *Die literarische Welt* VI, 23 (1930), 3-4, reprinted in *GWIV*, 213-222 and 'Zur Problematik des Dichterischen', first published in *Die neue Rundschau* XLI, 4 (1930), 485-497, reprinted in *Gesammelte Werke I. Essays, Reden, Vorträge*, ed. by Dieter Wellershoff (Wiesbaden: Limes, 1959), 66-83. Further references are given after quotation in the text. In each of these he reiterated his belief in the autonomy of art and the artist, a position which brought him into conflict with many of the leading writers of the day, including Egon Erwin Kisch and Johannes R Becher and, which, as shall be illustrated later in the text, led to his identification with an increasingly vociferous National Socialist movement.

expressed in the line: "wir holen unsere besten Kräfte aus den geheimeren Quellen des Irrationalen" (S, 87). However, as his view of the artist developed so did his evaluation of the role of *Vernunft*, the antithesis of the irrational. Mann progressed from his dismissal of reason and the rational in 1926 to a heightened awareness of its role in maintaining order, in keeping the irrational which, with its creative power, also had the ability to destroy, at bay. Ordered, democratic society in Mann's opinion, was feasible only if reason were paramount. Discussing the political life of the nation, for example, he emphasised: "*Die Politik ist das Gebiet, wo der Ratio vor dem Gefühl und der Ahnung der Primat gebührt*" (S, 87-88) Here *Gefühl* and *Ahnung* act as synonyms for the irrational. Rejection of reason could, to Mann's mind, lead only to anarchy and chaos, unleashing primitive responses kept in check by the power of the rational alone⁸⁴.

1.3.1 Political responsibility and the writer

Between 1926 and 1931 Mann progressed from a belief in intellectuals as beings insulated by their own introspection from events in the outside world. He moved to a far more interactive position, demanding that intellectuals influence the changing face of society. Mann's call for activism on the part of the writer was first indicated in his reappraisal of the First World War. In 'Fragment von der Jugend' from 1926 the War had been described, in effect, as a natural disaster. Quoting from his first novel *Der fromme Tanz* (1925) Mann had described the outbreak of war as "der gräßliche Schlußstrich, der blutige Brand, das flammende Abreisen" (S, 12). There was no value judgement, no criticism, merely a statement of fact.

By 1927 and the essay 'Heute und Morgen' this view had dramatically changed; the war was now seen as the result of human failure. In the behaviour of writers of 1914 Mann now perceived a warning to his own generation. Beginning his passage with the hypothetical "Setzen wir den Fall, ein neuer europäischer Krieg wäre im Nahen: sollte es möglich sein, daß einer von uns nicht teilnahme an dem Protest, der sich erheben müßte? Ist es denkbar,

⁸⁴ In 'Die Jugend und Paneuropa' Mann indirectly drew attention to this when he wrote of the power of reason: "Zuerst kommt das Leben, dann die Vernunft. Aber die Vernunft ist des Lebens unentbehrlichste Dienerin. Ohne sie geht das Leben in Trümmer, Deshalb bewahren wir sie - nicht als Selbstzweck [...] - vielmehr um des Lebens willen [...]. Denn ohne sie ist das Chaos gewiß" (S, 87).

daß *einer* von uns sich hinreißen ließ, vom Wahnsinn?" (S, 40), Mann developed his theme to show that the First World War was not merely human error but, more significantly, human failing; the intellectuals who could have wrought change by vehement condemnation of the glorification of war had failed in their responsibility to society. In a passage which revealed his own pacifist tendencies, through terms such as 'Blutbad', 'Wahnsinn', 'glorifizieren anstatt zu fluchen', Mann stated:

was tat der Geistige, wie verhielt sich der Intellektuelle? Er erlag der Psychose, er machte mit, er verteidigte das Fürchterliche. Statt, daß die dazu Verpflichteten, die Vorhut aller Länder, in Deutschland, Frankreich, England, Rußland und Italien sich gesammelt hätten, zum ungeheuren Protest, schrieben sie Bücher, die das Blutbad glorifizierten, sie hielten nicht stand, sie verfielen dem triumphierenden Wahnsinn, anstatt seiner zu fluchen. Solche, die die Lage erkannten, waren allein und vereinzelt, ihre Stimme verhallte im Lärm (S, 41).

Phrases such as "Er erlag der Psychose", "sie hielten nicht stand", "sie verfielen dem triumphierenden Wahnsinn" enabled Mann to convey the impression that the intellectuals lost their powers of critical judgement. In a moment of crisis they were susceptible to the atmosphere of the age⁸⁵.

The consequences of the intellectuals' failure to take an anti-war stance, in Mann's eyes, had had far-reaching ramifications for Europe and the generations to come. It was the generation of younger intellectuals whom Mann implored to learn from the mistakes of those who went before, conveying the message that change could be wrought, that mankind's destiny was neither prescribed nor unalterable. On the contrary, he believed that the individual had the capacity to control his or her own fate and yet, at the same time, to be responsible also for that of others.

⁸⁵ Although he wrote in general terms, Mann's words invite comparison with his own family circumstances where the public rift between Thomas and Heinrich Mann during World War One reflects in microcosm the divide within the intellectual community to which Klaus Mann referred in 1927. Thomas Mann had supported the war, emphasising in his key text of the war years, *Betrachtungen eines Unpolitischen* of 1918, the necessity of its bloodshed for the future survival of Germany. In contrast, as a committed pacifist Heinrich Mann became one of Germany's most vehement opponents to the war, criticising in his 'Zola-Essay' of 1915 both his homeland and his brother. Klaus Mann shared his uncle's pacifism and, in consequence, it might be expected that he would, retrospectively, also share his uncle's fierce criticism of Thomas Mann. Yet, during the Weimar Republic, Klaus Mann never publicly referred to Thomas Mann's position during the war. Even in *Der Wendpunkt* of 1949, where he raised the subject of *Betrachtungen eines Unpolitischen* and his father's role in legitimising a war he could not condone, he was unable to condemn his father directly. "Vielleicht kann man dieses Buch begreifen," he wrote, "wenn man die Umstände kennt, unter denen es geschrieben wurde. Die grausame Spannung jener Tage, die Vereinsamung und trotzig Melancholie des Autors, sein völliger Mangel an politischem Training, sogar die unzulänglichen Ernährung und die frostige Temperatur in seinem Studio während der Wintermonate" (Wp, 60).

What Mann's analysis of the intellectual in 'Heute und Morgen' revealed was the essential weakness of the writer within society. By highlighting the failure of the intellectuals in World War One, Mann revealed the power of the majority over the minority. Those intellectuals who did attempt to speak and to condemn were 'allein' and 'vereinzelt', their voice 'verhallte in Lärm'. Society did not want to hear what the pacifist intellectuals had to say. Drawing upon the classic argument that effectiveness could be achieved through uniting in solidarity, Mann pointed to a basic flaw in the behaviour of the intellectuals themselves, namely their inability to unite. Their voices could not be heard for they did not speak as one.

In 1927 Mann did not address a specific issue. He spoke of potential threats, his words having almost the feel of idle speculation, as shown for example in his statement on the possibility of exile: "Gehört das Jahr 1930 der militärischen Diktatur? Gut, so lebe unsereins um diese Zeit in Verbannung - 1935, soviel ist sicher, hat man sich eines anderen besonnen" (S, 55). The rise in popular support for the NSDAP in 1930, however, gave Mann's comments a focus and, to complement it, a more vehement, pragmatic approach, marked through increasingly forceful and unequivocal language. The increase in NSDAP representation in the *Reichstag* from 12 to 107 seats, Mann argued, had had one positive consequence - it had shocked German intellectuals out of a deep-seated apathy towards the political world. Mann's aim now was to jolt German men of letters out of their complacency, to force them to confront events surrounding them. He recognised, however, that he must fight a deep-seated hatred of politics:

Verachtung gegen die Politik sitzt dem deutschen Intellektuellen sehr tief im Blut. Sie galt ihm als die Sphäre, wo der Gedanke herabgewürdigt, vergrößert und falsch benutzt wird. Nur sehr wenige deutsche Schriftsteller haben ihr kostbares Wort der politischen Tagesdiskussion geliehen (S, 95).

He believed now that writers, both as intellectuals and as critics, had to interact with the political events of the time, an interaction which should be reflected in their writing.

The duty of the intellectual, as becomes increasingly clear in 'Wie wollen wir unsere Zukunft?', was to attempt to bring about change, to counteract increasingly reactionary and nationalistic elements within European society. Mann's campaign against the political apathy of German intellectuals reached its height with the statement: "Die Frage: 'Kann der Dichter die Welt ändern?' beantworte ich mit: Ja, ja, ja. Niemand kann sie ändern, wenn nicht er" (S, 111). Here Mann referred to German and European society, where xenophobia and reaction were becoming ever more prevalent. The message he conveyed was that change was possible, that to maintain a fatalistic outlook was merely one further way of abdicating all responsibility. A belief that involvement with the politics of the day must be accepted, that intellectuals were duty-bound to enter the arena of public debate underpinned this view. In 'Wie wollen wir unsere Zukunft?' Mann launched an attack on two fronts, criticising both those intellectuals who claimed to understand nothing of politics - this was, to his mind, little more than avoiding the issue - or those who highlighted a problem whilst proposing no solution: "wir armen Intellektuellen können nur immer wieder feststellen, daß dies alles so ist, das dies alles so abscheulich aussieht, und wir kommen uns oft genug wie Don Quichotte vor, wenn wir es tun" (S, 101). The adoption of either stance was tantamount to confessing their own political impotence.

Mann had anticipated this development in his thought towards the end of 'Heute und Morgen'. Here he had appealed: "Fallen wir also auf keinen Edelfaschismus herein, den irgendein Ästhetizismus als den dernier cri empfiehlt! [...] Rettende Lösung ist nicht stolzes Heraustreten aus der Zeit; der ist Ästhet, Pharisäer, der sich hochmütig außerhalb stellt" (S, 55). 'Ästhet', 'Pharisäer', both could have been levelled at Mann himself in 1926. In 'Fragment von der Jugend' he had demanded a divorce between the intellectual and the chaos of the outside world. It is indicative of his own progress that in 1927 he should have publicly rejected his earlier aesthetic isolation. Within the political sphere Mann had condemned the acceptance of "Heraustreten aus der Zeit" in 'Heute und Morgen' and had called for activism on the part of intellectuals, demanding that through their writing authors

confront a changing society and the political events evolving around them. In 'Wie wollen wir unsere Zukunft?' he expanded upon this position when he quoted: "'Die deutsche Jugend versank in metaphysischen Abstraktionen, vergaß der nächsten Zeitinteressen und wurde untauglich für das praktische Leben'" (S, 94). Mann assumed his reader's prior knowledge of this line's context to grasp the implications of its citation. He took the line from the third book of Heinrich Heine's Zur Geschichte der Religion und Philosophie in Deutschland (1834)⁸⁶, a work which, whilst purporting to be a study of religious and philosophical thought throughout the ages was, in truth, a vehicle for the author to convey his own demands for democracy within his homeland or, as Günter Baumann has noted, it was a political, revolutionary work masquerading as a philosophical, religious tract⁸⁷.

Beginning with Luther and the Reformation and developing his theme to include the major philosophers, Heine had argued that the history of religion and philosophy in Germany revealed the need for thought to lead to practical deed. Taking as his models, Luther, Descartes, Spinoza, Kant and Fichte he had proposed that through their challenge in their writings of dogma and accepted doctrine they had prepared the way for their reform and even their overthrow.

Each of these thinkers, Heine argued, had recognised the connection between their revolutionary thinking and its practical application in society. He had drawn particular attention to Luther whom he cited as his paradigm. Luther, he had claimed, first recognised the fallacy of conventional Church practice through the powers of reflection alone; having once realised this he had then actively campaigned for its reform. Turning his attention to contemporary philosophers, Heine had then launched a fierce criticism of them; it is this criticism that Mann quoted, to assert that they had forgotten the goal of their musings, namely to apply what they had deduced to the society of which they were a part. By juxtaposing the 'metaphysische Abstraktionen' of modern philosophy with the 'nächste

⁸⁶ Heinrich Heine, Historisch-kritische Gesamtausgabe der Werke, Vol. 8/1 Zur Geschichte der Religion und Philosophie in Deutschland, ed. by Manfred Windfuhr (Düsseldorf: Hoffmann & Campe, 1979), 9-120 (117).

⁸⁷ Günter Baumann, Poesie und Revolution. Zum Verhältnis von Kunst und Politik im Werk Heinrich Heines (Frankfurt: Peter Lang, 1982) 43. For a discussion of the issues raised here see also: Walter Grab, Heinrich Heine als politischer Dichter (Heidelberg: Quelle & Meyer, 1982), 40-51; Gerhard Höhn, Heine Handbuch. Zeit. Person. Werk (Stuttgart: Metzler, 1987) 286-289; Walter Wadepuhl, Heinrich Heine. Sein Leben und seine Werke (Vienna: Böhlau, 1974) 191-196; Stefan Bodo Würfell, Heinrich Heine (Munich: CH Beck, 1989) 83-86.

Zeitinteresse' and 'das praktische Leben', both phrases referring to the material world and its concerns, Heine established two distinct realms with mediation no longer possible, as it had once been in the past, between the two.

When Klaus Mann subsequently applied Heine's line 'die deutsche Jugend versank in metaphysische Abstraktion, vergaß der nächsten Zeitinteressen und wurde untauglich für das praktische Leben' to his own age he implicitly subscribed to Heine's basic desire for a connection between thought and deed. When he demanded that the writer be involved in 'das praktische Leben' Mann called for an extension of the writer's horizons, from a limited perspective focused on the self, to a greater awareness of the self as part of a wider whole. Although he did not advocate that literary production be tailored to the needs of one political ideology, Mann did believe by 1930 in 'Wie wollen wir unsere Zukunft?' in the need to be conscious of developments unfolding across Europe.

In 1930 'das praktische Leben', with its connotations of involvement in the events of the age, took precedence. Indeed, through his criticism of Gottfried Benn, to which I shall return shortly, Mann warned of the dangers of failing to respond, of maintaining the 'metaphysischen Abstraktionen', characteristic of the aesthetic lifestyle, at a time it did not benefit. It is in this context that his statement should be understood: "Ich zitiere diese Zeilen [von Heine] für diejenigen, die sich aus geistigem Dünkel zu gut für die Politik halten und die glauben, Versenkung in metaphysischer Spekulation mache ein für allemal zu fein für politische Gesinnung. Weit, weit, besonders weit gefehlt" (S, 96). Here 'politische Gesinnung' was synonymous with Heine's 'praktisches Leben'. The turn events had taken in the outside world meant, Mann believed, the artist could no longer afford to maintain an apolitical stance.

When Mann exhorted his audience in 1930 "nicht mehr die Feinen und Reservierten [zu] spielen" (S, 94) it indicated his final rejection of the purely aesthetic perception of the artist's position as independent of society and the realisation of the intrinsically interactive

relationship between artist and society. In the essay 'Woher wir kommen und wohin wir müssen' he unwittingly outlined his task for the years to come:

Was bleibt zu tun, was lohnt sich? Ununterbrochene Bemühung des Aufnehmens, des Wählens, Einordnens und Verwertens. Unterwegs sein, diese Welt kennenlernen, von der wir mit unverständlichem Anspruch verlangen, daß sie auch uns kenne. In Bewegung bleiben, auch wenn wir noch nicht genau wissen, wohin es geht (S, 380-381).

Mann managed to achieve here the balance between the aesthetic attitude, encapsulated in 'Aufnehmen', 'Wählen', 'Einordnen' and 'Verwerten' and the more active position of 'diese Welt kennenlernen'. This was no longer a retreat into an essentially passive relationship with the outside world, but signalled a far more interactive relationship. It was because of Benn's apparent failure to realise this definition of the nature of the relationship between writer and society that in 'Wie wollen wir unsere Zukunft?' Mann targeted him as the archetype of the truly politically apathetic intellectual.

1.3.2 The denial of pure aestheticism - Klaus Mann's critique of Gottfried Benn (1930)

Mann's critique of Benn in 'Wie wollen wir unsere Zukunft?' in 1930 is characterised by the tension between his desire to praise a writer with whom he felt a great affinity and his inability to condone Benn's aestheticism and desire for art's autonomy⁸⁸. He focused his criticisms on two essays by Benn, published in 1930 - 'Können Dichter die Welt ändern?'

⁸⁸ Mann could not resolve this paradox, either during the Weimar Republic or later in exile. It is perhaps best captured in his dedication to Benn in his copy of Auf der Suche nach einem Weg, a volume which contained both praise and criticism of the author. "Dem verehrten Gottfried Benn, den ich, noch wo ich ihm zu widersprechen wage, mehr bewundere als die meisten anderen, die ich lobe, von Klaus Mann. Berlin, 23.11.31", quoted from Friedrich Wilhelm Wodtke, Gottfried Benn (Stuttgart: Klett, 1962), 37. Throughout the 1930s Mann's critical appraisals of Benn's work reflect this paradoxical position. In May 1933, for example, following Benn's public criticism of the exiles, Mann wrote to Benn. He began his letter with a statement of his admiration defining himself as "[ein] leidenschaftlich[er] und treu[er] Bewunderer" (ZK, 24) before appealing to Benn to reconsider his position within the Third Reich: "Sie sollen wissen, daß Sie für mich - und einige andre - zu den sehr Wenigen gehören, die wir keinesfalls an die 'andere Seite' verlieren möchten" (ZK, 26). Following Benn's scathing public reply to Mann's private letter, Mann's attitude changed; in his unpublished reply to Benn's reply, 'Antwort auf die "Antwort"', (printed in Zahnärzte und Künstler, 27-31) whilst he still acknowledged Benn's status as a writer, referring to him as "ein groß[er] deutsch[er] Schriftsteller" (ZK, 30) he replaced the conciliatory tone of his letter with more open condemnation, concluding his reply with the unequivocal statement: "Gottfried Benn, indem er sich *dieser* Diktatur zur Verfügung stellt, bringt ein falsches, ein perverses, ein im wesentlichen Sinn verwerfliches Opfer. Er haßte die Ordnung so sehr, daß er nun für die brutal organisierte Unordnung optiert. Diese Sünde ist unverzeihlich" 'Antwort auf die "Antwort"' (ZK, 31). 1933 proved the nadir in Mann's admiration for Benn as Mann published a further essay highly critical of Benn that year, 'Gottfried Benn oder Die Entwürdigung des Geistes' (first published in Die Sammlung, September 1933, reprinted in Zahnärzte und Künstler, 40-43). However, four years later, Mann adopted a more conciliatory tone in "Gottfried Benn: Die Geschichte einer Verirrung", first published in Das Wort, September 1937, reprinted in Klaus Mann, Das Wunder von Madrid. Aufsätze, Reden, Kritiken 1936-1938, ed., by Uwe Naumann, and Michael Töteberg (Reinbek: Rowohlt, 1993), 237-246. In the essay Mann took account of Benn's disillusion with the National Socialist regime, explaining to his audience that Benn's apparent acceptance of the German dictatorship originated with his perception of art and understanding of the role of the intellectual within society. Benn did not go into exile, but chose not to publish within Germany, returning to his earlier profession as a doctor within the German army.

and 'Zur Problematik des Dichterischen'. Annemarie Christiansen notes that in 'Können Dichter die Welt ändern?', Benn addressed the related questions "wie stehen die politische, die geschichtliche Welt und die Kunst zueinander" and "ob die sozialen Gesichtspunkte, die gegenwärtig in der Politik dominieren, auch die künstlerische Produktion beeinflussen"⁸⁹. Here she also highlights the primary concerns of 'Zur Problematik des Dichterischen'. Jürgen Schröder then writes that in this essay Benn was interested in "die Frage nach dem Ich, nach der Struktur der dichterischen Persönlichkeit, das durch sie aufgeworfene Genieproblem und seine Stellung in der Gesellschaft"⁹⁰.

At a time when writers were increasingly alerting their colleagues of the need to address the rapidly changing political and social conditions in Germany, Benn decried such involvement. As Reinhard Alter observes, Benn "proclaims art as a primary value and simultaneously relegates the political world to a secondary position", before explaining further that, for Benn, art was "a quality higher than and incompatible with social and political concerns"⁹¹. Benn's essays called for the freedom to dissociate his work from the issues of the day. These issues, affecting society or the political life of the nation, were mere transient concerns in which art should not be interested. 'True' art, as evinced by the great works of literature from cultures past, was autonomous; he argued⁹² it transcended the bounds of time and the historical moment of its creation and served no utilitarian purpose. Art could not campaign actively for human progress for, he explained, history taught that such progress was impossible⁹³. Thus, in place of socially committed literature he proposed an ideal of art upon which no demands from the empirical world were made and to which no ameliorative function could be ascribed⁹⁴.

Benn's ideal of the writer corresponded to this ideal of art. In his essays he drew a

⁸⁹ Annemarie Christiansen, *Benn. Einführung in das Werk* (Stuttgart: Klett, 1976), 119.

⁹⁰ Jürgen Schröder, *Gottfried Benn. Poesie und Sozialisation* (Stuttgart: Kohlhammer, 1978), 99.

⁹¹ Reinhard Alter, *Gottfried Benn. The Artist and Politics (1910 - 1934)* (Frankfurt: Lang, 1976), 76.

⁹² In 'Können Dichter die Welt ändern?' Benn had commented of the 'great' works of art: "nichts an ihnen weist über sich hinaus, nichts bedarf einer Erklärung, nichts will wirken außerhalb seiner selbst, es ist der Zug in sich versunkener Gestalten, schweigsamer und vertiefter Bilder" (GWIV, 216).

⁹³ In his earlier essay 'Über die Rolle des Schriftstellers in dieser Zeit' Benn had stated quite clearly "Die Geschichte ist ohne Sinn, keine Aufwärtsbewegung, keine Menschheitsdämmerung, keine Illusionen mehr darüber, kein Bluff" GWIV, 205-212 (210).

⁹⁴ In 'Über die Rolle des Schriftstellers in dieser Zeit' Benn speculated "ob es nicht weit radikaler, weit revolutionärer und weit mehr die Kraft eines harten und fiten Mannes erfordernder ist, der Menschheit zu lehren: so bist du und du wirst nie anders sein, so lebst du, so hast du gelebt und so wirst du immer leben. Wer Geld hat, wird gesund, wer Macht hat, schwört richtig, wer Gewalt hat, schafft das Recht", (GWIV, 210).

fundamental distinction between *Schriftsteller*, the 'professional' writers who drew upon the specific historical age in which they lived for their inspiration, and *Dichter* for whom independence from the age was a prerequisite and who believed that "identification with social issues [...] involve[d] a betrayal of art"⁹⁵. He dismissed the *Schriftsteller*, arguing primarily that as their work was both based in the material world and written in the interests of precise political goals, it must of necessity be condemned to superficiality⁹⁶. The *Dichter*, in contrast, were introverts concerned with their own vision and the creation of their texts whose only duty lay in the perfection of their art⁹⁷; their art could neither respond to the age in which they lived nor serve political interests, the source of artistic creation, Benn maintained, lay beyond the causal bonds of time and place, hidden in the realm of the irrational, "the sphere", Alter explains, "which, because it functions independently of the empirical world, makes artistic autonomy possible"⁹⁸. In consequence, Alter continues, "the creative writer [...] is by definition antagonistic to *all* organisations devoted to the service of the empirical world"⁹⁹.

Benn's comments, and indeed Mann's subsequent critique, must be placed within a wider context. In the last five years of the Weimar Republic and into the early years of the Third Reich Benn was a figure of great controversy whose views on the autonomy of art and the artist made him the target of public criticism and condemnation, primarily from writers on the left¹⁰⁰. His obdurate refusal to defend the Republic from attack by the nationalist right or

⁹⁵ Reinhard Alter, *Gottfried Benn. The Artist and Politics (1910 - 1934)*, 64.

⁹⁶ In 'Können Dichter die Welt ändern?' Benn defined his understanding of the distinction between the *Dichter* and the *Schriftsteller* when he wrote: "Schriftsteller, deren Arbeit auf empirische Einrichtungen der Zivilisation gerichtet ist, treten damit auf die Seite derer über, die die Welt realistisch empfinden, für materiell gestaltet halten und dreidimensional in Wirkung fühlen", (GWIV, 214).

⁹⁷ This was implied by Benn in his statement: "der Dichter [besitzt] prinzipiell eine andere Art von Erfahrung und [strebt] andere Zusammenfassungen an als praktisch wirksame und dem sogenannten Aufstieg dienende"

⁹⁸ Reinhard Alter, *Gottfried Benn. The Artist and Politics (1910 - 1934)*, 63.

⁹⁹ Reinhard Alter, *Gottfried Benn. The Artist and Politics (1910 - 1934)*, 63.

¹⁰⁰ In *Gottfried Benn und die Deutschen. Studien zu Werk, Person und Zeitgeschichte*, (Tübingen: Stauffenberg, 1986), 31, Jürgen Schröder notes of the debate which focused upon Benn in the latter years of the Weimar Republic: "Ohne sein unmittelbares Zutun wird [Benn] zu einem repräsentativen Antagonisten der marxistisch orientierten Schriftstellers und des Streits um die Funktion der Intellektuellen in der endenden Weimarer Republik". The debate surrounding Benn had begun when, in 1929, Max Hermann-Neiße had reviewed Benn's *Gesammelte Prosa*, published in 1928, in the journal *Die neue Bücherschau*. His remarks had been complimentary, for he believed that Benn had proposed a real alternative in his advocacy of the autonomy of the artist to the socially committed literature that dominated German culture at the time and whom Hermann-Neiße dismissed as "Lieferanten politischer Propagandamaterialien", Max Hermann-Neiße, 'Gottfried Benns Prosa', quoted from *Benn - Wirkung wider Willen. Dokumente zur Wirkungsgeschichte Benns*, ed. by Peter Uwe Hohendahl (Frankfurt: Athenäum, 1971), 128-134, (128). This comment prompted the resignation of Egon Erwin Kisch and Johannes R. Becher from the editorial board of *Die neue Rundschau* who then used their resignation letters to attack Hermann-Neiße and Benn. In so doing, they drew the lines for the resulting confrontation with Benn amidst the literary world. Becher had remarked, for example, "der Aufsatz Max Hermanns über 'Benns Prosa', diese Bekenntnisse einer schönen Seele, vertreten Auffassungen, die wir jahrelang bekämpft haben und die nun auf einmal von neuem propagiert werden", quoted from Gerhart Pohl, 'Über die Rolle des Schriftstellers in dieser Zeit', *Benn - Wirkung wider Willen*, 133-136 (134). Kisch, in contrast, chose to attack Benn himself, commenting forcibly, "Gottfried Benn ist ein in seine krankhaften (schizophrenen) Hemmungen eingesponnener Snob, der keine Ahnung von der Welt hat, aber sie behandelt. Dagegen muß man sich wenden", Egon Erwin Kisch, 'Antwort auf Gerhart Pohls Brief', *Benn - Wirkung wider Willen*, 136-137, (136).

even merely to concede that art could not divorce itself from society, that it should not ignore the high unemployment, poverty and misery to which the collapse of its economic infrastructure had reduced Germany, was interpreted by many, as Jürgen Schröder points out, as testimony to Benn's closet affiliation with the cause of fascism¹⁰¹. Their argument was itself influenced by contemporary debate on both the role of the writer in society and the perennial conundrum - was the writer a *Schriftsteller* or, as Benn had resolutely insisted, a *Dichter*?

At first glance *Dichter* and *Schriftsteller* appear synonymous, and therefore interchangeable, for they are both embraced in English translation by the generic term 'writer'. However, this neutral word conveys none of the related ideological and, in the last years of the Weimar Republic, political connotations associated with either terms. Whether writers defined themselves as *Dichter* or *Schriftsteller* was determined initially by their perception of art and the creative process. The term '*Dichter*' drew upon Schiller's belief in the autonomy of art, a definition which in consequence denied the possibility of its topicality. It ascribed to the writer the status of exalted visionary, distinct from the mass of the people, independent of the mundane world and existing "as isolated individuals lost in the wilderness of contemporary society because they are communicating with some mysterious and eternal realm of beauty and poetry"¹⁰². In contrast, '*Schriftsteller*' suggested the more prosaic role of pedagogue who responded not to an inner muse but to reason and the hard evidence of the material world, who analysed and criticised temporal conditions and who dispassionately regarded writing as a profession. Here lies the traditional distinction between the two types of writer - the *Dichter* wrote primarily from a sense of vocation, whereas, as a professional, the *Schriftsteller* worked for financial reward.

¹⁰¹ Harro Müller points to the apolitical Benn's unwitting association with the cause of nationalism, when he comments: "Benn wird zum Antipoden für links-liberale und demokratische Autoren, die sein Verhalten als einen weiteren Schritt ins faschistische Lager interpretieren", Harro Müller, 'Gottfried Benns paradoxer Antihistorismus. Einige Überlegungen über Zusammenhänge zwischen ästhetischem Absolutismus und faschistischem Engagement', Geschichte als Literatur. Formen und Grenzen der Repräsentation von Vergangenheit, ed. by Hartmut Eggert, Ulrich Profitlich, and Klaus R. Scherpe (Stuttgart: Metzler, 1990), 182-195 (184).

¹⁰² H. Siefken, 'Of loaded words: Dichter or Schriftsteller', Modern Languages LXII (1981), 22-28 (23).

In her history of the *Sektion für Dichtkunst* within the *Preußische Akademie der Künste*, Inge Jens illustrates how this perception of the differences between the contrasting types of writer was, by 1929, insufficient to capture the political nuances of an author's identification as a *Dichter* or a *Schriftsteller*. Writing of the controversy surrounding attempts by its members in 1929 to change the name of the *Sektion der Dichtkunst* to permit a broader membership, Inge Jens notes, "die Frage: 'Soll die Sektion eine Vereinigung von 'Dichtern' oder von 'Schriftstellern' sein' [war] im Grunde kein ästhetisches, sondern ein politisches Problem [...]. Völkisch Gesinnte und überzeugte Anhänger der Weimarer Republik schieden sich an der Stellung zu dieser Frage"¹⁰³. As her summary of the debates demonstrates, writers who subscribed to the ideology and cultural practice of the far right, the 'völkisch Gesinnte', favoured the term *Dichter*, whilst those who supported the democratic ideals of the Weimar Republic and who sought to admit writers whose work did not conform to the criterion of 'creative writing' implied in the term *Dichtkunst*¹⁰⁴ opted primarily for the term *Schriftsteller*¹⁰⁵. Thus, when Benn insisted that he was a *Dichter* he not only negated all claims on him to address the needs of society but, clearly, allied himself with the ideals and objectives of the nationalist cause¹⁰⁶.

In January 1930 Mann had praised Gottfried Benn in the essay 'Gottfried Benns Prosa'¹⁰⁷, a review of Benn's *Gesammelte Prosa* which had been published in 1928 by the Kiepenheuer Verlag. Centring his argument in particular around Benn's 1927 essay 'Kunst und Staat', Mann had shared with Benn the belief that art could not be restricted to a simply utilitarian function: "Die überraschende Behauptung, Kunst sei immer und glattweg als 'Propaganda' für gewisse Wirtschafts- und Regierungsformen erklärbar, findet sich nicht bei

¹⁰³ Inge Jens, *Dichter zwischen rechts und links. Die Geschichte der Sektion für Dichtkunst der Preußischen Akademie der Künste dargestellt nach den Dokumenten* (Munich: Piper, 1971), 112.

¹⁰⁴ The term *Dichtkunst* as Inge Jens notes, limited membership exclusively to 'creative writers'. Those members who sought to change its name desired a wider definition, however, to permit entry to those writers whose work was more factual in nature, for example philosophers or essayists. Jens draws particular attention to the fact that writers such as Ernst Bertram, Ludwig Klages or Alfred Kerr, whilst respected in their respective fields, could not become members because they did not conform to the restrictive definition of *Dichter*, Inge Jens, *Dichter zwischen rechts und links*, 103.

¹⁰⁵ Inge Jens, *Dichter zwischen rechts und links*, 93-137.

¹⁰⁶ Jürgen Schröder draws attention to the inherent danger Benn exposed himself to when, given the ideological overtones of the term *Dichter*, Benn repeatedly defined himself as such, unwittingly providing his opponents on the left apparent evidence for his fascist inclination, *Gottfried Benn Poesie und Sozialisation*, 31-32

¹⁰⁷ Klaus Mann, 'Gottfried Benns Prosa', first published in *Die Literatur* (January 1930), reprinted in *Die neuen Eltern*, 249-252. Further references are given in the text after quotation.

Benn, der die Kunst das 'isolierte Phänomen, individuell, unfruchtbar und monoman' getauft hat (NE, 250). Mann's identification with the position adopted by Benn had been unmistakable when, a little later in the same essay, he had stated:

Mit ihm verglichen, sehen wir alle ein bißchen wehleidig, ein bißchen verzärtelt aus.

Darum gibt es junge Leute, die ihn mehr als irgendeinen andern verehren. Ich kenne solche, in Berlin, in Paris. Er ist ihr Vorbild, in ihrer Lyrik, ihrer kritischen oder hymnischen Prosa erkennt man seinen unverkennbaren Tonfall wieder. Er wirkt, er hat Einfluß, wenn auch nur auf Einzelne.

Es sollten ihrer mehr werden (NE, 252).

It could be claimed that here Mann had written from the standpoint of the *Dichter* for whom art was autonomous, describing the nature of art, *not* the nature of the artist. However, as Michel Grunewald has emphasised: "Je mehr die politische Lage sich zuspitzte, desto stärker wurde Klaus Manns Neigung, literarische Werke gleichzeitig nach ästhetischen und nach ethischen Kriterien zu beurteilen. An dem Wandel seiner Einstellung zu Gottfried Benn wird sichtbar, daß er im Laufe der Jahre letzteren den Vorrang gab"¹⁰⁸. Thus whilst he did not criticise Benn's statements on the nature of artistic creation, which to Mann's mind were still valid, when he reviewed 'Können Dichter die Welt ändern?' and "Zur Problematik des Dichterischen" in autumn 1930, Mann confronted the advisability of the beliefs to which Benn still testified at such a critical juncture in Germany's history.

Mann chose to dispute Benn's view of the man of letters within society and, specifically, his assertion in 'Können Dichter die Welt ändern?' that there is neither social purpose nor greater meaning to the *Dichter's* actions; the sole guide, Benn had claimed, was the aesthetic principle of autonomous creation. Mann drew particular attention to two lines in Benn's essay, to his disparaging rejection of contemporary definitions of ethical duty as "Undurchdringlicher Modder der Zivilisationsgesinnung, Ethos nur als Regelung sozialer Bindungen zu sehen" (GWIV, 221), and to his unequivocal belief "alle ethischen Kategorien münden für den Dichter in die Kategorie der individuellen Vollendung" (GWIV, 221). He quoted:

¹⁰⁸ Michel Grunewald, *Nachwort, Mit dem Blick nach Deutschland*, 141.

Wir folgen dieser eindringlichen, ungleich lehrhaften und von ihrer eigenen Erkenntnis berauschten Stimme auch dann noch, wenn sie es zornig als 'undurchdringlichen Modder der Zivilisationsgesinnung' bezeichnet, 'Ethos *nur* als Regelung sozialer Bindungen zu sehen' [...]. Mit mehr Bedenken zitiere ich schon den Satz: 'Denn *alle* ethischen Kategorien münden für den Dichter in der Kategorie der individuellen Vollendung' (S, 106).

By two subtle alterations to Benn's original statement Mann conveyed a vastly different meaning implying a criticism of Benn's belief in a specific ethos for the artist. Whilst acknowledging that he altered the emphasis placed on 'nur' in the original, Mann failed to do likewise for the change in emphasis he made to 'alle'. The effect cast doubt on the claims made by Benn for the ethos of the artist, a doubt which "Mit mehr Bedenken" underlined. Mann agreed with Benn when he claimed it was not possible to restrict the artist merely to a function within society. However, by placing the emphasis on the 'nur' Mann suggested, unlike Benn's original, that this social function was indeed one element in the ethos of the artist. Similarly by choosing to stress 'alle' in 'alle ethischen Kategorien münden für den Dichter in der Kategorie der individuellen Vollendung' Mann indicated his reservations. To him this was an oversimplification; it was not possible to address the question of the ethos of the artist in such categorical terms.

Whilst conceding that Benn rated as one of the most gifted authors in Germany, Mann found it difficult to reconcile himself with Benn's ahistorical, apolitical stance, and his refusal to become involved in an increasingly tense political situation. Mann could find no fault with Benn's perception of the nature of artistic creation. What he took issue with was a failure to respond to the age in which he was living. It was in this context that the following must be understood:

Wir sind ganz besonders empfindlich gegen den Vorwurf, Propagandisten des flachen Entwicklungsgedankens zu sein. Das hören wir wirklich ungern. Nichts, nichts, nichts läge uns ferner, unserer Natur, unserem Blute nach - wenn die Dinge nicht ganz so hart, ganz so zugespitzt lägen, wie sie es doch heute tatsächlich tun. Sie liegen so gräßlich und so gefährlich, daß wir aus primitivster Gewissensverpflichtung uns nicht einzustimmen erlauben in das

hymnisch exakte Preislied des genialen Benn, auf die Räusche der Einsamkeit (S, 106).

Mann appeared particularly sensitive here to the charge of being a 'Propagandist des flachen Entwicklungsgedankens'. He, like Benn, believed with Nietzsche in the essential nihilism of art. However, unlike Benn, Mann was unwilling to argue in favour of the alternative to 'Propagandist des flachen Entwicklungsgedankens', that is, that the only 'ethical' concern was with autonomous creation. Where Benn maintained that the innate characteristics of the *Dichter* excluded participation in society, Mann would rather argue that even the artistic temperament must be countered with an inborn sense of responsibility (the force of "aus primitivster Gewissensverpflichtung"). It was this which prevented Mann from being able to agree with Benn in his eulogy of isolation.

When Mann addresses Benn directly it had the force of a warning:

Sie stehen selbst links, Gottfried Benn. Warum machen Sie Ideale verächtlich, die für keinen Dichter endgültige Ideale sein werden, aber eben doch für die Stunde die einzig möglichen, die einzig überhaupt praktikablen? Wenn Sie, Dichter, dessen Name bei den Jungen vieles gilt, die Ideale von links verhöhnen, gewinnen Sie damit denen von rechts immer mehr Boden (S, 109).

Indeed to some extent this was the tone of the whole passage - there was none of the scathing criticism Mann reserved for his comments on Ernst Jünger or the dismissive tone Mann adopted in respect of Arnolt Bronnen. Here was a writer whom Mann admired but whose élitist and separatist stance he could not condone. Perhaps this is the way the passage should be read, that is, as an attempt to lure Benn away from his absolutist stance.

The quotation above introduced a key feature of what Mann was to term 'synthesis' - the suitability of artistic creation to the moment. Thus, when Mann used the phrase 'für die Stunde die einzig möglichen' he revealed himself as subject to the historical moment. Benn, as has been shown, had disputed this belief, claiming the artist, in his capacity as artist,

stood in isolation, free from the constraints of time. On this Mann and Benn appear at this period to differ most greatly.

Mann had advocated a greater involvement of the *Künstler* in the issues of the day, seeing this as fundamental to his nature. It is a stance which argued against Benn's dismissal of such participation as "Liebhaberei" (GWIV, 214). Benn did try to concede that the artist had a function in society, which was carried out through the creation of symbols: "haben nicht doch die Künstler seit Urzeiten der Menschheit gedient", he asked in 'Können Dichter die Welt ändern?', "indem sie durch Nachbildung und dichterische Darstellung den beunruhigenden Erscheinungen das Erschreckende und Fürchtbare genommen haben?" (GWIV, 221). Indeed, Mann accepted Benn's statement on the interaction of the *Dichter* and society:

Der Dichter, eingeboren durch Geschick in die Zweideutigkeit des Seins, eingebrochen unter acherontischen Schauern in das Abgründige des Individuellen, indem er es gliedert und bildnerisch klärt, erhebt es über den brutalen Realismus der Natur, über das blinde und ungebändigte Begehren des Kausaltriebes, über die gemeine Befangenheit niederer Erkenntnisgrade und schafft eine Gliederung, der die Gesetzmäßigkeit eignet. Das scheint mir die Stellung und Aufgabe des Dichters gegenüber der Welt (GWIV, 221).

However, he required rather more. For Benn the *Dichter* could not interrelate with society for two reasons. To represent any particular ideology in society was to serve *Tendenz*. Yet to act thus was to act against the nature of the true *Dichter*. However, it was in his attitude to progress that Benn is possibly at his most aggressive and provocative. The *Dichter*, he argued, realised the impossibility of bringing about any lasting and fundamental change through improvement in material and social conditions: "der sieht zu, der weiß, daß der schuldlose Jammer der Welt niemals durch Fürsorgemaßnahmen behoben, niemals durch materielle Verbesserungen überwunden werden kann" (GWIV, 217).

Mann believed on the contrary that the public expected the artist to be aware of their needs and to identify with them, stating:

Wenn er mit der dämonischen Eitelkeit, die ihm eignet, immer wieder auf seine mystische Grundveranlagung verwies, das heißt also: nicht Stellung nähme, sondern den Unergründlichen spielte, während in der Welt alles drunter und drüber geht - dann könnte es geschehen, daß diese Welt seiner überdrüssig würde, daß sie sich gelangweilt und enttäuscht von ihm wendete und dächte: Er ist wirklich nichts als ein besessener Clown und weiß nichts von unseren Sorgen (S, 111).

Mann's use of 'dämonische Eitelkeit', 'seine mystische Grundveranlagung', the 'Unergründliche' responded directly to Benn's 'Zur Problematik des Dichterischen' in which he had concerned himself more with the mystical, inexplicable element of the *Dichterische*. By using these terms Mann implied the essential introspection, introversion of the *Dichter*, the concern with the creative self as of paramount importance at the expense of any concern with society as a whole. Such preoccupation with the self, he believed, led to a dangerous dismissal of such élitist art with the argument: "Er [der Künstler] [...] weiß nichts von unseren Sorgen".

1.3.3 The writer's responsibility to reason

By 1930 Mann had become aware that the irrational, the unthinking, the emotional elements to which he had testified in 'Fragment von der Jugend' were being exploited by the extreme right wing. German fascism neither appealed to reason nor persuaded by argument, rather it called to emotion. When Mann came to deliver the speech 'Die Jugend und Paneuropa' in Vienna in the spring of 1930 prior to his criticism of Benn, it was against a background of increasing violence in society as a whole. Violence, Mann believed, was little more than a "Perversion des Instinktes" (S, 61). What he saw in the world around him was a transformation of the will for self-preservation into the desire for self-destruction. And yet he revealed himself aware that the aggressive had the power to seduce the young by appealing to the baser side of human nature:

Die Faszination, die der Faschismus für die Jugend hat, kommt aus dem tiefen und verhängnisvollen Reiz, den die Gewalt als solche, die Brutalität als Prinzip, vor dem Geiste voraus haben, der mit Argumenten überzeugen muß, wo diese sich unbekümmert selbst beweisen (S, 60).

Mann watched as popular fiction perpetuated the glorification of violence. It was on this point that he took issue with Ernst Jünger, for Mann made one fundamental assumption: that literature was indisputably “Dienst am Geiste” (S, 61); the *Geist* to which it was subservient was opposed to violence. If violence were a manifestation of the *Ungeist* (the evil ideology to which Mann referred in his statement: “Der Kult der Kraft und des Ungeistes verlocken wieder mehr als der Dienst am Geiste” (S, 61) and which he identified with the politics of nationalism), then, according to his definition, it must threaten the very nature of literature. Mann drew, however, an even closer link between violence and the irrational, for when he spoke of the *Geist* in this context it no longer had the sense of the creative impulse but rather was a virtual synonym of *Vernunft*. Ernst Jünger was therefore criticised not only for his advocacy of violence but also for the irrationality underlying it.

However, Mann’s position on this issue was paradoxical. From the time of writing ‘Fragment von der Jugend’ he had regarded the irrational as at the base of all life but, as Dieter Schiller points out, “Das grundsätzliche und bis an sein Lebensende immer wieder betonte Bekenntnis zum Irrationalismus als Weltanschauung wird Klaus Mann 1930 als Gefahr bewußt”¹⁰⁹. Mann never conceded that all aspects of life had a rational explanation. Indeed he believed it necessary for some things to remain inexplicable. What Mann desired was to marry the irrational with the rational, or to use his own terminology, to unite *Anmut* with *Vernunft*, aiming to achieve a synthesis between two apparently opposing forces.

1.3.4 The reconciliation of *Anmut* and *Vernunft*

The nineteenth century, with its discoveries and advances in the fields of science and technology, its desire to explain and understand, not surprisingly had believed that the rational might gain supremacy over the irrational, the dispassionate over the emotional. As did many of his generation, Klaus Mann had taken a different view. In both his early fictional and essayistic work, Mann rejected this attitude, which was to his mind still prevalent in society. Reappraising his stance of 1926, Mann stated in 1927 in ‘Heute und Morgen’:

¹⁰⁹ Dieter Schiller, ‘Geistige Differenz und politische Disziplin’, 167.

Das einzige, was wir haßten, war Rationalismus. Wir hatten das Leben ganz und gar zu lieben versucht, etwa dem Sinne nach, den die Philosophie Bergsons¹¹⁰ empfiehlt. Dieser Sinn war Hingabe an das Geheimnis, Hingabe an Bewegung und Fließen, nicht mehr Kritik. Denn 'der Intellekt' heißt es bei Bergson, 'charakterisiert sich durch eine natürliche Verständnislosigkeit für das Leben' (S, 35).

He had advocated a new irrationality, a new naivety in relation to life in 'Fragment von der Jugend'. This he encapsulated in a single word: *Leben*. This new belief in *Leben* was the key. Life stood outside the bounds of analytical explanation. It was and remained a mystery, the depths of which none could fathom. It was to be accepted, but not to be questioned or queried. Any attempt to explain, that is to rationalise, life was to act against its fundamental nature. If it could not be rationalised, then it could not be comprehended.

It is this view which is encapsulated in "Das Leben lieben, aber fremd sein in ihm" (S, 13), a sentiment epitomised in the enigmatic figure of the foundling Kaspar Hauser: "Zum Symbole wurde der Knabe Kaspar Hauser, der auf die Erde kam, ohne zu wissen, wer er sei, ohne zu ahnen wohin er zu gehen habe. Für Kaspar Hauser ist alles offen, er steht, unberührt vor dem lebendigen Wunder, wurzellos und ein Waisenkind, hingegeben allen Möglichkeiten" (S, 11). Here was the true proponent of *Anmut*, a feature which Mann felt permeated Hermann Bang's texts. Mann's view advocated tacit acceptance of good and ill fortune. It was a belief in which the power of self-determination was taken out of the hands of the individual, advocating an indiscriminate approach to life. In a passage highly reminiscent of the literature of the *fin de siècle*, Mann summarised this new belief when he wrote:

Fromm im Leben sein, heißt anmutig sein. Anmutig sein heißt vor allem: Verliebtsein in alle Dinge, in die weiten Landschaften, in die Schlankheit des menschlichen Leibes. Einen Körper anbeten mit all der grenzenlosen Schwermut, all der besinnungslosen Hingegebenheit, mit der man das Geheimnis des bewegten Lebens anbetet. - Nicht den geliebten Leib besitzen wollen, wissen vielmehr, daß man ihn nie besitzen darf, aber ihm doch in jedem Augenblicke danken, daß er da ist und atmet. Nicht das Leben besitzen wollen, fremd bleiben in ihm - aber in jedem Augenblick, jenseits aller Schwermut, Gott danken, daß man doch lebt. Das heißt anmutig leben (S, 16).

¹¹⁰ Henri Bergson (1859-1941). In his philosophy, Bergson gave greater credence to instinctive reaction than to purely rational explanation. Whilst he conceded indisputable, scientific fact he aimed to place it within a greater, natural whole.

Here was found the need for complete giving of the self. There was no room for half measures in Mann's scheme. The individual was no longer primary. Mann implied through the force of terms such as *anbeten* and *Hingegebenheit* an element of self-subjugation. The concept of the unconscious, of acting without question is embodied in Mann's use of 'besinnungslose Hingegebenheit', a spontaneous, emotional response, rather than the calculated decision of hard rationality.

In essence, the anti-rationalism central to Mann's belief in *Anmut* had been positive; it had achieved its end through non-assertive means. He was never to totally revoke his views on the fundamental necessity of the irrational as the base of all life and more specifically of all literary creation¹¹¹. However, as the 1920s drew to a close he became ever more aware of its misuse. Increasingly the political right sought to convince with recourse to the irrational, appealing in many respects to the basest instincts. This irrationality in contrast to that of Mann, was characterised by its appeal to violence and its apologia for war in which bloodlust defied rational explanation.

In spring 1930 Mann proposed in the speech 'Die Jugend und Paneuropa' the integration of *Leben* and *Vernunft*, adapting the views of the nineteenth century to those of the twentieth: "Das zwanzigste Jahrhundert hat mit der Intellektüberschätzung des neunzehnten große Abrechnung gehalten. 'Die Aufgabe unserer Zeit' definiert Ortega y Gasset dahin, daß die Vernunft wieder in die Biologie einzuordnen und dem Spontanen zu unterstellen sei" (S, 86). By 1930 *Leben* and *das Spontane* had replaced Mann's earlier term *Anmut*. Essentially all three embodied the same intrinsic qualities - an instinctive and intuitive reaction to society and the world in which the process of rationalising had no initial role. Reason became, in Mann's opinion, subservient to *Leben*. In contrast to 1926, Mann perceived, however, by 1930 no contradiction between *Vernunft* and *das Spontane* when in the speech 'Die Jugend und Paneuropa' he stated:

¹¹¹ Indeed here he shows the great affinity between himself and Gottfried Benn in believing that the powers of creation defy rational explanation; that they stand beyond the bounds of empirical explanation.

Zuerst kommt das Leben, dann die Vernunft. Aber die Vernunft ist des Lebens unentbehrlichste Dienerin. Ohne sie geht das Leben in Trümmer. Deshalb bewahren wir sie - nicht als Selbstzweck, wie das neunzehnte Jahrhundert - vielmehr um des Lebens willen. Wir sind uns, sehr im stillen, darin einig, daß sie eine Angelegenheit zweiten Ranges ist - und wir holen unsere besten Kräfte aus den geheimen Quellen des Irrationalen - , aber eine Angelegenheit eben doch, um die wir schlechterdings nicht herum kommen. Denn ohne sie ist das Chaos gewiß (S, 87).

By this time, *Leben* without *Vernunft* resulted only in anarchy, whilst *Vernunft* without *Leben* in a materialism he never advocated.

In the examples of Gottfried Benn and Ernst Jünger Mann saw respected authors advocating the irrational in an age in which he believed it behove them to call for the rational. In Jünger's advocacy of war in particular he perceived the essential balance between the rational and the irrational to be missing. Jünger, Mann maintained, neglected the essential duty of the writer to society. "Im Rahmen der Gesellschaft" Grunewald has summarised, "[hat] der Schriftsteller im Namen der Vernunft zu sprechen"¹¹².

1.3.5 'Talent dictates responsibility' - Klaus Mann and Ernst Jünger

Jünger was an apologist for war. As a former front-line soldier and highly decorated officer he drew upon his personal experience of battle, in essay, prose and memoir, to portray, explain and, ultimately, to legitimise the bloodshed and carnage of World War One. He wrote initially as a means to come to terms with his own role in a war that had cost the lives of many of his contemporaries. This resulted in 1920 in the retrospective war-diary, *In Stahlgewittern* (1920) and, three years later, *Der Krieg als inneres Erlebnis* (1923), both written whilst Jünger was still a serving soldier. However, he looked beyond the carnage to discover some hidden meaning to the war. As Dagmar Barnouw notes of Jünger's approach in general: "he sought cultural meaning in the experience of material warfare"¹¹³. War, he

¹¹² Michel Grunewald, *Nachwort, Mit dem Blick nach Deutschland*, 141.

¹¹³ Dagmar Barnouw, *Weimar Intellectuals and the Threat of Modernity* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1988), 194-230 (201).

argued throughout his early career, presented man with an opportunity to experience life 'in the raw', to see its innate brutality and experience the exhilaration of violence, the bloodlust that stripped mankind of its 'civilisation'. Battle replaced the intellect with an instinctive, 'natural' and irrational response to the moment. As Hans-Harald Müller indicates, Jünger quickly progressed from contemplating a war past to applying the lessons of war to political life¹¹⁴. Survival of the war, he believed, bestowed a responsibility on the veteran in peace-time for, as Woods writes, "the true front-line soldier is not merely concerned with memories of the war but rather with applying the spirit and the meaning of these memories to the future"¹¹⁵. In accordance with this view, from the mid-twenties Jünger involved himself increasingly with the new nationalist movement, contributing to and editing many of the nationalist journals of the day, and in particular those intended for a young audience¹¹⁶.

In her examination of the reception of Jünger's work during the Weimar Republic, Liane Dornheim notes that until 1929 Jünger's work was little known beyond the nationalist, military and *völkisch* circles which published his books and to whose journals he contributed as an essayist and editor from 1925 until the end of the Republic¹¹⁷. His readership at this time comprised mainly former officers and soldiers, who responded to Jünger's positive interpretation of the experience of war and sought in this the means to restore order to a disordered world, and the young whom, as co-editor of the youth journal *Vormarsch* from

¹¹⁴ Hans-Harald Müller, "Im Grunde erlebt jeder seinen eigenen Krieg". Zur Bedeutung des Kriegserlebnisses im Frühwerk Ernst Jüngers', *Ernst Jünger im 20. Jahrhundert*, ed. by Hans-Harald Müller, and Harro Segeberg (Munich: Fink, 1995), 13-37 (34).

¹¹⁵ Roger Woods, *Ernst Jünger and the Nature of Political Commitment* (Stuttgart: Akademischer Verlag Hans-Dieter Heinz, 1982), 43.

¹¹⁶ In his study of Jünger's work Martin Meyer notes that Jünger was closely involved, either as a contributor or editor, with eight publications, all drawn from the right. They included two articles in the National Socialist paper *Der völkische Beobachter*, an editorial role with *Arminius. Kampfschrift für deutsche Nationalisten* and, between 1930 and 1931, the time of Mann's attack on him, *Die Kommenden. Überbündische Wochenschrift der deutschen Jugend*. For a more detailed account than it is possible to give here, see Martin Meyer, *Ernst Jünger* (Munich: DTV, 1993), 102-112.

¹¹⁷ For a detailed study of Jünger's readership and its reaction to his work see Liane Dornheim, *Vergleichende Rezeptionsgeschichte. Das literarische Frühwerk Ernst Jüngers in Deutschland, England und Frankreich* (Frankfurt: Peter Lang, 1987). For a more general analysis see Hans-Harald Müller, "Herr Jünger thinks war a lovely business." (On the reception of Ernst Jünger's 'In Stahlgewittern' in Germany and Britain before 1933)', trans. by John Ormrod, *Intimate Enemies. English and German literary reactions to the Great War 1914-1918*, ed. by Franz Karl Stanzel and Martin Löschnigg (Heidelberg: Universitätsverlag C. Winter, 1993), *Beiträge zur neueren Literaturgeschichte Dritte Folge*, vol. 126, 327-340.

1927 to 1932, he addressed through essays which echoed this youthful readership's anti-Republican and anti-democratic sentiments¹¹⁸. Three factors, she explains, contributed to an increase in his audience as it swelled to include bourgeois readers. By far the greatest impact on increasing and widening the base of Jünger's audience lay with the sudden resurgence of interest in World War One as numerous fictional and factual accounts of the war, the most notable of which was Erich Maria Remarque's anti-war novel Im Westen nichts Neues, were published by pacifists and apologists alike. Victor Zmegac interprets this wave of war literature and the interest shown in it, especially in books written from the nationalist, pro-war perspective, as symptomatic of the mood of crisis in Germany following the onset of the Depression in late 1929¹¹⁹.

The second factor to which Dornheim draws attention was the publication in September 1929 of Jünger's essay 'Nationalismus und Nationalismus' in the liberal journal Das Tagebuch. The essay was introduced by the editor, Leopold Schwarzschild, whose opening words, as Dornheim observes, indicated the extent to which Jünger was unknown beyond his own circle for Schwarzschild had written: "Manchem unserer Leser wird nicht einmal der Name Ernst Jünger bekannt sein"¹²⁰. The essay testified to Jünger's identification with the goals of the new nationalist movement, with his belief in war and his rejections of the

¹¹⁸ Dagmar Barnouw draws particular attention to Jünger's appeal, particularly in the mid-1920s, to former officers who identified with Jünger's personal hatred of the Weimar state who approved of his eulogy of the *Frontgeist*, defined by Barnouw as "the blood fraternities of the trenches" and believed, with Jünger, the lives of some being more meaningful and valuable than that of others, Weimar Intellectuals and the Threat of Modernity, 197. Thomas Nevin in Ernst Jünger and Germany. Into the Abyss, 1914 - 1945 (Durham: Duke University Press, 1996), 77, expands upon Darnouw's comments noting that in particular reserve officers who had entered the war late and thus had little front-line experience, in contrast to Jünger who served for the full duration of the war, provided Jünger with a "ready and sympathetic readership" primarily for his essays in the early years of the Weimar Republic, for they wanted "a seasoned voice to set confusion into order and bitter loss into eloquent scope".

¹¹⁹ Zmegac explains that the books attracted a large audience "weil sie ein Heilmittel für die Krise am Ende der Weimarer Republik zu kennen behaupten und eine positive Zukunft in Aussicht stellen. Durch die Weltwirtschaftskrise war die Zerrissenheit der Nachkriegsdemokratie unübersehbar hervorgetreten. Um so verheißungsvoller hob sich von diesem dunklen Hintergrund die angeblich konfliktfreie Gemeinschaft der aus allen Berufen und Gegenden stammenden Soldaten der Frontromane als ein in die Geschichte projizierter Wunschtraum ab. Der verlorene Weltkrieg konnte so im nachhinein als Vorbild für ein sozial befriedetes starkes Deutschland positiv umgedeutet werden", Viktor Zmegac, ed., Geschichte der deutschen Literatur vom 18. Jahrhundert bis zur Gegenwart Vol. III/i 1918 - 1945 (Königstein: Athenäum, 1984), 84-85.

¹²⁰ Leopold Schwarzschild, Das TageBuch 10 (1929), 1552. Quoted from Dornheim Vergleichende Rezeptionsgeschichte, 60.

writer's involvement in the political process. At the same time, however, it gave him the opportunity to dissociate himself firmly from the ideology of National Socialism and to disclaim any affiliation with the NSDAP¹²¹.

The final factor was the publication, also in 1929, of Jünger's work Das abenteuerliche Herz. This text broke the pattern of Jünger's work to date. It neither dealt directly with wars past or those still to come (although Jünger's experience and interpretation of war certainly influenced some of his comments), but recounted a series of isolated incidents, some dreams, others with a basis in personal experience, against a highly philosophical background. Das abenteuerliche Herz found little resonance within nationalist and military circles. However, as Dornheim notes, it is doubtful whether this text was intended for Jünger's traditional audience. She proposes that it was, in fact, a conscious effort on Jünger's part to address a wider audience amongst the German bourgeoisie. This text, she argues in justification, prompted an initial interest in Jünger's work amongst the German middle class, with reviews appearing for the first time amongst the journals and papers of the moderate and, indeed, far left. This initial interest then developed into a greater interest in his earlier war-books¹²².

A fourth factor, however, influenced the decision by intellectuals of the centre left to acquaint themselves with Jünger's work. Characteristically they were firm believers in the

¹²¹ In the article Jünger stated: "Der wahre Kampf jedoch, der wirkliche Haß hat Lust an allem, was den Gegner zerstören kann. Zerstörung ist das Mittel, das dem Nationalismus dem augenblicklichen Zustande gegenüber allein angemessen erscheint. Der erste Teil seiner Aufgabe ist anarchischer Natur, und wer das erkannt hat, wird auf diesem ersten Teile des Weges alles begrüßen, was zerstören kann. Nicht unsere Aufgabe ist es, auf Maßnahmen zu sinnen, die den außenpolitischen Druck erträglicher erscheinen lassen, die innenpolitischen Spannungen mildern könnten, an Wahlen teilzunehmen, die Konferenzen und Abstimmungen zu beeinflussen, uns mit sogenannten Volksentscheiden zu beschäftigen. Nicht unsere Aufgabe ist es, gegen den allgemeinen Verfall der politischen und sozialen Moral, gegen Abtreibungen, gegen Streiks, gegen Zusperrungen, gegen Verminderungen der Polizei und des Heeres mit langen Tiraden zu Feld zu ziehen. Wir überlassen die Ansicht, daß es eine Art der Revolution gibt, die zugleich die Ordnung unterstützt den Biedermännern. Was hat denn das Elementare mit dem Moralischen zu tun? Dem Elementaren aber, das uns im Höllenrath des Krieges seit langen Zeiten zum ersten Male wieder sichtbar wurde, treiben wir zu. Wir werden nirgends stehen, wo nicht die Stichflamme uns Bahn geschlagen, wo nicht der Flammenwerfer die große Säuberung durch das Nichts vollzogen hat", Ernst Jünger, 'Selbstanzeige', Quoted from Lesebuch Weimar. Deutsche Schriftsteller und ihr Staat von 1918 bis 1933, ed. by Stephan Reinhardt (Berlin: Klaus Wagenbach, 1982), 172-173.

¹²² Liane Dornheim notes that because Das abenteuerliche Herz did not deal directly with the war in a similar way to the Kriegsbewältigung of Jünger's early work, his reviewers amongst the nationalist and military circles, in which he had previously enjoyed great popularity, could find no point of contact and therefore, with few exceptions, either ignored the text or compared it negatively against his early work, alerting their readership to the strange path of contemplation that Jünger had chosen, Vergleichende Rezeptionsgeschichte, 74, 76 & 91. Despite divergent political standpoints, conservative, liberal and Republican reviewers alike emphasised the literary qualities, in contrast to the ideological import, of Das abenteuerliche Herz, marking Jünger's transition from the scribe of 'mere' war memoirs to a writer of merit, Vergleichende Rezeptionsgeschichte, 99-104 & 109.

cause of pacifism, were committed to the Weimar Republic and German democracy and believed in sponsoring international co-operation by renouncing imperialist goals and objectives. The need to familiarise themselves with Jünger's apologies for war was their own response to the mood of crisis prevailing in German society, to the resurgence of the political extremism, particularly from the right, which was increasing its support amongst the electorate at an alarming rate, which had typified the early years of the Republic but which had subsided during the period of relative stability between 1924 and 1929. Thus amongst intellectuals of the centre and moderate left, to whom Mann belonged, there dominated a general belief that to defeat their ideological opponents on the right they had first to familiarise themselves both with their work and the ideology espoused therein¹²³. It is in this context that Mann gave his critique of Jünger in the speech 'Die Jugend und Paneuropa' (1930, offered in the form of a review of Das abenteuerliche Herz published the previous year in 1929 and which Mann quoted extensively.

The interest in Jünger expressed by the left-of-centre intellectuals was short-lived, lasting from 1929 to 1930. As such Mann's condemnation of Jünger was delivered at the height of this interest. He approached Das abenteuerliche Herz, and the author from a position diametrically opposed to that of Jünger himself. Mann's criticisms were, in consequence, highly subjective, written by an author opposed to almost everything Jünger represented. Mann was a Republican and democrat, Jünger, in contrast, despised the liberal Weimar state and promoted in his work an élitism which contradicted the egalitarian spirit of Weimar democracy. Throughout his life Mann advocated pacifism over military aggression; Jünger dismissed pacifists as denying Germany its lifeblood¹²⁴; Mann remained an unremitting opponent of nationalism and the antagonisms it bred. Jünger was not only identified as the intellectual figurehead of the new nationalism¹²⁵ but also actively

¹²³ Liane Dornheim identifies the increase in interest in Jünger's work amongst the Republicans with the worsening economic and political situation in Germany when she summarises: "Erst in der Krisensituation des Jahres 1929 verstärkte sich auch das Interesse der Republikaner am politischen Gegner. Die Auseinandersetzung mit dem 'Neuen Nationalismus' wurde über die Person Ernst Jüngers geführt", Vergleichende Rezeptionsgeschichte, 112.

¹²⁴ Thomas Nevin summarises the contrast between the pacifist's perception of war and Jünger's eulogising of it with the concise statement: "The pacifist sees only destruction in war, not new birth", then expands on Jünger's specific position: "Jünger is advocating the dubious thrill of historical dice-throwing, a fatalism that accepts war as inevitable and adventurous", Ernst Jünger and Germany, (Durham: Duke University Press, 1996), 89

¹²⁵ For a discussion of Jünger's role as figurehead see Dagmar Barnouw, Weimar Intellectuals, 195

championed nationalistic goals as an expression of Germany's destiny to be an imperial power.

Mann selected from Das abenteuerliche Herz those passages which were most in conflict with his own views. He conceded that the distance between Jünger and the representative parties of the German right, the NSDAP and the DNVP, led by Alfred Hugenberg, when he commented "Mit dem öffentlichen Unfug der Rechtsradikalen hat er nichts gemein; über Hugenberg fallen verächtliche Anmerkungen" (S, 78). Nevertheless, Mann attacked Jünger's close identification with the aims of nationalism, criticising him, in particular, for his advocacy of imperial objectives, by quoting from Das abenteuerliche Herz the lines "'Eine eroberte Provinz ist ein großes verpflichtendes Symbol'" and prefacing his quotation with the comment "Imperialismus plus Pseudoethik ist auch nicht immer erfreulich" (S, 79). Mann drew attention to Jünger's hatred of 'civilisation', the paradox of his refusal to be involved within the political process whilst denouncing communism as "'eine besondere und langweiligere Art Ausbeutungsform der bestehenden Ordnung'" (S, 81), and Jünger's dismissal of democracy and his repudiation of the need for individual freedom, summarised by Mann with the words "die jungen Deutschen [...] [horchen], daß die Demokratie überwunden sei, neugierig auf, wenn ihr Führer den Begriff der individuellen Freiheit kurzweg für 'antiquiert erklärt'" (S, 84). Mann reserved the greatest criticism of Jünger's ideas, however, for Jünger's glorification of the *Materialschlacht* (material warfare) commenting scathingly of Jünger's thought: "[Das] Chaos ist abscheulicherweise einfach die 'Materialschlacht'. Mehr fällt ihm nicht ein. Sie lauert hinter allen seinen Gesängen. Sie ist das letzte Wort seiner pompösen Rhetorik, die Reinigung, die er meint, das Wunder, das er seinen Gläubigen verheißt" (S, 81).

Yet, whilst he did not agree with Jünger's political beliefs, Mann's critique was not directed primarily at Jünger's ideas. Rather he criticised Jünger as a writer who had betrayed his responsibility as a writer and to an ideal of literature which, Mann argued, was to serve reason. In Jünger Mann detected this ideal grotesquely transformed into the negative, for in his work Jünger appealed to irrational prejudice. Whilst he recognised Jünger's talent as a

writer, Mann believed that talent to have been put to very dangerous use. "Daß er schreiben kann, erst das macht ihn gefährlich", Mann noted, then continued,

Seinen Gaben nach gehört er zu uns [...] Aber ein Geist von der finstern Glut Jüngers kann Unheil stiften. Eine geheimnisvolle Perversion des Gefühls hat ihn auf die Seite getrieben, wo notorische Böswilligkeit und Menschenfeindlichkeit sich als Tugend blähen (S, 83).

This was the main focus of Mann's critique, the effect of Jünger's work on a young audience drawn to the romantic and heroic ideal of warfare Jünger portrayed. Throughout his criticism Mann intimated Jünger's persuasive power and ability to seduce the young through his work. He carefully conveyed this seductive power with verbs such as *verlocken* (S, 77) and *behexen* (S, 84), whilst Mann suggested in his choice of *orakeln* the prophetic quality that Jünger lent his words:

Geheimnisvoll und unheilverkündend hört man seine Stimme orakeln: 'Dieses Maßnehmen an dem geheimen zu Paris aufbewahrten Urmeter der Zivilisation, das bedeutet für uns, den verlorenen Krieg zu Ende verlieren, bedeutet die konsequente Durchführung eines nihilistischen Aktes bis zu seinem notwendigen Punkt. Wir marschieren seit langem einem magischen Nullpunkt zu, über den nur der hinwegkommen wird, der über andere, unsichtbare Kraftquellen verfügt (S, 80)

His description of Jünger himself as "der geharnischte Rattenfänger" (S, 80) emphasised Jünger's ability to lead youth astray for it carried with it the legendary connotations of the enticement and bewitching of the innocents.

Jünger abused the power of the written word and led others, in this case the younger generation, astray:

Ihnen [den Nationalsozialisten] leiht er das Wort, dessen Sendung es ist, der Wahrheit zu dienen. Er ist ein Verräter, den man übergehen könnte, wenn seine argen Redereien nicht eine Jugend behexten, die der Phraseologie des Liberalismus sterbensmüde war (S, 83-84).

This comment should be seen against the background of Mann's belief in the duty of the intellectual to society. Mann had highlighted in 'Heute und Morgen' in 1927 that talent bestowed a general responsibility on the individual writer to work for the benefit of society. By spring 1930 in 'Die Jugend und Paneuropa' he defined this responsibility more precisely, as the writer now had a duty to the 'Vernunft' upon which society was based. In Jünger's apologia for war Mann perceived a dangerous precedent, whilst in Jünger himself Mann detected a worrying irresponsibility.

In its main characteristics Mann's criticism of Jünger conforms to general criticisms made of the author by republicans and those on the centre left¹²⁶. Defining their position Dornheim draws specific attention to the tension experienced by reviewers; "Man lehnte Jüngers Kriegsbücher aus ideologischen Gründen ab, sprach ihm aber gleichzeitig Anerkennung für seine schriftstellerischen Leistungen aus", and continues "Das Interesse an der Person Jüngers als 'Führer' des 'Neuen Nationalismus' schlug sich auch in einer positiven Bewertung seiner Kriegsbücher nieder¹²⁷. She draws attention to a review from 1929 in which the critic, in a general appraisal of books on war published in the Berliner Abendblatt defined Jünger as "ein außerordentliches schriftstellerisches Talent" before commenting on Jünger's portrayal of war: "An Lebensnähe, Sachlichkeit und Wahrhaftigkeit könnten also seine Schilderungen nichts zu wünschen übrig lassen, und sie lassen es auch nicht. Aber sie lassen auch nichts zu wünschen übrig an dichterischer Wucht und Darstellungskraft". He concluded, however, with the lament "leider steht dieses enorme Talent im anderen Lager"¹²⁸, which recalled Mann's own assertion in 'Die Jugend und Paneuropa' 'Seinen Gaben nach gehört er zu uns' (S, 83).

This praise for Jünger was echoed in a review by Johannes R. Becher for Jünger's In Stahlgewittern, first published in 1920 and then revised throughout the Republic. Writing from a position on the extreme left Becher was, nevertheless, unstinting in his praise:

¹²⁶ See Liane Dornheim, Vergleichende Rezeptionsgeschichte, 105-113.

¹²⁷ Liane Dornheim, Vergleichende Rezeptionsgeschichte, 108.

¹²⁸ Fred Hildebrand, 'Bücher vom Kriege', quoted from Liane Dornheim, Vergleichende Rezeptionsgeschichte, 109.

Um so wertvoller für uns, als es von einem Offizier, einem Kriegsbejäger, geschrieben ist. Daran ändert auch nichts der 'Nationalismus', für den es zeugen soll; denn diese Gesinnung wirkt schemenhaft und aufgeklebt. In dem Kampf zwischen Wirklichkeit und Gesinnung siegt die Wirklichkeit. Ernst Jünger möchte ein Ausruf sein, er wird wider Willen zu einem Fragezeichen¹²⁹.

As Dornheim points out, in contrast to Jünger's reviewers from his more typical readership on the right, for many on the left, amongst them Becher, the ideological import of his work gradually became of secondary importance to the literary skill Jünger demonstrated. It is at this point that Mann diverged from mainstream criticism in his appraisal of Jünger's work. Mann was unable to divorce the ideological factor from Jünger's work; indeed, he argued in 'Die Jugend und Paneuropa' that it was precisely the ideological content of Jünger's work which diminished Jünger's talent and his respect as a writer. For this reason he qualified his praise of Jünger with the forceful criticism: "Er ist ein Verräter, den man übergehen könnte, wenn seine argen Redereien nicht eine Jugend behexten, die der Phraseologie des Liberalismus sterbensmüde war" (S, 84) .

1.3.6 The writer and the future

In general terms the three essays in 'Die Situation 1930' introduced Mann's concept of the future. He aimed to show that writers and intellectuals could effect change in society and should propose the need of progress to counteract increasingly reactionary elements across the European continent. His views were written from a dual perspective: that of youth, especially in 'Jugend und Radikalismus', and that of the writer, paramount in 'Wie wollen wir unsere Zukunft?'. The increase in violent and xenophobic elements within German society pointed the way to certain disaster in Mann's opinion, a message he conveyed most clearly in 'Jugend und Radikalismus' which referred to arms talks in Geneva; "Genf bringt uns *vielleicht* den Frieden' die anderen [ie: the National Socialists] bringen uns die sichere Katastrophe" (S, 117).

¹²⁹ Quoted from Liane Dornheim, Vergleichende Rezeptionsgeschichte. 111.

Mann aimed to show that youth alone could no longer be relied upon to build the future. Commenting in 'Jugend und Radikalismus' on the younger generation's welcoming of National Socialism, Mann stated: "Nicht alles, was Jugend tut, weist in die Zukunft" (S, 114). He continues: "Ein großer Teil meiner Altersgenossen [...] hat sich mit all dem Elan, der dem 'Vorwärts' vorbehalten sein mußte, für das 'Rückwärts' entschieden" (S, 114). In 'Wie wollen wir unsere Zukunft?' his message was even clearer. There he declared that youth could not be relied upon to construct a future. The desire of the majority amongst the young to live for the moment with no long-term perspective, Mann believed, made them vulnerable and open to exploitation by the reactionary and destructive ideology of National Socialism. The responsibility to work for the benefit of *all* mankind, he believed, had been bestowed on writers and intellectuals: "Es hängt alles von uns ab. Wenn wir nicht nachgeben, kann nichts ganz verloren sein" (S, 113). As 'Wie wollen wir unsere Zukunft?' was essentially concerned with the role of intellectuals within society, Mann's use of *wir* in this context ought to be taken as identifying himself with these intellectuals.

In 'Wie wollen wir unsere Zukunft?' Mann attempted to raise his voice in opposition to increasing xenophobia across continental Europe as throughout Europe, calls for the preservation of national identity and national borders steadily increased¹³⁰. His outlook was utopian, a fact he conceded, for it involved the wholesale reformation of the fabric of society. The Wall Street Crash in 1929 and its repercussions around the world, he argued, had revealed the fragility of western capitalism. In 'Wie wollen wir unsere Zukunft?' one year later Mann sought to unite capitalism and socialism. He did not regard these two political doctrines as mutually exclusive. Indeed, he criticised those who did believe this: "Die mit den Millionenverdiensten rechnen zu fest darauf, daß der russische Staatssozialismus für westliche Regionen unannehmbar sei, einfach, weil die Forderung nach Freiheit, nach individueller Initiative im europäischen Menschen zu wesentief sitzt" (S, 100). What Mann worked towards was the unification of the "russische Auffassung vom menschlichen

¹³⁰ For a discussion of the increase in social tensions and rise in extremist parties throughout Europe following the Wall Street Crash see Frank B. Tipton, and Robert Aldrich, An economic and social history of Europe, 1890-1939 (Basingstoke: Macmillan, 1987), 235-293,

Zusammenleben" (S, 102) with Western needs. It was a vision of the future which had at its base the basic humanist belief in the equality of all, implied by Mann in his image of perfect democracy as "die gleiche Hochachtung vor allen Menschen" (S, 99), an idea he had borrowed from George Bernard Shaw¹³¹. As I shall discuss shortly this humanist principle underlined Mann's desire for a united Europe, a desire which he outlined most clearly earlier in 1930 in 'Die Jugend und Paneuropa'.

Mann's path to the future was in stages. Indeed it is one of the failings of 'Zur Situation 1930' as a whole that he did not give a clear definition of his ultimate goal. Rather the 'future' was shrouded in mystery, revealed only a little at a time. Before achieving his "Großzügige Föderationen nach außen" (S, 103), Mann had proposed in 'Die Jugend und Paneuropa' an initial stage: a united Europe. "[Diese] vereinigten Staaten", he had explained, "sind kein endgültig befriedigendes Ideal, nur eine Etappe. Werben wir für das Etappenideal, und wir werden für die Zukunft selber werben" (S, 90). The subject of a united Europe had first been broached in detail in 'Heute und Morgen' of 1927, when Mann had revealed himself indebted to the beliefs of Richard Coudenhove-Kalergi and Heinrich Mann.

In 1923 Richard Coudenhove-Kalergi had founded the *Pan-Europa-Bewegung* aiming to achieve economic and limited political union between the European nations. His premise was that for Europe to maintain its independence in the light of the strength of the USA and the USSR post-World War One, it had to unite. Initially his views found widespread favour amongst European intellectuals. However, his confrontational approach towards Russia and his increasing reliance on funding from industrial capitalists led many to suspect his motives. By the thirties his mainstream support had dropped dramatically. Klaus Mann initially showed close parallels with Coudenhove-Kalergi's ideas. However by 1932 he too had become distrustful of the capitalist/communist opposition he perceived underlying

¹³¹ In "Wie wollen wir unsere Zukunft?" Mann commented: 'Die Demokratie nannte Bernhard Shaw [...] die gleiche Hochachtung vor allen Menschen', before quoting directly from Shaw's unnamed essay "unser heutiges Parlament ist veraltet, es kann die Arbeit eines modernen Staatswesens ebensowenig verrichten wie Julius Cäsars Galeere die eines Ozeandampfers" (S, 99).

Coudenhove-Kalergi's views. By the mid-1930s he had broken completely with the *Pan-Europa-Bewegung*. He was to claim later in his autobiography Der Wendepunkt that his initial welcoming of the movement had been more the result of political naivety than true belief, perceiving it as the only alternative he had believed open to him in the light of rising nationalism.

Throughout the Weimar Republic Heinrich Mann published numerous articles calling for a United States of Europe. An early supporter of Coudenhove-Kalergi, he was one of the first to distance himself from the *Pan-Europa-Bewegung*. Heinrich Mann's vision of Europe had, at its base, the improvement in Franco-German co-operation, with the ultimate objective of unification. If these two nations could unite then, Heinrich Mann believed, so could the other nations of the European continent. Those who had a duty to call for federation were, he proposed, the intellectuals. Klaus Mann had revealed himself indebted to the ideas of his uncle when, in 1927 in 'Heute und Morgen' he too had advocated that France and Germany were at the heart of Europe and had indicated that neither country could exist without the support of the other.

The Europe Klaus Mann had proposed in 1927 was based on the continent's changed role in the wake of the First World War. The balance of power no longer lay in the European continent but had been shared between the USA in the West and the USSR in the East. Economic and political union would, Klaus Mann had maintained, ensure Europe's continued existence as an independent continent, strong enough to resist the overtures of East and West. At this early stage his views had revealed his great reliance on the works of Coudenhove-Kalergi and Heinrich Mann. By the publication of 'Die Jugend und Paneuropa' in 1930 Mann's ideas had developed; indeed his whole concept of Europe had evolved away from the narrow definition of 1927.

Mann's criticism of the French author Henri Massis in 'Die Jugend und Paneuropa' in 1930 gave him the opportunity to redefine his concept of 'Europeanism'. In 1928 Massis had

published Défense de l'occident, translated and published in Germany as Die Verteidigung des Abendlandes. It is this version with which Mann was familiar and with which he took issue. Massis had proposed to unite Europe through Roman Catholicism, returning the seat of European power to Rome. He had revealed himself to be vehemently opposed to the East in general, and Germany and Russia in particular, perceiving in both these nations a threat to European security. Germany and specifically Luther and Kant, he had maintained, had started the movement which had led to the usurpation of Roman Catholicism as the major religion in Europe. Russia's atheism he felt was a continuation of this process. Russia, moreover, in his opinion stood poised to over-run the Western nations. His advocacy of Roman Catholicism and fear of the East revealed his close ties with the *Action française*, of which Massis had been a member throughout the twenties and an organisation which, incidentally, Mann had attacked in 1927 in 'Heute und Morgen'.

Mann interpreted these views as showing Massis' proposal for a return to the Crusades of the Middle Age, and the bloodshed this would entail. In his reading of Verteidigung des Abendlandes, Mann saw the contradiction of his basic humanist belief in the equality and freedom of all peoples. In Mann's opinion, Massis proposed merely hegemonic rule over other nations. Mann's concept of Europe had no place for the aggression towards other nations which he saw underlying Massis' views. Indeed, Mann had proposed this ideal as a means to defeat the threat of war. Greater co-operation between nations, he had believed, would balance the increasingly strident nationalistic calls across the continent of Europe.

What Massis understood by 'Europeanism' was to Mann's mind a very restricted definition. His concept of Europeanism was more widely embracing. In 1930 he asserted in 'Die Jugend und Paneuropa': "Wahrhaft europäisch ist nur, was sich zugleich öffnet und bewahrt, was in sich aufnimmt, ohne sich zu verlieren" (S, 71). In an age which affirmed national identity, Mann proposed a balance between this and external influence. It was this balance he saw embodied in one part of French youth but sadly lacking in his own compatriots:

Was ich an dem besten Teil der französischen Jugend bewundere, ist aber gerade die Elastizität, die Sicherheit, die Eleganz, mit der sie nach dem Kriege ihr Weltbild und ihr Lebensgefühl erweitert und verändert hat, ohne daß es ihr eigentlichstes, französisch-europäisches Wesen verletzt hatte. Bei jungen Deutschen fand ich häufig, daß sie sich entweder mit einer ungesunden Absolutheit alles deutschen, manchmal alles europäischen Wesens, zugunsten amerikanischer oder russischer Einflüsse, entäußerten; oder daß sie mit einem gewissen verrohten Eigensinn über ihre völkischen Belange nicht hinweg kamen (S, 71-72).

Europeanism, according to Mann's definition, embodied basic humanist principles. More importantly, it offered a pluralistic approach to the world, not desiring constraint to any one belief to the exclusion of all else. On this point it is possible to see the earlier appeal in 1927 of the *Pan-Europa-Bewegung*, for Richard Coudenhove-Kalergi had conceived of the movement within the political sphere as quite definitely *überparteilich*¹³². Mann's own adaptation of this was an extension of views to which he had testified in 'Fragment von der Jugend' from 1926. There he had disputed the validity of one narrow belief, claiming: "man hat Angst vor dem Dogma, die begrenzte Meinung kann niemals erlösen" (S, 7).

Mann's advocacy of Europe did, however, have one fundamental flaw. As an ideal its logic could not be questioned, but as with many ideals it had little substance behind it. Mann offered no suggestions as to how unification might have been achieved. Indeed, this characterises his call for unification throughout his lifetime; from the theoretical perspective his argument cannot be faulted, from the more pragmatic viewpoint it has many shortcomings.

This criticism can, in fact, be applied more generally to Mann's concept of the future in 'Zur Situation 1930'. Once more he fell into the trap of speaking in the abstract rather than proposing practical solutions. Whilst conceding in 'Wie wollen wir unsere Zukunft?': "Wir gehen, immer, wenn wir von der Zukunft sprechen, von der Voraussetzung aus, daß die

¹³² Richard Coudenhove-Kalergi defined the movement in 1928 when he wrote: "Die Paneuropa-Bewegung verhält sich streng überparteilich: sie organisiert ihre Anhänger ohne Rücksicht auf deren Partei und Weltanschauung und ist bereit, mit allen Parteien zusammenzuarbeiten, deren außenpolitische Einstellung paneuropäisch ist", *Kampf um Paneuropa* vol. III (Vienna & Leipzig: Paneuropa Verlag, 1928), 11.

Menschheit sich auf einem Wege befinde" (S, 98), Mann undermined his argument when he continued: "wenn auch auf einem, der in Spiralen verläuft und dessen Ziel in völliger Dunkelheit liegt" (S, 98). At a time in which it behoved him to outline in definite and clear terms exactly what should be done were catastrophe to be averted, Mann returned to the discussion of abstract ideals and theoretical approaches which had characterised essays such as 'Fragment von der Jugend' in 1926 and 'Heute und Morgen' in 1927.

Mann's vision of the future was essentially progressive. By the time 1930 arrived he had rejected the fatalism characteristic of 'Fragment von der Jugend' in 1926. It was essentially a rejection of stasis and retrogression: "Wie wollen wir unsere Zukunft?", he asked in autumn 1930, "Wir wollen sie doch gewiß nicht genau ebenso, wie die Gegenwart ist, das hätte ja keinen Sinn und noch sinnloser wäre es, sie etwa so zu wollen, wie die Vergangenheit war" (S, 98). For Mann the future gradually evolved out of past and present, with each stage a learning process towards the next. It was this which he implied in "An der Vergangenheit hängen, die Gegenwart lieben, an die Zukunft glauben" (S, 113). Even Mann's apparent optimism could not disguise, however, the fact that the immediate outlook was bleak. As Mann acknowledged: "Ach, das Bild der Vergangenheit ist nicht rein, die Gegenwart schrecklich; die Zukunft bietet keine guten Perspektiven" (S, 113).

1.4 'Der synthetische Typ' - the Reconciliation of Aestheticism and Polemicism

In 1930 Klaus Mann wrote in 'Wie wollen wir unsere Zukunft?': "Die Frage, ob der Dichter die Welt ändern könnte, ob es seine Berufung sei, dies zu tun, würde uns sehr tief in die Problematik des Künstlerischen überhaupt hineinführen" (S, 110). With this play on Benn's essay titles 'Können Dichter die Welt ändern?' and 'Zur Problematik des Dichterischen' Mann announced his intention of formulating his own concept of the *Künstler*. His choice of the term *künstlerisch* as opposed to Benn's *dichterisch* is interesting. Throughout 'Können Dichter die Welt ändern?' and 'Zur Problematik des Dichterischen' Benn had used *Dichter* and *Künstler* fairly interchangeably, contrasting them with the *Schriftsteller*, the juxtaposition of the artist and the pragmatist. Mann's use of *Künstler*, however, assumed a far wider

meaning, becoming almost generic as it incorporated elements of both *Dichter* and *Schriftsteller* alike. By this means he aimed for the reconciliation of the aestheticism of 1926 expressed in 'Fragment von der Jugend' with the activism characterising 'Zur Situation 1930'.

At no point did Mann truly reject the convictions to which he had testified in the 1926 essay 'Fragment von der Jugend'. There he had in essence emphasised individuality and disregarded, in effect, the demands of society. However, by late 1926 Mann's total conformity with these ideas was already declining. Synthesis and 'der synthetische Typ', a term introduced in his review 'Auf Reisen gelesen. Über Hans Henny Jahn und Otto Flake'¹³³ and then developed in 'Heute und Morgen', combined the introversion of reflection with the extroversion of involvement in society. It corresponded to the open-minded approach for which Mann argued throughout his career. As Grunewald has commented: "Défendre une forme d'esprit synthétique, c'est, par définition, admettre qu'une multiplicité de points de vues ont le droit de s'exprimer"¹³⁴. From an initial broaching of the subject in 'Heute und Morgen' Mann was not given an opportunity to expand upon these views until autumn 1930, when he delivered the speech 'Wie wollen wir unsere Zukunft?'. Here he chose two authors in particular as examples of synthesis, coincidentally those closest to him - Thomas and Heinrich Mann.

Both Klaus Mann and Gottfried Benn regarded Heinrich Mann as the archetype for their own individual standpoints. For Benn, Heinrich Mann was the true *Dichter*, a view which was not without controversy¹³⁵. Indeed, Klaus Mann responded directly to Benn in his criticism of him in 'Wie wollen wir unsere Zukunft?'

¹³³ In the essay, Mann had defined his understanding of 'synthesis' when he commented: "Wir leben in der Zeit, da vieles Unwahrscheinliche zusammenkommen soll, in der schwierigen Zeit der Synthesen - [...] - wir haben die aufregende Pflicht, nach vielen Seiten hin den Blick offen zu halten", 'Auf Reisen gelesen. Über Hans Henny Jahn und Otto Flake', first published in *Neues Wiener Journal*, 21. October 1926. Reprinted in *Die neuen Eltern*, 88-93 (88).

¹³⁴ Michel Grunewald, *Klaus Mann 1906 - 1949*, 425.

¹³⁵ In the speech 'Heinrich Mann zum 60. Geburtstag' (reprinted in *Gesammelte Werke I*, 129-139) Benn insisted on referring to Heinrich Mann throughout as *der Dichter Heinrich Mann*, by his own definition excluding Heinrich Mann's extensive essayistic work.

Sie zitieren oft Heinrich Mann, den Sie besonders verehren. Nun, ich denke, er wäre ein besonders repräsentatives Beispiel dafür, wie man künstlerische Vereinsamung, artistische Passion nicht nur mit politischer Gesinnung, sondern sogar mit schärfster politischer Aktivität vereinigen kann (S, 109-110).

In Klaus Mann's opinion his uncle embodied the reconciliation of the activist with the aesthete. Heinrich Mann demonstrated that both could co-exist without apparent contradiction, that 'der synthetische Typ' was feasible not only in theory but also in practice.

In October 1930 Thomas Mann delivered the speech 'Deutsche Ansprache. *Ein Appell an die Vernunft*'¹³⁶. Having been invited to give a reading in Berlin he had then asked himself, "ob es sich lohne, ob es auch nur anständig und irgendwie vertretbar sei, unter den heutigen Umständen nach Berlin zu kommen, um ein Romankapitel vorzulesen und, etwas Lob und Kritik in der Tasche, [...] wieder nach Hause zu fahren" (Ansprache, 185). His reference to 'den heutigen Umständen', his speculation "ob es sich lohne, ob es auch nur anständig und irgendwie vertretbar sei" indicated an awareness of the suitability of art to the historical moment. The resulting speech addressed not questions of art but the recent success of the NSDAP, indicating his opposition to National Socialism and calling for support for the Social Democrats. In Thomas Mann's opinion, the writer could not be divorced from the world, artistic creation did not and should not exist in splendid isolation.

Thomas Mann's 'Deutsche Ansprache' and Klaus Mann's 'Wie wollen wir unsere Zukunft?' are contemporary, written and delivered in the light of increased National Socialist representation in the German *Reichstag*. Without doubt, it was to his father's speech that Klaus Mann alluded when he stated:

Er [Thomas Mann] hatte die Hochherzigkeit und den Mut, in die tagespolitische Arena zu steigen, sein höchst persönliches, eigensinnig und religiös persönliches Werk vorübergehend im Stich zu lassen, um dem deutschen Bürgertum [...] zu erklären, daß die Sozialdemokratie ihm näher stünde als irgendein 'militanter Neonationalismus' (S, 110).

¹³⁶ Thomas Mann, 'Deutsche Ansprache. Ein Appell an die Vernunft', *Politische Schriften und Reden 2*. (Frankfurt & Hamburg: Fischer, 1968), 185-200. Further references are given after quotation in the text.

The use of 'im Stich lassen' recalled his appeal in the same speech to German intellectuals to put their *Geistesinteressen* to one side. Once more Klaus Mann revealed here his belief in the duty of the writer to society and the interdependency between the age and the role of the intellectual. By drawing upon the example of his father, Klaus Mann was able to exemplify in 'Wie wollen wir unsere Zukunft?' the mutual relationship between author and society. His father, he believed, was conscious of a greater duty other than his own literary creation. From Klaus Mann's standpoint, the exclusive concerns proposed by Benn, had been set aside by Thomas Mann in favour of a more universal desire to work for the common good, transforming the introversion of artistic creation into the extroversion of political polemicism.

In emphasising that his father put his 'Werk', that is, his art, to one side to address the specific political context, Klaus Mann was in danger of over-simplifying his father's position. The publication of Mario und der Zauberer, for example, in 1930, with its critique of Italian fascism, illustrated that Thomas Mann did not regard art and politics as mutually exclusive. However, Klaus Mann deliberately presented his father's stance in this way to illustrate his own perception of the artist. Mann believed at this time that the writer had to act either as commentator or creator, believing that these two roles co-existed within the artistic personality. Although his views would change in exile where his fiction became an extension of his desire to fight National Socialism, in 1930 he did not advocate that the roles merge in the work of art. As such this initially appears the antithesis of synthesis. However, for Mann, synthesis denoted the writer's recognition of the dual role he had to perform. He explained his position in 1930 when he wrote on the nature of the artist in 'Wie wollen wir unsere Zukunft?':

Sein Gesicht ist doppelt, er kann die eine Hälfte oder die andere zeigen; er kann die eine Hälfte mit der anderen verbergen. In den Stunden äußerster Gefahr sollte er dies geheimnisvolle Doppelspiel aufgeben; aufgeben wenigstens in den Stunden, wo er nicht bildet und schafft, sondern spricht, erklärt und Stellung nimmt (S, 111)

This represented the reconciliation of the ideas of 1926 with those of 1927. The artist according to him was essentially dualistic in nature, both creator and activist. The two aspects of the *Künstler* became those of *bilden* and *schaffen* (the *Dichter*) and *sprechen, erklären, Stellung nehmen* (the *Schriftsteller*). The primacy of either was dependent on the historical moment. It is this definition which goes some way to explaining Mann's statement in 1937, made in the essay 'Gottfried Benn. *Die Geschichte einer Verirrung*' published in *Das Wort*: "Als Ästhet beginnen und als Sozialist enden: ich habe in solcher Entwicklungskurve ein Paradox niemals zu sehen vermocht"¹³⁷. Here 'Sozialist' should not be taken in its narrow political definition. In the context of Mann's work as a whole, 'Sozialist' has far wider implications, denoting involvement in the external world, and interaction with events and needs within this world. The essays of the Weimar Republic go some way towards tracing this development.

Essentially, Mann's essayistic prose during this period is characterised by frequent reappraisals and re-evaluations of his ideas and beliefs, with an increasing urgency as the Weimar Republic drew to an end, to address political events and social trends. Between 1926 and 1931 his ideas, his perception of the role of the intellectual and writer within society, indeed, his concept of art and literature evolved away from initial conformity with the aims of the aesthetic movement until, in 1930, he could claim in 'Wie wollen wir unsere Zukunft?': "Wir können auf verschiedenen Ebenen leben und denken. Klarheit und Aktivität auf der einen, schließen Hintergründigkeit und Tiefe auf der anderen Seite nicht aus" (S, 110). The realisation of the multi-faceted dimension to the writer marked, in essence, the culmination of Mann's progression from aesthete to activist as he reconciled in 'Zur Situation 1930' the aestheticism, so dominant a feature in 1926 in 'Fragment von der Jugend', with the emerging political consciousness characteristic of 'Heute und Morgen' of 1927.

¹³⁷ Klaus Mann, 'Gottfried Benn, *Die Geschichte einer Verirrung*', *Das Wunder von Madrid. Aufsätze, Reden, Kritiken 1936-1938*, ed. by Uwe Naumann, and Michael Töteberg (Reinbek: Rowohlt, 1993), 237-246 (244).

Klaus Mann and the German Critical Press

The reception of his fiction between 1924 and 1933

Mann's debut as a writer of fiction, marked by the publication in 1924 of his first volume of short stories Vor dem Leben¹, attracted the intense media interest and critical scrutiny more usually reserved for works by established writers². It continued throughout the Weimar Republic with each new book he published being extensively reviewed by many of the leading journals and periodicals of the day. This interest was generated partly by Mann's status as the son of Thomas Mann and nephew of Heinrich Mann, a situation which was not without its own peculiar drawbacks³, and partly by Klaus Mann himself⁴. He actively encouraged press curiosity, seeking publicity by participating in literary tours, giving interviews, reading from his work on radio, courting controversy in his speeches and bridging the gap between writer and performer by writing and starring in the plays Anja und Esther (1925) and Revue zu Vieren (1927)⁵.

Mann's apparent openness, however, belied an essentially uneasy and, at times, strained relationship between himself and the German press in general and, more specifically, between himself and the literary press, which persisted throughout the Weimar Republic. His private correspondence for the period from 1924 to 1933 and his diary entries for 1931 to

¹ Klaus Mann, Vor dem Leben (Hamburg: Gebrüder Enoch Verlag, 1925), reprinted in Klaus Mann, Maskenscherz. Die frühen Erzählungen, ed. by Uwe Naumann, 13-35 & 48-127. The earliest piece, 'Die Jungen', based on Mann's experiences at school, dated from approximately 1921 when Mann was fifteen. Four pieces, three taken from Mann's adaptation of the story of the mysterious foundling Kaspar Hauser, popularised by Jakob Wassermann in Germany and Paul Verlaine in France, and the fourth, 'Der Alte', based once more on Mann's schooldays, first appeared in newspapers. 'Kaspar Hausers Begräbnis' was printed in the Vossische Zeitung on 30 September 1924, also the place of first publication for 'Kaspar Hauser und die blinde Frau', although Michel Grunewald notes there is no precise date for this piece (Michel Grunewald, Klaus Mann 1906-1949. Eine Bibliographie, 23). 'Der Alte' appeared in the Berlin paper Das Zwölf Uhr Abendblatt of 6 November 1924; 6 days later, on 12 November 1924, the Acht Uhr Abendblatt printed the fourth piece, 'Kaspar Hausers Traum von Morgen'.

² In an untitled article in the book of remembrance Klaus Mann zum Gedächtnis, ed. by Erika Mann (Amsterdam: Querido Verlag 1950) (33.45) Erich Ebermayer, a close friend from 1925 to 1933, recalled Mann's high profile at the time of his launch. "Die Presse wimmelte in diesem Sommer [1925]", he commented, "von Notizen, Interviews, Vorabdrucken, Ankündigungen, 'Der Sohn des Dichters' wurde von einem übereifrigen Heer von Journalisten plötzlich zur Sensation gemacht" (35). The significance of the phrase 'der Sohn des Dichters' for its impact on the reviews shall be discussed later in this chapter.

³ The disadvantage of his birth with regard to its impact on his reviewers shall be discussed later in this chapter.

⁴ In Thomas Mann. Eine Biographie vol. I (Reinbek: Rowohlt, 1996), Klaus Harprecht summarised this courting of publicity by Mann with the concise statement: "Der Jüngling, mit solch reichen Talenten versehen, konnte nur selten der Versuchung widerstehen, sich in Szene zu setzen" (602-603).

⁵ Klaus Mann starred alongside his sister Erika and childhood friend, Pamela Wedekind, the daughter of Frank Wedekind in both these plays. In 1927 for Revue zu Vieren they were joined by Gustaf Gründgens, who also directed the play.

1933⁶, testify to his conviction that the animosity directed at him by his critics, as illustrated primarily in personalised attacks on him, influenced their reviews of his work. His letters, in particular, catalogue an ongoing search for positive appraisals of his work, as he called upon such as Stefan Zweig and Hermann Hesse to help him counteract the extreme hostility towards his texts that he perceived within the pages of Weimar's literary reviews⁷. Both in letters to his immediate circle of friends and family, and in his diary, Mann frequently accused his harshest critics of prejudice, suggesting they allowed their personal enmity and antipathy towards him as an individual obscure the objective and impartial judgement required of the reviewer⁸.

Mann's suspicions about the critical press crystallised first into disillusion and then into overt antagonism towards his most vehement critics. He defined his position in a statement made in 1930, following the overwhelmingly negative response to his novel Alexander, published in late 1929. Writing to Stefan Zweig on 1 June 1930, and making reference to Zweig's review of Alexander⁹, Mann denounced what he perceived as the parlous state of German literary criticism, commenting: "Die Buchbesprechung ist bei uns heute im ganzen

⁶ Mann had kept a diary in childhood and adolescence, but stopped the practice in early adulthood. In October 1931, after re-reading his old diaries for his first autobiography Kind dieser Zeit (1932), he recommenced and continued until his death. The entries are written in a shorthand, note form and initially document little more than his work in progress and its reception, and those he had met during the day. Increasingly, they then record in addition, his response to developments in Germany, the experience of exile, his battle against drug addiction, detailing both the drugs and the quantities he had consumed, and of his struggle against the temptation of suicide.

⁷ Klaus Harprecht comments in Thomas Mann, eine Biographie (585): "[Klaus Mann] war weltkundig genug, das enge Beziehungsgeflecht der Welt des Vaters für sich zu nützen". He isolates in particular Mann's letters to Rainer Maria Rilke, Hugo von Hofmannsthal and Stefan Zweig, correctly demonstrating how, on examination, they follow a set pattern; in which Mann flattered the author addressed, wrote that he had just finished reading the respective works, followed with a humble request for comments on his own, enclosed text.

⁸ This accusation of prejudice first appears in November 1925. Following the Hamburg premiere of his play Anja und Esther in 1925, Mann expressed his irritation, in a letter to his father, at the discrepancy between the audience's favourable response and the hostility of the critics. "Obwohl das Hamburger Publikum sich sehr nett gegen uns verhalten hat", he wrote, "hat das boshafte, gehässige und voreingenommene Mißverständnis, das fast die gesamte Presse mir entgegengebracht hat, mich doch gekränkt" (6.11.25, BA, 27). In June 1927, Mann then identified a causal link between his name and negative reviews when he tendered his resignation as co-editor of the forthcoming Anthologie jüngster Prosa, a volume of prose by new writers modelled on the Anthologie jüngster Lyrik he had just published with Willi Fehse. Referring to the negative critical response the earlier volume had received on publication, he wrote to Hans Rosenkranz, his co-editor on the new project. Prefacing his remarks with the observation, "Mit welcher Voreingenommenheit begegnet man diesem unschuldigen Gedichtbuch, nur weil mein Name auf dem Titelblatt steht", he then advised his colleague to reconsider the prudence of Mann's involvement before ending: "Ihre Besuche auf den wichtigsten Berliner Redaktionen haben Ihnen vielleicht bewiesen, daß Sie unbeschwerter *ohne* mich starten" (28.6.27, BA, 46). By December 1932 he had decided to adopt the pseudonym Vinzenz Höfer when attempting to publish his play Athen. A desire to circumvent the preconceptions of his reviewers had prompted him to take this course of action, he explained in a letter to Stefan Zweig. Referring to the past critical failures of his plays in the observation "Das lag sicher *auch* an den Stücken" (BA, 82) before reaching the conclusion "aber ebenso sicher auch an einer böartigen Voreingenommenheit der Theaterpresse [...] gegen mich" (1.12.32, BA, 82-83).

⁹ Stefan Zweig, Zwei historische Romane (Richard Friedenthal, "Der Eroberer" - Klaus Mann, "Alexander"), typescript dated 1930, printed in Stefan Zweig, Begegnungen mit Büchern. Aufsätze und Einleitungen aus den Jahren 1902 - 1939, ed. by Knut Beck (Fischer: Frankfurt, 1983), 133-137. Zweig offered a long, detailed and positive review of Alexander which he defined as marking a decisive step in Mann's development as a writer. Emphasising that the novel should not be confused with an exercise in historical research, Zweig illustrated how, in its style and language, Mann had made the age-old story of Alexander the Great applicable to the modern age, praising Mann for his portrayal of Alexander, in particular, as epitomising the exuberance and vitality of youth throughout the ages.

auf einem solchen Niveau, daß eine Kritik wie Ihre einen doppelt erfreut und stärkt" (1.6.30, BA, 69).

This chapter analyses the reviews of Mann's work. It asks if Klaus Mann's disillusion with the literary reviewers was justified or whether this disillusion was born of the author's resentment of negative criticism and his bitterness alone. I have considered only reviews published in German journals although reference is made as required to some unpublished material and foreign texts. The selection is restricted because many of the reviews did not survive the National Socialist regime. I have focused primarily upon the critical reaction to Mann's fiction between 1924 and 1933 - to the two volumes of short stories, Vor dem Leben (1924) and Abenteuer (1928), and the three novels, Der fromme Tanz, Abenteuerbuch einer Jugend (1926), Alexander. Roman einer Utopie (1929) and Treffpunkt im Unendlichen (1932). As necessary, it includes reviews of his performed plays Anja und Esther (1926) and Revue zu Vieren (1927).

I have divided these critiques into four main groups. The first concentrates upon reviews by Harald Braun in the journal Eckart as an example of a 'neutral' approach to Mann's texts. Two and three are related, in that they assess the approach taken by reviewers and writers who attested first and foremost to a political and ideological commitment; two focuses upon criticisms by those on the far left, whilst three concentrates upon those from the far right. The final section analyses the reviews by Mann's friends and by those who, with regard to the nature of fiction, most closely agree with the author.

The reviews are placed within the cultural and political context in which they were written, with an outline of those factors which, whilst external to the work, may nevertheless have influenced the reviewer. I shall begin, however, by outlining the developments within the genre of the literary review during the Weimar Republic.

2.1 The literary review in the Weimar Republic¹⁰

When, in 1930, Mann complained to Stefan Zweig of the parlous state of the review in Germany, his words in general were justified. The Weimar Republic witnessed an unprecedented explosion in the publication and sale of books¹¹, and with it a corresponding increase in demand for reviews. This demand came from a variety of sources: from the consumer turning to the reviews for 'independent' advice, although, as shall be clarified shortly, this advice was rarely impartial; from the publishers, who, realising the commercial benefits of a good review in terms of increased revenue from book sales, used the review as part of a wider marketing strategy to newspaper proprietors anxious to establish the 'serious' credentials of their journals for which a review section proved indispensable¹².

In his study of the review during the Weimar Republic, Thomas Rietzschel summarises the general situation when he comments: "Es wurde rezensiert und kritisiert, was immer im Druck erschien, vom *Kochbuch* bis zum *Zauberberg*, oftmals von ein und demselben 'Kritiker'"¹³. He uses inverted commas here advisedly for, although the demand for reviews was great, by contrast, skilled and experienced reviewers were rare. The ensuing shortage resulted in a situation where anyone, irrespective of ability, could, with ease, be deemed a reviewer. As Rietzschel notes: "Da sich kaum eine Zeitung einen besoldeten Buchkritiker leistete, konnte, wer nur wollte und einen Redakteur kannte, sich über Bücher auslassen, gleich ob er zu lesen, zu schreiben, zu urteilen verstand"¹⁴. The ease with which a person could become a reviewer led to a general lowering of standards, assessed by Rietzschel with

¹⁰ For a more detailed account than is possible to give here, see Russell A. Berman, 'Literaturkritik zwischen Reichsgründung und 1933', *Geschichte der deutschen Literaturkritik (1730-1980)*, ed. by Peter Uwe Hohendahl (Stuttgart: Metzler, 1985), 205-274, Rolf Geißler, 'Form und Methoden der nationalsozialistischen Literaturkritik', *Neophilologus* 51 (1967), 262-277, Thomas Rietzschel, 'Kritik ohne Maßstab? Gedanken zur bürgerlichen Literaturkritik der zwanziger Jahre', *Weimarer Beiträge* 27 (1981) vol. 7 103-133.

¹¹ This sudden rise in book sales can be directly attributed to advances in the printing industry. Previously book buying had been the preserve of the affluent middle classes because of their relatively high cost directly attributable to the labour intensive means of their production. However, developments in technology during the first decades of this century revolutionised the printing industry, reduced production costs and in turn led to a reduction in cost to the consumer to make books affordable for all.

¹² The review had long been associated with the established quality press before the Weimar Republic. Thus, from a desire to emulate them, many new newspaper proprietors decided to include one in their journals.

¹³ Thomas Rietzschel, 'Kritik ohne Maßstab?', 112.

¹⁴ Thomas Rietzschel, 'Kritik ohne Maßstab?', 113

the words: "das große Heer der Rezensenten [...] bot bestenfalls bescheidenes Mittelmaß an"¹⁵.

Yet these comments are pertinent only to the review in general; whilst they appear to confirm Mann's poor assessment of book criticism and undoubtedly applied to some reviews of his work, they do not strictly apply to the critiques of Mann's work under discussion in this chapter. Klaus Mann's work was reviewed in a wide variety of newspapers, journals and magazines, both in Germany and abroad by some of the leading reviewers of the Republic. The reviews included in this chapter are taken from a selection of these journals: from Die schöne Literatur on the far right to Die Weltbühne, its political counterpart on the left, to the 'middle of the road', liberal papers, Die neue Rundschau, Der Querschnitt and Die literarische Welt; from the trade journal Der Bücherwurm, to the organ of the Protestant Church Eckart¹⁶. Collectively, they represent some of the most respected literary publications of the day; journals highly regarded by many of the leading cultural figures and to which they regularly contributed. Many of his reviewers were 'besoldete Buchkritiker', regular, paid contributors to quality journals, who, in many instances, combined this, as Mann did himself, with their main career as respected writers; a fact that made them eminently capable of 'reading and judging' a given text.

Two forms of criticism predominated during the Weimar Republic, defined by Rietzschel as *Literaturwissenschaft* and *Literaturkritik*¹⁷. Whilst each implies 'criticism of a text', they

¹⁵ Thomas Rietzschel, 'Kritik ohne Maßstab?', 113. Rietzschel's views are confirmed by several contemporary assessments which also substantiate Klaus Mann's poor assessment of literary criticism in his homeland. In August 1930, for example, the film critic Siegfried Kracauer noted in the Frankfurter Zeitung: "Mehr oder minder unbekannte Kritiker füllen die Tageszeitungen und Zeitschriften mit Rezensionen, die entweder ahnungslos sind oder vom persönlichen Vorteil diktiert. Dilettantische Willkür, Cliqueswirtschaft und unsachliche Interessen beherrschen das Feld. [...]. Was ist geschehen im literarischen Deutschland? Und wohin sind die redlichen Kritiker geschwunden, deren Sehvermögen ungetrübt ist? Sie täten uns dringend not." Quoted from Anton Kaes, Weimarer Republik. Manifeste und Dokument zur deutschen Literatur 1918-1933 (Stuttgart: Metzler, 1983) 303. Two years later, replying to a questionnaire by Die Weltbühne on literary criticism in Germany, the novelist Hermann Kesten launched a scathing attack in the article 'Kritik der Literaturkritik' (first published in Die Weltbühne 22 November 1932, reprinted in Anton Kaes, Weimarer Republik 302-303.) Written as a series of numbered points, he began his article: "Wer will, schreibt was er will, über wen er will, und wo er will [...]. Literaturkritiker sind entweder Redakteure [...]; oder die Frauen von Redakteuren; oder Oberlehrer; oder Anfänger, die kein Geld haben und zu geringe Honorare erhalten, um die Bücher, über die sie schreiben, zu lesen; oder Schriftsteller, die leider nur gelegentlich schreiben, aus Freundschaft für einen Autor, aus Haß gegen einen Autor", (303). Erich Kästner echoed Kesten in his reply. "Wir haben zwar Theaterkritiker, Kunstkritiker, Musikkritiker und Filmkritiker, aber Literaturkritiker haben wir nicht", he noted, before continuing: "Und wir haben keine, weil die Buchkritik in Deutschland kein Beruf sondern ein Nebenberuf ist. Menschen, die das Bedürfnis und die Begabung zum literarischen Rezensenten haben, sind vor die Alternative gestellt: entweder zu verhungern oder keine Bücher zu besprechen. Die meisten ziehen das letztere vor," quoted from Kaes, Weimarer Republik 303.

¹⁶ For a discussion of the characteristics of these journals see Fritz Schlawe, Literarische Zeitschriften Vol. II 1910-1933, (Stuttgart: Metzler, 1962).

¹⁷ Thomas Rietzschel, 'Kritik ohne Maßstab?', 103.

also suggest a difference in approach to literary criticism. *Literaturwissenschaft*, the formal study of literature written for a predominantly academic audience, was a legacy of Wilhelmine practice, whereby criticism was regarded exclusively and primarily as a scholarly discussion of a work in terms of the aesthetic principles employed by the author. In contrast, the more general term, *Literaturkritik*, embraced this formal literary criticism but then narrowed its terms of reference; *Literaturkritik* applied solely to criticism published in the literary journals and review sections of the daily German newspapers. They were, in consequence, aimed at a wider and potentially more diverse audience. When Mann demanded impartiality in the judgement of his work, he interpreted criticism as *Literaturwissenschaft*, yet the reviews of his own work were *Literaturkritik*. In consequence, I am concerned primarily with *Literaturkritik* and its judgement of Klaus Mann's texts.

In the 1920s the term *Literaturkritik* carried with it a number of secondary connotations. Literary criticism did not simply refer to a mere critique of a given text independently of external considerations. The politicisation of literature in the early years of the Weimar Republic, associated with the rise of Expressionism and Dada, had removed the traditional distinction between art, society and the political life of the nation; in turn, the belief that a work could be reviewed in isolation as a work of art for and in itself was also rejected. It still considered the aesthetic quality of a work; in the highly charged political atmosphere of the Republic, however, with its closer inter-relationship between the political and cultural lives of the nation, the review evolved to consider, in addition, the social and political components of the work¹⁸.

The impact on literary criticism, at this time, of ideological and political factors external to the text, cannot be underestimated. In an age of close interaction between politics and culture, reviewers were no longer expected to pretend either impartiality or objectivity in the judgements they made. As the Republic progressed and, increasingly, writers were called

¹⁸ For a discussion of these issues see Thomas Rietzschel, 'Kritik ohne Maßstab?', 106. As his archetypes for the new type of critic who took these external influences into consideration he selects three of the most well-known and respected left-wing critics - Siegfried Jacobsohn, Kurt Tucholsky and Herbert Jhering, all of whom, he claims, made criticism secondary to practical objectives and supported their literary criticism with overt political views.

upon to declare their political allegiances in their work and public statements, the review became an instrument of covert political propaganda for the parties of the extreme left and right in which the personal viewpoints of individual critics were indistinguishable from the ideological doctrine of the party or interest group they represented. Writers such as Klaus Mann who, despite this highly politicised literary context, refused to identify with a specific ideology or political party¹⁹, in consequence found themselves condemned by right and left alike.

2.2 Harald Braun in Eckart 1924 - 1926

The journal Eckart, founded originally in the late nineteenth century, discontinued in 1915 and relaunched in October 1924, represented the views of the Protestant Church in Germany; indeed, its full title ran Eckart. Blätter für evangelische Geisteskultur. Originally edited by a committee, the 'Deutsche Zentralstelle zur Förderung der Volks- und Jugendfürsorge', in 1924 it came under the sole editorship of Harald Braun, the reviewer of the three critiques under consideration here. It aimed to lead its readers through the potential literary chaos of the day, assessing the literary and cultural questions of the day from a primarily protestant perspective. The journal included articles on all aspects of Weimar culture, attracting contributions from a diverse cross-section of Weimar literary life, including, amongst others, Alfred Döblin, Ernst Jünger, Ricarda Huch and Kolbenheyer. The reviews included here, of Vor dem Leben, Der fromme Tanz and Kindernovelle, are all taken from the early years of the relaunched Eckart and were published between 1924 and 1926.

¹⁹ From the evidence of his essays, diaries and autobiographies, Mann was, with many of his intellectual and artistic equals, *linksbürgerlich*, a centre left supporter of the Republic, a believer in social democracy as advocated by the SPD and opponent of extremist elements committed to the Republic's overthrow. In exile, possibly from a desire to dissociate himself firmly from the political situation in Germany, his position moved more to the left, although he never renounced his opposition to the totalitarianism of communism and the denial of individual freedom of thought he believed it demanded. This was implied, for example, in 1937, when Mann denounced the USSR and supporters of the communist regime for its condemnation of André Gide criticising in print the political and social conditions in Russia, "Drei Jahre lang gab es keinen antifaschistischen Aufruf, kein revolutionäres Manifest, für das man Gides Namen nicht beansprucht hätte. Heute aber - heute kann man in der Prawda lesen, daß Gide als ein 'aufs äußerste beschränkter französischer Kleinbürger', als ein in sich selbst verliebter Individualist' zu betrachten sei - und die Schriftsteller der Partei wetteifern mit den unbedingt 'Sympathisierenden' in der Kunst, die verächtlichsten, herabsetzendsten, bösesten Worte gegen André Gide zu finden", 'Der Streit um André Gide', first published in Die neue Weltbühne, 11 February 1937, reprinted in Das Wunder von Madrid. Aufsätze, Reden, Kritiken, 1936-1938, ed. by Uwe Naumann, and Michael Töteberg (Reinbek: Rowohlt, 1993), 84-94 (87). In 1939, whilst an exile in America, Klaus Mann firmly denied any association other than that arising from intellectual curiosity with the communist movement, after accusations in the Parisian edition of Das Tagebuch that he was a communist agent. Having listed his contacts with the Soviet Union Mann stated quite categorically: "Ich bin weder in meinen politischen noch in meinen kulturpolitischen Gesinnungen und Äußerungen von den Kommunisten beeinflusst worden", before continuing, with reference to his activities in the antifascist movement: "Ich habe in mehreren öffentlichen Erklärungen meinen aufrichtigen Willen zur Volksfront betont, wobei ich es übrigens beinahe nie unterließ, auf die Tatsache hinzuweisen, daß ich selber kein Kommunist und kein Marxist bin", Klaus Mann, 'Ich bin kein Agent der Sowjetunion. Eine Erklärung', Zweimal Deutschland. Aufsätze, Reden, Kritiken 1938-1942, ed. by Uwe Naumann, and Michael Töteberg (Reinbek: Rowohlt, 1994), 167-171, (169).

Braun used his review of Vor dem Leben²⁰ to introduce a potentially unknown author to his readership, and in consequence, kept his criticisms general, referring where possible to the work of Thomas Mann to provide a reference point for his comments. His analysis of Vor dem Leben formed part of a longer article addressing the relative merits of Thomas, Heinrich and Klaus Mann's writing. Within this review it is immediately apparent that Braun proposed Thomas Mann as the ideal of the writer, who combined in his work a concern with the individual and the needs of society. It is against this background that his comments with regard to Klaus Mann's work must be viewed.

Beginning his review with the Hofmannsthal quotation that Mann had taken as his motto for Vor dem Leben, "Denn es ist eine sonderbare Zeit und sonderbare Kinder hat sie, uns", Braun drew attention to the unmistakable autobiographical basis to the stories with the general statement: "Ausschnitte [reihen sich] aus dem Lebenskreis" before reflecting on the themes of these stories. These he defined as "[der] wirre Komplex halb-erfaßter, irregeleiteter, überbildeter Problematik meist erotischer Natur in einer nervösen Angestrengtheit" (280). Braun's condemnation was evident in the overtly negative terms 'halb-erfaßt', implying superficiality, 'irregeleitet' and 'überbildet' and became more apparent when he ignored the overt homosexuality and incest in the texts, referring to these euphemistically as 'die [...] interessanten Geschichten'. In their place, he concentrated on the 'Kaspar-Hauser-Legenden', the cycle of stories with which Vor dem Leben concluded. "Das Märchen von der Anmut, die Kaspar-Hauser-Legenden," he informed his reader, "sind in diesem Buch sicher wesentlicher, als die vorangegangenen 'interessanten' Geschichten". By isolating these stories Braun betrayed his own perception of literature. In comparison with the other stories, these are the most conventional, with Mann using traditional techniques and themes, at times reminiscent of German Romanticism whilst the story of the foundling Kaspar Hauser was

²⁰ Harald Braun, 'Thomas, Klaus und Heinrich Mann', Eckart 1 (1924/25), 278-280. His review of Vor dem Leben formed only a small part of this article which looked at the works of Thomas, Heinrich and Klaus Mann. It coincided with the celebrations to mark Thomas Mann's 50th birthday; as a result, Braun dedicated the majority of his text to an assessment of Thomas Mann's achievements as a writer and his relevance to the younger generation, for whom Braun implicitly proposed himself as spokesman. It proposed Thomas Mann as a model for all writers whilst indirectly assessing Klaus Mann's Vor dem Leben and Heinrich Mann's Der Kopf against Thomas Mann's oeuvre. Further references are given after quotation in the text.

itself a traditional theme which in the first decades of this century had been popularised by Jakob Wassermann²¹.

Yet although he evidently had reservations about Mann's work, Braun did not dismiss it out of hand. In him, Braun recognised a writer of ability whose talent had still to develop and mature, remarking: "Hinter allem steht deutlich eine dichterische Begabung, die sich mit eruptiver Jugendlichkeit in Stoff und Stil ausläßt" (280). Underpinning this talent he perceived the influence of Thomas Mann, believing that this manifested itself particularly in Klaus Mann's portrayal of outsiders in his fiction and his use of frequent repetition²², and suggested that for Klaus Mann to progress as a writer he should follow the example of his father, commenting: "die Persönlichkeit des Vaters als Gegengewicht' fehlt ihm natürlich, dafür scheint sich ihm [...] ein lösender Weg ins mehr Dichterische zu öffnen, das sich ihm vielleicht einst unmittelbarer erschließen mag, als dem Vater"²³.

In his review of Der fromme Tanz that appeared a year later in 1926²⁴ Braun adopted a more aggressively critical approach than was apparent in his review of Vor dem Leben where, taking into account Mann's youth, he had implicitly given him the benefit of the doubt. Here he also instructed his reader to remember both the author's age and the advantage of his birth when reading the novel. "Man muß sich beim Lesen des Buches dieses Zwanzigjährigen stets vor Augen halten", he told them, "daß ihm, als dem Sohn seines Vaters sich der Weg in die Öffentlichkeit zu einer Zeit erschloß, da bei anderen die Romanmanuskripte noch im Pult zu liegen und zu reifen pflegten", before adding the proviso: "unter dem Gesichtspunkt dieses Sonderfalls [...] will der Roman bewertet werden".

²¹ Jakob Wassermann published Caspar Hauser oder Die Trägheit des Herzens in 1908 with the novel quickly becoming a bestseller. Mann was familiar with the work, recalling its impact on him in 1925: "Wie nahe und lieb mir Kaspar Hauser war, als ich das Buch beiseite legte! Wir traurig ich war, daß die Welt ihn so grausam behandelte, den heimatlosen Prinzen, daß sie brutal nicht acht hatte auf seine erlauchte Anmut, deren tiefstes Wesen ja Weltfremdheit wiederum ist!", 'Kaspar Hauser', Die Weltbühne, 7 April 1925, reprinted in Die neuen Eltern. Aufsätze, Reden, Kritiken 1924-1933, ed. by Uwe Naumann, and Michael Töteberg (Reinbek: Rowohlt, 1992), 39-40. It is undoubtedly from Wassermann's text that Mann took his inspiration.

²² Braun did not give specific examples from the work of Thomas Mann, noting merely: "Daß Anklänge an des Vaters Art unverkennbar sind - in der Schilderung absonderlicher Gestalten, in leitmotivartigen Wiederholungen, in burschikoser Gelassenheit - ist bei dem Neunzehnjährigen nicht verwunderlich" (280).

²³ In advocating that Klaus Mann follow the example of his father, Braun was in conflict with many of Mann's reviewers who openly attacked him for perpetuating outdated literary forms in his work. The detail and origin of these attacks shall be discussed later in this chapter.

²⁴ Harald Braun, 'Klaus Mann. Der fromme Tanz', Eckart 2 (1925/26), 118-119. Further references are given after quotation in the text.

This determined his approach - the novel had not been published on merit, he implied, rather through family connections alone.

Quoting extensively from the text, Braun attempted an unbiased yet critical assessment of the novel, commenting primarily on its thematic concerns and literary qualities. Mann, he believed, had attempted too much, trying to depict all the problems and challenges facing the younger generation rather than concentrating on a few. Referring to youth's quest to find meaning and direction in its life, represented in the novel through the central character Andreas, Braun noted:

diese Wegsuche zwingt sie hart in das 'Gerausch' hinein, fort aus den sicheren Bahnen einer traditionell Behütung, um in 'vorschnellem, fast zu strengem Kampf, mit allen - ja es müssen [...] *alle* Dissonanzen der verzerrten Zeit sein - ihre eigene Melodie [ie their direction] zu finden (119)

However, in taking this approach Mann ran the risk of superficiality. "Da droht Gefahr", Braun continued: "daß dieser [...] Kampf bald Koketterie mit den zu bekämpfenden Mächten wird, ein scheinbar wohlgemäßes zielloses Durchkosten" (119).

Yet Braun did not dismiss the novel on these grounds, indeed his use of 'scheinbar' indicates that he did not ascribe to this view. Rather, he perceived the multiplicity of experience to which Andreas is exposed as integral to Mann's central theme, quoting from Mann's text: "sind wir so ziellose Tänzer da wir also das Leben wie ein frommes Fest feiern und nicht bedenken, wie wir es zum Guten, Richtigen, Tüchtigen führen könnte? ... Es muß ja ein Fest nichts Leichtsinniges sein ... Ein ernstes Spiel ist es aber, ein frommes Abenteuer" (119)²⁵. Braun challenged Mann's reference to 'ziellose Tänzer', to pose the fundamental question, "Wo findet dieser [...] 'frommer Tanz' sein Ziel?". After searching the text for the answer, the conclusion he reached was: "In der rigorosen Abkehr vom 'Geist' im Sinne einer intellektualistischen Mechanik, in der rigorosen Hinwendung zum 'süßen Geheimnis des Körpers' und in ihm [...] zum Neugesetz einer lebendigen Menschlichkeit"

²⁵ The significance of these lines are discussed in the next chapter.

(119). In recognising this, Braun isolated the novel's primary theme, Andreas' gradual realisation of the need for *Anmut*, the unquestioning, non-rational acceptance of life explained by Mann in 'Fragment von der Jugend' (1926) which was discussed in the previous chapter.

Yet for Braun Der fromme Tanz did not live up to the early promise of Vor dem Leben, reflecting, "die Legenden seines ersten Novellenbandes [...] versprachen mehr" (119). He dismissed the novel on four grounds:

Nicht literarisch, dazu ist er [...] nicht gerafft genug, der Stil zu ungleichmäßig und im großen und ganzen ohne Eigenart [...]; nicht weltanschaulich, denn die Folgen des Konflikts der neuen Jugend wurden zu einseitig überstürzt gestaltet, um typisch sein zu können, die Grenze zwischen Not und Gefallen am eigenen Schicksal ist zu schwankend, um die eindeutige Stellungnahme des Zuschauers zu ermöglichen, auf die es dem Verfasser ankommt, und das Ergebnis, die Botschaft des Buches verliert sich vollends im Versponnenen, Verschwommenen und ist vom Vater Thomas in seinem Beitrag zum Keyserling'schen 'Ehebuch' in vielem bereits beiläufig widerlegt worden²⁶ (119).

In his rejection of Der fromme Tanz on the basis of its literary merits Braun expanded on his comments in the review of Vor dem Leben. Here, he substituted *literarisch* for the much vaguer *dichterisch* of his earlier advice that Mann follow the example of his father. *Literarisch* in contrast to *dichterisch* with the secondary, ideological overtones that were highlighted in Chapter One, denoted specifically Mann's development of a specific writing style. That he had yet to achieve this was, in Braun's opinion, self-evident in his text.

His criticism that Der fromme Tanz was not *weltanschaulich* needs some explanation. Braun did not use the term to refer to a specific point of view which he did not see represented in the text, as might be expected in his choice of a word which has become

²⁶ Here Braun referred to Thomas's essay 'Über die Ehe', printed in Das Ehe-Buch, edited by Graf Hermann Keyserling and published by Niels Kampmann, Celle in 1925. In his contribution, Judit Gyory notes in 'Thomas und Klaus Mann. Anatomie einer Beziehung', DAAD Dokumentationen und Materialien 13 (1988) 177-190 (180) Thomas Mann acknowledged his faith in the family whilst also denying the legitimacy of homosexual eros by defining it as barren. This view was diametrically opposed to that of Klaus Mann who in Der fromme Tanz in particular defined homosexuality as a natural expression of human love. Mann's defence of homosexuality through his work is discussed in detail in Chapter Four.

synonymous with depicting an ideological belief. With *weltanschaulich* Braun sought to capture a more general desire not to merely portray the world as it is but to proffer at the same time some means of improving it. Again he echoed his comments in the review of Vor dem Leben although here he had been more indirect. Comparing the short stories with Thomas Mann's 'Unordnung und frühes Leid' of the same year²⁷ he had noted:

Thomas Mann, dem Vater, danken wir es besonders, daß er dies Erstlingsbuch [Vor dem Leben] seines Sohnes mit einer Novelle 'Unordnung und frühes Leid' beantworte, die [...] noch einmal sein beherrschtes, gütiges Gewährenlassen, seine gelassene Ueberlegenheit und väterlich stützende Sorglichkeit dem seltsamen jungen Geschlecht gegenüber offenbart (280).

Whilst in the context of this review Braun's words were vague, in the light of his comments when reviewing Der fromme Tanz it becomes apparent in retrospect that the references to 'Überlegenheit', and 'Sorglichkeit' here he praises Thomas Mann for his distance and his desire to understand and explain the younger generation, not merely to portray its plight from personal experience, as, by implication Klaus Mann had done in both the volume of short stories and his novel²⁸.

This highly personal dimension to Mann's work led Braun to conclude that if the novel were to be recommended then only as a *roman à clef*, "Man lese dieses Buch als persönlichstes, ja, familiäres Bekenntnis, das in seiner unbekümmerten Unmittelbarkeit uns als eiferndes Zeugnis gegenwärtiger gärender Jugendlichkeit gefangen nimmt und als Schlüsselroman" (119). Here Braun drew upon Mann's words in the preface to Der fromme Tanz, in which he had attempted to clarify his purpose in writing, noting that the novel was to be interpreted as a 'document' of contemporary youth²⁹. Yet, for Braun to define this work as a *Schlüsselroman* was to mislead. There is clearly an autobiographical element to Mann's work that persists throughout his career for he unashamedly drew upon his experience,

²⁷ Thomas Mann, 'Unordnung und frühes Leid', first printed in Die neue Rundschau June 1925, reprinted in Gesammelte Werke Vol VIII, Erzählungen, Florenz, Dichtungen (Oldenburg: Fischer, 1960), 618-657.

²⁸ I shall return to Braun's call for the work of art to be universally applicable later in this chapter.

²⁹ The significance of the word 'document' will be discussed in relation to Mann's reviewers on the right.

adapting and reshaping it to suit his purposes. In Der fromme Tanz Mann did not stylise his life into fiction as for example in Mephisto where, despite his assertion "Alle Personen dieses Buches stellen Typen dar, nicht Porträts"³⁰, the parallels between his characters and German literary figures are unmistakeable. Certainly there are parallels between his experiences and those of his protagonist Andreas³¹, however, these are in truth incidental.

Harald Braun's final review in this selection, published in Eckart in 1926³², compared Klaus Mann's Kindernovelle with Abschied von Paradies, Ein Roman unter Kindern by Frank Thieß³³; it is through this comparison that his main criticisms of Kindernovelle become apparent. The novella, he believed, echoed the themes of Mann's two earlier books, Vor dem Leben and Der fromme Tanz, in its concern with youth and its attempt to come to terms with the world of which it was a part, represented accurately, Braun believed, in the figure of Till. However, he ascribed strong value judgements to his judgement of youth, quoting from the text, established the link between Klaus Mann and the younger generation in his assessment:

durch die 'Kindernovelle' wandert ein Vertreter [i.e. Till] dieser von Klaus Mann so überaus gut gekannter Jugend, die blasierte Überheblichkeit,

³⁰ Klaus Mann, Mephisto. Roman einer Karriere (Reinbek: Rowohlt, 1988), 344

³¹ The clearest parallel between Mann and his protagonist is found in Mann's portrayal of Andreas' first night as a cabaret singer. He is faced by an indifferent audience which treats his performance with disdain, not ceasing from eating and talking during his performance and hardly applauding at the end (FT, 71-73). In Der Wendepunkt he recalled his own short career as a cabaret performer which lasted for one night only. He was, he remembered, an abject failure. "Ich soll ein Gedicht aufsagen", he wrote, "Es wird gelacht; böses Meckern kommt aus der schwarzen Tiefe. Mit heiserer Stimme murmele ich eine meiner kecken Balladen [...]. Es ist vorbei. Ein Mißerfolg ... Nun weiß ich also, was das ist: das Fiasko, die Blamage (Wp, 130-131). Without doubt, this is the basis for Andreas' portrayal; however, if this is the starting point, Mann then adapts it to turn Andreas from failure to success and thus differentiates from the detail of his life.

³² Harald Braun, 'Klaus Mann. Kindernovelle', Eckart 3 (1926/27), 210-211

³³ Abschied von Paradies (1927) was the third novel in a four-part cycle entitled Jugend, written by Frank Thieß (1890-1977), between 1924 and 1931, the others being Der Leibhaftige (1924), Das Tor zur Welt (1926) and Der Zentaur (1931). After service during World War One and a varied career as editor of the Berliner Tageblatt, theatre producer and critic, Thieß launched himself as a professional writer in 1923, concentrating primarily in later years on works with an historical theme and setting. In 1933 he welcomed the National Socialist assumption of power and proved himself willing to compromise with the régime by altering the preface to his novel Der Leibhaftige (1924) on its republication in 1933 to include positive references to Hitler and the need to protect the Reich from internal and external dangers. After becoming disillusioned with the régime, he soon rejected it, choosing the self-imposed exile within Germany of inner emigration, a term he is accredited with coining. Thieß returned to prominence after the war when, in 1946, he publicly attacked Thomas Mann, and with him the other émigrés, for deciding to leave Germany during the 12 years of Hitler's rule. He was replying to an open letter from Thomas Mann to Walter von Molo in which Mann suggested that the custodians of German culture during the years of dictatorship had been those who chose a life outside its borders, intensifying his remarks further by declaring that all the books written and published in the German Reich should be destroyed as worthless. Thieß, as the self-appointed spokesman of the 'inner emigrants', accused Mann and his fellow émigrés of desertion and declared that, in leaving the country, they had also forfeited their right to speak in the name of German writers. For further details on the debate on inner emigration and the prominent role Thieß and Mann played within it see Donald Prater, Thomas Mann (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1995) 385, Ronald Taylor, Literature and Society in Germany 1918-1945 (Barnes: Harvester Press, 1980), 266, 293-294. For details of Thieß' life and career see Mary Garland, Oxford Companion to German Literature, 3rd edn (Oxford University Press; Oxford, 1997), 823-824. Walter von Molo's original open letter to Thomas Mann is printed in So wunderbar ist das Leben. Erinnerungen und Begegnungen (Verlag Deutscher Volksbücher: Stuttgart, 1957), 405-407, Thomas Mann's reply, 'Warum ich nicht nach Deutschland zurückgehe' is reprinted in Thomas Mann, Gesammelte Werke XII. Reden und Aufsätze 4 (Fischer: Frankfurt, 1960), 953-962. For Thieß' response see Klaus Schröter, ed., Thomas Mann im Urteil seiner Zeit. Dokumente 1891-1955 (Christian Wegner: Hamburg, 1969), 338-343.

Koketterie mit äußerem und innerem Heruntergekommensein einerseits vereint mit 'kindlich aufgerissenen Augen', innerster lastender Einsamkeit und unbestimmter ruheloser Sucht (210)

However, Klaus Mann, he believed, found the complement to the dissonances of the younger generation in the simplicity and vitality of the child; noting for Till and then, by extension, for Mann, that this is the path of salvation:

Diese Situationsdarstellung [...] tritt in Klaus Manns Novelle nun aber zurück neben einer Welt, die statt der Differenziertheit die Eindeutigkeit, statt der müden Resignation das triebhafte Wollen vertritt, der Welt des Kindes. Diesen Weg zum Kindhaften - als Weg zum Unbedingten als Rettung empfunden - findet Klaus Mann noch aus einem persönlichen Antrieb (210)

In 1925 Thomas Mann had published the short story Unordnung und frühes Leid in which he drew extensively upon his own family circumstances to depict the chasm of incomprehension between the father, Professor Cornelius, and his eldest children, with Bert being modelled on him, Klaus Mann took exception to his portrayal as a criticism of himself³⁴. He responded with Kindernovelle in which he, significantly, killed the children's father before the beginning; his death mask above the mother's, Christiane's, bed a symbolic reminder of the power he had once exercised over the family but which no longer held sway as shown in Christiane, the docile, submissive wife whilst her husband lived, but transformed into sensuous seductress with the arrival in the family's midst of the itinerate Till. In his depiction of the children, modelled on himself and his three eldest siblings, significantly not the eldest and youngest pair as in Unordnung und frühes Leid, Mann rejected his father's indirect criticisms, doubt and reservations thorough Christiane: "Sie wußte, daß sie standhalten

³⁴ In 'Unordnung und frühes Leid' Thomas Mann had unmistakably drawn upon family and friends in his portrayal of family life under the new social conditions that followed the overthrow of Imperial rule in 1918. From his immediate family circle he had selected his two oldest children, Erika and Klaus, and two youngest, Elisabeth and Michael to juxtapose the distance between the elder children and their father with the close relationship between him and his younger daughter in particular. Klaus Mann appeared in the short story thinly disguised as Bert, a potential ne'er-do-well whose father despaired of him achieving within his life. That Klaus Mann objected to this portrayal is evident in a letter to Erich Ebermayer dated 15 January 1926. Referring to a recent reading by Thomas Mann of 'Unordnung und frühes Leid' in Leipzig, where Ebermayer lived, Mann asked first: "War es bei meinem Vater recht herrlich? Kanntest Du die Geschichte eigentlich schon?" before continuing, "Mich kann es nicht gerade erfreuen, daß er sie allerorts vorliest" (BA, 30). In reply to his father's apparent doubt in his ability to establish himself as a writer, as expressed through Bert, Klaus Mann proposed Kindernovelle, portraying himself through the child Harald and repudiating Thomas Mann's fears with the emphatic statement: "Die Mutter aber wußte, daß sie [die Kinder] standhalten würden" (MS, 171). For a discussion of Thomas Mann's 'Unordnung und frühes Leid' and Klaus Mann's reply Kindernovelle see Judit Gyory, 'Der "Geniestreich" Klaus Manns', Festschrift Karl Mollay zum 65. Geburtstage, ed. by Antal Máol, Budapester Beiträge zur Germanistik 4 (1978) 99-119.

würden", a direct response to Professor Cornelius' doubt: "mein armer Bert, der nichts weiß und nichts kann und nur daran denkt, den Hanswürsten zu spielen" (GW VIII, 643).

Braun referred elliptically to this chain of events when he noted: "Diesen Weg zum Kindhaften [...] findet Klaus Mann noch aus einem persönlichem Antrieb". Rather than making specific reference to Unordnung und frühes Leid, however, he generalised, showing the similarities between Der fromme Tanz and Kindernovelle by referring to the youngest child in itself and in direct reference to Unordnung und frühes Leid where the younger daughter is the father's acknowledged favourite. However, he linked Kindernovelle with Der fromme Tanz and Dr Magnus' marked preference and uncomplicated love for his younger child Marie-Thérèse, implying that this originated with Thomas Mann's favouritism towards his youngest daughter Elisabeth; that the portrayal of family life, the close relationship between mother and son all originate with Klaus Mann's personal life.

Yet, Braun's use of 'noch' in his comment is revealing. When he had reviewed Vor dem Leben two years previously, Braun had noted Mann's potential as a writer and had anticipated his development. Der fromme Tanz had subsequently proved a disappointment, for this anticipation had not been realised. Whilst acknowledging that in his style he had progressed, aiming for a more simple approach, Braun qualified this statement by placing it within the context of Mann's work: "das Erleben der 'Familie' [...] mit einer *für Klaus Mann* [my italics] bemerkenswerten Einfachheit und Herzlichkeit" (210). Braun acknowledged this as a new development in Mann's work but believed it undermined by his continued reliance on the same theme as in Der fromme Tanz and Vor dem Leben, that is, on the problems facing youth³⁵ and, his continued reliance on the personal, autobiographical dimension to Mann's work. This reliance, he believed, prevented Mann's work from being universally applicable, reducing it to psychological interest alone.

³⁵ Braun was not alone in believing that Mann's over-reliance on a single theme had limited his development. It is echoed four years later in W.E. Süskind's review 'Klaus Manns Alexanderroman', published in Die neue Rundschau 41 (1930), 2, 859-861 where he praised the novel as a positive step in Mann's development and as a break from a thematic concern and style that could no longer be refined or developed. The detail of these comments is discussed later in this chapter.

That Braun held universal applicability as key to a work of fiction became apparent in his review of Frank Thieß' Abschied von Paradies. He concluded his review of Kindernovelle and began that of Thieß' work with the observation: "Diese Bezirkung der dichterischen Welt Klaus Manns wird um so deutlicher, wenn man neben seine 'Kindernovelle' den 'Roman unter Kindern' von Frank Thieß stellt" (211). Although he did not state this outright, Braun clearly proposed Thieß as a model for others to follow, for his work, he noted, showed the diversity required of the writer as Braun made the broad statement: "Bei jedem neuen Buch des Dichters überrascht immer von neuem die Vielfältigkeit des Bezirkes, den er umspannt" (211). Then, turning to Abschied von Paradies, Braun clearly distinguished between Thieß' treatment of childhood and that of Klaus Mann. Whilst he conceded of Thieß' work: "Es geschieht nicht viel darin", the strength of the book, he believed, lay not in its action but in its impact on the reader. Referring back to the detail of the work, the childhood friendship, and the shyness associated with the first experience of love, Braun observed: "All das läßt man mit Entzücken an sich vorüberziehen, - bis man, wenn man das Buch schließt, erkennt, daß man im eigenen Lebensbuch geblättert hat. Nicht nur eine Fülle von uns seltsam vertrauten Einzelzügen, sondern die ganze Welt der Kindheit sieht uns an" (211).

Here lay the key distinction between Mann's Kindernovelle and Thieß' Abschied von Paradies; where Mann had drawn on his own experience, his own childhood and family life to recount a tale, in Braun's opinion, applicable only to him, Thieß in contrast had taken shared aspects of every childhood to write a book relevant and applicable to all, although this became apparent only in retrospect, as implied in Braun's 'wenn man das Buch schließt', further emphasised in his subsequent remark: "auf das Entzücken folgt die wehmütige Nachdenklichkeit und dann das erste Besinnen und dann der Dank" (211).

Braun criticised Kindernovelle directly for being only of interest to the psychologist. Its heavy reliance on the author's autobiography prevented it from achieving universality or

"den absoluten Wert" (210). He returned to this criticism indirectly in his closing praise for Frank Thieß Abschied von Paradies. This book, he believed, combined an insight into child psychology with a message for the adult reader:

Man könnte aber auch sagen, daß in dieser so 'harmlos'-heiter ausschauenden Geschichte das Ethos des "Lebens" [...] Gestalt gewann. Und das bedeutet nicht Rückschau sentimentaler Leser in ein entschwundenes Paradies, sondern Aufgabe für uns alle (211)

His words 'das bedeutet nicht Rückschau sentimentaler Leser in ein entschwundenes Paradies' was further criticism of Mann's text for Mann created in Kindernovelle an idyllic world upon which harsh reality did not intrude; he set the novella ostensibly amidst the chaos of post-war Germany but drew upon his experience in the pre-war affluent days at the family holiday home in Bad Tölz. The dress of the children within the novella, their lifestyle shielded in a rural idyll away from urban civilisation, in a world of seemingly endless summer, evoked a world gone by with little bearing on reality.

In each review, it is immediately apparent that Braun attempted to give an assessment of Mann's texts based on their strengths and merits alone, independent of the example of either father or uncle, although, in the first review especially, such comparisons were unavoidable. As shall be illustrated in the analysis of the articles by the reviewers on the left and right, Braun attempted a 'pure' literary critique, in keeping with Rietzschel's definition of *Literaturwissenschaft*; analysing the texts in isolation and free of overt ideological considerations in keeping with the ethos of the journal Eckart as apolitical. He assessed Vor dem Leben, Der fromme Tanz and Kindernovelle on their literary merits as evidence or otherwise of Mann's talent as a writer, his ability and mastery of the writer's craft. There is a qualitative difference between the reviews. In the first Braun effectively gave Mann the benefit of the doubt, assessing Vor dem Leben as a first work by a very young writer with stylistic flaws and weakness excused as indicative of the writer's youth. The second review, however, was far more pointed in its criticism; a more overt attack both on Mann and his

writing style. By the third review his rejection of the author and his work is complete, for he believed it to be relevant only to a small minority.

2.3 Writers on the political left and Klaus Mann's prose

Klaus Mann's critics on the left included some of the leading figures in Weimar cultural life, drawn from across the age range and embracing writers, critics and editors alike. The personalised attacks by Bertolt Brecht, discussed in the previous chapter, were mirrored in intensity by such as Axel Eggebrecht, whose feud with Klaus Mann was based upon mutual dislike, and Gerhard Pohl, the editor of Die neue Bücherschau, who in 1926 accused Mann of arrogance in presuming to represent, in 'Fragment von der Jugend', the views of the younger generation³⁶. In contrast, the communist writer Joseph Breitbach, born in 1903 and thus of an age with Mann, approached him and his work as a contemporary, but could not identify with Mann's refusal to address the real issues and injustices of society, a refusal which Breitbach believed disbarred him from being described as 'young'³⁷. As shall be shown in the analysis of the reviews, Breitbach's comments are a characteristic feature. Each of these reviewers, and those whose reviews shall be discussed in more depth shortly, brought to their critiques of Mann's work not only their individual judgement, but also a shared ideological basis to their thinking, rooted in their political allegiances. This led to a high degree of unanimity in approach to the text under discussion, to the criticisms made and in their final assessment. Two articles, Friedrich Burschell's review of Vor dem Leben³⁸ and Erich Mühsam's 'Der Fall Klaus Mann', published in the Communist newspaper Welt am Montag of 8 August 1927³⁹ perhaps best offer a general introduction to these criticisms.

2.3.1 Friedrich Burschell, 'Vor dem Leben' (1925)

Friedrich Burschell began his career as a professional essayist, biographer and critic in 1912, amidst the heyday of the Expressionist movement with which he was also closely

³⁶ For a discussion of these issues see Chapter One.

³⁷ Breitbach's rejection of Klaus Mann during the Weimar Republic changed after 1933 when the common bond of exile brought them together in the fight against National Socialism.

³⁸ Friedrich Burschell, 'Klaus Mann: Vor dem Leben', Die literarische Welt 1 (1925), vol 5, 5.

³⁹ Erich Mühsam, 'Der Fall Klaus Mann', first printed in Das Wort 1927, reprinted in Ausgewählte Werke II. Publizistik, Unpolitische Erinnerungen, ed. by Christlieb Hirte, with Roland Links, and Dieter Schiller (Berlin: Rixdorfer, 1985), 383-386. Further references are given in the text after quotation.

associated⁴⁰. By the Weimar Republic he had become a frequent contributor to a wide variety of journals, including Die literarische Welt, Die Vossische Zeitung and Die neue Rundschau, yet it is perhaps his status as a regular correspondent for Die Weltbühne that offers an insight into his political beliefs. From its creation until its demise in 1933 Die Weltbühne's primary objective lay in representing the views of the left-wing intelligentsia. Whilst this need not preclude pieces from writers of other political persuasions, Klaus Mann, it should be remembered, had his first articles published by the journal's then editor Siegfried Jacobsohn; a glance at its list of primary writers, with Kurt Tucholsky and Carl von Ossietzky's names prominent amongst them, emphasises its predominantly socialist ethos.

That Burschell also subscribed to this ethos can be determined from the detail of his life. After becoming involved with the Expressionist movement before World War One, he became editor-in-chief of the short-lived journal Revolution⁴¹. This publication combined politics with the literary arts, expressed in poetic commentaries on the age, prose observation and direct, overtly political, manifestos with contributions from such as Ernst Bloch and Oskar Loerke. Revolution lasted a mere two issues, appearing on November 23 and 30, 1918. It was superseded by Die neue Erde, also edited by Burschell, defined by Paul Raabe as one of the most significant of the Expressionist periodicals, despite lasting only three editions in January, February and April 1919. Die neue Erde continued the approach Burschell had taken in Revolution, printing new poetry and narratives, addressing contemporary political and philosophical questions whilst including essays and manifestos.

Writing in 1925, Burschell concentrated primarily on a discursive assessment of the volume; yet although his review of Vor dem Leben is no more than three paragraphs, he incorporated both his ideological and literary opposition to Mann's work and his status as the elder, more mature writer. His opening paragraph defined the tenor of the review and

⁴⁰ For details of Friedrich Burschell's life see Paul Raabe, with Ingrid Hannich-Bode, Die Autoren und Bücher des literarischen Expressionismus. Ein bibliographisches Handbuch (Stuttgart: Metzler, 1985)

⁴¹ For details of the Expressionist journals see Paul Raabe, Die Zeitschriften und Sammlungen des literarischen Expressionismus. Repertorium der Zeitschriften, Jahrbücher, Anthologien, Sammelwerke, Schriftenreihen und Almanache 1910-1921 (Stuttgart: Metzler, 1964).

immediately conveyed his opposition. "Wäre dieser exhibitionistische Jüngling nicht der Sohn des [...] Thomas Mann," he observed, "so hätten die nicht eben belangvollen, nicht gerade belanglosen, noch völlig unentschiedenen Produkte einer gärenden Jugend vermutlich nie das Licht der Öffentlichkeit erblickt". This statement combines Burschell's antipathy towards Klaus Mann, emphasised in the belittling expression 'dieser exhibitionistische Jüngling', a reference no doubt to Mann's self-promotion and high press profile, and his reservations towards his work. He did not reject Vor dem Leben out of hand, emphasising on the contrary that it is 'nicht gerade belanglos', of no importance, but nor did he endorse it fully, tempering his remarks with 'nicht eben belangvoll', not a significant work. Rather, in defining the volume as 'noch völlig unentschieden', he implied that Mann had yet to find his own direction and style.

He emphasised his greater maturity, or, conversely, Mann's immaturity, in his choice of vocabulary, referring to the author variously as "Der Jüngling", as above, "Der Junge" and more specifically, "Der Achtzehnjährige". Whilst they were all accurate descriptions of Mann, who was, after all, only eighteen when Vor dem Leben was published, their repeated emphasis serves only to underline his youth and, by extension, his immaturity as a writer.

The volume's strength lay not in its literary merits but in its sociological value. Here Burschell's political views came to the fore. Referring to 'Die Jungen', with which the volume opened, Burschell noted that it offered "einen nicht uninteressanten Einblick in die seelische Struktur jener reichlich verwöhnten Jugend, wie sie sich in den Landerziehungsheimen moderner Pädagogen [...] nicht sehr geheimer umhertreibt", with the phrase 'reichlich verwöhnt' which would later be echoed in the tenor of Mühsam's critique 'Der Fall Klaus Mann'.

Drawing on the themes of the stories in Vor dem Leben in the next paragraph, Burschell defined 'die seelische Struktur' more closely as a combination of: "Vaterhaß, [...] Aufsässigkeit, [...] Sexualität, [...] Hochmut, [...] Ästhetizismus". The rebelliousness and

arrogance of youth, a concern with questions of human sexuality and underlying aestheticism are certainly present, to some degree, within the stories, but it is Burschell's reference to *Vaterhaß* that requires greater consideration. By placing it at the head of the list and, in contrast to the other themes without a qualifying adjective, Burschell accorded greatest importance to 'Vaterhaß'. He neither defined his exact meaning nor gave examples of its occurrence but, by choosing a term linked with the recent Expressionist past, he relied upon the meanings associated with the term.

For a former Expressionist such as Burschell, the term *Vaterhaß* carried with it specific overtones. In Expressionist drama, in particular, the father symbolised both faceless society and its authority, restrictions and conventions. In defying the father, as captured in such plays as Hasenclever's *Der Sohn* (1914), Hanns Johst's *Der junge Mensch* (1916) or Arnolt Bronnen's *Vatermord* (1920), the young protagonists rebelled against society's strictures and the conformity it imposed upon its members. This mood of rebellion was certainly reflected in some of the stories in *Vor dem Leben*, but by no means in all. Harald's father in 'Die Jungen', the tale that opened the collection, without doubt conforms to the image of the authoritarian and conventional patriarch. Initially, he is defined merely as "[ein] hoher Offizier" (Ms, 23), itself signifying social status and prestige. Mann expands on this opening remark through another character, Adolf. "Deinen Vater," he tells Harald, "den möchte ich kennenlernen. Den denke ich mir gut und respektabel. Der dient dem Leben und dem menschlichen Staate" (Ms, 33), where life and the state are identified with the mores and codes of German society whilst goodness and respectability are determined by the individual's conformity with these. However, Adolf only wishes to meet Harald's father in order to reject him and his values. "Was deinen Herrn Vater betrifft," he tells Harald, "dein Herr Vater möge weiterhin seine Uniform in Würde tragen - mag er uns licherlich nennen - *uns* geht er nicht an" (Ms, 34).

Mann expressed the implied subversion of an accepted social order in 'Die Jungen' more forcibly and directly in 'Der Vater lacht'. Once more the father, Theodor Hoffmann, is a

figure of authority, who represents an inflexible and out-dated social order, suggested in the story by his title of *Ministerialrat*, a term and position which was no longer current. He demands conformity from his daughter Kunigunde, a distant figure returned after many years absence from boarding school, repeating to himself mantra-like:

Er war der Vater. Er war der vom Leben Bestätigte, der im Leben Tüchtige, der dem Leben Dienende. [...] Er durfte [Kunigunde] drücken, durfte sie, wenn sie störend gegen ihn groß werden sollte, klein machen, unterdrücken, erledigen. - Er war der Vater. - Er war der Ministerialrat. (Ms, 55)

However, Kunigunde undermines his order and authority. The process begins with her outlandish clothing, a stark contrast with Hoffman's staid, old-fashioned frock coat, then continues with her extrovert and gregarious lifestyle opposed to his life of the semi-recluse before concluding in her seduction of her father, the ultimate destruction of the values that had governed his life.

Whether her actions, or those of the schoolchildren in 'Die Jungen', are motivated by hatred of the father alone is unclear. Kunigunde does subvert her father's authority and, with her seduction of him, transgresses the social and legal codes of the state. Yet Mann did not merely restrict his story to a straightforward conflict between the generations. Rather he combined it with a more generalised battle of the sexes. Kunigunde not only undermines the *Ministerialrat's* power over her as her father, with the status and authority accorded to him in this capacity, she also destroys his *raison d'être* by denying him his masculinity, expressed as the power of determination he mistakenly believes he holds over his daughter.

When the school children rail against Harald's father in 'Die Jungen', it is not merely because he represents the authority of the state. On a more metaphysical level he represents life, the here and now of existence, expressed in service to society through the offices of the state. The children, in contrast, are obsessed by death and the transience of life, convinced that they have no right to life in the same form as that of their fathers⁴².

⁴² Adolf expresses this most clearly in 'Die Jungen', when he insists: "wer dem Leben nicht dient [ie the younger generation], der ist ruchlos und sollte sterben" (Ms, 33)

The validity of Burschell's identification of *Vaterhaß* as key amongst the themes becomes more tenuous when the other stories in Vor dem Leben are taken into consideration. Of those remaining, only 'Der Alte' has a father-figure, the schoolmaster of the title. The old man is trapped in his study, a barrier between himself and his pupils. Its walls are suffused with the unmistakable stench of death, with which he is also identified:

Im Zimmer des Alten war eine seltsame Luft. In die starken Gerüche des Eichkätzchens, das oben auf dem Bücherregal hauste, mischte sich der Duft großer welkender Blumen, reifen Obstes und irgend etwas Unbestimmbares, das dem Alten und seinem Barte eigentümlich zu sein schien und an den süßlichen Geruch der Verwesung erinnerte (Ms, 97)

In contrast, the pupils represent the new, the fresh and the vibrant. They belong to the living, natural world and represent the future whilst their teacher personifies a world in decline. Yet this is not a source of conflict. Rather, the pupils breach the divide each evening by visiting their teacher in his room, as Mann suggests that the barriers between the generations are not insurmountable.

To define Mann's treatment of the generation conflict in Vor dem Leben as hatred thus seems exaggeration by Burschell. However, a later comment throws doubt on whether Burschell was indeed referring to the themes of the volume when he used *Vaterhaß*. Commenting in general on Mann's style, Burschell noted later in the review: "alles zuviel, zu betont, pubertätshaft überheblich, mit nicht immer richtig verwandten präziösen Wendungen aus des verhaßten Vaters dennoch beliebten Beständen". Whilst not offering his reader a specific example, Burschell clearly recognised the latent influence of Thomas Mann's style on Klaus Mann, yet interpreted this influence as a contradiction, which he emphasised by juxtaposing '[der] verhaßte Vater' with his 'dennoch beliebten Beständen'.

Here Burschell blurred the distinction between Mann's fictional portrayal of the father and his actual relationship with Thomas Mann. The press speculated about the relationship between father and son, suspecting, perhaps, the potential for conflict that had been publicly

demonstrated in the break-up between Heinrich and Thomas Mann during World War One and the immediate aftermath, and who had only recently been reconciled. Klaus Mann attempted to deflect such speculation, openly stating, for example, in 1925, during the celebrations to mark his father's 50th birthday, on his relationship with one of the leading members of the older generation of writers: "Mag das ein Problem oder ein Glück für mich sein - oder beides in einem: das ist meine eigenste, privateste und geheimste Sache"⁴³. However, he undermined this statement in his next remark: "öffentlich darf das erst dann werden, wenn ich es eines Tages in irgendeine Art Werk oder Gestaltung formen und also über sich selbst zum Sinnbild erhöhen kann" (NE, 50).

Burschell was not alone in recognising the autobiographical elements underlying Mann's work, with specific reference to the figure of the father, both in Vor dem Leben and other works. Carl Sternheim, for example, recognised the dominant influence of Thomas Mann on Klaus Mann's work, both in terms of characterisation and stylistically, as Klaus Mann told his sister Erika in a letter from 1926 after a visit to Sternheim. Commenting specifically on the play Anja und Esther, Mann wrote: "[Sternheim] bemühte sich leidenschaftlich pädagogisch um [mich], [...] forderte eine neue, strengste 'Ökonomie' meines Lebens von mir und forderte auch, ich sollte mich innerlich immer teifer von meinem Vater trennen" (11.8.26, BA, 37-38).

Yet Burschell also recognised the inherent drawbacks in Mann's relationship to his illustrious predecessors. Acknowledging the difficulties associated with any work by a young author, Burschell first advised his reader: "Man muß vorsichtig sein angesichts des Werks eines Achtzehnjährigen" then continued: "Der Junge [Klaus Mann] hat es nicht leicht in einer so schwer belasteten Familie". Whilst this may be intended ironically, it also demonstrated an understanding of Klaus Mann's situation as he strove to establish himself in a literary environment already dominated by family members; published early through his family connections but also open to ridicule and condemnation because of these very

⁴³ Klaus Mann, "Mein Vater. Zu seinem 50. Geburtstag", first printed in 8-Uhr Abendblatt, 8 June 1925, reprinted in Die neuen Eltern 48-50 (50).

connections. The most cursory glance through the reviews of Klaus Mann's work reveals the frequency with which the name of Thomas Mann appears in them. As Wilfried Dirschauer notes in Klaus Mann und das Exil: "Es gab nur wenige [...] Stimmen, die bereit waren, ihn als selbstständiges Talent zu würdigen"⁴⁴. Elke Kerker succinctly captures the general approach taken to his texts in her comment: "'Klaus Mann, der älteste Sohn Thomas Manns', ist einleitende Standardformel fast jeder Kritik". She then continues: "Die Figur Thomas Manns, als unüberwindbares Vorbild den Schreib- und Theaterversuchen des Sohnes entgegengehalten, ist intellektuelles Hindernis und propagandistisches Mittel zugleich"⁴⁵.

Thomas Mann's oeuvre, as Kerker suggests, provided a point of reference familiar to many, an established norm by which to appraise Klaus Mann's books and plays. Yet for others amongst Mann's critical public, the surname 'Mann' alone, and the fame attached to it, was sufficient provocation for their scorn. As Bernd Weil observes of the situation in general: "Der väterliche Ruhm verhalf Klaus Mann nicht nur zu großer Publizität, sondern auch zu gehässigen Kritiken"⁴⁶. Wilfried Dirschauer attributes these attacks merely to the manner of Mann's prominence as a writer: "man war [...] mißtrauisch, weil man vermutete, Klaus Mann war unverdientermaßen protegiert und schlage Kapitel aus dem Vorteil seiner Herkunft"⁴⁷. The most critical and antagonistic voices came from Mann's reviewers on the political left who regarded him as blindly following without question the traditions and literary conventions of an outdated past.

The connection between Thomas Mann's renown and the publication of Klaus Mann's books and plays is illustrated most clearly in Friedrich Burschell's opening lines in his review of Vor dem Leben as he observed: "Wäre dieser [...] Jüngling nicht der Sohn des [...] Thomas Mann, so hätten die Produkte einer gärenden Jugend vermutlich nie das Licht der Öffentlichkeit erblickt". Certainly, these words appear to substantiate Dirschauer's views.

⁴⁴ Wilfried Dirschauer, Klaus Mann und das Exil (Worms: Heintz, 1973), 91.

⁴⁵ Elke Kerker, Weltbürgertum - Exil - Heimatlosigkeit. Die Entwicklung der politischen Dimension im Werk Klaus Manns von 1924 - 1936 (Meisenheim am Glan: Anton Hain, 1977), 51.

⁴⁶ Bernd Weil, Klaus Mann: Leben und literarisches Werk im Exil (Frankfurt: Fischer, 1983), 10.

⁴⁷ Wilfried Dirschauer, Klaus Mann und das Exil, 91.

However, Burschell did not assert the book *would* not otherwise have been printed. Rather, he was more circumspect, noting by including 'vermutlich' that it *probably* would not have appeared. Expressed in this way, Burschell's view is valid; considering his youth, there is every reason to assume Klaus Mann would not have been published as soon as he was.

Analysing the relationship between Klaus and Thomas Mann, Judit Gyory also considers, albeit in passing, the correlation between Klaus Mann's reviews and the high profile of his father. She first comments of the literary press and Klaus Mann in general: "die [...] literarische Welt der Zwanziger Jahre [...] stand [Klaus Mann] [...] weniger freundlich und wohlwollend gegenüber"; broadening her observations to include Heinrich Mann, she offers one explanation for the underlying press antagonism towards Klaus Mann. "Die Brüder Mann [Heinrich and Thomas Mann] beherrschten und teilten nämlich gerade in dieser Zeit so stark die literarische Szene Deutschlands," she writes, "daß das Hervortreten noch eines Dichters aus der Familie als etwas Ärgerliches und Anstößiges empfunden wurde"⁴⁸. Gyory does not expand on these remarks other than to refer to Klaus Mann's observation some years later that whilst families of writers were no rarity in France, it was still considered 'unseemly' in Germany⁴⁹.

To define the attacks on Mann as little more than an expression of 'aggravation' or 'distaste' is an oversimplification, although in drawing attention to Heinrich and Thomas Mann's domination of the German literary scene in the Weimar Republic, Gyory hints at the main reason for the ferocity and vehemence of some of the attacks on Klaus Mann, and to which Mann himself also indirectly pointed in Der Wendepunkt. Noting his critical reception during the Weimar Republic, he noted the frequency with which Thomas Mann's name appeared: "Sein Name tauchte, wie sich von selbst versteht, in fast jedem der satirisch-polemischen Kommentare auf, mit denen die deutsche Presse mich damals so reichlich bedachte" (WP, 172). He drew attention specifically to a cartoon by the caricaturist

⁴⁸ Judit Gyory, 'Thomas Mann und Klaus Mann', 179.

⁴⁹ Judit Gyory, 'Thomas Mann und Klaus Mann', 179.

Th. Th. Heine that was published in Simplicissimus of November 1925, in which Heine depicted Klaus Mann standing behind his father's chair and informing him: "Man sagt, Papa, daß geniale Väter keine genialen Söhne haben. Also bist du keine Genie"⁵⁰, and to Brecht's article 'Wenn der Vater mit dem Sohne mit dem Uhu ...' which closed with the words: "Die ganze Welt kennt Klaus Mann, den Sohn von Thomas Mann. Wer ist übrigens Thomas Mann?"⁵¹.

These attacks, cited by Klaus Mann as examples of the 'political, satirical commentaries', were, significantly by those on the left, the writers of some of the most vehement attacks on Mann. Looking more closely at their remarks, however, it is not immediately obvious whether Klaus Mann is the intended target; herein lies the crux of many of such attacks. In the postscript to the first volume of Klaus Mann's diaries, Peter Laemmle notes: "Die Polemik gegen Klaus Mann von seiten der Linken [richtet sich] oft auch indirekt gegen seinen konservativeren Vater [...], den man so frontal nicht angreifen konnte oder wollte"⁵². Thomas Mann's position as a respected and prominent member of the German literary establishment protected him from open and direct criticism by his political and cultural opponents. Klaus Mann, in contrast, had yet truly to prove or establish himself as a writer, presented critics with a convenient vehicle for such criticism.

2.3.2 'Der Fall Klaus Mann' - Erich Mühsam, August 1927

In 'Der Fall Klaus Mann' Erich Mühsam considered the implications for German literature, and the values it would reflect, if Mann were believed to represent a new generation of German writers. He did not, however, direct his comments at Klaus Mann personally; indeed he was at pains to deny any underlying personal significance to his words of criticism. "Damit kein Zweifel herrsche", he wrote,

⁵⁰ This caricature is reproduced in Eberhard Spangenberg, Karriere eines Romans. Mephisto, Klaus Mann und Gustaf Gründgens. Ein dokumentarischer Bericht aus Deutschland und dem Exil 1925-1981 (Munich: edition spangenberg, 1982) 32.

⁵¹ Bertolt Brecht, 'Wenn der Vater mit dem Sohne mit dem Uhu ...', 56.

⁵² Peter Laemmle, 'Nachwort', Klaus Mann Tagebücher vol I 1931-1933 (Reinbek: Rowohlt, 1995) 196.

mein Interesse an dem dichtenden und trachtenden Jüngling Klaus Mann ist überaus gering. Ich habe nichts gegen ihn und kenne ihn persönlich nicht, habe also auch, was sonst sicherlich der Fall wäre, keine ernstliche Sorge um sein Wohlergehen (383).

As Mühsam's title suggested, and which he subsequently clarified in the ensuing article, he treated the example set by Klaus Mann and his work as a case-study for his generation. "Es handelt sich gar nicht um den Dichter Klaus Mann, nicht um den Darsteller, nicht um den Sohn, Schwiegersohn, Bräutigam, Bruder, Schwager und Neffen Klaus Mann", he stated before then defining his approach:

es handelt sich lediglich um den Fall Klaus Mann. Der Fall Klaus Mann aber ist ein Fall der Jugend, mithin ein gesellschaftlicher, ein sozialer Fall, nämlich ein Fall des Verfalls. Eigentlich ist der Fall Klaus Mann nur ein Unglücksfall, aber ein typischer und darum der Betrachtung wert (384)

By denying Mann the roles which had attracted the attention of the public (the writer, the actor, son of Thomas Mann, nephew of Heinrich Mann) Mühsam focused specifically upon the values and motivation that determined his actions, and, by extension, those he felt influenced the actions of his generation.

Mühsam's initial consideration of modern German youth in general contrasted its apparent passivity and complacency with the revolutionary fervour of his youth. Of his own generation and its youth, Mühsam wrote:

Als wir vor drei Jahrzehnten heranwuchsen, gab es keinen Einsturz aller Weltgerüste, aber wir benahmen uns, als ob der Boden mitten im Bersten sei. Wir vergrößerten die Zeit, wir verstärkten die Signale der Zukunft, fühlten uns als Antreiber neuer Gesittung, besseren Geschmacks, gerechterer Beziehungen (385)

Mühsam used 'wir' to depersonalise his remarks and make them more generally applicable to his generation as a whole. Yet, on analysis, they referred specifically to his own experience, in which he combined the anti-authoritarianism of the anarchist with the reforming zeal of the socialist.

Born in 1878 and thus of the same generation as Thomas and Heinrich Mann, Mühsam stood on the far left politically. He had become a supporter of the German labour movement whilst it was still in its infancy, a support which ultimately led to his expulsion from school. On leaving Lübeck in 1901 to pursue a career in Berlin as a professional writer, he was introduced to the German anarchist movement, amongst which he quickly established himself as a leading figure. Whilst in Berlin he founded the *Gruppe Tat* with the objective to agitate for anarchy amongst the working class. The outbreak of war in 1914 saw an increase in Mühsam's political activities. He first attempted, without success, to form an international union of conscientious objectors; from 1916 he became actively involved with the *Spartakus* organisation that sought the overthrow of imperial Germany, culminating in 1918 when, with Kurt Eisner, the founder and leader in Bavaria of the opposition party, the USPD, he led the revolution in Munich that led to the creation of the short-lived Bavarian *Räterepublik*, for which involvement he served five years of a fifteen year sentence, from 1919 until his amnesty in 1924⁵³.

Mühsam's experience informed his ideal of youth which he defined in 'Der Fall Klaus Mann', with the words: "Jugend, sollte man meinen, nimmt Partei, stellt sich zum Kampf, eifert im Streit um die Werte des Lebens" (385). Essentially this was a view of youth as revolutionary, as the catalyst for change and instrument of social reform that was in keeping with Mühsam's deeply held political convictions. Inverting Mann's lament in 'Fragment von der Jugend' of 1926 that he and his generation had suffered from growing up in an age of uncertainty and chaos⁵⁴, Mühsam pointed to the positive consequences of such a situation. Mühsam prefaced his remarks with the assertion:

Da ist nun also ein Zwanzigjähriger [ie Klaus Mann], der *das unerhörte Glück* [my italics] hat, in einer Zeit geboren zu werden, die gekennzeichnet ist von den rasendsten Katastrophen, die die Menschheitsgeschichte seit der Völkerwanderung erlebt hat, in der alle Wurzeln der gesellschaftlichen und kulturellen Bindungen gelockert, zum guten Teil schon entrodet sind (384).

⁵³ For biographical details of Erich Mühsam see *Neue deutsche Biographie* Vol 18, ed. by Historische Kommission bei der Bayerischen Akademie der Wissenschaft (Berlin: Duncker & Humblot, 1996), 296-298.

⁵⁴ For a discussion of this view see Chapter One.

He then developed this theme to hint at the potential offered by the changes in society. Unlike Mann, he did not address his remarks to the specific context of the new Germany but pointed to the upheaval across the globe, taking the revolutions in Russia and China to overthrow Imperial rule as particularly indicating the demise of the combined rule of capitalism and the bourgeoisie. Mühsam, however, did not restrict his comments merely to the political context. He agreed with Mann that in removing imperial rule from Germany, the revolution of 1918/19 had profoundly affected everyday life, but did not see this in the negative light that had characterised Mann's comments. "Die traditionellen Formen der Konvention, der Mode, der Künste, der Zivilisation bersten", Mühsam wrote, "Technik, Tempo, Rhythmus des Lebens sind in voller Umwälzung, selbst unsere Sinne, Gesicht und Gehör, stellen sich auf neue Eindrücke und Sensationen um" (385).

In Mühsam's opinion, the younger generation of writers, as typified by Klaus Mann had chosen not to seize the opportunity offered by such a radical change. They preferred instead to follow, Mühsam believed, indiscriminately and unquestioningly in the footsteps of those who had gone before, whose work had been defined by the conventions of the bourgeois, capitalist world that revolution had supposedly overthrown. He acknowledged, in a way that, for example, Erich Ebermayer had not done, that his words did not apply to *all* young writers when he asked: "Wo aber stehen die, deren Beispiel Klaus Mann ist?" (385). The answer to this question filled him with dismay for with it came the realisation:

diese Zwanzigjährigen stehen nirgends; sie sitzen in Vaters Polstersessel und quälen sich Vaters Prosa ab und Großonkels Verse. Das ist nicht bewegt von einer Idee, die nach dichterischem Ausdruck drängt, das hat sich einfach entschlossen, Dramen zu schreiben, wie ein anderer sich entschließt, eine neue Stiefelschmiere herzustellen (385)

Mühsam's scorn is unmistakable, contained in his damning equation of the decision by the young to write with the decision to produce 'Stiefelschmiere', boot polish which, like their work, Mühsam suggested, was ultimately of no significance.

Mühsam's comments cited above contained one particularly telling phrase, his justification for rejecting the work of some of the young: "Das ist nicht bewegt von einer Idee, die nach dichterischem Ausdruck drängt". This was essentially a traditional view of writing as a force beyond the writer's control, a compulsion which could not be resisted and which demanded expression. Yet Mühsam continued by comparing, by way of example, Mann's play Revue zu Vieren (1927), with Schiller's Die Räuber (1782), Goethe's Götz von Berlichingen (1773), Hauptmann's Die Weber (1892) and Wedekind's Frühlings Erwachen (1891). In so doing, he both expanded upon his original statement and radically altered the impact of his words. These plays revealed the inadequacies of Mann's Revue zu Vieren for Mühsam concluded:

Da wird eine 'Revue zu Vieren' ausgeschwitzt [...] aus der Erwägung: womit wirke ich sensationell? [...] Und dann wird über die Dinge der Welt geschwafelt, von irgendeinem Oben herunter, das man sich aus unechter Blasiertheit zusammenkonstruiert hat, und in Wirklichkeit ist alles nur Impotenz und Geschäftstüchtigkeit. Probleme werden angewandelt, die vor dem Leben Klaus Manns mal, als es der Jugend an wahren Problemen mangelte, zu Problemen aufgeblasen waren. Allerlei Banalitäten über Jugend und Liebe und Romantik und Genuß werden ausgewalzt und in den Mittelpunkt ein Weltstürmer gestellt, der auch nicht mit einem einzigen Gedanken erfaßt, warum eigentlich die Welt zu stürmen sei und wie er seine Aufgabe anzupacken habe (385-386)

The crux of Mühsam's argument lay in this choice of plays and their subject matter with which he compared Revue zu Vieren.

For Mühsam, autonomous art did not exist. A work of art or literature, he believed, could not exist in isolation; rather it had to interact with society and address the issues which affected those within that society. Each of the plays he chose, Die Räuber, Götz von Berlichingen, Die Weber and Frühlings Erwachen, corresponded to his ideal, for they were each suffused with a revolutionary ethos that originated with the social criticism central to their plots. Each of these plays aimed to challenge the perceptions of their audiences by calling attention to injustices and wrongs within their respective societies. It was this

characteristic that Mühsam believed absent from Revue zu Vieren and to which he alluded in his comment: 'Probleme werden angewandelt, die vor dem Leben Klaus Manns mal, als es der Jugend an wahren Problemen mangelte, zu Problemen aufgeblasen waren.' The revolutionary ethos, he believed, united the otherwise diverse writers, Schiller, Goethe, Hauptmann and Wedekind was again missing from Mann's play: 'Allerlei Banalitäten über Jugend und Liebe und Romantik und Genuß werden ausgewalzt und in den Mittelpunkt ein Weltstürmer gestellt, der auch nicht mit einem einzigen Gedanken erfaßt, warum eigentlich die Welt zu stürmen sei und wie er seine Aufgabe anzupacken habe'⁵⁵.

In his comments Mühsam showed himself to be working with a specific ideal of literature. Throughout his career, Mühsam's writing reflected the hatred of the German Establishment that, in essence, dictated his political activities. His early fierce criticism of the Wilhelmine era in his youth, for example, evolved in the Weimar period into condemnation of the capitalist doctrines upon which the Republic was founded and which, for Mühsam, succeeded only through the exploitation of others. The pacifism he had avowed during World War One, and for which he had on several occasions been interned, led him in the post-war era to attack the German military establishment.

Perhaps most damning of all were Mühsam's closing words. Reminding his reader once more of his indifference in the person of Klaus Mann, he then stated quite clearly:

es geht um den typischen Fall einer Sorte von Zwanzigjährigen, die nicht die Jugend repräsentieren, sondern das stagnierende Greisentum, das als klebriges Rudiment erledigter kultureller Ansätze mit unnützer Indolenz in die gärende, flutende, grundstürzende Gegenwart hineinschnarcht. Der Fall Klaus Mann ist nicht der Fall der Jugend und der Zukunft (386)

⁵⁵ Revue zu Vieren followed in dramatic form from 'Fragment von der Jugend' and, in its subject matter, anticipated 'Heute und Morgen'. The play concentrated upon two couples - Allan and Ursula Pia and Michael and Renate - and the review, penned by Allan, they stage. They are motivated by a desire to harmonise the dissonances within modern society and particularly amongst their generation. This is the theme of the revue and, at the same time, of a treatise Michael is in the process of writing. However, both projects fail; Michael never finishes his work whilst Ursula Pia's jealousy of her co-star, Renate, undermines the review and ultimately leads to both couples fleeing both town and country. Both Michael and Allan rationalise their respective failures by blaming their audience, the younger generation, for being unable to understand the 'idea' that lay behind their work. However, at no time during the play did Mann clarify the meaning of this idea. In his review, Mühsam picked up on this missing explanation to give his own definition in his comment, 'Da wird eine 'Revue zu Vieren' ausgeschwitzt [...] aus der Erwägung: womit wirke ich sensationell?'. Mühsam was not alone in his criticisms. Herbert Ihering writing in the Berliner Börsenblatt of May 1927 had also pointed to the play's superficial treatment of some of the leading issues and concerns of the day, noting: "So entsteht diese Tourneerevue zu vieren, in der Klaus Mann peinlich, geschwätzig und glatt Zeitschlagworte umkost. Keine Vokabel, die hier nicht vorkäme. Keine Tendenz, die er nicht streifte". Quoted from Herbert Ihering, Von Reinhardt bis Brecht. Vier Jahrzehnte Theater und Film Vol. II 1924-1929 (Berlin: Aufbau, 1959) 265-267 (266)

The accusations Mühsam made here - that Mann did not represent youth, in that he did not embody the revolutionary spirit Mühsam associated with his own youth and that of youth in general, that he did not address real social issues but contented himself with a self-centred obsession with minor issues that concerned him alone, that his example would not lead to progression in literature but only to maintaining the *status quo* were repeated within the reviews by others on the left.

2.3.3 Reviews of Alexander. Roman der Utopie by Rudolf Arnheim⁵⁶ and Ernst Schwenk⁵⁷

Rudolf Arnheim came to prominence and achieved international renown as an early advocate of film and radio as new art forms which were distinct from those which had gone before⁵⁸. His two key works from the Weimar era, Film als Kunst (1932) and Rundfunk als Hörkunst (1933); contributed to the public understanding of the new media, as offering the potential for progression within the arts and as containing possibilities within them for artists to uncover. His willingness to embrace the new, and to look to the future, influenced his career as a reviewer which began while he was still a student. By the time he left for exile in 1933, he had contributed to many of the leading journals of the day, including Die Weltbühne, of which he was cultural editor from 1928 to 1933, the Berliner Tageblatt and the Neue Zürcher Zeitung. Through his work on Die Weltbühne in particular he was brought into close contact with Kurt Tucholsky, Alfred Polgar and Erich Kästner, whose collective views he shared and for which, with the assumption of power by the National Socialists in 1933, he was placed under a *Berufsverbot*.

Arnheim drew a fundamental distinction in his review of Alexander, published in Die Weltbühne of November 1929, when he stated in his opening line: "Wo Bericht und Märchen aufeinanderstoßen, da haust der Kitsch". *Bericht*, the accurate reporting of fact, and

⁵⁶ Rudolf Arnheim, 'Neues von jungen Dichtern II. Klaus Mann', Die Weltbühne 25 (1929) 857.

⁵⁷ Ernst Schwenk, 'Klaus Mann, Alexander' Querschnitt 11 (1931) 143.

⁵⁸ For details of Arnheim's career as a film and radio critic see Rupert Neudeck, 'Rudolf Arnheim, Pionier der Medienkritik' Merkur 33 (1979) 586-593.

Märchen, with its association with the fanciful and imaginary, represented two irreconcilable perceptions of art and literature. In his subsequent remarks, Arnheim clearly identified factuality with true art, when he noted of Klaus Mann: "Wo das Wahre durch das Wünschenswerte gefärbt und das Natürliche durch das Dekorative verschminket wird - in gefährlicher Nähe dieses gefährlichen Grenzbezirks, in dem ein junger Mensch sich ruhig eine Weile tummeln darf, wenn er nicht gerade die Absicht hat, Kunst zu schaffen, bewegt sich Klaus Mann". Thus, from his opening lines and comments, Arnheim defined his opposition to Klaus Mann and the type of literature he believed Mann represented.

Arnheim's demand for factuality in literature led him to dismiss Alexander; Mann, Arnheim implied, had violated historical fact by introducing imaginative elements into it: "Die Apotheose des Girknaben, nach Motiven der Weltgeschichte aufgeführt von einem, der in einer einigermaßen unkontrollierbaren Vergangenheit zu realisieren sucht, was er von der Gegenwart gern verlangte". This ignored the reality of Alexander the Great's conquest of the world, sanitising it to show, in place of the bloodshed and resistance of the actual conquest, nations subjugated by Alexander's beauty alone:

Der graziöse Sieger erobert die Welt im Tanz - nur gibt es leider keine Welt, die sich so erobern ließe [...]. Erdteile zollen der Schönheit einen Tribut, von dessen Notwendigkeit der Autor so überzeugt ist, daß nicht viel Kampf darum entsteht - kein ebenbürtiger Gegenspieler wird geduldet, und so fehlt der Aktivität des Welteroübers der Widerstand, an dem sie erst fühlbar würde

Whilst Arnheim found aspects of the novel to praise, in particular Mann's evocation of Alexander's transformation from liberator and benefactor into dictatorial tyrant, his overall assessment of the novel was negative for it confused past and present, approaching the past with the psychological insight of the present day, as suggested in the choice of 'Feinnervigkeit' in Arnheim's observation: "Die auftretenden Figuren beobachten Nuancen im Gebaren und Aussehen ihrer Mitmenschen mit einer Feinnervigkeit, die aus dem zwanzigsten Jahrhundert eingeschmuggelt ist". Arnheim's reservations towards Alexander were echoed in Ernst Schwenk's assessments.

Ernst Schwenk was the pen-name of the Czech reviewer Ernst Polak⁵⁹ who, in the decade before the First World War was a leading figure in the literary circles of Prague, counting amongst his friends such as Frank Werfel, Egon Erwin Kisch and Franz Kafka. Although not a writer of fiction, for which he recognised he had little talent, he became a noted reviewer, respected for his knowledge of and insight into literature⁶⁰. From the late 1920s until his exile in 1933, Polak contributed regularly to Die literarische Welt, edited by his friend Willy Haas, and Der Querschnitt, edited by another friend, Victor Wittner. His work appeared most frequently under the pseudonym Ernst Schwenk, as in his review of Alexander, but he also signed his work E Sch, ES, Esch and, more rarely, EP. Polak's first pieces, which appeared in Die literarische Welt from 1927, concentrated primarily on new works by young authors; this focus on the young persisted in the article Polak contributed to Der Querschnitt from 1929, emphasised, for example, in his collective review from September 1931 entitled simply 'Junge Leute 1931'. He juxtaposed his concern with unknown writers with reviews of works by respected authors and broadened his interest to include literary biography and fictional, literary travelogues. Into this latter group fell Polak's review of Klaus Mann's Alexander, published in 1931.

Polak launched a fierce and critical attack on novel and author alike to reject both in a mere sixteen lines. Whilst critical of Mann, Polak criticised the novel as a work of literature, concentrating primarily on the formal aspects of Mann's novel and, focusing specifically on the portrayal of Alexander the Great, Mann's grasp of the historical facts, as distinct from the fiction, of the emperor's life. He opened his review by taking issue with Mann's approach to his subject matter, noting in the first paragraph: "Klaus Mann hat [das große Thema] umgangen", before continuing: "Er hat ein Talent, es sich leicht zu machen, ein wahrhaftes Talent, denn es scheint damit immer, als würde er die Sache leicht machen". Here, it must be assumed, for he did not clarify his words further, that the phrase 'das große Thema' referred,

⁵⁹ To avoid confusion I have referred to Ernst Schwenk as Ernst Polak throughout.

⁶⁰ For biographical details see Hartmut Binder, 'Ernst Polak - Literat ohne Werk', Jahrbuch der deutschen Schillergesellschaft XXIII (1979) 366-415.

in general terms, to the complex interaction of events that turned Alexander the Great from benevolent ruler to the hated tyrant of his later years. When Polak then accused Mann of not addressing this in any depth, the force of 'er hat [das große Thema] umgangen', he criticised both Mann's characterisation of Alexander and his interpretation of the historical facts of his life, perceiving in this an over-simplification and reluctance to explore beyond the superficial.

Mann had not concentrated on Alexander exclusively as the impersonal general and emperor of history. Rather, he had depicted Alexander as a conventional tragic hero whose potential for lasting greatness had been undermined by a single, yet fatal, character flaw, in this case the inability to accept rejection in love by his general and childhood companion, Kleitos⁶¹. However, Polak detected a fundamental contradiction in Mann's portrayal, reflected in his assessment: "eine gewisse Niedlichkeit, die allen scheinbaren Ernst umrahmt, [will] zu der schrecklichen Größe des Knaben Alexander gar nicht passen". Here, the 'Niedlichkeit', the 'sweetness' Mann had used to humanise Alexander and to offset the magnitude accredited to his status as emperor was, in Polak's opinion, incompatible with the horror that Alexander's rule eventually became.

Polak then drew attention to an underlying tension in Alexander when he reflected: "Da soll unpathetische Gegenwartsnähe und wieder zugleich auch eine allerdings etwas leichtgeflochtene Mythe sein". Here, he identified a key aspect of the novel in its relevance to the present day. For Polak this represented an inherent weakness for it blurred the distinction between fact and fiction. Reserving his main criticism for Mann's treatment of history, and his inclusion of factual detail into the novel, he compared Mann with the historian, commenting: "die schwierige, einfache Sachlichkeit, die uns ein guter Historiker zumindest ahnen läßt, gibt sie schon gar nicht her". By referring to the 'good historian', Polak both indicated the crux of his argument and the source of his rejection of Alexander, whilst also signalling his participation in a much wider debate.

⁶¹ The relationship between Alexander and Kleitos is discussed in Chapter Four.

2.3.4 Fiction and the adaptation of historical fact

The late Weimar era witnessed a sudden rise and demand for historical novels, whether of the distant past, as with Alexander, the more recent past, as in the war novels of Ernst Jünger and Erich Maria Remarque, or of contemporary history, the *Zeitroman*, that focused specifically on the Weimar Republic and epitomised in such texts as Hans Fallada's Kleiner Mann - was nun? or Döblin's Berlin Alexanderplatz⁶². Although dealing with historical subjects and themes, these works were not historical texts; they were first and foremost novels written by writers of fiction who selected from a plethora of historical detail and fact that which best suited their underlying purpose and intention in writing. In so doing, they blurred the distinction between fact and fiction, between the provable and the imaginary. This, however, created tension between novelists and historians, which came to a head in 1928 with the publication of the pamphlet Historische Belletristik. Ein kritischer Literaturbericht in which a group of historians forcibly rejected the corruption of historical fact in contemporary, popular fiction. They concentrated specifically on the genre of historical biography, condemning their authors for their subjective and speculative portrayal of the past⁶³.

Whilst their attack prompted a fierce reply from Emil Ludwig whose Bismarck (1922/24) and Wilhelm der Zweite (1925) were amongst those novels the unnamed historians condemned, they also brought to the fore tensions amongst novelists, opening the debate to address, not just the treatment of documented fact, but also the legitimacy of choosing an historical subject, given the demands of the age in which they were living.

When Polak condemned Mann for not being a 'good historian' he intimated that he subscribed to the views of the report Historische Belletristik. Mann's novel was to be condemned, not merely because of its stylistic flaws and weaknesses but also because Mann had incorporated fantasy elements into documented historical fact. The subjectivity of this

⁶² The rise of the historical novel is discussed in more detail in Chapter Four.

⁶³ For details of this debate see Ralph Kohpeiß Der historische Roman der Gegenwart in der Bundesrepublik Deutschland. Ästhetische Konzeption und Wirkungsintention (Stuttgart: Verlag für Wissenschaft und Forschung, 1993), 34.

assessment is clearly evident when Polak's remarks are juxtaposed with those of Mann's friend and frequent advocate, W. E. Süskind. He recognised the dangers inherent in choosing an historical subject, in his reviews of Alexander, with his words recalling the debates of 1928:

Die größte Schwierigkeit mußte Klaus Mann daraus erwachsen, daß er sich einen ganz und gar objektiven, einen durch Geschichte und Mythos prädestinierten Helden erwählt hat. So hieß es für ihn zu allererst, seinen Alexander neu aufzeichnen, ohne doch gegen unser aller gegebene Vorstellungen zu verstoßen (860)

Whilst Süskind did not feel Mann had successfully achieved this in his portrayal and characterisation of the Macedonian leader, he believed it to have been realised in capturing the spirit of this age of conquest. Drawing particular attention to Mann's use of the natural world that parallels the rise and fall of Alexander the Great, he commented:

Etwas von Frühling, von Auftauen, von wehender Luft ist in dem Buch, und es gehört dazu, daß in den Kapiteln vom Niedergang und vom babylonischen Alexander soviel von den Ausdunstungen, den Gerüchen und atmosphärischen Verführungen des Ostens die Rede ist (860)⁶⁴.

By isolating these aspects, Süskind pointed to those parts of the novel for which there were no historical data and which were, in consequence, not subject to the reader's expectations and preconceptions.

In contrast, Süskind dismissed the more historically detailed passages, remarking: "Den Historiker befriedigt es nicht ganz, ich meine nicht den zünftigen Historiker, sondern den Leser, der eine gewisse geschichtlich Einhelligkeit in dem Roman erspüren möchte". He did not, however, criticise Mann for adapting the facts of Alexander's life; throughout his review Süskind implicitly accepts the status of Alexander as a novel and not as a scholarly, historically accurate biography⁶⁵. Rather he believed their integration into a work of fiction

⁶⁴ Mann's use of nature imagery to parallel the rise and fall of Alexander is discussed in Chapter Four.

⁶⁵ This recalls Stefan Zweig's words (in his unpublished review of Alexander): "Richard Friedenthal schreibt [...] einen *historischen* Roman, Klaus Mann einen *historischen Roman*" (134). Here Zweig clearly distinguished between a factual text and a work of fiction.

to be flawed. Referring once more to the reader, he commented: "Ihm bedeuten die mitgeteilten historischen Fakten oft ein Zuviel und ein Erstarren ins Trocken-Gelehrte hinein"⁶⁶.

The intricacies of the debate on the treatment of historical fact within the canon of literary fiction, is demonstrated with a 1930 critique of *Alexander* by Conrad Wandrey and published in the trade journal *Der Bücherwurm*⁶⁷. The tone and tenor of his review suggests that he wrote from a position of the far right and thus also offered an ideological counterbalance to Arnheim, Polak and, to some extent, also to Süskind. Wandrey began by returning to the criticisms of Mann's work that had been made at his debut. Alluding to Mann's interpretation of Alexander's biography, in which he portrayed the Macedonian emperor as a fierce leader and opponent, fatally flawed by his love for another man, his general and childhood companion, Kleitos, Wandrey condemned this portrayal in his pointed attack on Mann: "Sollte aber hinter dem üblen Literatenjargon Klaus Manns eine satirische Absicht stehen, so kann man sich über die seelische und geistige Philistrosität diese angeblich jungen Autors nicht genug verwundern". Whilst his description of Mann as 'angeblich jung' recalls the attacks of Mann's debut, Wandrey's choice of 'Literatenjargon' and 'die seelische und geistige Philistrosität' indicated a forceful rejection of his work. Ironically, Wandrey used the term 'Literaten' pejoratively, much as Mann himself had used it some three years previously in 'Heute und Morgen', drawing on its secondary negative meaning of the literary dilettante, the antithesis of the *Dichter*, the exalted purveyor of eternal truths and timeless truths⁶⁸. The equally pejorative term 'Jargon', with its connotation of superficiality, heightened the dismissiveness of Wandrey's remark. In essence, Wandrey criticised here merely the author's style. However, he then intensified his criticism by denouncing the novel itself as 'eine geistige und seelische Philistrosität'. By referring to it in this way, as a piece of intellectual and spiritual philistinism, Wandrey denied the novel its legitimacy as literature.

⁶⁶ A quotation from Hermann Kasack, whose review 'Klaus Mann, Alexander', appeared in *Die literarische Welt* 5 (1929), vol 49, 9, illustrates the conflict of the historical novel when he notes, in contrast to Süskind: "Das Buch packt immer dann, wenn der Stoff sich tatsächengemäß zeigt; es verliert sich, wenn der Lust zu fabulieren und episodische Szenen auszumalen zu sehr nachgegeben wird".

⁶⁷ Conrad Wandrey, 'Klaus Mann, Alexander', *Bücherwurm* 15 (1930) 56-57. Further references are given after quotation in the text.

⁶⁸ See Chapter One for a discussion of Mann's use of *Literat*.

Wandrey wrote with a clear ideal of both literature and the treatment of historical fact. He acknowledged Mann's attempt to interpret historical fact from a modern perspective and thus to make history relevant to the modern age: "man [soll] jemandem mehr weismachen wollen, geschichtliche Stoffe würden durch Angleichung an die Optik der Gegenwart unserem Gefühl 'nähergebracht'". With some justification, as shall be discussed in Chapter Five, Wandrey focused specifically on Mann's use of modern idiom, as intrusive. However, he assessed this attempt negatively as a corruption of known fact, stating first "[der Roman] ist offenbar das Ergebnis einer peinlichen Verwechslung und Vermengung" then noting dismissively: "Begabte Gymnasiasten der unteren Klasse, die in der Pause auf dem Schulhof zur Kurzweil Alexander spielen, ahnen mehr von den wirklichen Vorgängen jener legendären Zeit, wenn sie nur frische und begeisterungsfähige Burschen sind".

The phrase 'den wirklichen Vorgängen' implied that Wandrey approached Mann's text from a position close to the historians in the *Historische Belletristik* and similar to that of Ernst Polak, he appeared to demand an historically accurate biography of Alexander's life verifiable with known sources. However, this phrase is misleading for in writing from a position on the far right, Wandrey incorporated into his review the right's perception of history as a means to promote their own ideology. Thus Wandrey did not want a historical treatise; rather, he demanded a text which conformed to the ideals of history and the claims made of it by the right. Approaching the story of Alexander the Great with a clear image of the emperor as the true leader, predestined to lead his country to greatness, Mann, he believed, had failed to grasp the true significance of Alexander's accomplishments. Reflecting on Mann's adaptation of Alexander's life and exploits, Wandrey noted: "mit dem jungen Mazedonierkönig Alexander [...] hat dieser flüssig geschriebene, aber bis zur Karikatur flache 'Roman einer Utopie' nur den Namen und den Stoff gemeinsam". 'Flüssig geschrieben' and 'flach' further undermined Mann's novel for they implied superficiality. Wandrey pointed to this interpretation when he intensified his criticism by comparing Alexander with the travelogue, Rundherum (1929), co-written by Mann with his sister Erika,

and commented scathingly: "Alexanders des Großen Welteroberung war ein heldisches Abenteuer von mythenbildender Kraft; wenn Klaus und Erika 'Rundherum' fahren, bleibt das eine kesse Sache ohne tieferen Belang".

Here Wandrey distinguished clearly between the present and an inviolable, idealised past that, by blurring the distinction between past and present, Mann's interpretation had, however, violated. In juxtaposing his praise for the age and exploits of Alexander ('jene legendäre Zeit', 'ein heldisches Abenteuer von mythenbildender Kraft') with his scornful rejection of Rundherum, ('eine kesse Sache ohne tieferen Belang'), Wandrey indicated the basis for his criticism. He ascribed to the past a significance that Mann, by implication had denied; the past, he suggested, by reference to the legendary, heroic and mythical qualities of Alexander's achievements, provided a model for the present. He regarded Alexander as a positive role model, which stood in direct opposition, however, to Mann's account; here the emperor degenerated into a tyrannical, megalomaniacal despot, who used the cruel and unjust exercise of power over others to compensate for the rejection of his love by Kleitos, destroying in the process the unconditional love of those around him and, at the same time, causing the downfall and ruin of his country.

2.4 Criticism from the right

Conrad Wandrey used his review of Alexander to attack not just the text but also the person of Klaus Mann, a writer who in his essays proved himself diametrically opposed to the ideology with which, indirectly, Wandrey identified. His review constituted part of an ongoing attack on Klaus Mann that spanned the years 1924 to 1933. In common with those on the left, it combined literary criticism with political ideology and personal enmity, ultimately to dismiss Mann's work as of little consequence. Two of the three reviews under discussion here, Fritz Rostosky's review of Der fromme Tanz⁶⁹ and Walter Heinsius' assessment of Kindernovelle⁷⁰ appeared in Die schöne Literatur which, under the editorship

⁶⁹ Fritz Rostosky, 'Klaus Mann: Der fromme Tanz', Die schöne Literatur XXVII (1926), 253.

⁷⁰ Walter Heinsius, 'Klaus Mann: Kindernovelle', Die schöne Literatur XXVIII (1927) vol5, 207-208. Further references are given after quotation in the text.

of Will Vesper, developed into an organ of the right, propagating its calls for 'authentic German' art and decrying decadence⁷¹ or modernity in literature. The third, Karl Rauch's deeply sarcastic review of Treffpunkt im Unendlichen entitled 'Unendlicher Klaus Mann ...' in contrast appeared in the trade journal Bücherwurm⁷².

2.4.1 Fritz Rostosky, 'Der fromme Tanz'

Despite their very different political positions, the criticism that Mann could not 'represent' youth for, despite his young age, he was not, however, 'young', linked his critics on the left and the right. As discussed earlier, the left based their observations primarily on Mann's reliance on traditional literary styles they deemed to be out-moded and incompatible with the modern age. The *völkisch*⁷³ reviewers of the right, in contrast, brought to their remarks a clear ideal of youth from which Mann diverged. In Klaus Mann 1906 - 1949 Grunewald defines the programmatic nature of the term 'young' when he writes: "être jeune, c'était, d'une manière schématique, avoir le goût de l'effort et de l'action, être énergique, spontané et posséder des qualités qui correspondaient à l'idée plus ou moins vague qu'ils se faisaient de l'Allemand idéal"⁷⁴. That Mann's early work did not correspond to this ideal is illustrated in a comment by Bernd Isemann. Reviewing Vor dem Leben for Die schöne Literatur in 1925 he dismissed the volume with the assessment: "Nichts Jugendliches, nichts Straffes, nicht Durchkämpftes"⁷⁵, where *Straff* and *durchkämpfen* evoked the nationalist virtues of discipline and struggle for a cause.

A year later, Fritz Rostosky, also writing in Die schöne Literatur, challenged Mann's depiction of youth in modern German society in his novel Der fromme Tanz. Despite his opening reference to Mann as "der junge Mann", a phrase which had the dual purpose of undermining Mann's credibility as a writer by emphasising his young age, whilst implying

⁷¹ As shall be discussed shortly, the accusation of decadence recurred throughout the reviews of Mann's work during the Weimar Republic.

⁷² Karl Rauch, 'Unendlicher Klaus Mann ...', Bücherwurm 17 (1932) 149-150. Further references are given in the text after quotation.

⁷³ I have selected the term *völkisch* here as a generic term denoting the reviewers on the nationalist, far right.

⁷⁴ Michel Grunewald, Klaus Mann 1906-1949 vol I, 52-53.

⁷⁵ Quoted from Fredric Kroll, Klaus-Mann-Schriftenreihe Vol II (Wiesbaden: Blahak, 1977), 131.

the reviewer's greater maturity and, in turn, greater powers of judgement, Rostosky, born in 1901 and thus only five years older than Mann himself, came from the generation whose plight Mann purported to represent in his novel. In his review, Rostosky referred specifically to Mann's foreword where he had written first in defence of his text:

Kein Buch vielleicht hat es nötiger, am Anfang gleich um Entschuldigung zu bitten, um seiner Wirrnis willen, als eines, das aus unserer Jugend kommt, von unserer Jugend handelt, und nichts sein, nichts bedeuten möchte, als Ausdruck, Darstellung und Geständnis dieser Jugend, ihrer Not, ihrer Verwirrung- und ihrer hohen Hoffnung vielleicht (FT, 7).

He had then continued: "als ein Dokument kann es vielleicht bestehen, finden doch die 'Verwirrungen, die diese außerordentliche Zeit für uns mit sich brachte', einen nur zu deutlichen Spiegel in ihm" (FT, 8).

Rostosky focused upon Mann's choice of 'Dokument', with its connotations of factuality and accuracy, to take issue with the portrayal of youth within the novel. Criticising Mann's depiction as lacking depth and as painfully self-conscious, he then pointed to the fundamental discrepancy between the author's experience of youth and his own:

Wir anderen Jungen möchten es doch höflich, aber bestimmt ablehnen, durch ein Buch uns dokumentiert zu fühlen, dessen Abenteuer zu dreiviertel homosexuell geschminkt einherwanken, wobei meist nicht klar wird, wie weit es Schminke, und wie weit es die ehrliche Haut unseres Poeten ist, die da süßlich und pervers duftet.

Here Rostosky combined three different elements of criticism characteristic of the right in general and of their approach to Mann's work in particular. Rostosky followed Mann in choosing the personal 'wir' over the impersonal 'die' in his initial reference to 'wir anderen Jugend'. 'Wir' creates the impression of a group identity. Thus, Mann had used it consistently in his foreword to suggest to his (older) readers the typicality of the experiences and adventures they would find in his novel. Yet, whilst here 'wir' was inclusive and all-embracing, it could also be exclusive, designed to differentiate between groups. Rostosky

drew upon both implications in his review. At first glance, 'wir anderen Jugend' created the sense of group identification - both with his judgement and rejection of the novel - for which Mann had also striven.

In an early study of National Socialist literary criticism which, in its general characteristics, evolved from the nationalist, *völkisch* criticism of the Weimar Republic, Rolf Geißler typified the critics' approach as determined by a simple "Freund-Feind-Denken"⁷⁶ This "them and us' approach he defined as a clear and immutable delineation of works and authors into mutually exclusive factions, the one positive, the *Freund* in Geißler's formulation, the other, the *Feind*, negative. By thus modifying the general, inclusive phrase Mann had used in his foreword, 'wir Jungen', with the adjective 'andere', Rostosky followed this pattern. With it he changed both the emphasis and underlying message of his words. 'Wir *anderen* Jungen' was exclusive; it presupposed the basic division of his and Mann's shared generation into opposing and irreconcilable camps - those represented by Mann and those following Rostosky's assessments.

Alluding to the autobiographical basis to Mann's novel and the author's homosexuality in the phrase '[es] wird meist nicht klar, wie weit es [das homosexuelle Abenteuer] Schminke, und wie weit es die ehrliche Haut unseres Poeten ist, die da süßlich und pervers duftet' , Rostosky then assumed the moral high ground in his review. His comments were coloured by an intolerance of homosexuality, the basis for his rejection of the novel and Mann's uncompromising portrayal of homosexual love. Rostosky drew upon the commonplace perception of homosexuality as synonymous with effeminacy⁷⁷ - in his choice of the verb 'einherwanken' - and, more importantly, as morally indefensible, transferring to the neutral term 'homosexual' the overtly negative associations of 'pervers'. He then reinforced the sense of outrage and disapprobation implicated in 'pervers' when he speculated: "Es mag unendlich schwer sein, im Lebenskreis und -ursprung des Autors unbefangen und gerade sich

⁷⁶ Rolf Geißler, 'Form und Methoden der nationalsozialistischen Literaturkritik', 266

⁷⁷ This is an indirect reference to Paulchen, the effeminate homosexual in *Der fromme Tanz* who falls in love with Andreas. The detail of this portrayal is discussed in Chapter Four.

auszuwachsen und auszurecken". Here the adjective 'unbefangen' and the verbal phrase 'gerad sich auszuwachsen und auszurecken' were deliberately provocative; they carried with them overtones of naturalness and 'natural' behaviour which, in this context, acted as a positive contrast to the 'perversion' of homosexual practice.

In assuming the high moral ground in this manner, Rostosky conformed to a uniform approach taken by his conservative reviewers on the right. They did not deny Mann's ability as a writer, a concession which Rostoky, for example, made in his opening statement. "Im voraus sei gesagt, daß der junge Mann ein beachtliches Talent mitbringt", he began, before praising him as a worthy successor of his father: "Es sei aber auch nicht verkannt, daß er sich in den Manieren [...] des väterlichen 'Kollegen' wiegt und mit Glück gibt"⁷⁸. However, aside from his skill, particularly in this early period of his career, they concentrated on, and pointedly criticised, the dominance of human sexuality as a *leitmotif* to his work as an emerging writer. For this reason they accuse him of 'decadence', an accusation heavy with ideological significance, suggestive of deep moral degeneracy, the blatant disregard of social mores and a hint of impropriety that threatened the moral well-being of the nation's youth.

Certainly, they were justified in isolating this specific theme. Taking society's accepted norm of heterosexuality as his standard in the short stories of Vor dem Leben, in Der fromme Tanz and in his play Anja und Esther (1926), Mann did explore variant forms of human sexuality - ranging from homosexuality to the extremes of necrophilia, incest and paedophilia - and the effect of sexuality on human relationships. Whilst the deliberately provocative issues of necrophilia, incest and paedophilia did not reappear after Vor dem Leben, his concern with homosexuality as a legitimate expression of human love, which arose from his status as a homosexual writer, was not merely a passing interest; rather it defined his work of the Weimar Republic and in the fiction of his later years where the 1935 novel Symphonie Pathétique, based on the life of the composer Tchaikovsky, is perhaps the most direct and detailed study⁷⁹. However, the comments of the critics on the right have to

⁷⁸ Rostosky's reference to 'der väterliche Kollege' alludes to Thomas Mann's dedication in Klaus Mann's copy of Der Zauberberg. In Der Wendepunkt Klaus Mann recalled that this dedication had run: "Dem geschätzten Kollegen - sein hoffnungsvoller Vater", he also remembered: "Leider war ich unvorsichtig genug, diesen Scherz Freunden zu zeigen, die ihn ihrerseits nicht für sich behielten. Ein gefundenes Fressen für die liebe 'Journaille'!" (Wp, 172).

⁷⁹ Klaus Mann took the life of Tchaikovsky as a parallel to his own age to portray the homosexual within a society that condemns it as morally indefensible. I shall return to this in Chapter Four.

be seen in context. As Grunewald has noted: "L'importance des thèmes de nature érotique dans les premières oeuvres de Klaus Mann ne pouvait pas passer inaperçue, surtout à une époque où, en Allemagne, le débat sur la pornographie battait son plein"⁸⁰. He refers here to the contemporary campaign to re-introduce some limited censorship into the publishing industry, which a constitutional guarantee of the freedom of artistic expression had removed, although Grunewald is mistaken when he defines this as 'le débat sur la pornographie'⁸¹ for Germany already had Obscene Publications legislation which prohibited the sale of pornographic material. The campaign to which he refers was for a more general law which would prohibit works deemed to be 'filth' or 'smut'.

The campaigners were prompted to action by the rise in 'pulp' fiction, the cheap, serialised Westerns and romances sold by the thousand to young adolescents in the kiosks and small shops of Germany's high streets. Because the idealised life they depicted did not correspond to the reality of their impressionable readers, the campaigners argued, these pamphlets and booklets promised that which could never be realised whilst the values reflected in the romances in particular, they believed, posed a serious threat to their readers' morality.

Although a coalition of Protestant and Catholic church groups, pressure groups for the preservation of the moral health of the nation, and politicians orchestrated the campaign, highly vocal amongst them were the parties of the right. Through their intervention a draft bill was introduced into the *Reichstag* in 1925 which, after lengthy discussion and amendment was passed in December 1926 as the *Gesetz zur Bewahrung der Jugend vor Schund- und Schmutzschriften* (the Harmful Publications (Young Persons) Act of 1926). The law prohibited the sale and distribution to the under-eighteens of material categorised, with strong moral overtones, as either 'trash' or 'filth'. Although a precise definition of such texts could not be agreed, it was implied in the exemptions to the act; for example, texts deemed

⁸⁰ Michel Grunewald, *Klaus Mann 1906-1949* Vol I, 53.

⁸¹ For an introduction to the background and detail of this legislation see Luke Springman, 'Poisoned Hearts, Diseased Minds, and American Pimps: The Language of Censorship in the *Schund und Schmutz* Debates', *German Quarterly* 68 (1995) 408-429 and Klaus Petersen, 'The Harmful Publications (Young Persons) Act of 1926. Literary Censorship and the Politics of Morality in the Weimar Republic', *German Studies Review* 15 (1992) vol 3 505-523.

by an independent board to have artistic and literary integrity, that is, 'literature' as opposed to 'popular fiction', were precluded, nor could political beliefs espoused in a work be considered sufficient reason to seek its prohibition⁸².

To place a text within the category of *Schund- und Schmutzschrift* was in itself a clear value judgement for it denigrated a work by denying it the status of 'literature'; that the right assigned Mann's work to this category is clarified in a number of remarks made following the premier of *Anja und Esther* in 1926 which sent forth a stream of invective, targeted at Mann and his work alike. It ranged from a call for 'right-thinking' young Germans to fight the obscenity found in his works⁸³ to an unnamed politician's attempt, following a performance of *Anja und Esther* in Frankfurt, to impose a regional ban on future performances of Mann's plays in the state of Hessen. Denouncing the play, this politician appealed to the *Landtag*:

Was hier auf krankhaft perverse Weise in Herabsetzung des Weibes auf die Stufe tierhafter Schamentblößtheit unter Verwendung kindlicher Mitdarsteller vor größtenteils jugendlichem Publikum geleistet wurde, mußte Schrecken und Grauen zugleich erwecken. Nicht daß die Mehrzahl der Zuschauer das Stück erfreulich kühl ablehnte, ist hier die Hauptsache, sondern das ist der Skandal, daß ein solcher Schmutzfladen in unserem mit schweren Opfern erhaltenen Kunsttempel überhaupt die Bretter berühren durfte. Ich frage daher die Regierung, was sie zu tun gedenkt, um in Zukunft die Aufführung derartiger Fragwürdigkeiten zu verhindern⁸⁴

Although made some months before the Harmful Publications legislation was enacted, this appeal undoubtedly called upon the future provisions it would make to protect the young from moral harm, the reason he emphasised the youth of actors and public alike.

⁸² These concessions, though imprecise and ill-defined, were achieved after the left in particular, fearful the legislation could be used as a means of political censorship, organised widespread protests and petitions against it. For details of the groups involved and the form of their protest see Klaus Petersen, 'The Harmful Publications (Young Persons) Act', 514-516.

⁸³ Quoted from Michel Grunewald, *Klaus Mann 1906-1949* Vol II, 619

⁸⁴ Quoted from Michel Grunewald, *Klaus Mann 1906-1949* Vol II, 620

However, factors external to the play also influenced his condemnation. The 'sick perversion' he perceived in Mann's female characters for example, defiled an ideal of woman which defined her as pure, natural and virginal and, at the same time, as the future of the German nation. The questionable moral values of Anja und Esther, conveyed by reference to it as 'das Schmutzfladen' and '[eine] Fragwürdigkeit', violated, in contrast, the sanctity of German theatre, idealised as a 'temple of art'. Such reference to *völkisch* ideals, whether, for example, of youth, woman, art and literature, against which to measure and evaluate Mann's work unified the reviews by those on the right that were published during the Weimar Republic. Their approach, characterised by rigidly dividing texts into the ideologically acceptable and the alien, before assessing them accordingly, brooked no compromise⁸⁵.

2.4.2 Walter Heinsius, 'Kindernovelle'

Neither the ferocity of the politician's rejection of Anja und Esther nor the implied rebuke of Rostosky's critique of Der fromme Tanz were present in the second review in this selection, Walter Heinsius' appraisal of Kindernovelle which appeared in Die schöne Literatur of May 1927. In contrast to Rostosky, Heinsius accepted, without question, Mann's depiction of the young in his novella. He began his review with an observation that, in essence, echoed Mann's own assessment of his generation's plight in 'Fragment von der Jugend' from 1926. Comparing them with the Expressionists who had preceded them, Heinsius wrote:

Klaus Mann und seine Generation stehen dem Leben nicht mehr in der Haltung von Rebellen und Vaternmördern gegenüber wie jene Jugend, in deren abschließende Entwicklungsjahre der Krieg fiel, sondern mit dem frühreifen Leidenszug, mit der Hilf- und Ratlosigkeit von Menschen, die in eine völlig ungeordnete, chaotische Welt hineingeboren wurde, in der auch die Erwachsenen keinen Rat mehr wußten und keinen mehr geben konnten.

In his closing statement Heinsius pointed to Mann's representative value amongst the young, commenting that a work such as Kindernovelle should be "[das] Kunstziel der jüngsten Generation, für deren Repräsentanten Klaus Mann gehalten werden möchte".

⁸⁵ For a discussion of these issues see Rolf Geißler, 'Form und Methoden der nationalsozialistischen Literaturkritik', 265-266.

The tenor of Heinsius' short review suggests that, unlike Rostosky, who was of an age with Mann, Heinsius was some years older. He adopted a paternalistic approach to that which he had read, considering in his discussion not merely the book under discussion but also Mann's earlier texts. That these works were flawed he readily acknowledged, specifically noting, for instance, Mann's over-simplification of their shared central theme. "Die Ratlosigkeit vor dem Leben", Heinsius reflected, "[wurde] von Klaus Mann [...] in seinen ersten Büchern in typisch pubeszentenhafter Verkürzung als rein sexual-erotisches Problem gesehen". However, he attributed this solely to the author's immaturity, rather than to any basic inability as a writer, and believed it overcome in Kindernovelle. Defining 'die Ratlosigkeit vor dem Leben' more precisely as "rat- und hilflose Geisteshaltung", he stated: "hier hat sie den Gegenstand gefunden, der ihr gemäß ist: die kindliche Welt" before continuing with reference to Mann's short stories Vor dem Leben:

Auch sie liegt 'vor dem Leben' wie ein reiner und unschuldiger Traum, aber dessen zarter Schmelz und dessen märchenhafte Verwobenheit mit allen Dingen so entzückend dargestellt sind, daß man darüber den Kunstfehler übersieht, der darin liegt, daß die Komposition durch die eingeflochtene Liebesgeschichte der Mutter gesprengt wird.

In the desire to point to the positive in Mann's work, and to define each new work as a progression from the last, Heinsius' remarks demonstrate, at first glance, a closer affiliation with the reviews by Mann's close acquaintances, and, especially, those by W.E. Süskind, than with the vehemence and forthright rejection of Mann's texts by Heinsius' fellow critics on the right both before and after the publication of this review. Heinsius did not, however, divorce his remarks from the ideological considerations to which, as a contributor to Die schöne Literatur, by this time a recognised mouthpiece for the far right, he also subscribed. He made direct reference to these considerations when he expanded on Mann's interpretation of '[die] rat- und hilflose Geisteshaltung' of bearing traits of "dekadenter Müdigkeit und süßlicher Morbidität", a choice of words which recalled the terminology of Rostosky's review of Der fromme Tanz or Gerathewohl's critique of Anja und Esther whilst 'Müdigkeit' and 'Morbidität' each emphasised Mann's divergence from the ideal of vitality that Grunewald pinpointed as underpinning the right's ideal of the young in particular.

This does not explain, however, why Heinsius should then praise Kindernovelle as illustrated in the quotation above. In her analysis of Mann's changing attitudes and perception of literature, Judit Gyory has pointed to the correlation between Mann's idealisation of the unconscious and the irrational as a counterbalance to the extreme rationalism and materialism he perceived in society. As the Weimar Republic progressed, she notes, Mann realised that the right had expropriated these ideals to legitimise their own divisive ideology, a development which, in the later years of the Republic, compelled him to modify his views⁸⁶.

In 1926, however, when he wrote Kindernovelle Mann could not foresee this development. In consequence, the novella eulogised the primitive and instinctive affinity between the children and the natural environment in which they lived, a world far removed from the urban life of a distant town and from which their mother, as a rational being, had been alienated. This brought him close to the *völkisch* ideal of a romanticised, agrarian, past that contrasted with the reality of modern industrial society centred on the large German conurbations. Heinsius thus praised Kindernovelle for its proximity to this ideal, referring to the story as 'ein reiner und unschuldiger Traum' and to its 'märchenhafte Verwobenheit mit allen Dingen'.

2.4.3 Karl Rauch, 'Treffpunkt im Unendlichen' (1932)

The final review in this selection is Karl Rauch's critique of Treffpunkt im Unendlichen that appeared in the trade journal Der Bücherwurm in 1932. Rauch entitled his review 'Unendlicher Klaus Mann ...', an ironic play on the novel's title that immediately defined the overtly antagonistic approach taken by the reviewer to the novel and, to a greater extent, to the author himself, for this review is, in all but name, a thinly disguised attempt to undermine Mann as a serious writer. Throughout the review, Rauch emphasised Mann's relative youth, he was, after all, still only in his mid-twenties, in a manner reminiscent of the

⁸⁶ Judit Gyory, 'Die Neuordnung der Werte bei Klaus Mann im antifaschistischen Exil', Kontroversen alte und neue. Akten des VII internationalen Germanistenkongresses Göttingen 1985, ed. by Albrecht Schöne, Vol 9 Deutsche Literatur in der Weltliteratur. Kulturation statt politischer Nation?, ed. by Franz Norbert Mennemeier, and Conrad Wiedemann (Tübingen: Niemeyer, 1986) 246-250 (247).

first critiques of his early work. Rauch did not refer to him, for example, in full as 'Klaus Mann' as might be expected in a review of a writer of, for instance, his father's stature. Rather, Rauch addressed him more familiarly as 'Klaus'. By deliberately ignoring the formality the context demanded, Rauch transformed this apparently innocent use of Mann's first name alone into a term of mockery, intended to belittle its target, acceptable perhaps for a child but not for a writer of some years standing.

Rauch further undermined Mann's work by adopting a technique favoured in particular by critics on the right when reviewing a text by one of their political opponents. In his survey of the nationalist book review Geißler noted that the reviewers deliberately isolated elements within the work from their context or misquoted, frequently running two or more quotations together to give a meaning vastly different from the author's original intent, in order to expose the work and the author to ridicule⁸⁷. Rauch did not deliberately distort the text or Mann's meaning within it; rather he chose selectively from it. Approximately half the review consisted of quotations from Treffpunkt im Unendlichen which Rauch then annotated to draw his reader's attention to Mann's stylistic errors. Thus, in Rauch's opening line, a quotation from the first page of Treffpunkt im Unendlichen, he highlighted Mann's flawed German by inserting two exclamation marks into the original sentence: "'Nein, ich wollte doch ohne Mundstück', machte (!) er enerviert (!)". In a second quotation, Rauch then added more directly his own assessment: "'Als die Dame ihn schließlich kurzerhand 'Sie Lausejunge!' nannte, schrie er mit funklnen Augen: 'I am a british [sic] boy!'" (Das bleibt uns also noch zu lernen: mit den Augen schreien [!])" (149).

Rauch was not alone in pointing to such weaknesses and errors in Mann's text. Hermann Hesse, for example, in an unpublished review⁸⁸ pointed to oversights in Mann's editing, picking up on inaccuracies and inconsistencies within the novel:

⁸⁷ Rolf Geißler: 'Form und Methoden der nationalsozialistischen Literaturkritik', 272

⁸⁸ Hermann Hesse, 'Beim Lesen eines Romans', Gesammelte Werke II, Schriften zur Literatur I (Frankfurt: Suhrkamp, 1970), 272-277 (274-275)

Der Held kommt nach Berlin, steigt im Hotel ab, und zwar im Zimmer Nummer Elf, und wie ich das lese [...], denke ich: 'Wozu braucht er diese genaue Bezeichnung der Zimmernummer?' Ich warte, ich bin überzeugt, die Elf werde schon irgendeinen Sinn haben [...]. Aber ich werde enttäuscht. Der Held kehrt, eine oder zwei Buchseiten später, in sein Hotel zurück - und hat jetzt plötzlich die Nummer Zwölf! (274-275).

The difference between this and the approach adopted by Rauch lay in their position within the text - Hesse included his comments in the main body of his review while Rauch deliberately placed them in a position, at the very opening of his review, which would draw and retain his reader's attention. By isolating the errors in this way, he dictated the tenor of the review and the sarcasm that underpinned it.

Rauch's antipathy towards Klaus Mann was clearly demonstrated in his closing lines of his review. Here he drew attention to the strong autobiographical traits with which Mann endowed the central character, Sebastian. "Nachdem ich durch alle 367 Seiten mich hindurchgequält hatte", Rauch commented,

all das seichte Geschwätz von junger Generation, Weltstadtgefühl, Morphium- und Haschischrausch verwunden war, ist nur ein einziger Satz als bemerkenswert mir haften geblieben: 'Sebastian ist vollkommen privat', beschloß er. 'Darum wird er es auch zu nichts bringen.'

Sollte dahinter eine leuchtende Selbsterkenntnis Klausen sich verbergen, dann: Meinen herzlichen Glückwunsch (150).

2.5 Reviews by those favourable to Klaus Mann

I have sub-divided these reviews. The first group is represented by Erich Ebermayer and Herbert Schlüter, who used their reviews to defend Mann against the harsh criticism his work had received from others and, in consequence, are reviews which offer little truly impartial judgement of his texts. The second group is dedicated exclusively to the reviews by W. E. Süskind for, although a close friend of Klaus Mann's and also wishing to defend him as Ebermayer and Schlüter had done, he nevertheless attempted an objective assessment of the texts he reviewed, indicating their flaws as well as their strengths.

2.5.1 Erich Ebermayer and Herbert Schlüter

In his contribution to Klaus Mann zu Gedächtnis, Erich Ebermayer recalled that he had written his review of Vor dem Leben, which is under discussion here⁸⁹, before he had met Mann face-to-face⁹⁰. The publication of Vor dem Leben, and the critical hostility towards it, prompted him to contact Klaus Mann directly, requesting the author's permission to review the volume of short stories; permission Mann readily granted in a letter dated 16 May 1925: "Daß Sie es besprechen wollen, danke ich Ihnen auch [...]. Ich freue mich über jedes Verständnis, schon über jedes Nichtvoreingenommene" (KMG, 34), soliciting, at the same time, for his play Anja und Esther also to be included in the review although in the event Ebermayer omitted this.

Ebermayer had been moved to write, he recollected in Klaus Mann zum Gedächtnis, both by the impact Vor dem Leben had made on him and by the hostility with which it had been received. "Im Frühjahr [1925] kamen die ersten törichten und bösen Angriffe gegen den jungen Autor und sein erstes Buch", he wrote and then continued, "Ich hatte es sofort verschlungen und liebte es auf den ersten Blick. Kritiklos, ganz". These statements, although made some twenty-five years after the events Ebermayer described, contained two telling phrases indicative of the author's approach to Mann's work. By dismissing out of hand the criticisms of Mann and Vor dem Leben as both 'foolish' and 'evil', by terming these criticisms 'attacks', he denied the legitimacy and validity of some. There were undoubtedly reviewers motivated by a personal antipathy towards Mann and what they felt he represented, yet these were balanced by such reviewers as Harald Braun who attempted to judge the volume on its merits alone. By then stating that he had read the volume without

⁸⁹ Erich Ebermayer, 'Vor dem Leben', Die Literatur/Literarische Echo 27 (1924/25) 621-622. Further references are given in the text after quotation.

⁹⁰ In his contribution to Klaus Mann zum Gedächtnis, Ebermayer reflected how he was already aware of a new writer within the Mann family. Reflecting on his association with the family, Ebermayer wrote: Eine seltsame Scheu hielt mich bei den ersten Besuchen in der Poschinger-straße [the Mann family home] davon ab, nach dem Sohn zu fragen, der als Sekundaner auf der Odenwaldschule - Nebendinge trieb. Daß er dies tat, hatte ich längst durch jene drahtlose Telegrafie erfahren, die alles, was zu Landerziehungsheimen und Freien Schulen damals Kontakt hatte, verband. Thomas Manns Sohn Klaus, sechzehn Jahre, schreibe Gedichte und Novellen, er verabsäume es durchaus, den regelmäßigen Unterricht zu besuchen, bleibe morgens schlicht im Bett, und wenn Herr Geheeb, der Chef, an seiner Zimmertür rüttelte, käme die Antwort des Schülers Mann: 'Bitte nicht stören. Ich *schreibe!*' Worauf Geheeb sich zurückzuziehen pflegte. He then continued: Wenig später begann es im Blätterwald zu rascheln: Klaus Mann, der älteste Sohn des Dichters, hätte einen Band Erzählungen 'Vor dem Leben' vollendet, der bei Gebr. Enoch in Hamburg erscheine. Ich horchte auf. Welch ein genialer, weil einfacher und wahrer Titel! Ja - vor dem Leben, das war dieser junge Mensch wirklich" (33).

criticism, the force of 'kritiklos', Ebermayer suggested an uncritical stance which is reflected in his review of Vor dem Leben published in 1925 in Die Literatur.

As illustrated earlier in this chapter, Mann's most vehement critics had condemned all aspects of Vor dem Leben, from the storylines of its narratives to the language in which they were written. With few exceptions, they had regarded its publication as the consequence of nepotism denied to other young writers and had, in consequence, taken the opportunity of the review to condemn both his work and its author's unconventional bohemian private life. In a skilful piece of writing that attacked none directly or by name Ebermayer took issue with, and rejected, each of these criticisms in turn, conceding the validity of some but placing them in the context of what he believed was the unique nature of Mann's writing talent although he did not give a clear definition of this 'unique talent' at any stage.

Prefacing his analysis of the volume with the speculative question: "Was aber ist nun der Zauber dieser Sprache, woher kommt der Duft, der uns hier entgegenweht, so unsagbar erfrischend und erlösend zwischen all dem Wust des Gedruckten?" (621), Ebermayer quickly dismissed the key areas of criticism made of Vor dem Leben with a series of rhetorical questions. "Ist es die große Schlichtheit der Sprache?", he asked, "Ist es die Knappheit des Ausdrucks? [...] Ist es die Handlung, die uns bewegt?" (621-622). To each of these questions he answered categorically in the negative. "Sicher nicht", he concluded, "Szenen, Verschlingungen, Stimmungen, die nicht ins allgemein Gültige erhoben werden, die vielleicht durchaus Einzelereignisse sind und bleiben" (622). Yet for Ebermayer it was precisely the episodic, personal character of the volume which gave its appeal and removed it from the realm of 'mere' literature; indeed, he rejected the very notion that Vor dem Leben be considered as literature. Referring to the tension between the lure of death and the appeal of life that characterised the stories in the volume and would also typify Mann's later work, Ebermayer remarked:

Das alles ist so gar nicht Literatur, ist so einfach hingeschrieben, traumwandlerisch, von einem, der zum Leben noch in kühler, reservierter und

doch sehnsüchtiger Ferne steht, von einem, der Tiefen kennt, nicht vor ihnen zurückscheut, dem aber doch Instinkt und Rasse der Richtung geben (622)

Here Ebermayer clearly measured Mann's text against an ideal of writing with his terminology betraying his own stance. Vor dem Leben was not literature, for 'literature' he associated as a product of the conscious rational mind. In his assessment of Vor dem Leben, however, he strove to demonstrate that the volume and the stories it contained came from a more primitive source hidden beneath the layers of the conscious mind.

He aimed to capture spontaneity in writing in his claim 'Das alles ist gar nicht Literatur' intensified with '[das] ist einfach hingeschrieben', before intensifying this by characterising the result as 'traumwandlerisch'. Once more, this implied the subordination of the conscious, rational mind in the act of writing, Ebermayer defined his position most clearly; however, when euphemistically referring to the tension between life and death in the choice of 'Tiefen', he asserted '[das] ist so einfach hingeschrieben [...] von einem, der Tiefen kennt, nicht vor ihnen zurückscheut, dem aber doch Instinkt und Rasse der Richtung geben' (622). The terms 'Instinkt' and 'Rasse', which would later be exclusively associated with the racist ideology of National Socialism, was used apolitically by Ebermayer to indicate the intuitive, primeval source of Mann's writing which recalled Mann's own view of literature at this time, discussed in the previous chapter.

Ebermayer did not, however, write merely in praise. He conceded that Vor dem Leben had its weaknesses and flaws, noting, for example, "Es sind etwa ein Dutzend Novellen hier zusammengefaßt, kleine Sachen meist, alles in allem kaum 200 Seiten. Verschieden die Qualität, am schwächsten vielleicht 'Der Vater lacht', am stärksten 'Die Jungen' und die 'Kaspar-Hauser-Legenden' (621). He concurred with the criticism made by others that the stories were suffused with melancholia:

freilich ist alles auch übersponnen von einer schweren, ein wenig kranken und wunden Müdigkeit. All diese jungen Menschen, die hier auftreten, stehen in einem skeptischen, ja feindlichen Verhältnis zum Täglichen, Klaren, zur Disziplin, zur Zucht und zum Durchhalten im Dienst am Leben.

Yet, where others had taken this aspect of Mann's work as an opportunity to attack and condemn him, Ebermayer inverted it, turning a potential weakness into a positive strength to perceive it as characteristic of the "Eigenart und Stärke [seines] Talents".

Ebermayer's perception of the role of literary criticism became apparent in his concluding remarks. He initially appeared to agree with the personalised attacks on Mann by other reviewers, commenting for example: "Klaus Mann vermag zunächst nur allzu einseitig das Extravagante, das Lebensuntüchtige, das bis zum letzten 'Antibürgerliche' darzustellen". He then continued, however: "Das aber sind Bedenken, die hier, wo es sich um Wertung des Buches [...] handelt, zurücktreten können" (622). Returning to Thomas Rietzschel's definition of literary criticism discussed at the beginning of this chapter, in restricting the role of the review solely to an evaluation of the merits and demerits of a given text divorced from external considerations, Ebermayer clearly subscribed to a definition of literary criticism that approximated *Literaturwissenschaft*; objective, impartial judgement of the author's mastery of literary principles free of ideological considerations.

In common with the friendship between Mann and Ebermayer, Herbert Schlüter's friendship with and admiration for Klaus Mann dated from the early years of Mann's career. The men had first met, Schlüter recalled in Klaus Mann zum Gedächtnis in 1926 in Berlin. Prompted by the author's high profile, the similarity in their ages (Schlüter was the elder by only a matter of months) and a sense of affinity gleaned from the pages of Vor dem Leben and Der fromme Tanz, he had approached Mann with his own, recently completed novel. "Er war ein geduldiger und aufmerksamer Zuhörer", Schlüter recalled, "und ich bewunderte seine geschwinde literarische 'Ortung' meines Werkes"⁹¹. From this first meeting sprang a friendship which, in contrast to that between Mann, Ebermayer and Süskind⁹², withstood the

⁹¹ Herbert Schlüter, untitled, Klaus Mann zum Gedächtnis 135-142 (136)

⁹² Mann's exile broke the close bond between Ebermayer, Mann and Süskind, although the break was more immediate and abrupt with regard to Mann and Süskind. Whereas in spring 1933 Mann could still contemplate working with Ebermayer on a dramatisation of Antoine de Saint-Exupéry's Vol de Nuit, albeit as a silent partner (see BA 89 & 91 and Der Wendepunkt 280-281), he broke off his friendship decisively with Süskind in August 1933, following Süskind's denunciation of the exiles in his editorial for Die Literatur, the editorship of which he had taken over in early 1933. In a vehement letter reminiscent of that to Gottfried Benn some months earlier (see Chapter One), Mann accused Süskind of betraying their friendship and of inexcusably collaborating with the National Socialist regime (BA, 116-118). Despite Süskind's protests to the contrary in his reply, (BA, 688-690) the initial editorial effectively ended the friendship between them. Both Süskind

rigours, demands and separation of exile⁹³.

The admiration that Schlüter recalled in Klaus Mann zum Gedächtnis was clearly in evidence in his 1927 review of Kindernovelle⁹⁴ in which he expressed his unreserved praise for Klaus Mann and his work. He did not offer an assessment of the text's formal characteristics; he neither commented on Mann's writing style nor reflected on the basic storyline of the four children coming to terms with the imminent birth of a fifth. Indeed, after making the apparently self-evident statement, "[Kindernovelle] handelt von Kindern", he then summarily dismissed their involvement in the plot in the opening lines of the review. "Von Spielen ist viel die Rede und von all den sonderbaren Träumen und Scherzen, an die wir uns nur noch dunkel [...] erinnern können" (334), he wrote.

Schlüter changed the emphasis of the novella, moving it from the children to their mother, the young widow Christiane, and Till, the mysterious stranger who fathers the unborn child. Despite their respective ages of 31 and 21, he proposes that it is to them that the title refers, stating categorically: "Im Grunde ist [Till] überhaupt ein Kind, trotz seiner einundzwanzig Jahre, wie auch die Dame Christiane ein Kind ist mit einunddreißig" (334). This approach thus transforms what is essentially a secondary plot into the main storyline as Schlüter interprets the novella, not as a reply to Thomas Mann's Unordnung und frühes Leid but, ultimately implies that it is the literary counterpart of Klaus Mann's essay 'Fragment von der Jugend'.

and Ebermayer attempted a reconciliation with Mann after the war, with Ebermayer writing in summer 1945 and Süskind in late 1946. While Mann recognised the potentially insurmountable obstacles in their way, warning Ebermayer in July 1945 "Don't forget that we have been living in two different worlds for the past twelve years! So long and so profound a separation cannot but result in a kind of estrangement. I don't say that it will be impossible for us to understand each other again; but I am afraid that it may turn out to be more difficult than your letter seems to suggest" (BA 543, 21.7.45). The tone of reconciliation was also evident in Mann's 1946 letter to Süskind, although once more he recognised the gulf between them. "Entfremdet sind wir uns einmal," he wrote in reply to Süskind, "ich kann's nicht ändern, die Läufe und unsere Charaktere haben es so mit sich gebracht [...]. Wir wissen ja beide, wie alles zusammenhängt, und wie sich's fügte und entwickelte; aber ein Abgrund bleibt es eben doch. Erinnerungen sind wehmütig und schön, schaffen aber doch den Abgrund nicht aus der Welt" (BA, 565, 23.12.46).

⁹³ Schlüter's experiences in exile and in the years following the war differed greatly from those of Klaus Mann. From France he travelled to Spain in 1934 where he met up with Mann in Mallorca in 1936 when Mann reported on the Spanish Civil War, before moving to Yugoslavia and finally to Italy. In 1941 he was then conscripted into the Wehrmacht as a translator, ending the war as a prisoner-of-war. He returned to Germany in 1946 where he edited the literary review *Die Fährde* from 1948.

⁹⁴ Herbert Schlüter, 'Kindernovelle', Die neue Rundschau 38 (1927) vol 2 334-335. Further references are given in the text after quotation.

In 'Fragment von der Jugend' Mann had adopted the direct approach in trying to explain the behaviour and attitudes of the younger generation to an non-comprehending, older audience; in Kindernovelle Schlüter believed the same approach again prevailed. Quoting extensively from the text, he focused specifically of the figure of Till whom he regarded as a symbol for his generation. "Wir finden uns wieder, wir erkennen uns ein wenig in dem jungen Till", he commented, before continuing a little later with indirect reference to Till's itinerant lifestyle, "Im übrigen sind wir auf Reisen. 'Schick und verkommen' lungern wir herum und leben". He then reiterated the similarities between Mann's characterisation and youth in general: "Wir erkennen uns wieder in diesen kindischen, klugen und grausamen Gesprächen".

Selecting from these 'conversations', Schlüter isolated two phrases: "Wir glauben überhaupt nur noch an das Leben - und an den Tod", spoken by Till, and Christiane's realisation: "Es gab nur das Leben, das dem Tode entgegenwuchs" (334). In pointing to these, Schlüter acknowledged the basic premise underlying Kindernovelle - the instinctive knowledge of the ever-present and ever-real proximity of death that is reminiscent of the medieval preoccupation *memento mori*. Images of death abound in the text. Heiner, Christiane's eldest son, for example, is confronted by the corpse of a drowned boy only a few years his senior, an incident drawn from Mann's childhood. The orphan Till leaves behind a dying brother in the city when he escapes to the country. Christiane has her husband's death-mask above her bed, an overpowering symbol of his power over her even from beyond the grave, and keeps his study as a shrine to his memory. Most powerful of all, however, she almost forfeits her life in exchange for that of her baby when the fifth child is born.

In concluding his analysis, Schlüter explained his understanding of the interdependency of life and death. Generalising his remarks to suggest that they applied to all of youth, he began with the categorical statement: "Wir lieben das Leben [...] und auch sein Ende, den

Tod, der ja kein Jenseits für uns ist" (344). At first glance, this appears nothing more than the belief in an afterlife common to religious thought. When he then explains the nature of this afterlife, however, he reveals close parallels with Klaus Mann. "An die Erde wollen wir uns wiedergeben", Schlüter continued,

an die so geliebte Erde, ihre Wiesen, ihre Flüsse [...]. Wir verehren das Leben und beten es an, auch in seine merkwürdigen Formen, und wenn das Ende dann gekommen ist, ist es dann anders nicht als die Heimkehr für immer nun ins alte Schloß? Und unser letzter Gedanke [...] wird so sein: wir haben uns nichts versagt, aber es blieb uns auch nichts erspart. Es war schwer [...] dieses Leben [...] und jetzt werden wir wieder eines mit unserer geliebten Erde, ihren Wiesen, ihren Flüssen, nun halten wir Heimkehr (344-345)

By terming death not as an after-*life* but as a return to a state of oneness with the natural world, indistinguishable from the rivers and meadows of this world, Schlüter effectively repeated Mann's views in 'Fragment von der Jugend', as discussed in 'Fragment von der Jugend', and Der fromme Tanz where the central character Andreas rationalises suicide as a return to a primordial state of non-being⁹⁵.

Schlüter did not attempt an impartial assessment of Kindernovelle or a discussion of its merits as a work of literature. Rather he used the review to dispute claims made by Mann's opponents that Mann's work was relevant only for a select minority. Schlüter proposed, albeit indirectly, Kindernovelle, and the figure of Till, in particular as an accurate portrayal of youth and its concerns. Yet, by demonstrating his familiarity with other texts by Klaus Mann, by echoing Mann's words in his own appraisal, Schlüter betrayed his lack of impartiality for he clearly shared, without reservation, Mann's views as expressed in his fiction and essays. Behind this apparent partisanship lay the desire to protect and defend the work of an author whom he both admired and respected. This desire runs as common thread through the varied reviews by those close to Klaus Mann between 1926 and 1932. For Schlüter the desire to defend Mann apparently led to the suspension of his critical judgement. That this was not inevitable, that the desire to defend Mann could be reconciled with objective criticism is revealed in the critiques by Süskind between 1926 and 1930.

⁹⁵ This is discussed in the next chapter.

2.5.2. W. E. Süskind (1926-1930)

Süskind's reviews of Mann's texts embrace each period of his early career; the first under discussion here concentrated on Kindernovelle⁹⁶, dating from 1926, the second, from 1930, on Alexander and the third looking at Treffpunkt im Unendlichen⁹⁷, written shortly before Mann's exile and the rift this occasioned between Mann and Süskind. Unlike the other reviews in this section, those by Süskind are of interest, for by their number they enable the modern critic to assess how Mann's contemporary reviewers re-assessed their personal interpretation of Mann's work as he developed and matured as a writer.

The first review by Süskind under consideration here is taken from Die literarische Welt of November 1926 and offered a long, detailed critique of Kindernovelle. If compared with Schlüter's review of the same text from the following year, it is immediately striking that Süskind employed none of the essentially uncritical eulogising and praise for Mann typical of Schlüter; rather, he adopted a factual, almost detached, approach to the text, concentrating on those formal qualities which Schlüter would ignore some months later. He began with a brief sketch of the media interest, scandal and disdain that Klaus Mann attracted apparently by merely being Klaus Mann:

Armer, viel zu populärer Klaus Mann. Vielberedeter, über den jeder Hinz, jeder Hinz und Kunz, seine eigene kleine Meinung hat, weil er dich kennt, deinen Namen und dich selber leider aus den p.p. Illustrierten. Denn so bist du, nach einem knappen Jahr literarischen Hervortretens, schon zu einem Bürgerschreck geworden und die Rebellen [ie: the left], ebenso hastig, mögen dich auch nicht leiden, sie können dich erklärtermaßen nicht vertragen, ein wahrhaftiges Brech-Pulver bist du für sie.

In these seemingly innocuous words Süskind declared his sympathy for Klaus Mann, emphasising this with his repeated use of 'du' and 'dich', he did not use these as many of critics on the left had done, to undermine Mann by combining it with the derogatory diminution of his name to stress the author's youth and immaturity. Rather, by addressing

⁹⁶ W.E. Süskind, 'Kindernovelle', Die literarische Welt 2 (1926), vol 48, 6.

⁹⁷ W.E. Süskind, 'Treffpunkt im Unendlichen', Die Literatur 34 (1931-32), 700.

Mann directly with the familiar 'du', Süskind aligned himself with the writer, showing sympathy towards him not merely as a friend but also as a fellow-supporter of his views. This became clear a few lines later when Süskind reflected:

Solcherart Popularität ist aber [...] Verdunkelung. Schon scheint es, daß dich keiner mehr als strebenden Menschen nehmen will, sondern als Typus, als Spielball der Ab- und Zuneigung, und vor lauter vorgefaßtem Urteil möchte ganz vergessen werden, was du nämlich [...] als Erster unter der Nachkriegsjugend es versucht hat, in einem Roman ganz entschlossen einen Nachkriegs-Lebenslauf zu beschreiben.

Here, Süskind referred to Mann's debut novel Der fromme Tanz, published in January 1926, with his words 'vor lauter vorgefaßtem Urteil' echoing Mann's own accusation of prejudice in his letters of 1926, to imply that the preconceived ideas of other reviewers had clouded their powers of independent critical judgement.

As illustrated earlier, Der fromme Tanz met with widespread rejection by critics on the right and the left, those on the right condemning it for its 'immorality', those on the left denouncing it as the typical product of the indulged and affluent middle classes. Despite their political opinions, both sides had agreed that the portrayal of youth in the novel was atypical. Süskind was not blind to the novel's limitations, acknowledging his reservations when he noted:

Man [mag] auch dann vielleicht mit Einwänden kommen [...], daß dieser Lebenslauf von einem allzu 'verwirrten' einem allzu kunstgerechten Zeitgenossen [a reference to the novel's central character, the artist adventurer Andreas] zurückgelegt werde, daß er [...] in schwierig-erotischen, überzärtelten Seelenabenteuern ein wenig eintönig verrinne.

However, he took particular issue with the accusation implied in the criticisms from left and right that the novel demonstrated no social conscience or responsibility. The very act of portraying a post-war adolescence, Süskind argued, was testimony to this social act. 'Diese wichtigste, weil sozialste Aufgabe für einen jungen Dichter hast du dir aufgegeben, das sollte man nicht vergessen', he wrote of Der fromme Tanz.

Süskind followed what was, to all intents and purposes, a defence of Klaus Mann with his review of Kindernovelle. Beginning with a sketch of the plot this then developed into a discussion of the merits and demerits of the novella. Again, he took issue with possible accusations of immorality, associated with the birth of an illegitimate fifth child, emphasising that this should be kept in perspective, "Soll niemand einwenden, die Katastrophe falle aus dem Rahmen, das illegitime fünfte Kind, es habe, versteht sich, der Klaus Mann den beliebten Skandalpunkt wieder nicht verkneifen können". He assessed the birth of the fifth child, nevertheless, against contemporary received morality, referring to it as a 'katastrophale Ereignis'; only to turn this on its head by stating categorically that the birth and development of a baby corresponded to the mystery which suffused the world of the child: "Mir scheint [...] dies katastrophale Ereignis - ein Kind wächst ins Haus - der Kinderwelt wunderbar entsprechend zu sein; welches andere griffe denn so tief geheimnisvoll und abschließend und dabei doch 'zwanglos' in eine Kindheit".

Süskind attempted to balance his praise with justifiable criticism, stressing, in particular, Mann's interchange between narrative perspectives. Kindernovelle is narrated alternately from a position close to the child protagonists, for whom the adult world, as Süskind correctly identified, remained a mystery, and from a position close to their mother, Christiane, who observes her children's play with the same incomprehension with which they watch the adult world. Referring specifically to Christiane's affair with the young outsider Till, to whom Süskind referred indirectly and dismissively as "[der] ein wenig glaubenswürdige Tausendsassa", he assessed this change in narrative perspective negatively, concluding: "Die Stimmung des Buches hatte verlangt, daß auch die geheimste Welt der Erwachsenen noch 'Kinderland' gewesen wäre, frei von 'Körpergeschichten' und mütterlicher Madonna und all solchen überlegten Erwachsenenempfinden".

The review concluded positively, with Süskind's emphasis once more on Mann's portrayal of the children and their play as they investigate the adult world they cannot grasp. Süskind finally assessed this text as the 'most legitimate' of Mann's oeuvre to date, ending

with the exhortation to the author: "Bücher, die so gesinnt sind, so allgemein, auch wo sie individuelle Lebensläufe zu schildern haben werden, solche Bücher [...] erwarten wir von dir, Klaus Mann".

The pattern of this review - initial praise and defence of Klaus Mann followed by assessment of the text under discussion with a positive conclusion - was subsequently repeated in Süskind's review of Alexander published in 1930 in Die neue Rundschau. This analysis, which in its opening paragraphs had little to do with the novel, developed into a much fuller and more detailed critique than that of Kindernovelle in 1926. Again he incorporated and rejected some of the personalised attacks on Mann in general, expanding his defence to approximately one third of the total length of his article. He began by confronting Mann's dubious accolade of being "der Erzähler einer bestimmten, schwer zu definierenden Gruppe von Jugend" (859), dismissing out of hand definitions of this group of youth as 'Nachkriegsgeneration' and 'dekadent'⁹⁸. Arguing that Mann had never proposed himself as his generation's spokesman in words reminiscent of Mann's 1926 letter to Axel Eggebrecht⁹⁹, Süskind then asserted: "Es ist Klaus Mann nie eingefallen, sich für den Chronisten seiner Generation zu halten". He did acknowledge, however, in a way that Mann never did: "er ist vielmehr der Erzähler [...] einer von ihm erschlossenen Teilwelt" (859). Here, he clearly legitimised Mann's portrayal of one section of German youth, taking issue in the process, if at first only indirectly, with claims by some of Mann's more vehement critics that he could not speak in the name of youth for his views, writing and lifestyle did not correspond to an ideal of youth to which they subscribed. This approach was, in his opinion, to violate the responsibility of the reviewer to act as objective critic.

Süskind suggested that in writing the author instinctively drew on personal experience and thus implied that all works contained an autobiographical dimension, the aspect of Mann's work which even then as now was a major preoccupation amongst critics.

⁹⁸ Süskind believed both these definitions to be outdated in the modern age, noting "In Wirklichkeit ist sie sozusagen in die Zeit eingesprenzt und in einzelnen Belegexemplaren vielleicht gar nicht greifbar, weder bei chronologischer, noch bei soziologischer Nachsuche".

⁹⁹ For the detail of this letter, see Chapter One.

Personalising his comments by drawing on his experience as a novelist, Süskind wrote: "Ich gestehe zu meinem geringen Teil, daß meine Generation [...] mir beständig der Gegenstand meiner Anstrengung [...] ist [...], dessen Gestaltung ich mir glücklichstenfalls in gewissen Schattierungen und höchstpersönlichen Ausschnitten zutraute" (859). However, he continued, this bestowed a responsibility on the reviewer. Clearly alluding to those critics who had rejected Mann's portrayal of youth, Süskind insisted: "Der Kritiker [müßte] [...] sich klar darüber sein, daß der fälscht, der die Jugend geschildert bekommen möchte und 'dieser' (der jeweils dargestellten) Jugend die Gültigkeit abstreitet (859).

Whilst believing that Mann's work would one day attain the acclaim it demanded as literature and documents of contemporary history, Süskind also acknowledged the limitations of Mann's early work. "Sein bisheriger Gegenstand war ihm in den letzten Jahren nicht gewachsen, sondern hatte sich eher in der Richtung aufs Gefällige, aufs Kuriose und selbst Mondäne verschliffen" (860). However, with the publication of Alexander Süskind believed Mann had broken this pattern. "Klaus Mann hat das Verantwortungsgefühl¹⁰⁰ gehabt, sich an ein neues und fernes Thema zu wagen", Süskind maintained, before continuing: "Er hat Krücken von sich geworfen - das ist der wichtige und freudige Eindruck nach dem 'Alexander'" (860)¹⁰¹. That the novel had its weaknesses could not be denied and were readily acknowledged by Süskind. "Eine Ungleichmäßigkeit in der Komposition macht sich [...] bemerkbar", he noted,

was geeignet scheint, der jugendlichen Aufbruchsstimmung dämpfend in den Weg zu treten, macht Klaus Mann noch etwas Angst, er behandelt es mit Mißtrauen und im Vorübergehen und löst es weniger auf, als daß er er

¹⁰⁰ Süskind did not clarify whether by *Verantwortungsgefühl* he meant Mann's responsibility as a writer or his responsibility to his development and progress as a writer.

¹⁰¹ His words are echoed by Hermann Kasack who also attempted to achieve a balance between criticism of Mann's work and praise for its place within the author's development, noting in particular of Alexander: Die Erstlingsbücher von Klaus Mann wollten mit ganzem Ehrgeiz und Einsatz der Jugend gleich alles erreichen. Das war zu viel. Der neue Roman will weniger - und ist mehr. Es scheint mir für seine weitere Entwicklung ein versprechendes Zeichen zu sein, daß er [...] seiner außerordentlichen Begabung Zucht auferlegt; daß er die Gefahr, ins Gefällige, Feuilletonistische abzugleiten, mit wirklichem Ernst zu überwinden sucht. Dieser Alexander ist als Ganzes ein ernsthaft gearbeitetes Buch (9). Kasack reasserted this positive assessment of Alexander in his concluding remarks where he noted: "Man nimmt [das Buch] als ein sympathisches Symptom für eine neue Entwicklungsstufe des Dichters, der auf dem rechten Wege zu sich selber ist" (9). These comments enforce the perception of Mann's career as following a definite path in which each work was a clear progression from the one before. They were an attempt by Kasack to offer an accurate, objective assessment of Mann's work based upon the evidence of the text alone. He attributed to Mann the attempt to be a 'serious' writer, implied in his praise for Mann's success in avoiding the temptation of being a 'popular' writer, suggested in the related characteristics 'das Gefällige' and 'das Feuilletonistische', with their overtones of glibness.

mitteilt. Auf's gleiche Motiv führe ich es zurück, daß Alexanders 'Abenteuer' eine eigenartige Reduzierung auf spezifisch jugendliche Erlebniskomplexe erfahren, auf erotische und mythisch-religiöse Begegnungen (860)

At first glance, this appears to echo in sentiment the opening lines of Ernst Schwenk's review of this novel where he had written: "Das große Thema wäre auf manche Art anzupacken. Aber anzupacken". However, where Schwenk used these words to launch an attack on Mann, Süskind in contrast employed them to demonstrate that Alexander is the product of a writer in transition, implied in his use of *noch* in the phrase 'was geeignet scheint, der jugendlichen Aufbruchsstimmung [...] in den Weg zu treten, macht Klaus Mann noch etwas Angst.' Süskind presumed he was addressing an informed audience, familiar with Mann's work, as he recalled the themes of the author's earlier texts in his reference to 'eine eigenartige Reduzierung auf [...] erotische und mythisch-religiöse Begegnungen'.

In conclusion, Süskind turned to the language of Alexander, commenting, in direct contradiction of criticisms by other reviewers, that here Mann's style had found "seine typische, gültige und verheißungsvolle Ausprägung" (860-861). Its impact, he argued, only became apparent in retrospect. "Liegt die Lektüre einige Zeit zurück", he stated, "festigt sich [...] der Eindruck merkwürdig nach der Seite des Positiven und Einheitlichen" (861). Where such as Conrad Wandrey had, with some justification, isolated particular phrases to condemn them as intrusive and out of place or, as in the review by Hermann Kasack, pointed to specific grammatical flaws, Süskind spoke in the abstract to conclude without reservation: "[Der] Tonfall ist natürlich; [...] er steht diesem Buch [...] ausgezeichnet an" (681). It was, he continued, that of the modern-day storyteller, "einer, der das 'Es war einmal' in unsere Sprache übersetzt". This is in direct defiance of the criticisms of others whereby his use of 'unsere Sprache' implied that he identified these criticisms with an older generation distanced from his own.

Süskind's desire to investigate each new work by Klaus Mann for proof of his development as a writer was once more in evidence in the final piece under consideration

here, his 1932 review of Treffpunkt im Unendlichen. In contrast to these earlier pieces, Süskind focussed exclusively on this novel with only passing reference to Mann's other texts (he mentions Der fromme Tanz briefly but only as an aside) and offering no defence of Mann as in the review of Alexander and Kindernovelle. Yet at first, Süskind appeared to break with the pattern of his earlier texts in another way. "Klaus Manns neuer Roman ist gegenständlich nicht besonders beträchtlich", he began, "er spielt zum größten Teil in jener Pariser und Berliner Gegenwelt von Boheme und Eleganz, die für den Unterhaltungsroman als obligates und gleichsam vorherbestimmtes Milieu dient, genau wie in früherer Zeit das adlige Schloß" (700). However, he quickly dismissed this assessment and returned to his familiar praise for Mann's prose by stating categorically: "Es wäre ganz verfehlt, Milieu und Gegenstand bei dem Buch allzu wichtig zu nehmen; wer das täte, müßte [...] enttäuscht sein" (700). For Süskind, the plot and content were of little importance for the novel's merits lay elsewhere and here he again pointed to the work's significance for Mann's growth as a writer. "Der Roman [ist] von sehr starkem Interesse, sowie man ihn in des Autors schriftstellerische Entwicklung einstellt und daraufhin besieht, was sich an neuer Möglichkeit, neuem Können, neuer künstlerischer Sichtweite aufgetan haben mag". To this end, in developing his skills as a writer, Süskind judged that Mann had acted correctly in deliberately selecting a relatively inconsequential and lightweight storyline. "Seine Prosa [...] wird 'gerechter', und es soll uns nicht stören", he advised his reader, "daß sie das anläßlich leichten Buches tut, ja es war vielleicht nötig, daß Klaus Mann einen leichten, einen nicht tendenzmäßig vorbelasteten Stoff wählte".

He correctly isolated Mann's characterisation as differentiating Treffpunkt im Unendlichen from that which had gone before, summarising these earlier texts with the words

Bisher hatte Klaus Mann dazu geneigt, seine Lieblingsfiguren [...] zu idealisieren, die anderen Gestalten dafür aber stark als Chargen zu behandeln; er hatte überdies die Welt der Dinge noch nicht mit der ganzen Fabulier- und Sinnenlust angegangen, die einem Schriftsteller eigen sein muß, und so hatte man eine gewisse Beschränkung - Einseitigkeit oder Enge, wie man will - in seinen Büchern empfinden können.

In Der fromme Tanz and Alexander Mann had concentrated primarily on developing one main character in a single storyline at the expense of the secondary figures, many of whom remain little more than two-dimensional stereotypes. However, as shall be discussed in a later chapter, in Treffpunkt im Unendlichen he offered his reader not one but two central characters, Sonja and Sebastian, and a succession of secondary figures. Each of these is in turn the protagonist of their own story for the novel operates with the complex interaction of a multiplicity of subsidiary plots in the main story of the parallel lives of Sonja and Sebastian¹⁰².

Once more, Süskind did not avoid the novel's weaknesses, criticising in particular Mann's attempt to introduce contemporary references into his novel and so to transform it into a *Zeitroman*, the novel of contemporary history. Mann had made specific reference to the high unemployment following the Wall Street Crash, to the rise of nationalism and the civil unrest that dogged the final years of the Weimar Republic. Yet these were mentioned only in passing and without the incisive criticism of Mann's essays or the direct attacks of Mephisto (1936) and Der Vulkan (1938). To Süskind's mind, these references were an artificial attempt to lend credibility to Mann's characters which, however, failed. "Manches an dem Buch verdrießt freilich", he noted, "vor allem eine Sucht, durch eingesprengte soziale Hinweise die Hauptfiguren mit der Zeit zu verknüpfen", before advising Mann, "in Wirklichkeit müssen sie aus sich heraus Gültigkeit haben, sie gewinnen sie nicht durch angebliches Mitgefühl mit den Beladenen dieser Zeit".

In his reviews Süskind, in common with Ebermayer and Schlüter, defended Mann against the harsh criticism of others, adopting at times an almost confrontational tone in repudiating the attacks on Mann's works, particularly by those on the left and right, although he took care not to refer to them directly. Concentrating exclusively on the text under discussion, he then approximated the vigorous and close examination characteristic of the *Literaturwissenschaftler* and not of the ideologically and politically influenced *Literaturkritik*. At the end of his last review, in words which recall Ebermayer's own assessment of the role of

¹⁰² The complex structure of Treffpunkt im Unendlichen is discussed in Chapter Five.

literary criticism in 1926, Süskind asked his fellow critics: "Warum gelingt es immer seltener, in der Buchkritik bei der Sache zu bleiben und vom literarischen Standort des besprochenen Werks zu sprechen? Warum all der aktivistisch-politische Geifer und die öde Gegenstandsbetrachtung?" He then defined his position as a critic and his understanding of the responsibility it bestowed upon him: "Nichts, nicht, nichts anderes hat mir der Literaturkritiker zu sagen, als wie es sich mit dem Buch literarisch verhält, allgemein und innerhalb der Entwicklung des betreffenden Autors. Mit allem anderen aber sollte er uns verschonen!". Here he quite clearly dismissed the politically and ideologically contemporary review, defining it pejoratively as venomous, in the phrase 'aktivistisch-politische Geifer'. In his subsequent emphasis on the literary qualities of a text ('wie es sich mit dem Buch literarisch verhält') he essentially summarised this perception of literary criticism associated with *Literaturwissenschaft*.

Although this comment was written amidst and in response to the increased politicisation of German cultural, particularly literary, life in the closing years of the Weimar Republic, Süskind's reviews of Mann's texts reveal that, throughout the Republic, his approach was governed by this perception of literary criticism. He undoubtedly wrote as a friend of Mann's and, in common with the reviews by Ebermayer and Schlüter, used the review to defend Mann against the harsher criticism he met. However, in contrast to Ebermayer and Schlüter, he addressed primarily the formal literary qualities of the work, whether it be Kindernovelle, Alexander or Treffpunkt im Unendlichen, in isolation against the fundamental presumption that their author was following a specific, if undefined, path and that, in consequence, each work contributed to his development.

Conclusion

In his study Klaus Mann und das Exil, Wilfried Dirschauer surveys the critical reactions to Mann's work and comments: "Echte Anerkennung fand der junge Klaus Mann eigentlich nur bei Gleichaltrigen"¹⁰³. As proof for this remark he cites Erich Ebermayer's 1925 review Vor dem Leben. Certainly Ebermayer was of an age with Mann and, as I have shown, his

¹⁰³ Wilfried Dirschauer, Klaus Mann und das Exil, 93.

comments were favourable in the extreme; however, in his assessment Dirschauer over-generalises and, in consequence, misleads. By assuming that Ebermayer's views represented those of the younger generation of critics as a whole, he ignores the impact that Ebermayer's affinity with Mann and his views on art had had upon this review. When assessed against the views of Mann's critics in general it soon becomes apparent that views such as Ebermayer's were atypical.

Mann's reviewers were drawn from a large pool of professional critics and writers from across the age-range. In the selection included here, a number, such as Stefan Zweig, Erich Mühsam or Hermann Hesse, were closer in age to Thomas Mann than to Klaus Mann. Some were from the generation between father and son; they included, amongst others, Bertolt Brecht, whose attack on Klaus Mann in 1926 was discussed in the previous chapter, Friedrich Burschell, Hermann Kasack and Karl Rauch. The remainder came from Klaus Mann's generation, defined as those born in the first decade of the twentieth century. Their interpretation and assessment of Mann's work varied in the extreme - from the overtly positive, found primarily in the reviews by his close friends to the overtly negative, associated primarily with his political opponents on right and left.

Analysis confirms Mann's memories of a predominantly negative critical reception. He was condemned for his style and his themes; dismissed as decadent and attacked as old fashioned; accused of immorality in his subject matter and defiling the sanctity of German art. However, behind these attacks lay considerations external to the works in question. Political ideology of whatever persuasion cannot be overlooked in assessing the reviews. While the review can never be objective or unbiased for by its nature it demands subjectivity on the part of its writer, those who publically acknowledged their political beliefs brought to it also a defined view of literature based on these beliefs. They did not measure Mann's work on its own merits but according to its conformity or divergence from this view.

Klaus Mann and Literary Tradition

Der fromme Tanz Abenteuerbuch einer Jugend as a modern Bildungsroman

Der fromme Tanz¹ was Klaus Mann's first attempt at the novel, although he did not ascribe this term to it, preferring in its place the more descriptive "Abenteuerbuch einer Jugend". I shall return to the significance of this subtitle later. Published by the Gebrüder Enoch Verlag in 1925, reaction to its release was mixed, as illustrated in the previous chapter, with many unable to accept the open testimony to homosexuality it represents. It is set predominantly in avant garde Berlin, giving an insight into a subcultural world of gay nightclubs, drug abuse and prostitution, a world from which poverty is never far away. At its centre is Andreas Magnus, the eighteen-year-old son of a retired, middle-class doctor; the novel following him as he rejects his comfortable and affluent home and ventures out into a perilous world of which he has little experience.

It is immediately striking that Der fromme Tanz is concerned with the world of the young, suggesting a description of it as a defence of youth. Interaction between generations is limited and characterised by a lack of understanding on both sides; the lifestyle of one alien to the other. There are few representatives of the older generation. Those who are included remain on the periphery of the action; shadowy figures portrayed in varying degrees of negativity. Their world is one which is gradually dying out, its values, customs and lifestyle anachronistic in the modern age. Despite a desire on the part of both the older and younger generations for the generations to come close together, it is acknowledged by young and old alike that this is impossible, for youth, in contrast to age, is essentially progressive. This sentiment is clearly expressed in the text by the artist Frank Bischof, a family friend of Andreas' father: "alle Jugend muß weiter. Mögen beide Teile sich noch so bemühen im Sich-Anpassen und im Sich-Verstehen: der Tag wird kommen, da sie uns [i.e.: the older generation] alle verleugnen" (FT, 31). As Kraske has indicated, youth's rejection of

¹ Der fromme Tanz, first published by the Gebrüder Enoch Verlag Berlin in 1925, reprinted by Rowohlt, Reinbek, 1989. All quotations are taken from this edition.

the parents is tantamount also to a rejection of their world, as the young are unable to shoulder the burden of responsibility which the older generation expects them to carry².

Here Mann returned to the theme which had characterised his volume of short stories Vor dem Leben, published in 1924. Although it had been denied by revolution and war the securities of a bygone age, youth, he maintained, nevertheless sought to establish itself in the adult world; its actions, whilst appearing extreme to the older generation, merely expressed a need to find direction in life. In Der fromme Tanz Mann offered his reader a novel of explanation, an intention he formulated in the foreword, one of the few written by the author for his own work:

Kein Buch vielleicht hat es nötiger, am Anfang gleich um Entschuldigung zu bitten, um seiner Wirrnis willen, als eines, das aus unserer Jugend kommt, von unserer Jugend handelt, und nichts sein, nichts bedeuten möchte, als Ausdruck, Darstellung und Geständnis dieser Jugend, ihrer Not, ihrer Verwirrung - und ihrer hohen Hoffnung vielleicht (FT, 7).

Whilst it is no novel of social criticism, the changing fortunes of the German nation, the new position of the upper and middle classes in society, the rise of communism, the reappraisal of social mores and the desperate poverty of the post-war period are all part of Der fromme Tanz. The action takes place in the latter years of the inflationary era 1919-1923 as Germany strove to re-establish itself in the wake of the devastating defeat of World War One. Germany's trauma is, however, not the focus of attention, as Mann himself stated: "Andere Dinge sind es, die im Vordergrund stehen" (FT, 8). Its purpose is to provide

² In her discussion 'Die Darstellung der Jugend in den Erzählungen Klaus Manns', Klaus Manns Werk und Wirkung, ed. by Rudolf Wolff (Bonn: Bouvier, 1984), 22-45, Eva Maria Kraske notes: "Die Absage der Jugend an die Eltern-Generation kann jedoch nicht als 'Vaterhaß' interpretiert werden. Hierin zeigt sich vielmehr das Unvermögen der Jugend, die auf ihr lastende Bürde zu tragen. Für die Eltern-Generation waren Arbeitsmoral und Leistungsethos die Voraussetzungen zur Lebensberechtigung. Dieses Vorbild ist es, das erdrückend wirkt. Die Jugend flieht in die Unkonventionalität, in eine antibürgerliche Lebensführung" (28-30). This is especially true, as discussed in Chapter Two, of the short story 'Die Jungen' in which Harald, the son of a German army officer, and his classmates believe themselves unequal to the duties and responsibilities epitomised by Harald's father. In consequence, they reject his world and lifestyle. Similarly, as shall be discussed later in this chapter, Andreas rejects his father's world, this time by physically removing himself from the parental home for freedom amongst the avant garde of Berlin. With the passing of time, however, the theme of the conflict between the generations, and the inability of the younger generation to live up to the expectations of the older, although still present, diminished in importance in Mann's work. By the time he wrote Treffpunkt in Unendlichen, it had become a very minor concern, mentioned, almost in passing, in relation to the secondary character Richard Darmstädter who lives his life in constant opposition to the wishes of his father. The role of Darmstädter is discussed in Chapter Five.

the backdrop to a novel depicting extremes in which events occur away from society, in the cloistered environs of the home or the unconventional world of the European avant garde.

Recent critical approaches to Der fromme Tanz have arrived at such diverse conclusions as it is; a defence of homosexuality³; an *Anti-Künstlerroman*⁴ and essentially, an autobiography⁵. Grunewald is alone in referring to Der fromme Tanz as a Bildungsroman, a comment made only in passing⁶. This I intend to examine in more depth, to illustrate Mann's reliance on aspects of the genre and aim to show how he adopts traditional elements and structures of this quintessentially German novel form to convey his message of *neue Unschuld*. I shall begin by outlining in brief the development in Germany of the Bildungsroman as a literary genre, then examine the more formal characteristics of Der fromme Tanz, looking at the significance of its subtitle, its structure, the symbolic use of time and the definition of the narrator. Attention shall then be paid to the protagonist Andreas Magnus and his gradual evolution through the course of the novel. This will then lead to an analysis of three secondary figures. They are Paulchen who epitomises possessive love, Franziska who is the model of renunciation and as such, complements Paulchen, and as Andreas' Other, Niels. I shall then address two key features of the novel - death and the affirmation of life and the doctrine of *neue Unschuld* towards which Andreas must strive.

³ This is the approach taken by Susanne Wolfram in Die tödliche Wunde. Über die Untrennbarkeit von Tod und Eros im Werk von Klaus Mann (Frankfurt: Peter Lang, 1986) (31) who interprets Mann's portrayal of the homosexual attraction between the novel's protagonist Andreas and the ne'er-do-well Niels as an act of provocation in light of the harsh and punitive legislation prohibiting homosexual practice in the Weimar Republic. The validity of her interpretation and Mann's treatment of homosexuality in his literature of the Weimar era is discussed in Chapter Four.

⁴ Fredric Kroll proposes this interpretation in Klaus-Mann-Schriftenreihe vol. II (Wiesbaden: Blahak, 1979), 147, taking as evidence Mann's scepticism towards the future of art in his foreword to Der fromme Tanz, "Zuweilen will es mir beinahe vorkommen, als sie es an sich und von vorneherein schon ein Zeichen von Rückständigkeit und Melancholie, als junger Mensch heute überhaupt noch Bücher zu schreiben", (FT, 8). As Kroll further notes, this view is then echoed by the dancer Paulchen who poses the fundamental question in relation to books and literature in general: "Was haben sie auch für Zweck? Sie handeln alle davon, daß die Menschen es schwer haben, aber das wissen wir sowieso. Manche erzählen dagegen, sie hätten es meistens schön - und das wissen wir doch auch, soweit es überhaupt stimmt" (FT, 148-149). The significance of Paulchen's words in relation to his characterisation is discussed later in this chapter. The view of literature Mann expressed in his foreword and in Paulchen's words corresponds closely to those of 'Fragment von der Jugend' discussed in Chapter One. Yet, if Der fromme Tanz were truly an 'Anti-Künstlerroman' it would deny the world of literature Andreas inhabits after the hedonism of Berlin. I shall return to the significance of this reawakened interest in relation to Andreas' development later in this chapter.

⁵ In one of the earliest studies Klaus Mann (Boston: Twayne, 1978) Peter Hoffer interprets all Mann's texts primarily from this position, drawing attention to specific incidents from Mann's life which he then incorporated into his texts. However, as the autobiographical dimension is latent to all Mann's work, to define Der fromme Tanz as primarily autobiographical is to ignore the stylisation of those facts into fiction, and would also not differentiate this novel from any of the seven novels and numerous short stories of Mann's career.

⁶ In Klaus Mann 1906-1949 (Frankfurt: Peter Lang, 1984), 43, Grunewald notes: "Der fromme Tanz tient à la fois du 'Bildungsroman' et de la chronique d'une 'éducation sentimentale'", 43.

3.1 Characteristics of the *Bildungsroman* genre⁷

The simple question "what is a *Bildungsroman*?" has no correspondingly simple answer. Attempts to define the genre invite a plethora of contrasting and, indeed, conflicting responses central to which lies the precise meaning of the term *Bildung*. Whilst acknowledging that such a definition is central to any discussion of the genre, its inherent imprecision makes it almost impossible to define in the abstract⁸. For this reason, I have postponed its full discussion until the analysis of Mann's novel. For the purposes of this overview of the genre's key characteristics, I have substituted, where necessary, the terms 'development' and 'progress'.

In his study of the genre and its development, Gerhart Mayer notes that in its composition the *Bildungsroman* comprises both non-variable and variable constituents⁹. He identifies the non-variable constituents specifically with the demands and requirements of plot, narration, structure and characterisation. These, he argues, remain constant and recur without change in works of different periods to reveal a pattern of continuity through the ages. The remainder of this section considers these non-variant aspects to determine the characteristic features of the *Bildungsroman*. The variation within the genre shall be the subject of the next section.

In 1922 Wilhelm Dilthey defined the plot of the *Bildungsroman* in his work Das Leben Schleiermachers when, referring to Goethe's Wilhelm Meisters Lehrjahre he noted: "Ich

⁷ The limitations of space preclude a detailed study of the *Bildungsroman* here. For such a study I refer the reader to: Michael Beddow, The Fiction of Humanity. Studies in the Bildungsroman from Wieland to Thomas Mann (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1982); W. H. Bruford, The German Tradition of Self-Cultivation 'Bildung' from Humboldt to Thomas Mann (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1975); James Hardin, ed., Reflection and Action. Essays on the Bildungsroman (Columbia: University of South Carolina Press, 1991); Helmut Koopmann, Der klassisch-moderne Roman in Deutschland. Thomas Mann-Doblin-Broch (Stuttgart: Kohlhammer, 1983); Gerda Röder, Glück und glückliches Ende im deutschen Bildungsroman. Eine Studie zu Goethes 'Wilhelm Meister' (Munich: Max Hueber); Rolf Selbmann, Der deutsche Bildungsroman (Stuttgart: Metzler, 1984); Klaus Dieter Sorg, Gebrochene Teleologie. Studien zum Bildungsroman von Goethe bis Thomas Mann (Heidelberg: Carl Winter, 1983); Martin Swales, The German Bildungsroman from Wieland to Hesse (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1978).

⁸ To translate *Bildung* for example merely as 'education' and thus the *Bildungsroman* as a 'novel of education' is to imply an overt, prescriptive pedagogic intent more commonly associated with its literary 'bedfellow' the *Erziehungsroman*. By circumventing the ideological pitfalls of the word 'education', by selecting the more general term 'cultivation' leads to a translation of the *Bildungsroman*, as a 'novel of cultivation' that is so imprecise as to carry little meaning. Bruford expands upon the original to define it as the 'novel of self-cultivation', however, this places too much emphasis upon the protagonist's ability to reflect on his own actions and events whilst seemingly disregarding the role of the secondary characters who are his guides and instructors throughout the novel, a role which, as shall be illustrated later in this chapter, is a key defining characteristic of the genre. In differentiating between the three related genres of *Entwicklungsroman*, *Erziehungsroman* and *Bildungsroman* Martin Swales composes a longer, interpretive definition of *Bildung* as implying "the generality of a culture" and "the clustering of values by which a man lives" The German Bildungsroman, 14. Culture and the value system within both it and society as a whole are subject to change through time. Thus a definition that may hold true for the accepted paradigms of Wieland's *Agathon* or Goethe's *Wilhelm Meisters Lehrjahre* need not necessarily be valid when applied to the examples of the nineteenth or twentieth centuries. In this context *Bildung* is a flexible term that takes into account the historical, cultural and social context of the novel in question.

⁹ Gerhart Mayer, Die deutsche Bildungsroman, 19-20.

möchte die Romane, welche die Schule des Wilhelm Meisters ausmachen [...] Bildungsromane nennen. Göthe's [sic] Werk zeigt menschliche Ausbildung in verschiedenen Stufen, Gestalten, Lebensepochen"¹⁰. He echoed here a much earlier definition by Professor Karl Morgenstern. In the early nineteenth century he had written, "Bildungsroman wird er heißen dürfen erstens und vorzüglich wegen seines Stoffs, weil er des Helden Bildung in ihrem Anfang und Fortgang bis zu einer gewissen Stufe der Vollendung darstellt"¹¹. Viewed against demands for realism and authenticity in the novel, the *Bildungsroman* is, at the very least, far-fetched. Although by the early twentieth century, greater realism had been introduced into the genre, with writers considering the trials and tribulations suffered by the protagonist, against a backdrop of dominant social, intellectual, psychoanalytical or cultural concerns, to provide a convincing realistic backdrop to the action of the novel it nevertheless depends on providence and coincidence, stretching the reader's credibility to its very limits.

At its simplest, the main theme of the *Bildungsroman* is the development and progress of the protagonist both in and through the world. The treatment of this theme depends upon the individual author. However, constant throughout the centuries is a concern with what Swales refers to as the tension between the possible (the protagonist's potential) and the actual (the limitations imposed by a society demanding specialisation and thus exercising a powerful constraint on the protagonist's potential)¹². The journey that is central to the genre, which the protagonist takes through life, thus represents a journey to discover his true potentiality in its many guises. However, whilst this may be termed a voyage of self-discovery through which the protagonist gains a real sense of his own identity and individuality, it is also a realisation of the need for restriction. With the new found revelation of *who* the protagonist truly is comes the realisation of *what* he is; that is, of his role and place within society and an accepted, conventional social order; an insight gained, as Sorg has noted, through the discovery of a lifestyle which, within, society best suits the protagonist as an individual¹³.

¹⁰ Quoted from Klaus Dieter, Sorg, *Gebrochene Teleologie*, 12.

¹¹ Quoted from Gerda Röder, *Glück und glückliches Ende*, 9

¹² Martin Swales, *The German Bildungsroman*, 29.

¹³ Sorg notes in *Gebrochene Teleologie*: "das Individuum [ist] nicht mehr in einer starren Ständeordnung eingebunden, [muß] vielmehr sich seinen Platz in der Gesellschaft erst suchen" 8.

This search, in the guise of a journey, is often precipitated by a personal crisis in the life of the protagonist that coincides with the transition from boy to man, signalled by entry into the world of the adult. Realising that he has no place within a static social order represented by the parent, the protagonist ventures out into a world of which he has little or no experience, to search for orientation and models by which to structure his own life without having it imposed on him by a third party. The hero bears sole responsibility for his fate. He may be guided and instructed but he is not indiscriminately subject to the strictures of others. His guides show him, through the examples of their lives, models by which he may choose to live, but ultimately, he alone must assess, evaluate and, as necessary, eliminate the possibilities open to him. That he will take wrong decisions, forget or simply not act on what he has learnt is inevitable; as part of the greater learning experience in which he finds himself, this is indeed a prerequisite of the genre.

The earliest definition of the *Bildungsroman*, written by Professor Karl Morgenstern pointed to the interaction between protagonist and reader; to suggest that the reader is as much involved in this learning as the protagonist, growing and developing by observing both the progress and mistakes made by the protagonist¹⁴. In this regard, however, the reader is better able to judge the actions from the protagonist. The distance that the reading process inevitably places between the reader and the events of the plot results in a degree of objectivity and dispassionate impartiality denied the protagonist. Add to this the narrative asides and comments addressed to the reader by the narrator, whose role shall be discussed in more depth shortly, the reader can see, more clearly, the path that the protagonist stumbles along, the errors he makes and, thanks to the narrator, the goal to which he aspires.

The reader's ability to reflect and reach a decision is further called upon with regard to the ending of the novel. Swales has noted that whether the protagonist attains this goal, which varies considerably from novel to novel, is left to the reader to decide. He notes that while the *Bildungsroman* may, and usually does, suggest a positive outcome, that the

¹⁴ Morgenstern defined this as a secondary role, noting of the *Bildungsroman*: "Er [fördert] [...] des Lesers Bildung, in weitem Umfange als jede andere Art des Romans." Quoted from Gerda Röder, *Glück und glücklicher Ends*, 9.

protagonist shall gain whatever he seeks, this resolution to the plot is not actually shown. The genre is peculiarly open-ended since the words 'to be continued' could be appended to the ending of all *Bildungsromane*. However, as Swales comments, this technique places the emphasis on the journey undertaken by the protagonist, with the reader, and not on the final outcome, the destination¹⁵. Thus the journey cannot be complete; to do so would convey an overt didactic or ideological message common to the *Erziehungsroman* but not to the *Bildungsroman*¹⁶; it would remove the important role played by the reader, turning the reading process from active involvement with the text into passive absorption of information as it is presented.

The *Bildungsroman* is of necessity a retrospective genre; the ending is already clear at the novel's beginning to focus the reader's attention on how it is achieved. The omniscient narrator is already certain of the outcome and desires the reader be conscious of, and share, in this knowledge. He acts as the unifying factor to an apparently haphazard series of events. More mature than his protagonist, the narrator remains distanced, objectively assessing the events of which he tells. The relationship between narrator and protagonist is characterised by an underlying tension as the narrator is both sympathetic to the plight of his hero and yet willing to mock and judge. His intrusions and criticism distance the reader, preventing over-identification and ensuring objectivity throughout.

The *Bildungsroman* hero is consistently young and impressionable, a figure open to, and capable of learning from, all experience, whether good or ill. Typically he¹⁷ is a late adolescent or young adult, trapped between childhood, with its naive acceptance of the world as it is, and adulthood, with the demands and expectations it places upon the individual. He fits into neither environment for, though no longer a child, and thus unable to accept the restrictions and limitations of childhood, he is not yet ready to shoulder the responsibilities of the adult.

¹⁵ Martin Swales, *The German Bildungsroman*, 34.

¹⁶ Martin Swales, *The German Bildungsroman*, 34.

¹⁷ I use the word 'he' advisedly for until the feminist *Bildungsroman* of recent years, the hero had consistently been male.

The hero has the advantage of time on his side, an aspect that reveals an intrinsic optimism to the genre. No error is irredeemable, as in the fullness of time the mistake may be rectified. Indeed, trial and error epitomise the genre as the hero does battle with his fate. Essentially a passive figure, circumstances, rather than active, personal intercession, compelling him to reappraise his position and assimilate new knowledge, the traditional hero of the *Bildungsroman* constantly evolves and adapts to each new situation, undergoing what amounts to a metamorphosis during the course of the novel.

The characteristic *Bildungsroman* protagonist, Koopmann argues, is an outsider, isolated from others materially, intellectually and morally, who searches for knowledge and seeks contact with others, primarily to obtain instruction¹⁸. He must be able to reflect on what has happened and then act accordingly¹⁹. The genre assumes the hero's ability to develop as the novel develops; a protagonist who is either incapable of change or without the potential to evolve would thus, by definition, invalidate the genre. He is thus predisposed to learn, for as Mayer notes, "die Idee der Bildsamkeit des Individuums" determines the *Bildungsroman* and the nature of its protagonist²⁰.

Mayer then refines his definition to identify two, opposing types of protagonist which he terms the introvert and the extrovert²¹. Of these, the introvert is the more traditional for he corresponds to the hero as aesthete who strives towards becoming that which he has the potential to be. There is therefore no qualitative change within the introvert protagonist; he becomes at the end what is latent within him at the beginning. The extrovert hero stands in direct contrast to this for he does undergo a qualitative change during the course of the novel. Whilst initially apart *from* society, he nevertheless wishes to *be* part of society as he strives for integration into a world that is initially alien to him. His development takes place through and in society, for his goal is integration into that world. This, Mayer argues, effects a qualitative change in him.

¹⁸ Helmut Koopmann, *Der klassisch-moderne Roman in Deutschland*, 12.

¹⁹ Jeremy Hardin emphasises the need for reflection combined with action in his introduction to *Reflection and Action*, xiii. He draws on the definition of the genre given by Georg Lukács in *Theorie des Romans* of 1916.

²⁰ Gerhart Mayer, *Der deutsche Bildungsroman*, 19.

²¹ Gerhart Mayer, *Der deutsche Bildungsroman*,

A structure allowing for frequent plot recapitulations enables the reader to assess the measure of the hero's progress and to recognise the occasionally small changes within him. At its core lies an underlying dynamism, stasis found solely in secondary characters, who are of significance only insofar as they assume the mantle of educator and mentor, or embody a single attribute, present amongst many, in the person of the protagonist. As Pascal has correctly summarised, the emphasis of the *Bildungsroman* lies in narrating "the story of the formation of a character up to the moment when he ceases to be self-centred and becomes society-centred, thus beginning to shape his true self"²².

Literary genres are not static; they evolve as successive generations of writers bring subtle changes of emphasis and approach to their treatment of the genre. Influenced by the dominant literary trends of the age, they thus modify and expand what has gone before to introduce new elements and reject others to make the novel relevant to their time. Mayer denotes this evolution the variable constituent of the *Bildungsroman*. Before assessing Mann's use and adaptation of the *Bildungsroman*, I shall now outline its development and evolution during the Weimar Republic; an age in which the genre came to the fore once more and in which writers, in the mood of general experimentation that permeated Weimar culture, challenged some of the underlying precepts inherited from literary tradition.

3.2 The development of the genre through time²³

Over time the *Bildungsroman* has gone from being the dominant and prevailing novel form to being merely one example amongst many, experiencing a succession of declines and renaissances. In the intervening years since the publication of Goethe's *Wilhelm Meisters Lehrjahre*, the paradigm of the genre, it has been modified with each new generation of writers bringing new influences, dependent on their age, to their interpretation of the genre. Its exclusive focus on the individual to the exclusion of all other concerns has been questioned and even the nature of the *Bildung* it advocates has been challenged, primarily in response to the changing nature of German society.

²² Roy Pascal, *The German Novel. Studies* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1956), 9.

²³ For an outline of developments in the genre see Jürgen Jacobs, *Wilhelm Meister und seine Brüder. Untersuchungen zur deutschen Bildungsroman*, (Munich: Wilhelm Fink, 1972); Todd Kontje, *The German Bildungsroman: History of a National Genre* (Columbia: Camden House, 1993); Gerhart Mayer, *Der deutsche Bildungsroman. Von der Aufklärung bis zur Gegenwart* (Stuttgart: Metzler, 1992), Jürgen Jacobs, and Markus Krause, *Der deutsche Bildungsroman. Gattungsgeschichte von 18 bis zum 20. Jahrhundert* (Munich: Beck, 1989).

From the nineteenth century Germany changed rapidly from a largely agrarian land comprising primarily small fiefdoms and principalities into a modern, urban industrialised nation with the new industrial age demanding increasing specialisation to reduce the individual to little more than a cog in the industrial machine. For writers of the *Bildungsroman* this offered new opportunities for the genre as they revised and developed their definition of *Bildung*. The eighteenth century perception continued that *Bildung* represented the hero's development into a rounded personality with its emphasis on the non-utilitarian nature of this 'education' for it was centred primarily upon personal growth and not upon a single skill to the detriment of others. This is contrasted by the realisation that modern society demanded specialised skills of its workers if they were to have a productive role within society. *Bildung* thus became associated also with formal, quantifiable skills and qualifications.

Increasingly writers rejected the introspection and individualism inherent to the traditional *Bildungsroman*, to address social and political issues in their work. They challenged its emphasis on the individual with little relationship between the events of the text and the real, external world by attempting to reconcile social and political concerns, applicable to the external world, with individual development, and by restricting the necessary individualism to specific, private areas of human activity. Gradually, more realism was introduced into the texts following calls in the late nineteenth and early twentieth century for writers to recreate accurately the social conditions and lives of the 'ordinary man' in the 'real' world.

Early twentieth century writers adapted the *Bildungsroman* tradition they inherited. They dispensed with both the eighteenth century humanist concept of *Bildung* and with the idealised hero of the novel. As Selbmann comments: "Der neue Bildungsroman orientiert sich [...] an einem verwässerten und zugleich verkürzten Wilhelm-Meister-Schema, bei dem Goethes Bildungsroman auf sozialen Aufstieg, privates Glück und höchstens noch ökonomischen Erfolg reduziert ist" ²⁴.

²⁴ Rolf Selbmann, *Der deutsche Bildungsroman*, 153.

By the 1920s, when Mann published Der fromme Tanz, the paradigms of the past no longer held sway, Gerhart Mayer notes. "Die Autoren" he reflects, "fühlten sich unter veränderten historischen Bedingungen zu freiem Experiment aufgerufen"²⁵. However, despite this desire to experiment, writers remained true to the basic concerns of the genre - the youthful protagonist's search for his identity and place in the world; a chronological narration focused on the hero to the exclusion of other concerns; secondary characters who are of significance only insofar as they reflect upon the hero and the involvement of the reader; drawn into the story by the narrator and expected to participate, through reflection, on the events that occur within the narrative.

However, whilst this appears merely a continuation of what had gone before, writers of the Weimar Republic differentiated their *Bildungsromane* primarily in the nature of their protagonist. Mayer notes that, whereas previously, he had been expected to have a universal value applicable to all by the 1920s writers recognised the class and social divisions within society; in consequence they aimed to give their protagonists a representative value only within a specific social class. As a natural progression from this, increasingly they introduced a more wide-ranging interest in the social, political and economic factors influencing an individual's development. Thus they overturned the concept of *Bildung* as entailing, primarily, introspection to define it more generally as also the product of external influence beyond the individual's control. As Mayer reflects in general, the protagonist will characteristically be confronted " mit den zerstörenden und bewahrenden Kräften der Natur, mit Luxus und Elend der Großstadt, mit den Lebensräumen Deutschlands und Afrikas"²⁶. Perhaps, however, the greatest contrast lay in the protagonist's perception of society and his place within it. "Im Bildungsroman der Weimarer Zeit", Mayer summarises, "verharrt [...] der Protagonist nicht mehr in unfruchtbarer Opposition, sondern er sucht nach Maßgabe der eigenen Möglichkeit das soziale Engagement:²⁷.

²⁵ Gerhart Mayer, Der deutsche Bildungsroman, 223.

²⁶ Gerhart Mayer, Der deutsche Bildungsroman, 224.

²⁷ Gerhart Mayer, Der deutsche Bildungsroman, 224-225.

3.3 The significance of Mann's subtitle 'Abenteuerbuch einer Jugend'

Set in the latter years of the inflationary period 1919-23 Der fromme Tanz recounts six months in the life of Andreas Magnus, an 18-year-old whose early adolescence had coincided with the tumult caused by the outbreak of war in 1914 and later by the unrest of 1918/19. An aspiring artist who seeks to establish himself in the adult world, Andreas craves both success and recognition from his peers. Frustrated by apparent inadequacy in his chosen field, he contemplates suicide, only to be dissuaded by a mysterious 'voice'. Choosing instead to leave his affluent home, he enters into a precarious lifestyle amongst Berlin's avant garde, eking out a living in the cabaret 'Die Pfütze'. On a brief excursion he falls in love, only to experience the pain of unrequited love. Having decided to leave Berlin for good, his life is spent in a succession of hotels in northern Germany. Essentially this marks a period of introspection, as Andreas learns the significance of *neue Unschuld*, turning away from the nihilism so characteristic of the early stages of the novel and ultimately uttering the intrinsically life-affirmatory: "ich glaube an diese Welt" (FT, 188), the goal towards which he has been working²⁸.

Mann's choice of the subtitle 'Das Abenteuerbuch einer Jugend' requires some explanation. The term *Abenteuerbuch* evokes the *Abenteuerroman* tradition in German literature which itself evolved from the earlier picaresque novel. This emerged in Spain during the sixteenth century, and was introduced into German literature in the early seventeenth century. Characteristically, the picaresque novel focused upon a hero of lowly origins who lived amongst those on the periphery of society. The novel described a string of unconnected and fragmentary adventures faced by the hero in his past, as he confronted life, and the world in an attempt to assert his own identity. As the hero reflected on his former, dissolute life, his adventures contained the strong moral message to the reader, neither to follow the same path that he had taken nor to strive to emulate him²⁹. The *Abenteuerroman*, which Mann evoked in his choice of subtitle, evolved from the picaresque novel; over the

²⁸ Each of these aspects shall be discussed individually later in this chapter.

²⁹ For a discussion of the picaresque novel see Stuart Miller, The Picaresque Novel, (Cleveland: Case Western Reserve University Press, 1967).

course of time elements of it were incorporated into the *Bildungsroman*. As the name suggested, the *Abenteuerroman* had, at its heart, deeds of 'derring-do' with its hero expected to do battle with new dangers at every turn requiring him to rise and meet the challenge of the obstacles placed in his path until he finally emerges victorious.

Without doubt, the emphasis in Der fromme Tanz lies in gaining knowledge through experience as Andreas searches for the fount of knowledge, which will reveal to him the hidden truth in life itself and his place within the world. Initially this search is little more than the desire to leave the family home, a place he identifies exclusively with failure³¹ but evolves into a more wide-ranging quest for self-knowledge. He is offered no ready solution; there is no mentor to guide his path other than a 'voice' residing in the realm of the metaphysical which, at the time of his attempted suicide 'encourages' him to affirm life in all its variety implied in the words: "Er löste den Blick von der schwarzen, fließenden Stille vor sich [ie death] [...]. Und ganz fest [...] schaute sein Blick [...] in eine andere Ferne, die irgendwo, hinter der Nacht, zu liegen schien. Voll Abenteuer war diese, voll Lust und Not und Gefahr" (FT, 41). Andreas must learn to cope with any given situation on his own, for in spite of those around him, he is essentially alone. It is through confrontation with each adventure and, indeed, misadventure that he is able to build upon an initially rudimentary view of life and knowledge of himself³⁰.

However, as I shall illustrate more fully in my discussion of Mann's 1929 novel Alexander. Roman der Utopie in the next chapter, the word *Abenteuer* also recalls its Latin origin *aventiure*. Within the canon of the medieval romance, this denoted not just the thrill and exhilaration of battle but also the experience of love, of being enthralled through the bonds of love in service to another. In recounting Andreas' story, Mann draws upon each of these definitions to portray his hero confronting the challenge of the world and suffering the

³⁰ When the novel opens Andreas is working on a painting of his sister Marie Therèse, her friend Peterchen and God. Yet he is unable to transfer the image he has in his imagination to the canvas. The more he is unable to do so the more he suffers and the more he attributes this suffering to his work. "Alles, was heute morgen sich ihm in einer erschreckenden Überklarheit gezeigte hatte, empfand er jetzt noch einmal als dumpfe Qual, als beinahe lähmende Not - angesichts seiner Arbeit". Confirmation of his failure comes from his childhood companion Ursula Bischof whose reservations towards his painting, posed in her opening question of the work, "ja - aber kann man dran glauben?" (FT, 35), precipitate his flight.

pain of unrequited love in his attraction to Niels³¹. He depicts each of these by implication, depicting both as fundamental to Andreas' growth and development into a rounded personality. Experience leads to introspection, as Andreas strives to make sense of the world around him and seeks to understand both events as they happen to him, and his own response to them. With maturity, this becomes a process which necessitates numerous re-evaluations leading to new perspectives on the world in which he lives.

That Der fromme Tanz should be 'Das Abenteuerbuch *einer Jugend*' dictates how the reader ought to regard Andreas. This is not merely the story of an individual. More importantly, it is, simultaneously, the story of a generation, although, as illustrated in Chapter Two, this was a point much criticised by Mann's reviewers, especially those on the right; Fritz Rostosky, in particular, emphatically disassociated himself from Mann's portrayal of their shared generation. Andreas must have validity as a character in his own right and as an archetype for one part of youth. Mann was conscious that his generation was divided, that the views he represented and propagated were not necessarily those of youth as a whole. Whilst this came increasingly to the fore towards the end of the Weimar Republic, it had been latent in Mann's earlier essays; 'Fragment von der Jugend' of 1926, although stylised into the conflicting groups 'die jungen Literaten' and 'youth', and in his repudiation, in 'Heute und Morgen' that, when he used the word 'wir', he referred not to *all* his generation but merely to one small part of it³². For this reason, in Der fromme Tanz, he also portrays a generation divided, although without the condemnation that would come to the fore in later years. All the young characters share a desire to find a passage through life, but there is no uniformity of approach amongst them. At the one extreme is Andreas' childhood friend Ursula Bischof, who opts for the status quo, remaining in the family home and continuing a way of life essentially unchanged despite the political and social changes in Germany. While she is neither criticised nor condemned for this, her choice is not applicable to all as

³¹ Whilst in Der fromme Tanz Mann depicted the experience of unrequited love as essential to Andreas' development, he developed his theme in Alexander, combining the two meanings of 'Abenteuer' to suggest that for the homosexual leader the experience of heterosexual love in his relationship with Kandake poses a threat to his definition of self as a homosexual. This is discussed in more detail in the next chapter in relation to Mann's investigation of homosexuality in his literature of the Weimar Republic.

³² For a discussion of these issues see Chapter One.

reflected in the contrasting example of those living in the boarding house in Berlin where Andreas lodges on leaving home and who, like him, have rejected the rigid lifestyles of the past for an avant garde existence in the metropolis. Each of them confirms Andreas' observation in Part I:

So war seine Jugend gewesen, die Jugend die im Lärm des Aufstandes begann; vielfarbig und ungeordnet, befleckt und unrein, unschuldig doch, weil sie sich dauernd nach Reine, nach Klarheit und Licht sehnte. Umschwenkend von einer Orientierung zur anderen oder allen auf einmal in Wirrnis hingegeben - amüsan und peinigend zugleich. - So war sie gewesen: Weglos und ihrer hilflosen Sucht nach Richtung kindisch - verderbt abenteuerlich auf allen Gassen (FT, 19).

Yet, whilst Andreas is unwilling to restrict his potentiality and is open to all experience, irrespective of whether it brings good or ill-fortune, his fellow lodgers have all chosen their routes out of the confusion of the age. That is, they have selected specialisation rather than diversification. This however is not the solution Mann wishes to suggest; rather, it implies an overly simplistic and superficial response to the given situation which, in the long term, cannot last³³.

Through Andreas, Mann can attempt a novel aiming to be "Ausdruck, Darstellung und Geständnis dieser Jugend, ihrer Not, ihrer Verwirrung - und ihrer hohen Hoffnung vielleicht"(FT, 7), although his use of 'vielleicht' undermines his intentions, suggesting as it does Mann's reservations with regard to his ability to achieve this goal. Through careful choice of address he establishes his hero as distinct from the myriad of secondary characters. Usually addressed merely as 'Andreas', placing him automatically on a more familiar footing with the reader, he is one of only two characters to be given both forename and surname. Use of the more formal 'Andreas Magnus' is sparing, occurring on only twelve occasions in the entire text. Frequently placed in the minds and mouths of others, it identifies and isolates him amongst many, ensuring that attention remains focused on him alone. On only two occasions does Andreas refer to himself in full. In both instances, the same phrase is used: "Andreas Magnus, der Einzelfall" (FT, 17 & 49) but to greatly differing effect.

³³ This is in keeping with his rejection in 'Fragment von der Jugend' of the *Meister* and *Propheten* who offer ready solutions to the confusion experienced by youth in a world from which revolution has removed all certainty.

Shortly after the dream with which the main body of the text opens, and whilst reflecting on the cruelty of fate to so disrupt his life with World War One, Andreas reaches the conclusion:

In diesen Krieg hineingeboren war er - er, Andreas Magnus, der Einzelfall, der ihm in seiner einmaligen Verwirrung vor Augen stand, obwohl er zuinnerst begriff, daß diese Verwirrung die einer Generation sein mußte, die eines ganzen Geschlechtes, nicht die eines einzelnen, einen (FT, 17-18).

Mann's choice of *Einzelfall* in this instance appears something of a misnomer. Indeed his statement would appear inherently contradictory - if Andreas is truly an *Einzelfall* then his situation cannot be relevant to the whole of his generation. What Mann is trying to suggest here is Andreas' status as an archetype for youth. In Andreas is embodied the confusion of the age, the existentialist crisis all youth must undergo. He must be represented to the reader as the mediator of a whole generation's confusion. His slow, and at times circuitous, path through life is intended as typical of the generation as a whole and, as gradually becomes apparent, quintessentially typical of youth throughout the ages, caught in the transitional phase between child and adult.

The second occurrence of the phrase "Andreas Magnus, der Einzelfall" draws attention to him as a character in his own right. It is a direct consequence of a need on his part to establish himself in the adult world. His arrival in Berlin at the beginning of Part II is characterised by a total lack of interest in him. He is ignored by porters, exploited by an unscrupulous taxi-driver and even the narrator deprives him initially of a name, and hence an identity, referring to him solely as 'er'. Life in Berlin is anonymous, encapsulated in "Die Stadt hatte nicht acht auf den [i.e. Andreas], der da allein im Wagen saß" (FT, 46). Alone in his room he searches for recognition: "Der Nachdenkliche, der vorüberging, würde bei sich überlegen: da schläft einer. - Und es war doch er, er, Andreas Magnus, der Einzelfall, der ausgezogen war, ohne zu wissen wohin -" (FT, 49). His assertion "es war doch er, er, Andreas Magnus der Einzelfall" is an affirmation of his own identity and partial appeasement for his craving desire to achieve universal recognition.

3.4 The structure of the novel

The novel follows a single story-line without sub-plots, whilst the opportunity exists for Mann to expand some strands of his novel into independent secondary story-lines, he fails to take it. Numerous and diverse secondary characters, whose roles shall be discussed later in the chapter, are introduced but rarely developed; they are significant solely for the qualities they represent and the message they convey to Andreas. This is, in part, dictated by his reliance on the *Bildungsroman* format, which necessitates that the reader's attention remains focused solely on the hero and the gradual process of revelation, he undergoes, during the course of the novel. It is, in part, also a symptom of Mann's immaturity as a writer. When Der fromme Tanz, for example, is compared with Treffpunkt im Unendlichen from 1932 his progress is unmistakeable, for here he employs a number of different story-lines, which interact with each other whilst revolving around the central characters, Sonja and Sebastian. However, this progression was relatively slow with Mann, even in Alexander of 1929, still persisting with the single story-line and central character to which all other concerns are subordinated³⁴.

However, Der fromme Tanz is characterised by an underlying dynamism; it is primarily forward-looking, permanently anticipating the next stage. It falls into five distinct parts, each of comparable length and comprising seven chapters. Although they vary in quality, none is superfluous, as each recounts one stage of Andreas' life; the culmination of each part is simultaneously the close of one phase in Andreas' life. The step-by-step approach enables the frequent plot recapitulation Mann requires to emphasise the physical and emotional distance Andreas has travelled during the novel. Such recapitulation is endemic to the *Bildungsroman* genre, for at any given time it reminds the reader how far the hero has progressed. At times, however, Mann handles this technique somewhat clumsily; this accentuates his lack of expertise and inexperience with the novel format in general, and the *Bildungsroman* in particular.

³⁴ In many respects Alexander could be regarded as the mirror image of Der fromme Tanz, acting, as it does, as the antithesis of the *Bildungsroman*. Here Mann presents a hero who is already certain of his place within the world and has achieved the goal of self-knowledge to which Andreas aspires. However, through the course of the novel he proceeds to destroy all that he has achieved.

Part I stands alone, concerned exclusively with the affluent middle-class which, with minor adjustments, has weathered the worst excesses of high inflation. Stagnating in modern society, where its adherence to convention and order is anachronistic, this is the world of the adults, who are tangible examples of a success Andreas wants and yet resents in others. Whilst he may choose to reject his father's sense of order and, in dress, identify with a class not his own³⁵, Andreas remains a product of precisely that bourgeoisie whose conventions and mores he flouts so flagrantly. His decision to be an artist, demanding introspection and isolation, may be interpreted as a statement of intent, of a desire not to participate in their social world. His life and art are dominated at this stage by the rationality of his class; here his reactions and responses are all mediated through the rational mind, with his every deed the act of conscious deliberation.

The direct antithesis of the sterility of Part I is found in Part II. Set solely amongst Berlin's impecunious avant garde, this is unquestionably the world of the young; adults remain peripheral, their role restricted to the attempts they make to curtail the younger generation's open flouting of 'accepted' convention, attempts in which they fail. Their youthful counterparts regard the adults with antipathy. Part II is also dominated by youth's need to survive, expressed in an unceasing quest for money, and a desire to find some explanation for the chaos of their lives. In Berlin, it is Andreas who comes into contact with the employees of the cabaret 'Die Pfütze', Franziska and Paulchen, both of whom are attracted to Andreas but it is an attraction that Andreas cannot reciprocate³⁶.

As Kroll has indicated "erst der dritte Abschnitt [...] bildet eine geschlossene, straff gestaltete Handlung"³⁷. Andreas meets, falls in love with, and ultimately rejects, Niels,

³⁵ Whilst in the family home Andreas dresses to differentiate himself from those around him, emphasised in particular in the clothes he wears for the party to mark his father's birthday. Those around him are dressed conventionally, if somewhat anachronistically, his father especially so in morning dress. In contrast, Andreas' clothes are described as "unbürgerlich", a point reiterated in the subsequent line: "er hatte einen blauen, mussisch geschnittenen Anzug, bis zum hinauf geschlossen" (FT, 32). However, once in Berlin the reader learns nothing more of his everyday attire, although Mann details his stage clothing once he is employed at the cabaret 'Die Pfütze'. This omission must be interpreted as deliberate for, in Berlin, Andreas is no longer in opposition to the group of which he is now a part.

³⁶ The lesson that each has to teach Andreas as they cope with the futility of their respective situations is discussed later in this chapter.

³⁷ Fredric Kroll, *Klaus-Mann-Schriftenreihe*, vol. II, 142.

protégé of a former operetta star, the Hofrätin Gartner. It is, crucially, the experience of loving which marks the turning point of the novel. Through the idealised figure of Niels, Andreas begins to become more consciously aware of the doctrine of *neue Unschuld*, learning from him a more spontaneous approach to life, enjoying and revelling in the immediate³⁸. This is the most structurally tight part of the novel; as Kroll has noted, events in the initial chapters parallel those in the closing ones³⁹. Because it is so self-contained, successful integration into the whole is difficult, indeed, the link provided by Mann between Parts II and III is artificial in the extreme and, ultimately, unconvincing.

Although superficially concerned with the search for Niels, a search which is, incidentally, quickly renounced, Part IV marks essentially a period of introspection, characterised by Andreas' isolation from the external world. Indeed, as Andreas retreats into himself, this world is quickly forgotten, news of it conveyed to him only through intermediaries. During this time he becomes more deeply aware of the greater meaning of his love for Niels, transposing the emotions he had discovered from personal experience in Part III in his unreciprocated relationship with Niels into a more general observation of the nature of human life. This is given expression in the literary excursus which concentrates on the works of Stefan George, Oscar Wilde and Walt Whitman⁴⁰.

The weakest part of the novel is coincidentally its conclusion. The action switches to bohemian Paris, which Mann describes in terms reminiscent of scenes in Berlin, as Andreas responds to a summons from Niels, delivered in a letter at the end of part IV. "Mein lieber Andreas", writes Niels, "Vielleicht wirst Du Dich wundern, so lange von mir nichts gehört zu haben. Ich war die ganze Zeit unterwegs. Jetzt bin ich in Paris [...]. Vielleicht kommst Du einmal und besuchst mich" (FT, 155). Primarily Part V depicts Andreas' rejection of Niels and announces his intention to broaden his experience through world travel. It further

³⁸ Mann shows some confusion in his thought here for whilst 'neue Unschuld' conveys a more accurate, descriptive sense of this doctrine, in 'Fragment von der Jugend' he also ascribed to it the vaguer 'Anmut'.

³⁹ Fredric Kroll, *Klaus-Mann-Schriftenreihe*, vol. II, 142.

⁴⁰ I shall return to the significance of the literary excursus later in this chapter.

indicates Andreas' alienation, at this point, from the world of extremes this society represents. He no longer desires the headlong rush into life, living for the present with no thought for the morrow, which is the message of the Bacchanalian *Künstlerfest* Clo-Clo-Clo, defined twice as: "Das war 'Clo-Clo-Clo', das Künstlerfest - das war der mondänste Treffpunkt des ausgelassenen, internationalen Bohèmevölkchens - das war der glänzende Ball der intellektuellen und dennoch lebensfrohen Gesellschaft" (FT, 170 & 175). It is a celebration of extremes, a melting-pot of European culture in all its diverse forms with only the Germans distanced and reluctant to participate of whom Mann writes, in words reminiscent of 'Fragment von der Jugend': "die deutschen Literaten saßen in ihrem Winkel und schimpften untereinander auf ihr gefährdetes Zuhause" (FT, 171).

Yet the festivities are suffused with the artificial and superficial, giving the appearance of frivolity but not the substance as indicated in phrases such as "hier ging es komisch zu, zum totlachen komisch" (170) and "Jeder mußte betrübt sein, der dieses Fest nicht besucht hatte" (FT, 175). Andreas remains distanced from events; although he is present he is not necessarily a part of them. He no longer identifies with this society; the lure of home, represented in the increasing dominance in his thoughts of his erstwhile childhood friend and fiancée, Ursula Bischof, is, by this time, far stronger than the temporary satiation of the senses offered by Clo-Clo-Clo. Here he implicitly recognises that this part of his life is over; this is emphasised further in his parting from Niels, the last link with his past life in Berlin, who drifts away from Andreas in the centre of Paris:

Während Andreas, den Kopf gesenkt, weiterschlendert, bemerkt er plötzlich, daß Niels nicht mehr an seiner Seite geht. Andreas kann nicht sehen, wohin er verschwunden ist. - Erst als seine Augen ihn angstvoll suchen, finden sie ihn, ziemlich weit schon entfernt, langsam zwischen schweigenden Gemüshaufen von ihm fort und davon gehen (FT, 182).

Thus Mann symbolises that his contribution to Andreas' development is at an end⁴¹.

⁴¹ Niels, in his role as a secondary character, cannot develop for, given the constraints of the *Bildungsroman* genre, he must of needs remain static. This is discussed in more detail later in this chapter.

3.5 The use of time

Der fromme Tanz covers six months from mid-September to mid-March with the narrator giving clear indications to the reader at strategic moments. Hence in Part II is found the statement: "Anfang der nächsten Wochen war sowieso Monatsbeginn - der erste Oktober" (FT, 69). By Part V the novel has passed through autumn and winter with spring now about to start made explicit with: "Die Kostüme waren alle ein bißchen sommerlich für Mitte März" (FT, 165). However, more subtle indications are present within the text. For example, three months elapse between midway in Part III and the end of Part IV. Evidence for this comes from Franziska's news of Niels' unborn child: "'Wann wird es zur Welt kommen?' fragte er weiter. 'Heute in sechs Monaten'" (FT, 158). Passing reference is made throughout, especially in the early stages, of days and weeks going by unnoticed. The effect of such references is to underpin and emphasize the essential dynamism underlying the novel; time is not static and neither is Der fromme Tanz. Furthermore, the changing tempo from the torpor of Part I to the breakneck speed of Part II, in particular, emphasizes the wealth of experience Andreas accumulates when once freed from the parental home.

Part I is striking in the novel as a whole for its slowness. It covers approximately twenty-four hours in Andreas' life and throughout the reader is acutely, almost painfully, aware of time, to the point of the narrator stipulating the precise hour (FT, 23). The pace is ponderous, any sense of rapidity coming only at the close, once Andreas has taken the decision to leave home. Mann opens his novel slowly to emphasize the oppressive quality of the home environment. Whilst it has not yet reached stasis it is not far from it. Speed is associated with youth. Dr. Magnus' home is that of the older generation whose work is done, stressed in Dr. Magnus' retirement, and which is gradually coming to rest. It is from the trap of being caught in this process that Andreas escapes.

Mann's most effective use of time in Der fromme Tanz, however, is in its apparent denial. On two occasions, time apparently ceases to exist. The first is in Berlin, when Niels suddenly falls ill and Andreas appoints himself his nurse (FT, 15-121). The passing of the

day is intimated only in the reference to darkness in the lines "Inzwischen war es beinahe dunkel geworden", "in die Dunkelheit begann die Stimme zu sprechen" (FT, 119) and "Andreas [...] saß [...] auf seinem Stuhl neben dem Bett in Dunkeln" (FT, 121). The second occurs once Andreas has left Berlin, ostensibly to find Niels but in reality to discover more about himself. He takes up residence in an hotel in Cologne, where he rediscovers the pleasures of reading last experienced whilst in the parental home⁴². During the six pages of literacy excursus which follow (FT, 142-147) there are only two indications of the passing of time - the sound of the cathedral bell "der Dom sang und läutete über den Platz" (FT, 144) and, in retrospect, a bunch of roses. At the beginning of the excursus these had been fresh but, by the end, they show signs of incipient decay: "Wenn Andreas aufsah, standen die Rosen vor ihm, die Doktor Dorfbaum ihm geschenkt hatte. Sie waren schon welk, schwärzlich und beinahe duftlos" (FT, 147).

Both instances, Niel's illness and the literary excursus, indicate that Andreas is neither in the world of everyday reality nor subject to the constraints of time. There are periods of introspection in which he withdraws from the world and denies the claims it makes on him. He is, to all intents and purposes, alone. During his illness, Niels is merely the nominal addressee, for he sleeps through the tales Andreas tells. In the literary excursus, Andreas is then physically removed from the world beyond his hotel room. He stands apart from the activities in the street below his window, the bustle of which emphasises his inactivity:

[Andreas] trat an das Fenster, und er sah an die Höhe des Domes hinauf [...]. Aber vor dem Dom lag ein runder Platz, auf dem die Menschen schwärzlich umherwimmelten. Winzige Trambahnen überquerten ihn klingelnd. Wie aus solche Vogelperspektive bis zum Scherzhaften sich alles verkleinerte! - Soldaten marschierten vorbei. Ein Miniaturlärm, ein komisches Geklinger kam herauf geflattert (FT, 144).

⁴² Mann establishes the parallels between Andreas' life in the parental home and his time in Cologne through the similarity of description of his rooms in the respective places. Thus, of Andreas' room in the parental home, Mann wrote: "Da waren Bücher, welche er liebte - waren zu kleinen Stößen gestapelt, standen in langen Reihen. Nordische Bücher und französische Bücher und deutsche Bücher" (FT, 16). Introducing the later description somewhat clumsily with the words, "Wie damals, als [Andreas] noch im Hause seines Vaters wohnte", Mann then continued: "lagen die Bücher in kleinen Stapeln um ihn herum, waren in Reihen auf Tische und Fächer gestellt, waren verstreut über alle Stühle und selbst übers Bett [...]. Nordische Bücher und deutsche und französische und englische Bücher" (FT, 142). The parallels are deliberate for, following the pattern of Goethe's *Wilhelm Meisters Lehrjahre*, it is part of Andreas' development that he return to the life he has temporarily left behind and I shall return to this later in this chapter.

The hiatus both occasions create enables Andreas to reappraise his life. This is illustrated for example when, whilst Niels is ill, Andreas wonders: "eine Stimme hat mir einstmals verheißen, daß ich die Klarheit finden und verstehen werde. Habe ich schon gefunden? Habe ich schon verstanden?", questions which are followed by Andreas, by this time reduced to a voice, re-ordering his life to-date: "wie der sorgsame Maler sein Bild malt, so ordnete diese Stimme die Dinge, die sich ehemals ineinander verschlungen hatten, ausführlich und rein, im runden, goldenen Rahmen stellte sie sie auf und vor goldenen Grund" (FT, 119). However, this is only possible once Andreas has recognised and accepted the futility of his infatuation with Niels. The story he tells Niels of two children lost in a wood, in which one, Kaspar, searches in vain for the other, Ugolino, reflects the relationship between Andreas and Niels. "Wir sind zwei Kinder, die sich im Wald verlaufen haben und sich auch gegenseitig nicht finden können", he tells Niels before continuing:

Ich rufe deinem Namen [...]. Vielleicht rufst du meinen Namen [...] Aber unsere Namen finden sich nicht, der Wind treibt Fangball mit ihren Silben, er wirft sie so durcheinander, sie begegnen sich - ach sie kreuzen sich, in der schwarzen Luft. Kaspar kann dich nicht sehen [...]. Er läuft wieder an dir vorbei (FT, 117).

In this tale Andreas discovers the importance that his infatuation, although not reciprocated, has for him. Referring to himself in the third person, still in the context of his story, Andreas comments "du [bist] seine Richtschnur und ohne dich wäre er lange verloren" (FT, 117). He also acknowledges that he will never become closer to Niels. From this point his relationship with Niels becomes more distanced and, finally, comes to an end temporarily with Niels' abrupt departure from Berlin; although Andreas only learns of this after the event when his landlady's daughter, Henriette, gives him the message: "Herr Niels hat mir gestern abend noch den Auftrag gegeben, Ihnen zu sagen, daß er abgereist sei. Er käme in absehbarer Zeit nicht wieder" (FT, 126).

3.6 The Narrator

It could be said of Der fromme Tanz that it is little more than a disunited whole, depicting a series of tableaux which have little relation to one another. This would certainly have some

validity if it were not for the protagonist Andreas and his narrator ensuring continuity, for they alone are present at every stage. In general, the role and nature of the narrator have been overlooked by critics despite the fact that he moulds the reader's opinions through his own interpretation of events. This ensures that the reader retains some degree of objectivity in relation to Andreas but yet does not assume a stance of total antipathy. The narrator with his apparently omniscient overview acts as a reassuring presence, confirming that the outcome will be positive despite the floundering of the hero. His apparent prescience is denied Andreas, whose attention by necessity remains concentrated solely on the present.

In general the narrator reveals characteristics commonly associated and identified with the traditional classification of omniscient narration, showing:

familiarity [...] with the characters' innermost thoughts and feelings; knowledge of past, present and future; presence in locations where characters are supposed to be unaccompanied [...]; and knowledge of what happens in several places at the same time⁴³.

However, this definition requires some limitations in relation to Der fromme Tanz. The narrator here reveals 'inside' information consistently with only one figure - Andreas. He adopts a stance close to him and views events from his perspective. Nothing is described of the innermost feelings of the secondary characters; their inner turmoil must be deduced from their external appearance alone. Interest extends to other figures only insofar as they shed some light onto Andreas' life. Although the reader is told of the interaction between characters, this interaction is not observed, for attention is concentrated on Andreas alone. Any changes in narrative position serve only to either verify the narrator's subjective comments or to distance the reader from over-identification with the novel's protagonist.

The narrator stands apart from what he tells, forming and passing judgement on events as they unfold. His development is at an end; he has passed through the transitional stage and

⁴³ This definition is taken from Shlomith Rimman-Kenan, Narrative Fiction Contemporary Poetics (London: Routledge, 1990), 95.

possesses that knowledge and maturity which Andreas has yet to attain, knowledge which the narrator then conveys to the reader. The presence of the narrator is a constant reminder of the distance Andreas has to travel, and emphasises Andreas' emotional and psychological immaturity. The narrator's assumption of ignorance in the Prologue, expressed in the opening sentence: "Ich sehe ein Hotelzimmer in irgendeiner fremden südländischen kleinen Stadt und in diesem Hotelzimmer sitzt ein junger Mensch und schreibt einen Brief - ich weiß aber noch nicht an wen" (FT, 10) immediately places him on the same footing as the reader. However, the "noch nicht" implies optimism, the guarantee that this will be explained and clarified.

By 'confiding' in the reader his own ability and his distance from his protagonist, the narrator aligns himself immediately to the reader and, in the process, isolates Andreas. This common footing, however, subtly changes once the text begins. Information is withheld, not only from Andreas, who must learn through personal experience alone, but also from the reader, who is given only hints that the ending shall be positive. This does cast some doubt on the reader's ability to be both truly objective in relation to events as they occur and to assess accurately Andreas' own development. This must then lead to a questioning of the reader's role within the novel. Passivity in reading is not what is required here, but rather interaction with events. The reader must question what unfolds and become involved in the same learning process that Andreas undergoes towards learning the underlying message of *neue Unschuld* that leads to his affirmation of life at the novel's conclusion. However, the novel is not overtly didactic. The narrator does not state outright what is meant precisely by *neue Unschuld*. Its meaning is gradually revealed through his insight into Andreas' mind and is only partially conveyed at each stage to the reader. This initiates the reader into the same process of development as the subject. At this stage, the reader learns with Andreas, through the natural process of listening to a tale, the outcome of which, however, only the narrator knows with any certainty. Gradually, however, this strategy is discarded; the reader becomes privy to the greater knowledge of the narrator, is reinstated to a position 'above' Andreas and is once more able to view his progress objectively.

Der fromme Tanz is essentially a retrospective of Andreas' life, and as such establishes clarity through the re-ordering of events. That it shall have a positive outcome is established in the Prologue, for chronologically this follows the end of Part V, and is the realisation of Andreas' intention expressed in Part V "die ganze Welt zu sehen, die ganze bunte Kugel" (FT, 185). The use of the present tense and first-person narration in the Prologue differentiates it from the novel as a whole. Mann employs the present tense here to emphasise the historicity of the main body of the text, where recourse to the present is infrequent and used with the sole intention of heightening dramatic tension. In retrospect, it stresses that the events which are to be described in the novel, have all taken place in the past.

The Prologue is the province of the narrator, his one opportunity to establish himself as an independent figure within the novel; first-person narration used consistently and extensively only here enables him to enter into dialogue with his reader. Recourse to this occurs only twice more. In both instances, its inclusion is intrusive, although the narrator's presence is unmistakable throughout. Yet Mann does not establish him as a figure who makes direct comments to the reader, thus emphasising the artificiality of the novel, other than in the Prologue. Indeed, it is noticeable that direct address to the reader is infrequent. At the time of Andreas' attempted suicide, however, the narrator intrudes, informing the reader: "Ich glaube nicht, daß sie [die Stimme] in Worten zu ihm gesprochen hat" (FT, 41). As Kroll has stated: "Der nicht integrierte Ansatz zur Ich-Erzählung hätte wohl besser gestrichen werden sollen"⁴⁴. The second instance occurs much later in Part IV where the narrator claims: "Vereinigung mit dem geliebten Körper ist uns niemals gegeben" (FT, 153). This is, however, somewhat complicated by the preceding "Dies Lächeln verstand" (FT, 153), implying that this statement is not intrusion by the narrator; but rather, that it represents interpretation and mediation of Andreas' thoughts.

⁴⁴ Fredric Kroll, Klaus-Mann-Schriftenreihe Vol. II, 143.

The Prologue focuses upon a young, unnamed man, about whom the narrator conveys subjective impressions of his physical appearance. Nothing is told of his inner insecurities; rather, his youth is emphasised. He is merely “der junge Mensch” (FT, 10) and “der Knabe”, his writing “knabenhaft”, his gaze a “Kinderspielblick” (FT, 11). Such conclusions suggest the maturity of the narrator in relation to this figure, who retrospectively is revealed to be Andreas. However, the fact that he should remain unnamed, given attributed labels rather than a specific identity, distances the reader still further. Such labelling recurs in many guises throughout Der fromme Tanz: Andreas is “der junge Maler” (FT, 21) and “der Bruder” (FT, 43); Dr. Magnus simply “der Vater” (FT, 119); Frau Meyerstein “Witwe Meyerstein” (FT, 66). In retrospect, this indicates, in part, ‘society’s’ need to categorise its members, to restrict them to roles at the expense of an identity. However, this is more significantly a depersonalisation strategy. The label, as with more formal terms of address, prevents, at least temporarily, close identification between the reader and the subject.

Whilst the narrator may choose to identify with the younger generation and is certainly not hostile to them, he is also not blind to their faults and not above gentle mockery at their expense. Undermining characters and what they have to say occurs occasionally within Der fromme Tanz, although Mann does not exploit this ironic overtone to its full effect. Its force is once more to distance the reader from what is happening, to regain objectivity in observation and prevent over-identification. On the whole, the narrator is sympathetic to Andreas, referring to him without any ironic intent as “der arme Andreas” (FT, 26). However, even he must be belittled, a technique used sparingly, but conveying better than words alone, his immaturity.

Andreas's attempts to be 'worldlywise' when his experience of the world is limited in the extreme. Thus, on first meeting Franziska, who desires simply to help him, he somewhat belatedly inquires:

Zwecks raffinierter Prüfung und um ihr endlich auf die Fährte kommen zu können, fragte Andreas sie - und fühlte sich eingeweiht in alle Ränke der

Welt -; 'Welchen Zweck verfolgen Sie wohl, denke ich mir, wenn Sie mich in diese mir unbekannte Pension locken? Wollen Sie mir, bitte, das nun auch noch mitteilen?' (FT, 56)

The narrator's subjective evaluation of his reasons for asking, 'Zwecks raffinierter Prüfung', stands in direct contrast to the manner of interrogation, which is anything but 'raffiniert'. This intended discrepancy is further compounded by the narratorial comment "und fühlte sich eingeweiht in alle Ränke der Welt". Andreas' experience of the world is, at this juncture limited, for it is restricted to one unfortunate evening with a taxi-driver's family, a fact of which the reader is aware. The irony is underpinned by Franziska's concise reply, which emphasises, in turn, his immaturity: "'Kindchen', sagte sie nur" (FT, 56).

This technique of interspersing the narrator's personal comments into the text when applied to other figures, in particular Dr. Magnus' widowed sister, the Baronin Geldern, establishes these characters as essentially caricatures. She, in particular, is not intended to be taken seriously; her adulation of the artist Frank Bischof borders on the ludicrous, the use of irony in relation to her stressing, in fact, her insignificance, and, as a consequence, diminishing her stature. However, Mann also adopts this change in tone to lessen somewhat exaggerated prose and to heighten the irony of the text. This is illustrated in Andreas' reaction to Niels' telegram from Paris in Part IV, in which Niels invites him for a visit:

Er dachte, daß er jetzt etwas tun, unternehmen müsse. Er klingelte nach dem Pagen, der ihm den Pariser Brief gebracht hatte. Der Page war ein wenig verschüchtert, er dachte, er hätte alles ganz falsch gemacht oder zum mindesten eine Unglücksnachricht übermittelt, für die er nun grausig zur Rechenschaft gezogen werden solle.

'Wie heißt du?' fragte der junge Herr ihn streng. 'Fedor Meyer.' 'Dein Herr Vater?' 'Viktor Meyer.' 'Deine Frau Mutter?' 'Annaliese Meyer.' 'Wie alt bist du?' 'Dreizehn Jahre -.'

Da lachte Andreas. 'Du bist dreizehn Jahre', rief er immer wieder, 'du bist nett - du bist nett. Weißt du denn, daß du nett bist?! Vielleicht komme ich einmal und besuche dich. Aber du wohnst ja nicht in der Rue Lepic -.'

Er schenkte ihm fünf deutsche Reichsmark und ziemlich viel Milkschokolade. Er sagte ihm Komplimente über seinen blonden Scheitel und machte ihn ausführlich darauf aufmerksam, daß er in Fedor von Zobeltitz einen berühmten Namensvetter habe (FT, 156).

For Meyer, Andreas' response is both inexplicable and incomprehensible. The only explanation he finds for it is conveyed in the narrator's assessment of the bellboy's reaction to the favour bestowed upon him: "Der Page Meyer, der nunmehr erkannte, daß er es mit einem harmlos Wahnwitzigen zu tun habe, zog sich erheitert zurück" (FT, 156). This is a far more normal reaction to Andreas' behaviour and signals to the reader that Andreas' reactions are not simply to be accepted but are in fact open to question and criticism.

Frequent plot recapitulation enables the narrator to indicate the distance Andreas has travelled during the novel. However, this is essentially a disruptive element within the text, which alienates the reader from the subject matter, enforcing distance between reader and subject and in turn placing the emphasis indisputably on the process and not the plot. However, Mann's handling of this technique is weak, on the whole, demonstrating, at times, his own inexpertness with the novel form, as demonstrated at the end of Part IV. The end of the novel, if not the process, is, by this time, imminent, but Andreas' appraisal of his own progress is awkward and essentially unnecessary:

Er hatte gelernt in diesen Monaten. Gelernt hatte er, als er, vom Ungeziefer ruiniert, im Zimmer der Chaffeursgattin weinte, Gelernt, als er bespöttelt auf der Kabarettbühne stand und danach in traumwandlerischer Gewandtheit Doktor Dorfbaum in der Garderobe begrüßte. Unendlich viel hatte er doch gelernt, als er, das Gesicht auf rauhes Leinen gepreßt, an Niels' Lager gebetet hatte. (154)

That he is the product of all influence, that no meeting and no individual has been insignificant has already been more successfully established by Mann through the image of the painted picture in Part III. Here Andreas separates the many strands of his life and reconstructs the whole with the logic of the artist. At the centre is himself but of all those around him he is the most indistinct. In this one image, Mann establishes the diverse influences on his hero without recourse to direct statement, the figures in the painting corresponding to different periods and situations in Andreas' life. The later, direct statement is, in truth, superfluous, 'spelling out' what the reader already knows with its inclusion detracting rather than aiding the whole.

That the narrator is close to Andreas throughout Der fromme Tanz is without doubt. Predominantly all the events are seen from his perspective; the reader observes his interaction with others and, with the narrator, is privy, primarily, to his thoughts alone. Both the reader and narrator are familiar with Andreas' inner insecurities and with his growing realisation of his destiny. At no stage, however, do narrator and protagonist merge; they remain quite definitely two distinct characters, one with the clear-sightedness accredited to his role, the other compelled to struggle and cope with the immediate with little thought to the future. Indeed, at no point does the narrator identify too closely with Andreas, ensuring that some degree of objectivity is maintained by narrator and narratee alike. His principle role is to highlight the process through which Andreas is going and to emphasise the essentially positive thread underlying it, in spite of the tangents Andreas must follow before his journey is at an end.

3.7 The protagonist Andreas Magnus

Andreas is a contradictory figure; he is racked by self-doubt, his confidence is easily shaken, yet at the same time he exhibits elements of self-obsession which border on the narcissistic. His formal education is at an end, completed before Der fromme Tanz opens. Of his formative years little is divulged, yet it must be assumed and accepted that he is the product of a social class in which he is essentially a misfit. In common with his peers, he actively searches for his own path to follow through life, a path which is right only for him and which he may only find through experimentation. In contrast to many, however, he finds his solution neither through political doctrine⁴⁵, the tenets of religious belief or through a career.

He is receptive to instruction; indeed, this is the reason why he leaves the parental home. Desiring knowledge and experience, he searches for both unceasingly and finds his guides amongst the many with whom he comes into contact, although their significance and influence remain at the subliminal not the overtly pedagogic level:

⁴⁵ Indeed, given Mann's opposition to the *Meister* and *Propheten* in 'Fragment von der Jugend' it would be surprising to find him advocating these steps in Der fromme Tanz.

Andreas kam mit so vielen ja in Berührung. Die einen machten ihm länger, die anderen kürzer zu schaffen. Auf der Straße begegnete er ihnen oder in den Kaffeehäusern oder in der Pension Meyerstein, wo sie den oder jenen zu besuchen kamen. Er sprach mit ihnen, er sah sie sich an, er suchte aus ihnen klug zu werden (FT, 77).

However, this desire is not satisfied during the novel, but apparently intensifies the more he is exposed to the possibilities of life; he expresses it in his letter to Ursula Bischof: "Ich will in den großen Osten reisen, wo alles herkommt und nach Amerika, wo sich alles zum Betrieb zersetzt" (FT, 185). Here East and West symbolise one of the many polarities of human life. America, representing the West, is viewed negatively as a land in decay which is undermined by its commercialism; in contrast, the East is evaluated positively as the origin of all life, the force of 'wo alles herkommt'. When Andreas then asserts: "Ich möchte mir alles ansehen, alle Räume und alle Menschengesichter" (FT, 185) he testifies to a personal desire to explore the potentiality within himself through observation of others.

To emphasise that this is a journey of self-discovery that he must make alone, Andreas has no physical guide. True mentors, actively interceding in his development, are absent, although a metaphysical voice, with which Andreas enters into dialogue, provides 'spiritual' encouragement. It is audible only to Andreas and appears first at the time of his attempted suicide, when it compels him to search actively and commits him to adhering to his task: "sie mußte einen Befehl vor ihm aufgerichtet haben, wie man eine Fahne hinstellt vor einen Soldaten, der schwören will" (FT, 41). The nature of this order becomes apparent only in retrospect when the voice is synonymous with "die letzte Stunde" (FT, 118). Addressing this, Andreas states: "ich habe das Leben gelebt wie du's befahlst" (FT, 118), a life which, during the suicide attempt, had already been described as "Voll Abenteuer [...], voll Lust und Not und Gefahr" (FT, 41). It promises the final goal of comprehension: "eine Stimme hat mir einstmals verheißen, daß ich die Klarheit finden und verstehen werde" (FT, 119). Psychologically, the journey he undertakes is perilous, for it exposes Andreas to emotions long repressed or never experienced and forces on him a reappraisal of his own values, judgements and sense of self.

Andreas is essentially the product of his class; his outlook and views moulded by the home environment, imbued with the sense of order, the belief in the work ethic and the need to confirm one's own sense of self through achievement endemic to the social class into which he was born. Here the guiding principle, as later becomes apparent, is not *who* one is but *what* one is: "von ihm wollte sie [Franziska] wissen, welchen Beruf er habe, welche Beschäftigung" (FT, 55). In this world, reason and the rational mind predominate, epitomised and established in the "redlicher, kluger Bürger" (FT, 19) Dr. Magnus. His life has been characterised by its single-mindedness of purpose: "Der wußte doch, was er wollte" (FT, 19). His day, unlike that of his son, runs to a strict timetable which allows for no deviation in its observance; his former employment within the medical profession conveys both the rationality of science and the axiom of service to the community. The turmoil of the external world has little impact on the security of his inner world, requiring reappraisal and re-evaluation rather than wholesale revision⁴⁶.

Dr. Magnus represents a class, however, which is essentially displaced within a society and which exists in isolation from events around it. The full impact of the dire consequences of war on a specific social stratum is conveyed through his widowed sister, Baronin Geldern. She is the product of affluence but is now alienated from the new society surrounding her, and she epitomises the confusion wrought on the older generation by post-revolutionary Germany:

Unten erzählte die Baronin den Herren von ihrer traurigen Lebenslage. 'Mein Töchterchen Elisabeth hat jetzt als Tippmamsell eine Stellung gefunden', berichtete sie schmerzlich, 'ach, ihr Chef nützt sie natürlich entsetzlich aus.'

Um ihren mageren Mund und um den armen Hals, an dem, ein Zeichen einstiger Pracht, die Perlen schimmerten, zuckte es leicht und in ihren beängstigten Augen lag die Not einer ganzen, aussterbenden Klasse. (FT, 34)

As representative "einer ganzen, aussterbenden Klasse" the values she embodies are open to question by the modern age, and as a result doubt is cast on their validity. Her daughter's compulsion to seek work goes against the former expectations and conventions of her social class, yet it is an unavoidable necessity.

⁴⁶ This portrayal echoes that of Harald's father in 'Die Jungen' and of the *Ministerialrat* in "Der Vater lacht" whilst it anticipates his description of Richard Darmstädter's father in Treffpunkt im Unendlichen 1932.

However, whilst the values themselves may be given little credence, their legacy continues into the next generation. Andreas' seven-year-old sister Marie Therèse and her schoolfriend Peterchen both demonstrate in their formal behaviour a growing awareness of the dictates of society which reveal an assumed maturity incongruous with their age. Similarly Andreas cannot truly divorce himself from this world; his reactions and responses to those around him are mediated through the rational mind; his lifestyle, while still at home, represents only a superficial, token rejection of the values embodied in his father, exemplified by his arrival in Berlin; Mann conveys little of Andreas' initial impressions of the metropolis for Andreas concentrates on the mundane: "Seine Gedanken waren so qualvoll an Sachliches gebunden, konnten von diesen naheliegenden peinlichsten Dingen sich nicht einen Augenblick lösen" (FT, 46).

Andreas finds temporary refuge from the pain of experience in the power of reason and habit, both of which are a type of conditioned response. Following his humiliation at the hands of the taxi-driver and his family, during which he is taunted with permutations of the phrase "Überhaupt ist der ja noch ganz jung" (FT, 51) which acts as a rude awakening to the harsher realities of life, he contemplates his foolishness in not committing suicide when the opportunity arose. Such thoughts are, however, too painful for him to dwell on. With a change of tempo, signalled through a change of style as Mann's prose becomes far more concise and matter-of-fact, Andreas hides from his own emotions.: "Dann dachte er, daß er jetzt zum Friseur gehen müsse, unrasiert war er auch. Dort hinten hatte einer sein Schild ausgehängt. Hoffentlich wählte der Mann mit dem zuckenden Huhn nicht denselben" (FT, 52). Indeed, it is characteristic of Andreas in this period that he should shy away from his emotions and painful experience, denying them, in consequence, their authenticity.

The dominance of one side of the personality may lead to the atrophy of the other. Andreas is essentially one-sided, for reason is so supreme that it has repressed the non-rational. As Ursula Bischof makes clear, he has lost the ability merely to accept and believe: "Wir sind doch zusammen aufgewachsen, Andreas, haben zusammen gespielt und

gelitten, ohne zu wissen wohin uns dies alles führen werde, Nun ist wie ein Fieber über dich plötzlich die Idee gekommen, du möchtest dies alles gestalten" (FT, 36). Here 'gestalten' expresses not merely the creativity of art but also Andreas' much wider desire to shape the world around him and, thus, to be proactive in society. However, as a corollary to this, Andreas loses the ability of spontaneous activity; this context, 'gestalten' demands the primacy of the rational mind. This is then expressed in Andreas' quest for knowledge and comprehension, an obsession he shares with his generation as a whole. As Kroll has correctly stated, those who inhabit the Berlin boarding-house only establish the veracity of Ursula's statement when she asks:

unsere Jugend, unsere große, andere Jugend - wie ist es denn eigentlich mit ihr? Ach, so einfache Auswege scheint sie aus der Wirrnis gefunden zu haben, durch deren Labyrinth wir uns ratlos und sehnsuchtsvoll zu tasten mühen. Ein bißchen Sport, ein bißchen Politik und sie ist schon zufrieden (FT, 36-37)⁴⁷.

Youth in general, Mann implies, accepts specialisation and limitation of their full potential in exchange for partial appeasement of the craving desire to find direction and to resolve the insecurities of the age in which they live.

This need alienates them from those who accept unconditionally, for whom every day holds in store the promise of new adventure and new experience. As is made clear in Ursula's earlier statement, this is an outlook on life epitomised by children whose youth and immaturity express their naivety. Andreas has already passed through this phase and initially he is no longer able to identify with those still going through it. Berlin, the antithesis of his home environment and a strange and alien city to Andreas, robs him of the complacency assured by the familiarity of home. Life there is all new to him, and once more he is transported to the childlike state, absorbing indiscriminately all that the city has to offer, to which Mann refers as "ein hörendes und gedankvolles Kind" (FT, 78). The society into which he is drawn is marked by its vitality and exposes him, in its over-emphasis of the

⁴⁷ Fredric Kroll notes of those in the boarding house and at the cabaret 'Die Pfütze': "Andreas begegnet mehreren Randfiguren, die [...] eine Lebensführung aufweisen, die auf einen einzigen Leitgedanken beruht. Den Typ des 'Verlorenen', der aufgegeben hat, ohne zu kämpfen, verkörpert 'der kleine Boris', ein Kokainist. Fräulein Anna versinnbildlicht den Fleiß. Fräulein Lisa widmet sich religiösen Kulte und hofft, dadurch etwas Entscheidendes zu vollbringen [...]. Alle stehen als Beweis für Ursulas Polemik gegen die Jugend da", *Klaus-Mann-Schriftenreihe* Vol II, 146.

pleasure instinct, to inconceivable delights. Whilst this may be characterised by its artificiality, for example, in the gay nightclubs where frivolity is merely a veneer covering the parlous hardship of its frequenters, it enables Andreas to re-awaken that part of his psyche which has lain dormant for so long; on the trip to the fairground Luna-Park, for example, he rediscovers and revels in sheer physical sensation. He and the others from the boarding house select their rides specifically for this effect: "Alles zog sie ja an, was raste und sich drehte und lärmende, funkelnde Gefahr bedeutete" (FT, 108). The effect is captured in the description of the rollercoaster:

Sie füllten beinahe ein ganzes Wägelchen aus [...]. Langsam rollte der langgestreckte Wagen hinauf - hoch hinauf bis zum Höhepunkt des Gerüsts. Paulchen quiekte schon ängstlich im voraus, und ehe die eigentliche Fahrt begann - dieses nach unten und wieder nach oben Sausen, dieses schwindelerregende Auf und Ab [...].

Jetzt waren sie oben, unter ihnen strahlte, lärmte, prunkte der Luna-Park. Großes Klingeln, Kreisel, Kreischen lag unter ihnen [...].

[Da] sauste der Wagen schon mit ihnen allen nach unten. Ratternd raste er in den Abgrund, so daß einem die Sinne vergingen und sich die Magennerven verkrampften.

Alle zusammen schrien sie: 'Huiii - !!', so daß es über den Rummelplatz gellte (FT, 109 - 110).

Andreas is unable, however, to remain in a world devoted to the satiation of the senses. The decision to leave Berlin and search for Niels is simultaneously a decision to distance himself from all that Berlin represents, signalled in his speech to "die letzte Stunde" in Part III. Assessing his time in the capital he arrives at the conclusion: "es war ein munteres Leben" (FT, 118). The past tense Mann uses here before Andreas has decided to leave Berlin, before he has felt compelled to reject Niels, indicates that subconsciously he has realised that he is unable to stay in this environment. It is a necessary stage in his development but once renounced, it is one to which he is unable to return.

Berlin represents a temporary refuge from the constraints of his bourgeois background, a means to defeat the stagnation which permeates this world and an opportunity to explore those elements of his psychological make-up long repressed. The size of the city alone

assures his anonymity and offers diversity of experience and influence. Yet at no point does Andreas truly reject his background and the demands it makes of him. Thoughts of returning home are in the main repressed but, because of his attachment to Ursula Bischof, he is not able to divorce himself wholeheartedly from the parental home. She acts as the one constant feature in his life; her power is only diminished with Niels' appearance in Part III.

As Der fromme Tanz progresses Andreas' affinity with home grows stronger, reinforced by the photographs of Ursula Bischof and her father and Dr. Magnus, which suddenly appear in Parts IV and V. They are an indirect link with home for their photographed images deputise for their physical presence. As he gains in maturity, he increasingly realises that it is not possible for him to deny his background, as he assures Ursula in a letter: "Wenn ich zurückkomme, will ich Dir [...] alles erzählen - und einmal komme ich ja zurück" (FT, 185). Indeed, the decision to write to his father and Ursula is an initial step towards re-establishing contact after a temporary period of isolation, during which all communication had been broken.

Return to the parental home must be of his own volition and not enforced by parental authority, a point which is exemplified by Fräulein Barbara. Although she had been adopted by a wealthy family, Barbara rejected their affluent lifestyle, preferring to fend for herself in Berlin than be kept in luxury in Nürnberg. Her father's attempts to compel her to return are repelled and result in violence, his stature as a powerful member of the parental generation is diminished by the physical strength of his daughter. Although she leaves Berlin it is not to return home. It is emphasised that Andreas, in contrast to Barbara, is free to do as he wishes, that, although a minor, he does not fear his father ordering him home. His experiences away from home necessitate that his return must also meet with certain specific provisos: "Jetzt würde er die Tage in der väterlichen Villa nicht mehr unter der Geißel unnatürlicher Anspannung, fruchtlos verkrampfter Bemühung verbringen" (FT, 154).

Andreas dreams of returning home. However, these dreams have an ulterior motive. In day-dreaming about his arrival in his home town, envisaging himself as the prodigal son returning after long absence⁴⁸, he indicates a latent narcissistic element in his character. Andreas is the supremely individuated being. He is acutely, almost painfully, aware of his own image and is unable to lose his sense of selfhood. In his early fiction, Mann depicted youth as rejecting the principles that had governed their parents' generation and yet they are unable to divorce themselves from these principles. Kraske in her study, draws attention to the need for order with specific reference to the short story 'Die Jungen'. Yet this applies equally to the need for success, as illustrated in Der fromme Tanz⁴⁹. The over-weening wish to achieve, as exemplified by Andreas, is essentially debilitating, preventing rather than aiding its accomplishment; the more Andreas attempts to be successful the less he actually succeeds. His need for self-affirmation and the adulation of his peers is expressed in his desire, which runs throughout Part I, to win their accolade and to be acknowledged as their representative. He models himself on the older figure of Frank Bischof, who has already achieved this status, captured when Bischof's contemporary, Baronin Geldern, describes him as "der große Bildner, der große Repräsentant unserer Generation, der bürgerlichen Epoche" (FT, 30).

Andreas is shown to succumb to whim on only one occasion in Part I, the period during which the need to be a success is strongest: "Dann dachte er, daß er aufstehen müsse, er habe reichlich genug gelegen, und im raschen Entschluß sprang er schon aus dem Bett" (FT, 22). Here speed is of the essence, as thought immediately corresponds to action, the use of 'müssen' conveying a sense of inner compulsion. This exuberance is transient: "Gleich aber, nachdem er das Bett nun verlassen, ging er ermüchert plötzlich durch die Kälte des Tags, barfuß und mit verwirrtem Haare durchs Zimmer" (FT, 22). His actions are no longer purposeless but have regained intent: "Er hatte den Spiegel als Ziel ins Auge gefaßt" (FT, 22).

⁴⁸ The analogy with the Biblical story of the prodigal son is shown more clearly in the original title of this passage which was published as a separate piece in the Vossische Zeitung in March 1925 as 'Traum des verlorenen Sohnes von der Heimkehr', reprinted in Maskenscherz, 44-47.

⁴⁹ Eva Maria Kraske, 'Die Darstellung der Jugend',

The motif of the mirror gives expression initially to Andreas' intrinsic narcissism, as he delights here in his own reflection. It then evolves to indicate both his changing sense of self and consequent defeat of the narcissistic element within himself. Having left home, he is initiated into a long process which will undermine his sense of self. It begins with his short sojourn with the taxi-driver's family in Berlin. During the night of his stay, he is fiercely bitten by bugs whose bites destroy his former physical perfection:

Ihm tat alles so weh, die Stiche hinter dem Ohr waren am schlimmsten, die brannten ja wie Geschwür. Und wenn sein Blick, aus Versehen beinah, sein Gesicht im Spiegel traf, war es ihm, als müßte er vor übergroßer Scham gleich in den Fußboden versinken, wegen des so lächerlich geschwollenen Auges (FT, 53).

The bites assume a far greater symbolic value for they represent the inner affront to his dignity and damage to his pride inflicted by the ridicule of his hosts, an expression of "Ein Gefühl des Geschmähseins, des zutiefst Beleidigt- und Entwürdigteins" (50). This feeling is intensified by his experiences at the cabaret 'die Pfütze'. His opening night is characterised by the mockery of his attempts to entertain. The full impact of the humiliation he feels at the hostile reaction of the audience is conveyed once more in his self-pitying, subjective evaluation of his reflection in the mirror:

Als Andreas wieder in der Gardrobe saß, mußte er die Stirne gegen das Spiegelglas legen. Das also war sein Gesicht. Die, die von drei gemeinen Liedern und einem billig glitzernden Brokatkleid lebte, hatte seine Schönheit 'makelhaft' genannt. Und ihm war, als sähe er selbst schon Züge eines frühen Welkens um diesen blutrot aufgesetzten Mund, der mit seiner Künstlichkeit alles beflecken mußte, was er berührte, um diese viel zu weiß geschminkten Wangen. (74)

Here Mann conjures up the classic scene from variety theatre of the contrast between the carefree clown on-stage and the melancholic figure off-stage. Experience, failure and humiliation all contribute to shake his faith in himself until the high opinion of himself, with which the text opens, is gradually eroded away to almost nothing.

Andreas' failure to catch his invisible audience's attention away from their food and drink, the noise of which is the only indication of their presence, lies not merely in the inadequacy of the poem but rather in the approach he takes towards its recitation. He is physically alienated from those around him, the blinding effect of the footlights denying him any visual contact with his audience. Andreas stands isolated on the stage; only one other figure, the owner Alma Zeiserich, can be distinguished by him. At first glance, this appears little more than a problem in the staging of his act and, as such, not Andreas' personal or immediate concern. It emphasises, however, that Andreas has failed to bridge the gap between himself and his audience. In consequence, as he recites his poem, he is left alone with his thoughts. These thoughts reveal that he approaches his work from a purely utilitarian position. His actions carry the hallmarks of good rehearsal but little else: "Obacht jetzt, alles hergeben jetzt, die große Strafe, die große Barmherzigkeit jetzt mit der Stimme malen" (FT, 73). The rational, conscious mind still holds dominion over him. He does not feel in the same way, or to the same degree, as Franziska and Paulchen, the full force of the act he performs. Indeed, Paulchen's performance is the epitome of the defeat of individuation.

3.8 The secondary characters Paulchen, Niels and Franziska

Paulchen is a truly pathetic and vulnerable figure; essentially a grotesque parody of the effeminate, exaggerating in dress and behaviour his own feminine traits. He is a deliberate caricature of the homosexual, a figure it is difficult to take seriously; his name alone, as Wolfram has indicated, undermining his credibility⁵⁰. Mann's description of his dance "Das Abendgebet eines Vogels" attempts to mirror, in words, the rhythm of the music and its sheer physicality:

Paulchen [...] flog, gewichtlos, beschwingt, ohne Gedanken wie ein sich neigendes Blatt, hingegeben den Biegungen, den schwärmerischen Neigungen seines Körpers, zwischen den Vorhängen, vor zu der Rampe, glitt, wie vergehen, zur Erde, hob sich wieder, reckte sich, spannte sich ganz aus, verzückt, selbst hingerissen von der Bewegung, mit der er die Arme hob,

⁵⁰ Susanne Wolfram, *Die tödliche Wunde*, 31.

ausstreckte, dehnte, auf den Zehenspitzen hoch oben, wippend, zitternd, vibrierend, als wolle er abfliegen in den Raum, sich steigend lösen ins Nichts (FT, 65).

Dance represents an unreasoned response to the music, the force of “ohne Gedanken”, an immersion of the self into the beat of the music, as he responds intuitively to the music. Paulchen gradually loses all sense of self; his identity and the movement of his body become inseparable; after the initial identifier “Paulchen” the narrator then refers to him by an imprecise “er”.

In any conventional sense, Paulchen is uneducated; this is intimated in his reaction to the many books in Andreas’ hotel room in Part IV. Books are the evidence of learning and their presence make Paulchen uneasy:

Paulchens Blick ging im Zimmer umher. 'Wieviel Bücher hier sind', sagte er, und es war, als füllte sein Blick sich mit Angst. 'Ich kann nicht lesen', gestand er und zog die Schultern zusammen als friere ihn, 'mich machen Bücher immer nervös - -' (FT, 148)

Unlike Andreas, his mind has not been formed and moulded to concentrate solely on the rational. Dance, for Mann, was the ultimate expression of the irrational and the spontaneous, commenting: “ein Tänzer [ist] mehr vorm Herrn als einer, der schreibt oder malt” (FT, 118). Writing and painting are primarily the product of the rational mind and thus estranged from the truly spontaneous encapsulated in dance.

Andreas only truly experiences this loss of the sense of self in his love of Niels. The active experience of loving is evaluated positively in contrast to being merely the passive recipient of love, implied in Andreas’ outburst “Es kommt aufs Geliebtwerden nicht an” (FT, 89), and leads to the concern for the self alone being externalised and transformed into concern for another. This is symbolised in Andreas’ apparent reverie whilst gazing at Niels’ photograph, the only reminder of him Andreas possesses: “In tiefen Stunden verloren sich seine Augen in dieses Menschengesicht, das ihm fremd war wie keines und vertraut, wie keines. Am Ende war es ihm, als erkenne er sogar sein eigenes Gesicht in diesem wieder”

(FT, 152). The photograph assumes the properties of a mirror. For once Andreas is not lost in the depths of his own reflection but rather in that of another, his identity subsumed into that of Niels.

Standing in direct contrast to Paulchen is Niels himself. He represents within the novel Andreas' Other. The epitome of the natural and spontaneous, he retains a childlike pleasure in his surroundings, resident in a world of sheer physicality. His reactions are instinctive, unmediated through the rational, an essential vitality underlying his actions. Unable to be constrained, he desires his freedom, revealing a disquieting, violent and ultimately self-destructive element within his psyche, which inevitably ruins every relationship of which he is a part.

Adored and lauded by all those with whom he comes into contact, with the possible exception of Paulchen, Niels never experiences love other than passively; he is never placed in the role of supplicant, neither humiliating nor humbling himself in the manner of Andreas' attempts to win his love. His position always at the centre of attention constantly reaffirms his identity and fuels his egotism, for Niels is essentially egocentric, his world revolves around him alone. He displays little consideration or concern for his fellow man and even less for his lovers, exploiting their generosity and love for his own end. With recourse to cocaine he retreats into himself; this is the ultimate expression of his egotism. The consequence of the drug has already been prefigured in Boris, the addict from the gay nightclub "Paradiesgärtlein". Mann recalls the description of him as "benommen vom Gifte, das er dauernd nahm, das zarte Gesicht müde aufgestützt, die Augen rührend verdunkelt von innen heraus" (FT, 81) in relation to Niels; as such his fate must be assumed to be identical: "Andreas fiel plötzlich ein, daß der kleine Boris nun immer noch im 'Paradiesgärtlein' sitze, zart und benommen, - und wartete, bis einer ihn mitnähme" (FT, 83). Boris and Niels epitomise both passivity and, ultimately, their isolation from those around them.

In his love for Niels, Andreas is initially exposed to the potential for his own destruction. He jealously guards his feelings for Niels but must suffer the pain of rejection caused by Niels' popularity with all. Andreas' experience of love is limited, restricted to his token betrothal to Ursula and his platonic relationship with Franziska. They are idealised and elevated to conform to the image of woman as Madonna hidden deep in Andreas' subconscious, an image which manifests itself in the dream with which Part I opens. Here the Madonna is essentially a power for good, a peaceful figure who, in the rejection of Andreas' offer of the rosary, acts as a subliminal catalyst for his decision to leave home. Her words on so doing, although causing pain to Andreas, contain the essential positivism underlying Der fromme Tanz: "Du hast dir's noch nicht verdient, Du hast dir's noch nicht erlitten" (FT, 15) she tells him. The emphasis through repetition placed on "noch nicht", ignored in his anguish by Andreas, conveys the possibility and feasibility on his part, of success.

Rejection in the dream world is quickly paralleled by rejection in the real world. Ursula Bischof, asked by Andreas to comment on his most personal possession, his depiction of God, is unable to offer any comfort in her criticism. However, her words, like those of the Madonna, contain some solace:

Ich weiß keinen Ausweg für dich, Andreas ([..]. Soll ich dir heute sagen: ich glaube, daß du einen finden wirst? Das wage ich, denn die Verwirrung ist groß. Aber ich wünsche es so, Andreas, ich wünsche es mir so - um deinetwillen - um meinetwillen - (FT, 38).

In both instances, however, Andreas is insensitive to the underlying message, the inherent hope behind their words; he reacts only to the negative phrase, "ich weiß keinen Ausweg für dich", which Mann emphasises in Andreas' reaction to Ursula's judgement: "Aber er verstand nicht . . . für dich -" (FT, 38).

Mann establishes the direct link between the Madonna, Ursula and Franziska by repeating the same description which is applied to each in turn: "so war ihr Gesicht über

seinem: gütig wie der Mutter, sanft, wie das der Geliebten nach der ersten Nacht, geheimnisvoll wie das Gesicht der Schwestern" (FT, 38). Wolfram has shown how this stylisation into mother and sister represents to the homosexual, non-threatening female figures⁵¹. Of the three, Franziska is most strikingly identified with these roles. She alone is described as "mütterlich" (FT, 80), and embodies a positive force for good in her care for those around her, all of whom are younger than she. From the stylisation she is then transformed into an actual mother, for by the novel's conclusion she is expecting the birth of Niels' child, a role which exemplifies her association with life. The child represents a spiritual union modelled on Goethe's Wahlverwandtschaften⁵², between Andreas and Franziska; at the time of conception, she fixes her gaze on Andreas, but all Andreas' attention is focused on Niels alone: "Während Paulchens glanzlose Augen matt auf Andreas lagen, schaute dieser ganz bewegungslos zu Niels hinüber. Fräulein Franziska ließ den schwarzen Blick nicht von Andreas' Gesicht" (FT, 111). The possibility of physical consummation of either of these relationships is denied both Andreas and Franziska.

In her willingness to forgo her love for Andreas, Franziska epitomises the ideal of love expressed in Andreas' realisation: "So galt es, einen zu finden, dem man alles gab, ohne ihn zu besitzen, dem man helfend treu blieb bis zum Tod, ohne ihn zu besitzen" (FT, 153). She practises in her relationship with Andreas the inherent altruism underlying this ideal; the single act of physical intimacy between them, Franziska's kiss in Part III signals her sacrifice of her love for him. This kiss is later paralleled when Andreas kisses Niels' photograph and, with that, marks his final renunciation of him.

Franziska acknowledges the futility of her hopes: "ich weiß, du kannst mich nicht lieben - du liebst nicht die Frauen" (FT, 131). This statement has commonly been regarded as recognition of Andreas' homosexuality. However, in the light of Andreas' stated intention to return to Ursula and the distance he places between himself and Niels in the Prologue, telling the photograph: "Heute bin ich [Ursula] näher, als Du" (FT, 110) this assumption

⁵¹ Susanne Wolfram, Die tödliche Wunde, 31.

⁵² Frederic Kroll summarises this when he writes: "Das Modell für die 'übersexuelle' Zeugung in der deutschen Literatur stellen Goethes Wahlverwandtschaften dar, da das biologische Kind Eduards und Charlottens die Züge Ottiliens und des Hauptmanns trägt, weil beim Geschlechtsakt Eduard an Ottilie und Charlotte an dem Hauptmann denkt", Klaus-Mann-Schriftenreihe, Vol. II, 146.

must be questioned. Franziska's statement may possibly be a recognition of his idealisation of women and of the fact that he may only enter into a relationship with them based on adoration from afar.

Paulchen's relationship with Andreas, juxtaposed with that between Andreas and Franziska, represents the antithesis of Franziska's sacrifice: Andreas observes in Paulchen the worst excesses of possessive and jealous love, essentially a destructive and debilitating emotion, and learns from him an object lesson, for, in his relationship with Niels, Andreas demonstrates many of the traits exhibited by Paulchen. Infatuated with Andreas, Paulchen cannot reconcile himself to the fact that his love is not reciprocated by Andreas. Becoming increasingly jealous of Andreas' many admirers, this jealousy becomes more overt once Andreas' infatuation with Niels can no longer be denied. As his jealousy grows Paulchen becomes increasingly passive; in Part II, he had taken an active role in Andreas' life, as he and Franziska arrange for Andreas to join them in the cabaret 'Die Pfütze' but he gradually recedes into the background, ignored by Andreas until he becomes invisible:

Durch den dunklen Korridor ging Andreas in seine Garderobe zurück. Auf einer Kiste saß Paulchen, ließ seine schmalen lila Seidenbeine baumeln und rief etwas, als Andreas vorbeiging. 'War es gut?' fragte er und lächelte er ihm zu. Aber Andreas hörte ihn nicht und bog schon um die Ecke, wo es zu seinem Verschlage ging - Da erstarrte das Lächeln auf Paulchens Gesicht und er saß mit angefrorenem Lächeln - eine traurige Puppe (FT, 123).

He is thus rejected by Andreas long before the latter's decision to leave Berlin and search for Niels amongst the towns and cities of Northern Germany.

Paulchen cannot cope with this rejection, for his life is robbed of meaning once he has been robbed of Andreas. His suicide, once Andreas has rejected him, is a direct consequence of his utter despair, which he expresses in a distraught note to Andreas: "Ich denke beinahe den ganzen Tag an Dich. Ich weiß nicht mehr, was ich tun soll" (FT, 142). It is probably the final ignominy that he should be obliged to transport his rival's photograph from Franziska

to Andreas. His death, heightened in being 'off stage', is the only option open to him and emphasises his insignificance and anonymity in life:

Als Andreas noch aufrecht am Tische stand, hörte er den scharfen Laut seines Revolvers im Korridor. Es was ein Knacken beinahe mehr, als ein Knallen. Auch als draußen die Mägde und Frauen zusammenliefen, bewegte er sich nicht. Mit langsamen Bewegungen nahm er Fräulein Franziskas Geschenk aus der Seidenpapierhülle.

Draußen wurden die Rufe: 'Mein Gott! Einen Arzt! Einen Arzt!' schon lauter. Andreas verfolgte, ohne sich zu rühren, jeden einzelnen Laut. Jetzt schaffte man den Körper auf eine Bahre (FT, 151).

His suicide is made the more poignant for, ultimately, it is an act of no consequence. Andreas remains unmoved by the sound of the gun, for the photograph he holds of Niels diverts his attention from the aftermath of the suicide.

Kroll has suggested that Paulchen's life is characteristic of one destined to commit suicide⁵³. In death he loses all identity, reduced to a mere corpse. This desire has already been expressed in dance where, in trying to create the full impact of his dance, Mann describes it "als wolle er abfliegen in den Raum, sich steigend lösen ins Nichts" (FT, 65). This is the ultimate defeat of any sense of self; the dance offers Paulchen total freedom from the constraints placed upon him through the inevitable process of individuation. Denial of the self is taken here to the most extreme, to death⁵⁴. However, in dance, Paulchen sublimates his nihilistic wish for self-destruction for he temporarily denies the existence of the ego, and, in so doing, is relieved from the burden of individuation. However, this cannot last for ever. During his final visit to Andreas, with his suicide imminent, Paulchen confesses: "Ich tanze nicht mehr - nie mehr kann ich jetzt tanzen -" (FT, 150). Death is no longer a possibility but by now a foregone conclusion.

Paulchen and Andreas share an affinity with death, expressed most powerfully immediately prior to Paulchen's suicide:

⁵³ Fredric Kroll, Klaus-Mann-Schriftenreihe, Vol. II, 148.

⁵⁴ Here Mann draws on a traditional image of the dancer as a figure associated with death.

Da sagte Andreas nicht, er solle keine Dummheiten machen und Selbstmord sei stets ein Unrecht gegen sich selbst. Er sagte nur: 'Auf Wiedersehen', und der andere sagte: 'Auf Wiedersehen', es war zwischen ihnen ein kurzes, geheimnisvolles Abschiednehmen. Es war, als wollte der eine sagen: 'Grüße für drüben -' und der andere entgegnete mit seinem schwarzen Blick: 'Eines Tages kommst du ja nach -' (FT, 151)

For Paulchen, as for Andreas in Part I, suicide represents a solution to the depression into which Andreas' departure has plunged him. It remains a futile gesture, a pointless melodramatic act.

Death for Andreas is not a thing to fear; on the contrary, Andreas evaluates it positively in stark contrast to his negative perception of the world into which he has been propelled. His decision to take his own life in Part I, however is, not the conscious act of the rational mind; Andreas acts automatically, unable to express his wish in words, which are the symbols of reason, but have no place at this moment. That it should be rationalised merely as "heimkehren" (FT, 40), a request that he should be 'absorbed' into the water of the river, is not without significance. Death by drowning, Grunewald proposes, is the expression of a subliminal desire to return to the womb, to a pre-natal state of nothingness, a final renunciation of all claims made by the external world upon him. Simultaneously, however, the attempt at suicide, he suggests, is an elaborate purification ritual⁵⁵. It is, in effect, a symbolic rebirth, which ends one period in Andreas' life and, with an awareness of the proximity of death, enables a new beginning. It is from this that Mann derives his title Der fromme Tanz for the journey he then takes is a journey through life and the experience it has to offer. However, whilst it appears to affirm life in all its variety, at the same time, it is a journey made with the knowledge of the proximity of 'death', of the state of nothingness that precedes and succeeds life.

As with Paulchen, Andreas initially had only a superficial knowledge of the greater significance of death. The suicide attempt has the feel of empty posturing, of Andreas' wish to renounce his life before he has any experience of it. It is a reaction to Ursula's rejection

⁵⁵ Michael Grunewald, Klaus Mann 1906-1949, 281.

of him, a last, dramatic gesture at a supposedly hostile world. He fails to realise that death is an ever-present force behind all human life, its agent of the body. This is a constant reminder of human mortality, expressing both the vitality of life and its intrinsic transience, clarified at the end of the novel with: "Bewegung ist reif werden zur Ruhe. Leben ist reif werden zum Tod" (FT, 186). At its extreme, *Ruhe* is synonymous with death whilst *Bewegung*, on the contrary, is identical with life. The right to die, he comes to realise, must first be earned by enduring the tests set by life. Only once he has come to realise this can he be initiated into the secrets of *die neue Unschuld*.

Der fromme Tanz revolves around a series of parallel and antithetical situations and figures. Niels and Andreas complement one another; the Hofrätin Gartner and Franziska have features in common; Andreas' decision to reject Niels temporarily (for he later resolves to search for him) in Part III parallels Niels' rejection of the Hofrätin at the beginning of Part III whilst Franziska's narration of her biography which she narrates at the close of Part III (FT, 127 - 132) mirrors Andreas' own biography as it unfolds in the novel.

Franziska's recounting of her childhood and adolescent years serves a dual purpose. She is at most, two years older than Andreas, although she gives the impression of far greater maturity. Epitomised in her short life is the turbulence of which Andreas speaks in the abstract at the beginning of the novel. Of Russian/Spanish parentage and by birth an Austrian, Franziska passed her formative years in Paris, where she lost herself in the world of the great German writers, but with the outbreak of war in 1914 she became a true displaced person, an alien in her adopted homeland of France and ostracised in Austria. The security of her home life destroyed by events in an external world with which she had no relationship. The change in her material fortune and the loss of both parents and younger brother symbolise the financial and emotional penury of both her generation and Europe, and the trauma the continent had experienced in the twentieth century. Her story is far more vivid, more direct than Andreas' own description of his childhood:

Seine dumpfe, träumevolle Kindheit war also in die Aufbruchtage von 1914 gefallen, deren Größe, deren gewaltiges Pathos er aber noch nicht hatte verstehen können, sondern die eben nur als irgendeine große Erhebung, als ein klirrender drohender Lärm, als eine unerklärliche Stunde, nach der alles anders werden mußte wie vorher, seiner Seele sich eingeprägt und diese umgebildet hatten (FT, 18).

The parallel between Franziska's biography and Andreas' are unmistakable and intentional. With this in mind, the closing statements by Franziska "Ich weiß, Andreas, daß es dir ähnlich ergangen ist" (FT, 130) and "allen geht es doch ähnlich, wenn sie nur reden wollten" (FT, 131) are an overconscious labouring of the point which detracts from what is, essentially, a very self-contained passage.

Franziska's story neatly encapsulates Der fromme Tanz. In a matter of a few pages, Mann recounts the essential features of his novel without the long period of trial and error through which Andreas must pass to reach the same stage of maturity as Franziska. The emphasis is, however, suddenly altered here. There is no need to show Franziska's development. She is a static figure when the novel opens and is not intended to grow any further. Her story, however, re-emphasises the underlying optimism to the text. In common with Andreas, she too has contemplated suicide but, significantly, has rejected it, choosing instead the infinite possibilities of life. Indeed, in her rejection, she stresses the futility of dying having never experienced life: "Was hätte ich nun davon gehabt, wenn ich damals in Wasser gegangen wäre, was ich selbstverständlich täglich plante" (130), she asks Andreas. Her thoughts are concentrated initially solely on her late father, her sick mother and younger brother and then, typified by a general and imprecise sense of confusion, gradually turn to other things. "Erst habe ich immer nur von meinem Vater geträumt, dessen Augen voll Blut waren und von meiner kranken Mutter und von meinem geliebten Bruder", she tells Andreas, and then continues, "Erst ging ich nur immer umher und hatte meine Verwirrung im Sinn und den einen Gedanken, daß ich ausgesetzt sei und ohne Halt" (FT, 130). These are essentially negative and self-destructive thoughts which she only overcomes through her love of the body: "Später lernte ich die Körper lieben" (FT, 130). Franziska acknowledges the transience of life, in the love of the body, for the body is mortal, but also affirms, in the love

of the body, life itself. In the line 'ich [lernte] die Körper lieben', as becomes apparent only after the event, Franziska prepares Andreas for the next stage in his development.

The placing of this narrative here is significant, for it represents a period of calm and peace after the emotional peak of Andreas' rejection of Niels immediately preceding it. Distance is reinstated between reader and subject through the simple measure of removing Andreas altogether. His presence is quickly forgotten, as attention remains fixed on Franziska and what she has to say. The importance of her tale is, however, diminished by the narrator, certainly in relation to Andreas. He undermines her biography with the line "Der am Fenster [i.e. Andreas] zog Linien, und ob er zuhörte, war nicht recht zu bestimmen" (127). Franziska carries on regardless but it is open to question as to whether Andreas is her intended audience. The answer would appear to be in the negative for this passage is intended for the reader. Its didacticism is softened, however, by the presence of the nominal addressee, Andreas.

Conclusion

Der fromme Tanz anticipated in its themes and concerns, Mann's 1926 essay 'Fragment von der Jugend' with the novel and essay complementing one another. It corresponded to Mann's belief at this time in the autonomy of art and its independence of the historical moment. There is no true reference to the early 1920s in which it is set other than in the abstract; as Mann removes his central character, Andreas, from any active involvement within society, placing him, in contrast, within an avant garde setting that consciously divorces itself from the outside world. When compared with his later novels Alexander (1929) and Treffpunkt im Unendlichen (1932), Der fromme Tanz is a weak work, the product of his youth and inexperience as a writer, which confirms the contemporary belief discussed in Chapter Two that had he not been the son of Thomas Mann, the Klaus Mann's novel would not have been published.

Yet if these are to the novel's detriment, in his structure, narration and characterisation, with secondary characters representing contrasting aspects of the protagonist's character or providing a lesson from which he must learn, Mann proved his grasp of the *Bildungsroman* genre. It is not, however, typical of his age, but is rather reminiscent of the structures and techniques of the early *Bildungsromane*, the protagonist undertaking his 'education' undertaken away from external influences, relying solely on his powers of introspection. However, this introspection does not lead to an active, participatory role contributing to society; rather Mann aimed to show, again in keeping with his views in 'Fragment von der Jugend', his spiritual development, whereby the over-reliance on the rational mind is, by the novel's conclusion, subordinated to the doctrine of the new naivety.

A novelist's interpretation of history and adaptation of legend: Alexander, Roman der Utopie as a personalised study of Alexander the Great and the Macedonian Empire.

In late 1929 the Fischer Verlag, Berlin published Mann's second novel, Alexander, Roman der Utopie¹, which is based loosely on the life of the Macedonian leader Alexander the Great. It was preceded by the publication of his second volume of short stories Abenteuer (1929)². Each of its three narratives, 'Abenteuer des Brautpaares', 'Das Leben der Suzanne Cobière' and 'Gegenüber von China', readdresses in less stylised form the main concerns of Mann's earliest prose; in the relationship between its central characters, Gert and Jak, for example, 'Abenteuer des Brautpaares' examines the tension between the individual and society, initially identified with the demands of the Communist collective, of which Jak is a member, and then encapsulated in the family, an approach reminiscent of Der fromme Tanz; 'Gegenüber von China' and 'Das Leben der Suzanne Cobière', in contrast, return to the primary theme of his early work, the desire to overcome a deep-rooted sense of displacement and alienation in society which Mann believed, was experienced by all youth.

Abenteuer is influenced by the impressions and experiences Mann gathered whilst travelling round the world between 1927 and 1928. The resulting travelogue, Rundherum, co-written with Erika Mann, was also published in 1929³. Evidence in this text suggests that the experience of world travel and exposure to different cultures and lifestyles confirmed Klaus Mann in his hatred of national antagonisms, racism and xenophobia; these are issues he had first addressed in 1927 in the essay 'Heute und Morgen'. Within this essay he had vehemently denounced the divisions and factionalisation of his own generation, the polarisation of intellectual life in the Weimar Republic, expressed most forcibly in his public confrontation with Bertolt Brecht, and the increasing nationalism across the continent of Europe, which led to his advocacy of the *Pan-Europa-Bewegung*.

¹ Klaus Mann, Alexander, Roman der Utopie, first published by S. Fischer Verlag, Berlin, 1929. Reprinted by Rowohlt, Reinbek, 1986. Further references are given after quotation in the text.

² Klaus Mann, Abenteuer, first published by Verlag Philipp Reclam Junior, 1929, reprinted in Klaus Mann, Maskenscherz. Die frühen Erzählungen, (Reinbek: Rowohlt, 1990) 177-252.

³ Klaus Mann and Erika Mann, Rundherum. Abenteuer einer Weltreise, first published by S. Fischer Verlag, Berlin 1929, reprinted by Rowohlt, Reinbek, 1990. Further references are given after quotation in the text.

Both Abenteuer and Rundherum address issues which, to some extent, relate directly to the modern age. In Rundherum his and Erika Mann's condemnation is forthright and unequivocal. They broach specific concerns, the lack of consideration for basic human needs in Russia or the discrimination against blacks in America, for example; in Abenteuer Klaus Mann is concerned with more general questions that affect his generation alone. Whilst he has yet to achieve the vociferous tone characteristic of his essays post-1930 and of his fiction written in exile, each text is in keeping with Mann's campaign for writers to address society's ills through their work which he had begun in 1927 with the essay 'Heute und Morgen' and would continue in the three essays 'Die Jugend und Paneuropa', 'Jugend und Radikalismus' and 'Wie wollen wir unsere Zukunft?', published in his volume of essays Auf der Suche nach einem Weg (1931) under the collective title 'Zur Situation 1930'.

Alexander fits uncomfortably into this pattern for in its subject matter, the life of Alexander the Great, it appears to have little relevance to the twentieth century. It is the first text to which Mann himself ascribed the title *Roman* and also the first to take as its protagonist an historical figure, the detail of whose life is amply chronicled by history and literature alike⁴. This chapter places Mann's novel within this heritage and addresses his portrayal of Alexander as a generous ruler whom latent megalomania and unrequited love transform into a despotic tyrant as an adaptation of both historical data and legend. It addresses why Mann should choose to write a semi-historical, semi-mythical novel at this time and places the text in the context of the later years of the Weimar Republic, a period in which interest in the historical novel was increasing amongst writers, scholars and politicians. I shall then demonstrate that Mann uses the age of Alexander as a tool through which to offer a defence of homosexuality and to comment upon the increasing nationalism of his own period. The chapter concludes with a discussion of the nature of Utopia to which Mann referred in his subtitle 'Roman der Utopie'.

⁴ Mann would repeat this technique three more times in his career. In 1932 he wrote the play Athen, based upon the life of Socrates but in reality a critique of the late Weimar Republic. Three years later he published Symphonie Pathétique. Ein Tschaiowski-Roman, which combined a fictionalised biography of the Russian composer with a desire to portray both the flight of the exile, as experienced by Mann and his fellow emigrés, and the isolation of the homosexual within heterosexual society. I shall return to these texts later in this chapter. His short story 'Vergittertes Fenster' (first published by the Querido Verlag, Amsterdam, 1932, reprinted in Speed. Die Erzählungen aus dem Exil, ed. by Uwe Naumann (Reinbek, Rowohlt, 1990) 45-98) focussed on the life of the insane Bavarian ruler Ludwig II.

4.1 The historical background to Alexander. Roman der Utopie

In his autobiographies, The Turning Point (1942) and Der Wendepunkt (1949), Mann mentioned an eclectic mix of general sources for the text; they included Aristotle's philosophical and scientific treatises, the works of Xenophon, anthologies of Babylonian legend and Persian fable⁵, all of which contribute to Mann's evocation of the ancient world. Kroll suggests an influence both from the study Geschichte Alexanders des Großen by the nineteenth century historian Johann Gustav Droysen and from Plutarch's Life of Alexander⁶, Grunewald agrees with Kroll⁷ and then expands upon this list to also include accounts published in the first decades of the twentieth century. He includes the specifically historical analysis entitled Geschichte des Hellenismus, published in two volumes between 1917 and 1925 both of which Mann owned, and a more general reference work, Religiöse Stimmen der Völker, published in 1921 which Grunewald cites as the source of the Babylonian legend of Gilgamesch that Mann incorporates in Alexander. More generally, however, Grunewald claims Alexander is reminiscent of passages by Friedrich Gundolf in Dichter und Helden and by Ernst Bloch's description of Alexander's expedition to Asia published in Geist der Utopie⁸.

Although written against this strong historical background, Alexander is not a detailed and accurate biography of the Macedonian king. Mann blurs the time-scale of the events he depicts; he gives only the most perfunctory descriptions of Alexander's campaigns (he dismisses in a single line, for example, the decisive and key battle of Issos, at which

⁵ In The Turning Point Mann described his preparatory work in his description "During the time I was engaged in writing 'Alexander' [...] my luggage was burdened with Aristotle, Xenophon and Homer, I perused Babylonian legends [...] in Stockholm; Persian chronicles [...] near Florence" (TP, 172). His description in Der Wendepunkt is more concise for he notes merely "Mein Gepäck war belastet mit den Schriften des Homer, des Xenophon, des Aristoteles" (Wp, 216).

⁶ Fredric Kroll draws attention, in particular, to the linguistic similarities between Droysen's text and Mann's and notes also that, in its main characteristics, Alexander closely follows Plutarch, Fredric Kroll, Klaus Mann Schriftenreihe III, (Wiesbaden: Klaus Blahak, 1979), 70.

⁷ Grunewald arrives at the same conclusion as Kroll when he comments: "Pour camper le cadre d'ensemble de l'ouvrage, Klaus Mann a utilisé l'étude consacrée par Droysen au roi de Macédoine. Toutefois, pour relater certains événements révélateurs du caractère d'Alexandre, il a donné la préférence à la version des faits proposée par Plutarque dans sa Vie d'Alexandre", Michel Grunewald: Klaus Mann 1906-1949, 66.

⁸ Julius Kaerst, Geschichte des Hellenismus Vol. I (Leipzig: 1917), Vol. II (Leipzig, 1925); Walter Otto, ed., Religiöse Stimmen der Völker Vol. III (Jena: Diederichs, 1921); Gundolf, Dichter und Helden and Ernst Bloch, Geist der Utopie, from Michel Grunewald, Klaus Mann 1906-1949, 66-67.

Alexander the Great finally defeated the Persian emperor Darius) and merges historical fact with imaginative fiction. Parts One, Two and Three, 'Aufbruch', 'Sieg' and 'Prüfung', for example, whilst not historically detailed are, in the main, historically accurate. They span some twenty-seven years, from approximately 356 to 327BC, and chart Alexander's childhood and early career up to the murder of his marshal Kleitos and the execution of his chronicler Kallisthenes. Mann begins the gradual transition towards a portrayal more in keeping with romance tradition in Part Four, 'Verführung' where he combines history, the Macedonian campaign against Asia, with folklore and legend. The transition from historical record to an overtly fictional account is completed with Part Five. In its title 'Der Engel mit den verbundenen Händen' and in its content Mann recalls medieval adaptations which concluded with Alexander storming the gates of Heaven in order to bring it under his dominion.

This raises the question why Mann should choose to write about this historical figure. It is an unprecedented step at this stage in his career and one which appears to contradict his stated intention made in 1927 in the essay 'Heute und Morgen', which he repeats more vehemently in 1930, that the writer should address in his work the problems within society around him. By turning to ancient history and a subject which is overlain with mythical overtones Mann appears to negate this objective. However, his decision has to be seen in the context of the Weimar Republic, for his novel is the product of a widespread reawakening of interest in the potential that history offered the writer of fiction that gripped Germany during the 1920s.

4.2 The historical novel in the Weimar Republic⁹

The latter years of the Weimar Republic, the period in which Mann's Alexander falls, saw the sudden rise to prominence of the historical novel. It was, modern commentators agree, a

⁹ For a discussion of the issues raised here, see Klaus Schröter, 'Der historische Roman. Zur Kritik seiner spätbürgerlichen Erscheinung', Exil und Innere Emigration. Third Wisconsin Workshop, ed. by Reinhold Grimm, and Jost Hermand (Frankfurt: Athenäum, 1972), 111-151; Harro Müller, 'Possibilities of the Historical Novel in the Nineteenth and Twentieth Centuries', trans. by David Roberts, The Modern German Historical Novel. Paradigms, Problems and Perspectives, ed. by David Roberts, and Philip Thomson (New York: Berg, 1991) 59-69; Walter Schiffels, 'Formen historischen Erzählens in den zwanziger Jahren', Die deutsche Literatur in der Weimarer Republik, ed. by Wolfgang Rothe (Stuttgart: Reclam, 1974), 195-211; Jost Hermand and Frank Trommler, Die Kultur der Weimarer Republik, 161-172; Petra Gallmeister, 'Der Historische Roman', Formen der Literatur in Einzeldarstellungen, ed. by Otto Knörrich (Stuttgart: Alfred Kröner, 1981), 160-170; Ralph Kohpeiß, Der historische Roman der Gegenwart in der Bundesrepublik Deutschland. Ästhetische Konzeption und Wirkungsintention (Stuttgart: M&P, 1993), 27-63.

direct consequence of the political, social and economic upheaval Germany had experienced in the years following the end of World War One. For some writers, these changes brought the realisation that they were the 'eye witnesses' of historical events which had the power to change the basis of the lives of individuals, of social classes and of the state itself and that, as such witnesses, they should include these events within their work. This resulted in the rise of the *Zeitroman*, the novel of contemporary history, as writers used their fiction to address and come to terms with Germany's recent past¹⁰. It came to prominence with the war novels of the late 1920s, popularised by such as Ernst Jünger and Erich Maria Remarque, as writers universalised and externalised their personal experience of the bloodshed and horror of World War One by transferring it to a fictional setting. From this beginning, the *Zeitroman* authors broadened their reference to address other issues that had beset the German state - the inflationary crises and unemployment of its early years, the hardship suffered by many as the nation strove to rebuild an industrial and economic base plundered by war, the devastating collapse of the German economy following the Wall Street Crash of October 1929, the return to high unemployment it brought and the rise of political extremism that followed in its wake.

Characteristically there is little temporal distance between the fictional time of a *Zeitroman* and the actual time of the work's reception; the novels are written almost 'as history happens' with author and reader alike caught up, if not in the events themselves, then certainly in their aftermath. In consequence, whilst the *Zeitroman* offers an insight into contemporary history by those who lived through it and brings immediacy to their work, it also limits the writer's opportunities to anticipate or draw long-term conclusions from that which is portrayed. Prediction, however, was not the ultimate objective of this novel form. The *Zeitroman* performed a dual purpose - documenting contemporary history by those involved in it whilst motivating and inspiring its readers to political involvement and action. As a novel form that was overtly critical of society, it thus used fiction as an instrument of overt instruction and insight.

¹⁰ For an introduction to the *Zeitroman* and its aims see Jost Hermand and Frank Trommler, *Die Kultur der Weimarer Republik* (Munich: Nymphenburger, 1978), 161-172. For a discussion of the difference between the historical novel and the *Zeitroman* see Harro Müller, 'Possibilities of the historical novel', 61.

Although clearly an historical novel, Mann's *Alexander* is no *Zeitroman*, although, as shall be discussed later in this chapter, he makes reference throughout the work to contemporary issues. Rather, his novel conforms to the pattern of the *Geschichtsroman*, the novel of past history, that paralleled the *Zeitroman* during the Weimar Republic.

In his study of the historical novel in the nineteenth and twentieth century, Harro Müller differentiates between the *Zeitroman* and the historical novel by asserting quite specifically of the latter "as a form of retrospective narration there exists between the writing situation of the author and the selected time period a difference of about thirty years" (HM, 61). To make his words more generally applicable, it is perhaps more advisable to suggest a difference in time of *at least* thirty years.

In her survey of the historical novel Petra Gallmeister identifies three reasons why authors during the Weimar Republic chose a setting in the distant past. It was, she notes, either a flight from the reality of life in 1920s Germany, the issues affecting society and the necessity of deciding for or against the Republic, a direct consequence of the political, economic and social upheaval of recent times with authors searching for the stability and order missing from their own environment in the stasis of the past, or prompted by a desire to criticise the Republic indirectly, to protest but also to seek reassurance for the future from the example of the past¹¹. It is with this latter appropriation of history that I am concerned here.

In 1937, whilst defending the right of authors to compose historical novels, Alfred Döblin stated categorically in his article 'Der historische Roman und wir': "Mit Geschichte will man etwas"¹²(302). Thus he called, indirectly, for the *application* of history to illuminate the present. With this simple statement, Döblin captured the essential appeal of the historical novel both amongst his emigré audience and, retrospectively, to writers of the Weimar

¹¹For details of this discussion see Petra Gallmeister, 'Der historische Roman', 167-168.

¹² Quoted from Ralph Kohpeiß, *Der historische Roman der Gegenwart*, 37. This remark, and his article in general, formed his contribution to an on-going debate amongst the German emigrés as to the validity of writing novels set in the distant past when, in Hitler and National Socialism, they faced a very real and tangible enemy that should be confronted directly in their work.

Republic. Whilst writers could not ignore the prior knowledge their audience brought to their reading, and were thus prevented from significantly altering the factual detail of documented history, history nevertheless proved to be infinitely adaptable to authors, with a single historical event capable of being moulded to suit a variety of purposes¹³. For the writer of fiction, but, as illustrated in chapter two, not for the historian, historical facts were malleable as writers applied their powers of imagination to bring the past to life. As Harro Müller has noted, this was *poesis* not *mimesis*¹⁴.

To use an historical novel as a vehicle for social protest and criticism was not unique to the writers of the Weimar Republic. Rather, in using the novel in this way, they reverted to a pattern of writing that originated in the mid-nineteenth century. Following the failed revolution of 1848, Gallmeister notes, writers were prevented from making overt political comment in their work. They turned to the past, both to search for a model of harmony with which to contrast the contemporary age and, more importantly, to comment indirectly on issues of the present age.

The novel of past history operates with a dual time reference, summarised by Gallmeister when she notes of this novel form: "Er schildert eine vergangene Epoche, und er handelt Konflikte der Gegenwart des Autors ab" and then continues: "Historische Romane stehen in einem Spannungsverhältnis von Vergangenheit und Gegenwart; sie stellen den Leser vor die Frage, inwieweit ihre Darstellung vergangener Vorgänge historisch getreu ist und welche Aussagen sie über die Gegenwart treffen" (160)¹⁵.

¹³ The clearest example of this is in the war novels with which the *Zeitroman* came to prominence and which dominated the later years of the Weimar Republic. For the right, typified in the works of Ernst Jünger, World War One epitomised the heroism and valour of the 'true' German spirit; it emphasised the patriotic duty of all Germans to sacrifice their lives for the nation and captured the essence of a nation fighting for power over others. In contrast, the anti-war novels of such writers as Remarque or Ludwig Renn, who used their work to examine the horror of war, its causes and the potential for its recurrence.

¹⁴ Harro Müller, 'Possibilities of the Historical Novel', 63.

¹⁵ Petra Gallmeister, 'Der historische Roman', 160.

The writer of historical fiction was granted more freedom than the writer of history alone, for whilst the historian strove to portray the age the novelist focused more specifically on a single aspect or character from the past. They addressed the psychological question *why* an historical figure was as he was, giving the novelist the freedom to focus on the speculative not on the proveable. Yet the writer could not deviate too far from acknowledged and proven fact. He had to take into account his reader's and audience's referential historical knowledge and was thus prevented from going too far from the historical facts as they were known. However, Klaus Mann, in choosing the subject of Alexander the Great, had selected an area in which the distinction between fact and fiction had already blurred. The remainder of this chapter examines how Klaus Mann uses history and the story of Alexander the Great to comment on his own age. During the economic boom of 1924 to 1929 writers used historical settings in their work to comment upon contemporary society. These settings ensured distance between the author's criticisms and the target of these criticisms. It is in this sense that Mann uses the historical fact of Alexander the Great in his novel he explores the contentious issue of homosexuality and attacks, in coded form, the increasing nationalism and xenophobia of the late Weimar period.

4.3 The investigation of homosexuality in Alexander

Throughout his career Mann voiced his opposition to the blind prejudice and intolerance of homosexuality prevalent in society around him. Whilst his opposition found its most forceful and vehement expression in his essayistic work, the theme of homosexuality as a variant of human sexuality recurs throughout his fictional prose and drama as he used fiction as a tool with which to educate his audience.

Mann had first offered an open challenge to prevailing attitudes, in 1926; in describing the intensity of Andreas' love for the bisexual Niels in Der fromme Tanz, he wrote: "Andreas gab sich dieser Liebe ganz hin, die er nicht als Verirrung empfand. Ihm kam es

nicht in den Sinn, sie vor sich zu leugnen, sie zu bekämpfen als 'Entartung' oder als 'Krankheit'" (FT, 152). This passage reflected and, more importantly, defied widespread contemporary homophobia. Mann's questioning of contemporary attitudes is expressed in the indirect challenge of his phrase 'die er nicht als Verirrung empfand'; this carries with it an implied 'in contrast to others' and is further emphasised in Mann's deliberate use of the emotive and inherently pejorative terms *Entartung* and *Krankheit* which are quoted by him from contemporary discussions. As Mann indicated in his use of inverted commas, these were not the views of the author, rather he ascribed them to an anonymous public, which used such words as common terminology for a form of sexuality potentially alien and anathema to them. *Krankheit*, *Entartung* and Mann's earlier reference to *Verirrung* are all terms which carry with them a negative judgement of homosexuality; they imply, in their disparaging overtones, an unacceptable deviation from an accepted (heterosexual) norm.

Mann rejected this view of homosexuality and, at the same time, unequivocally identified his opposition to the disapprobation associated with it in the categorical statement, expressed through his protagonist Andreas, "Diese Worte [Entartung, Krankheit and Verirrung] berührten die Wahrheit so wenig, sie kamen aus anderer Welt' (FT, 152). He emphasised his defiance in the potentially controversial closing words of the passage, expressed once more through Andreas: "Gut hieß [Andreas] diese Liebe [...] ganz und gar, er lobte sie, wie alles, was Gott gab und verhängte" (FT, 152). In referring to God and homoerotic love in the same sentence Mann placed homosexuality within a Divine, natural order of life, granting it equal status with heterosexuality, a view which was, and still is, deliberately provocative¹⁶.

¹⁶ This fictional appeal for homosexuality to be treated as a natural expression of human sexuality became a vehement programmatic statement in Mann's essay 'Homosexualität und Faschismus' published in 1934. In it he attacked the Soviet Union, a state with which he had previously felt a great affinity for its unique tolerance of homosexuality, for revoking its laws to make homosexual practice a punishable and imprisonable offence. He conveyed the full force of his opposition in an aggressive opening paragraph. Here he wrote: "In der Sowjet-Union gibt es neuerdings ein Gesetz, das die Homosexualität unter schwere Strafe stellt. Es klingt überraschend, und man fragt sich, mit welcher Logik und mit welcher Moral eine sozialistische Regierung die Entrechtung und Diffamierung einer bestimmten Menschengruppe rechtfertigt, deren 'Verschuldung' in ihrer naturgegebenen Veranlagung beruht". This legislation, as Mann suggested through his selection of *Verschuldung*, sought retribution for an offence, but was based upon the erroneous belief that an individual's homosexuality was a matter of personal decision. By isolating *Verschuldung* within inverted commas, Mann distanced himself from this view; indeed, he emphasised its fallacy in his words 'naturgegebene Veranlagung' whereby the very term *Veranlagung* indicated that homosexuality stood beyond the bounds of choice. Mann clearly stated his own position in the final paragraph of the essay, first in his emphatic declaration 'Die Homosexualität ist nicht 'auszurotten''. The emotive verb *ausrotten* echoes contemporary views, held by those, on both the political left and right, who believed that homosexuality could be eradicated through punitive means, whether in the *gulags* of Stalin's Russia or in German concentration camps. Mann then offers a Utopian vision which he describes with the words: "Der Sinn eines neuen Humanismus [...] kann es nur sein, alles Menschliche, das die Gemeinschaft nicht verbrecherisch stört, nicht nur zu dulden, sondern einzubeziehen, sondern zu lieben, zu fördern und so der Gemeinschaft nutzbar zu machen" (ZK, 242). Here his call for a new form of humanism appeals for the acceptance of homosexuality, exemplified in its open and constructive use within society. 'Homosexualität und Faschismus', first published in *Europäische Hefte/Aufruf*, Prague, December 1934. Reprinted in *Zahnärzte und Künstler, Aufsätze, Reden Kritiken 1933-1936*, ed. by Uwe Naumann and Michael Toteberg (Reinbek: Rowohlt, 1993), 235-242. Further references are given in the text after quotation.

In 1935, some ten years after the publication of Der fromme Tanz Mann responded to the persecution of homosexuals by the National Socialist and Communist regimes¹⁷ with his novel Symphonie Pathétique, published in that year. Basing the novel loosely upon the life of the Russian composer Tchaikovsky, with whom he identified closely¹⁸, Mann focused upon the isolation of the ageing homosexual whom society condemned to a life as an outsider because it was unable to accept homoerotic eros as a legitimate expression of human sexuality. He concentrated upon the last years of Tchaikovsky's life portraying them as dominated by both the loneliness of exile and the composer's physical and mental decline. This decline Mann identified as the adjunct of the composer's enforced suppression of his sexual inclination. At the same time, Mann offered a spirited challenge to the criminalisation and condemnation of homosexuality integral to the Russian legislation of 1934. He associated Tchaikovsky's inability to compose, with which the novel opens, with the denial of his homosexuality; once he affirms his sexuality in his love for his nephew Tchaikovsky embarks on a period of intense creativity which results in his final work, the Symphonie Pathétique of Mann's title.

In many respects Mann anticipated the issues and themes of Symphonie Pathétique of 1935 in his earlier text Alexander, published some six years earlier, yet in contrast to the later novel, in 1928, when Mann was working on Alexander, the Weimar Republic appeared to epitomise tolerance and liberalism in its attitude to homosexuality. Richard Dyer, for example, opens his investigation of gay and lesbian film in the Weimar Republic, 'Less and More than Women and Men: Lesbian and Gay Cinema in Weimar Germany', with the categorical statement: "The sense of a widespread and relatively public lesbian and gay

¹⁷ In 1917, following the October Revolution, the Soviet Union declared that sexual acts between consenting adults was a private matter and thus of no concern of the state. In his essays, biographies and diaries, Mann expressed the attraction of a régime which purported to put the interests of its populace first. However, his admiration was not unreserved; in Rundherum, his travelogue, which is contemporary with Alexander, together with his praise, he also voiced his reservations as, for example, in the statement on the artist in Russia: "Was man von diesem Besuch mitnimmt, ist ein starkes Mitleidgefühl. Es muß für einen Künstler, dessen Natur das politische Pathos fernliegt, nicht eben leicht sein, unter des Proletariats Diktatur sein Leben zu fristen" (R, 149).

¹⁸ In Der Wendepunkt Mann described the basis of his affinity with Tchaikovsky when he wrote: "Wie hätte ich nicht alles von ihm wissen sollen? Die besondere Form der Liebe, die sein Schicksal war, ich kannte sie doch, war nur zu bewandert in den Inspirationen und Erniedrigungen, den langen Qualen und flüchtig kurzen Seligkeiten, welche dieser Eros mit sich bringt" (Wp, 335).

presence is endemic to the image of the Weimar republic [sic]"¹⁹ (5). Citing the German capital as his model he notes later: "one could buy gay guides [...] listing the extensive lesbian and gay nightlife of Berlin. There were lesbian/gay meeting places, magazines, novels, even a theatre (Theater des Eros, 1921-24)"²⁰ (12).

Whilst in its openness Berlin did not typify the Republic as a whole, a fact which, as Plant notes, the far right was keen to emphasise²¹, its flourishing gay community and associated culture were not unique to the capital. Most major German cities had gay communities, nightclubs and bars; although in contrast to Berlin, they existed at the level of a sub-culture that by definition was hidden from the mainstream of city life, they nevertheless suggested a liberal, enlightened and tolerant society which espoused the ethos of 'live and let live' in its attitude to human sexuality. It thus seems strange that, given this seemingly liberated environment, Mann should use his novel to provide a defence of homosexuality and a challenge to homophobic attitudes. It is therefore necessary to investigate behind the public image of tolerance and acceptance to examine the underlying attitudes to, and perceptions of, homosexuality that informed its portrayal by Mann both in *Alexander* and, more generally, in his early fiction as a whole.

Homosexuality as a legitimate expression of human eros was as contentious an issue in the Weimar Republic as it still is today. Those who campaigned for its acceptance and recognition faced the latent and entrenched homophobia of society, the Protestant and Catholic churches, political parties and the Constitution itself. Article 175 of the Republic's penal code clearly prohibited homosexual practice, stating categorically: "A male who indulges in criminally indecent activities with another male or who allows himself to

¹⁹ Richard Dyer, 'Less and more than Women and Men: Lesbian and Gay Cinema in Weimar Germany', *New German Critique* 51 (1990) 5-61 (5).

²⁰ Richard Dyer, 'Less and More than Women and Men', 12.

²¹ The right denounced the city as a latterday Sodom, in its apparent acceptance of homosexuality, home to perversion and, as a result, a corrupt heart to the German state.

participate in such activities will be punished with jail"²² Prohibition, however, merely led to the creation of an active and vociferous gay rights movement which campaigned for better understanding of homosexuality and for its decriminalisation. As Barry Adam notes, the movement won its greatest battle in 1929, ironically at the same time as the proposed changes to the laws of prostitution mentioned above, when it persuaded parliament to overturn the legislation. The plans to revoke the law were not, however, put in practice for they were blocked in 1930 by the National Socialists who, two years previously, in May 1928, had expressed their forthright and uncompromising opposition to homosexuals. In a questionnaire on Article 175 of that date they stated this opposition unequivocally, with the words "Anyone who thinks of homosexual love is our enemy". They defined homosexuality as an attempt to undermine the nation, arguing that it robbed Germany of the masculinity and discipline it required to remain strong. They summed up their position with the statement "We [...] reject any form of lewdness, especially homosexuality, because it robs us of our last chance to free our people from the bondage which now enslaves it"²³.

In 1928 and 1929, as Mann worked on *Alexander*, the *Reichstag* considered changes to the law which coincided with increasing, if latent hostility towards homosexuality within society and with proposed legal changes in 1929 to empower German courts to punish male prostitution with prison sentences of up to ten years. Responding to a questionnaire issued by the *Institut für Sexualforschung* founded by Magnus Hirschfeld, Mann denounced this legislation as morally and humanely outrageous and then drew attention to the double standards of contemporary society when he observed, "Ich wüßte nicht, warum homosexuelle Prostitution sittlich verwerflicher als heterosexuelle sein sollte"²⁴.

²² Quoted from Richard Plant, *The Pink Triangle*, 30. In reality, the law was not put into practice, the police, especially in the conurbation, turning a blind eye to the thriving gay culture of their cities. Indeed, for many this proved a very valid argument in calling for its repeal, Magnus Hirschfeld, for one, arguing in 1924 that there was little point in having a law if it was not implemented. Protesters against Article 175 of the Constitution seized upon this fact as a key argument in their campaign to have the law revoked.

²³ Quoted from Richard Plant, *The Pink Triangle. The Nazi War against Homosexuals* (Henry Holt: New York, 1986), 50.

²⁴ 'Unzucht zwischen Männern? Eine Antwort auf eine Umfrage, first published in 297.3. 'Unzucht zwischen Männern? Ein Beitrag zur Strafrechtsreform, ed. by Peter Martin Lampel, with Magnus Hirschfeld, Gottfried Lehnerdt, Max Hedann (Neuer deutscher Verlag: Berlin, 1929). Reprinted in *Die neuen Eltern*, 244-245, 244.

The objections raised by the National Socialists had at their heart a specific political objective; their general hostility to homosexuality, however, was matched in the opposition expressed by the Protestant and Catholic churches alike which, in a move which brought it close to the reactionary ideologies of the right, from the mid-twenties intensified their calls for a return to old values to offset worrying modern trends. They addressed issues as diverse from one another as homosexuality, illegitimacy, alcoholism, working mothers and drug abuse all of which were condemned as ills of modern society. The churches exercised great influence in shaping public opinion for it acted for many as a moral guide; their shared condemnation of homosexuality as against the laws of God thus indirectly promoted homophobia. It is against such attitudes in which homosexuality is perceived as an unacceptable and condemnable variant of sexuality that Mann wrote Alexander.

In his study of the theme of homosexuality in literature Wolfgang Popp notes that historical settings far removed from contemporary society frequently serve to justify or explain homosexuality to a potentially hostile audience²⁵. In Alexander a setting in ancient Greece, a period associated with the classical heritage of modern Europe but also universally acknowledged for its overt homophilia, in which homosexuality was accepted as a natural and integral stage in the process of growing up, allowed Mann to explain the issues under the pretext of detached historical writing. It provided him with a stark contrast to his own age. From this position he challenged the generally unquestioned assumption of the heterosexual norm against which to measure other forms of sexuality. He relies upon the temporal distance between his audience and the events of his novel initially to show in the Macedonian army, with Alexander as its leader, an idealised homosexual community.

²⁵ Popp writes on the homosexual author's adaptation of history: "Er idealisiert historische Herrscherfiguren, um der Gesellschaft einen - idealisierenden oder kritischen - Vergleich mit den gegenwärtig Herrschenden zu suggerieren, er transferiert gegenwärtige Konfliktsituationen [...] in eine vergleichbare historische Situation, die er ggf. entsprechend ummodellern, uminterpretieren oder verfälschen muß, um historische Konfliktlösungen [...] auch für die Gegenwart als erwartbar und wünschbar suggerieren zu können. Oder er benutzt die drastische Darstellung negativer historischer Persönlichkeiten oder negativ zu bewertender historischer Ereignisse und gesellschaftliche Situationen, um den gegenwärtig Herrschenden und der gegenwärtigen Gesellschaft einen Spiegel ihres eigenen Verhaltens und ihrer eigenen Situation vorzuhalten", Wolfgang Popp, Männerliebe. Homosexualität und Literatur (Stuttgart: Metzler, 1992), 271-272.

Mann differentiates between types of homosexuality by introducing three distinct manifestations of it. These are the homosexual by choice, identified with the Macedonian court under the reign of Philipp; the homosexual stage as a transitional phase between childhood and adulthood, represented by the Macedonian army, and the exclusively homosexual man, later defined by Mann in 1934 in the essay 'Homosexualität und Faschismus' as "ein Typus Mensch, zu dem man übrigens keinesfalls durch Verführung oder Gewöhnung wird, sondern als der man geboren ist" (ZK, 239) and exemplified by Alexander himself. Within this context he identifies and examines the insecurities, the sense of displacement and isolation within heterosexual society experienced by the exclusively gay man for whom heterosexuality is anathema.

In an unusual example of role-reversal, Philipp, in his vain attempt to be accepted and integrated into overtly homophilic Greek society, suppresses and thereby compromises his own sexual orientation. Mann included only one description of homosexuality at the Macedonian court under the rule of Philipp when he commented: "Er [Philipp] leistete sich [...] Lustknaben aus Athen, weil die Päderastie Mode war, eigentlich lag sie ihm gar nicht" (A, 27). The qualifying statement '*eigentlich* lag sie es ihm nicht' with its implied 'in truth' clearly indicated that Philipp went against his natural inclination. As Mann's terminology implied he did not associate this with 'true' homosexuality innate to the individual. He defines it as *Mode*, as a fashionable pastime and, as such, subject to individual choice. However, Mann repeatedly emphasised in his essays and through such exclusively homosexual figures as Andreas in Der fromme Tanz, Richard Darmstädter in Treffpunkt im Unendlichen or Tchaikovsky in Symphonie Pathétique that real homosexuality was not a matter of personal volition. For this reason he substitutes in describing the Macedonian court the archaic term *Päderastie* for the more neutral form *Homosexualität*. In contrast to *Homosexualität*, *Päderastie* is to the twentieth century audience for whom Mann wrote intrinsically negative. It is selected by Mann because its German definition of 'Knabenliebe' encapsulates the exploitation at the Macedonian court of the young *Lustknaben*, who prostitute themselves for the gratification of the older noblemen. The combination of

Lustknaben and *Päderastie* also pinpoints the fundamental inequality in the relationship between the nobles and the prostitutes who are reduced at court to a mere commodity to be bought and sold at will.

In Philipp's rape of his page Pausanias, Mann illustrates the lowly status of the *Lustknaben*. Describing the incident to Kleitos, Pausanias concedes "Wenn er mich noch ins Schlafzimmer gebeten hätte, gut, ich würde nicht nein gesagt haben, obwohl er mir [...] nicht liegt" (A, 35); rather, Pausanias' outrage is at the manner of its execution, captured in his outburst, "Diese entwürdigende Rücksichtslosigkeit" (A, 35). Although he is of noble birth he loses status, not because of his homosexuality but because of the nature of his defilement; Philipp does not seek Pausanias' affection, as in a relationship based upon equality; he merely demands Pausanias' submission. His actions do not permit Pausanias to exercise free-will; as a result they turn him into one of the *Lustknaben*. Kleitos summarises Pausanias' new position with the words: "Dein Renommee bei Hofe ist dahin. Nun bist du ein kleiner Lustjunge, wie die Hergelaufenen aus Griechenland, die es gerne für ein Abendessen tun" (A, 35), thus equating Pausanias' exploitation by Philipp with prostitution and, at the same time, capturing the low regard in which the *Lustjunge* are held within the homosexual environment.

The homosexuality of the Macedonian court serves as a negative counterpart to Mann's ideal of homosexual eros; this is epitomised in Alexander's army during the passing homosexual phase which marks their transition from adolescence to adulthood. In these troops Mann portrays a utopian community in which homosexual practice between equals is neither questionable nor unorthodox; rather it is accepted as standard. Mann does not attempt to justify or legitimise the soldiers' homosexuality, presenting it in such simple, direct phrases as "Alle liebten sich untereinander" (A, 48), "Nachts schliefen die meisten [Soldaten] im Freien, viele paarweis ineinander verschlungen" (A, 50) or "beinah jeder war der Freund und Liebling eines jeden gewesen" (A, 118), as merely a matter of fact; as a

result, homosexual practice in this respect is free from any value judgement. Indeed, Alexander's wish "nichts als junger Mann unter jungen Männern zu sein, teilzuhaben an ihrem Bunde, der ihm herrlicher und frischer als der Bund zwischen Mann und Frau schien" (A, 67), clearly applauds homosexuality in the form of the adolescent *Männerbund*²⁶.

The Macedonian troops offer a positive role-model of the homosexual. As warriors they are in stark contrast to the stereotypically effeminate figures of Paulchen in *Der fromme Tanz*, or Pausanias in *Alexander* itself, and to the neurotic and hypersensitive Richard Darmstädter in *Treffpunkt im Unendlichen* for whom his sexuality is little more than persecution. However, Mann qualifies his descriptions of the homoerotic bond which unites the Macedonian soldiers when he emphasises their relative youth. For example, at the beginning of Alexander's campaign, the period in which they are at their closest and which approximates a homosexual utopia, he notes: "sie waren alle nicht älter als fünfundzwanzig" (A, 48); when detailing the conspiracy against Alexander by his pages, who are bound to one another in their shared hatred of Alexander and love for one another, Mann once more draws attention to their youth, commenting "Keiner von ihnen war älter als sechzehn Jahre" (A, 118). By deliberately emphasising their age Mann identifies their homosexuality with relative youth; in so doing, he implies that for each of the soldiers it is merely a phase, supplanted, in the example of the older soldiers, at a later stage by heterosexuality²⁷.

In depicting Alexander as exclusively homosexual Mann defies literary tradition. In general, fictional accounts of the life of Alexander the Great define him unreservedly as heterosexual, whether in the guise of the medieval *minneritter* who devotes his life in (love) service to a lady, or as the ladykiller of the *Greek Alexander Romance*. Mann's approach, in contrast, bears closer similarities to recent, historical analyses. Whilst they have yet to reach

²⁶ Mann's depiction here of the homophilic bond between the Macedonian army bears influences from the German *Wandervogel* movement and, in particular, from the thought of Hans Blüher. During the first decades of the twentieth century he had repeatedly proposed the *Männerbund* and the homoeroticism inherent to it as an ideal relationship between equals which the relationship between a man and a woman could never approximate for, he believed, women were genetically inferior to men. For a short outline of Blüher's thoughts see Richard Plant, *The Pink Triangle*, 40. For a more detailed discussion see Ulfred Geuter, *Homosexualität in der deutschen Jugendbewegung. Psychoanalyse und Jugendpsychologie am Beginn des 20. Jahrhunderts*, (Frankfurt: Suhrkamp, 1994), 163-180.

²⁷ His representation of homosexuality here corresponds to that in Greek society, discussed by Antony Andrews, *Greek Society* (London: Penguin, 1991); K.J. Dover, *The Greeks and their Legacy. Collected Papers*, Vol. II (Oxford: Blackwell, 1988), 115-134 and Robert Garland, *The Greek Way of Life from Conception to Old Age* (London: Duckworth, 1990).

any definite conclusions on the nature of his sexual orientation, commentators now believe that, even at its most tentative, circumstantial evidence suggests a figure with strong homosexual inclinations, for whom marriage was politically expedient but emotionally superfluous²⁸.

In Mann's characterisation, heterosexual love is neither physically feasible nor mentally conceivable for Alexander as evinced in his inability to consummate either of his marriages. Mann concludes his description of Alexander's first wedding to Roxane with the statement: "Das Abenteuer schien für ihn abgeschlossen" (A, 117). His choice of *Abenteuer* is interesting. It suggests something out of the normal bounds of an individual's own experience which has connotations of risk-taking and the excitement involved with that risk; in this context, the attempt at heterosexuality which marriage represents, is indeed a hazard for Alexander for, as a homosexual man, marriage to Roxane carries a potential threat to his sexuality. However, *Abenteuer* is also an inherently positive term which intimates that, although his relationship with Roxane is shortlived and ends in failure, it nevertheless contributes to his development. Here Mann retains some of *Abenteuer's* original meaning of *aventure*.

Medieval writers associated *aventure* with the tests faced by the young knight who ventured out to explore the world and prove himself against formidable opponents and fantastic beasts alike. They defined these tests as a key stage in the knight's education and development which only ended with his discovery of a beautiful, courtly lady. When Mann writes 'Das Abenteuer schien für ihn abgeschlossen' he places Alexander's meeting with Roxane within this tradition, suggesting that Alexander's apprenticeship is over, that he is no longer an inexperienced ruler merely following in the footsteps of his late father. Mann, however, inverts this norm. Having found Roxane, Alexander then rejects her for his homosexuality prevents and prohibits him from responding to her advances. Consequently Mann does not state categorically 'Das Abenteuer *war* für ihn abgeschlossen'; rather he

²⁸ For an historian's interpretation of Alexander's life see Robin Lane Fox, *Alexander the Great* (London: Penguin, 1988), John Maxwell O'Brien, *Alexander the Great: The Invisible Enemy. A biography* (London: Routledge, 1992), Wolfgang Will, *Alexander der Große* (Reinbek: Rowohlt, 1995).

comments with more circumspection, 'Das Abenteuer *schien* für ihn abgeschlossen', and thus suggests that Alexander's development and trials are set to continue.

Alexander is prevented from consummating his wedding by a force greater than himself to which he first alludes in the question 'Welches Gesetz verbietet mir, sie anzufassen' and to which he refers again when he asks himself "Warum darf ich sie nicht anfassen?" (A, 116). Fredric Kroll proposes that, in his questioning of himself and rejection of Roxane Alexander subconsciously acknowledges the taboo of incest²⁹.

In his account of Alexander's childhood and adolescence, Mann certainly alerts his reader to the potential for incest in the relationship between Alexander and Olympias and thus follows in a tradition that dates back to the earliest accounts of Alexander the Great's life. In *Alexander* Olympias confuses the parent/child relationship with that between lovers, captured in Mann's early description of Olympias' relationship with the child Alexander: "Wenn sie gegen Abend guter Laune wurde, ließ sie den jungen Prinzen Alexander kommen. Sie küßte und preßte ihn wild, ihm wurde schwindlig, wenn er den bitter betäubenden Geruch ihres Haars atmete. Sie schaute ihn von unten schwärmerisch und spöttisch an" (A, 10-11). Mann later recalls this scene when he defines Olympias' love for her son, seen from the perspective of the court, as "anstößiger Zärtlichkeit" (A, 28) and then reiterates the potentially incestuous nature of their relationship when, on Alexander's succession, he writes of Olympias: "Die breite Stirn gesenkt, schaute [Olympias] dem Prinzen mit dem verführerisch tiefen Blick entgegen. Da er sich elatisch ihr näherte, sich verneigte, ihr die Stirn und Hand zu küssen, lächelte sie, aber nicht nur mütterlich" (A, 41). However, he does not pursue the theme of incest between mother and son. He associates it exclusively with Alexander's youth and specifically to Olympias. Once Alexander leaves Greece the theme

²⁹ He writes "In der zweiten Hälfte des Buches scheidet Olympias fast völlig aus [...]. Gleichsam stellvertretend für Olympias erscheint im dritten Teil, 'Prüfung' genannt, Roxane, die Königin der besiegten Amazonen" Fredric Kroll, *Klaus-Mann-Schriftenreihe*, Vol. III 72. Wolfram and Kroll base their conclusions on the assumption that Roxane bears a physical resemblance to Alexander's mother, Olympias which Kroll identifies in his analysis: "Ein Korb bei Olympias' Bett birgt viele Schlangen. Roxane ihrerseits trägt ein enganliegendes, silbrig schuppiges Kleid 'klingend von Juwelen, Schlangengürteln, blitzenden und harten Verzierungen' [...] - eine schlangenartige Erscheinung [...]. Wie auch Olympias ist Roxane mit 'unanständigen Kulturen' vertraut (72)."

disappears from the text. Whilst some of the women attracted to Alexander resemble Olympias insofar as they are strong, forceful characters, Alexander neither regards them as surrogates for her nor, with the exception of Roxane, does he actively seek their affection. Rather than attributing his physical rejection of Roxane to the taboo of incest, I propose it is the natural consequence of Alexander's homosexuality.

Roxane is the only woman to whom Alexander is emotionally attracted. Following Plutarch, who had defined their relationship as a true love match, Mann portrays Alexander and Roxane as complementary halves of the same personality. This he captures in their sudden, unvoiced realisation "wir gehören zusammen. Nur aneinander noch haben wir uns zu bewähren, wir sind uns vorbestimmt seit eh und je, unbedingt, unerbittlich" (A, 114-115). They respond to one another instinctively, emphasised by Mann in his choice of *traumwandlerisch* and in the analogy *wie Hypnotisierte* in the description: "Sie gingen aufeinander zu mit kleinen, traumwandlerischen Schritten, wie Hypnotisierte sie haben. Als sie unversehens sich so nahe gegenüberstanden, daß sich fast ihre Stirnen berührten, erschranken sie beide" (A, 115). Here their physical proximity reflects their emotional and spiritual closeness. It is starkly contrasted by the distance between them on their wedding night emphasised in Alexander's unsuccessful attempt to touch Roxane, "[Er] hob die Hände nach ihr; aber er stand zu entfernt, er erreichte sie nicht" (A, 116).

In Roxane, Alexander finds the partner he had sought in vain in his childhood companion, Kleitos. He is attracted to her primarily by her physical resemblance to a youth. When he and Roxane first meet she appears as a warrior, expressed in Mann's line "[Alexander] blieb an der Tür stehen [...], als er Roxane, einsam, aufrecht, gerüstet, mitten im Raum stehen sah" (A, 114). He intuitively responds not to Roxane but to the masculinity of her appearance. The Amazons of whom she is queen consciously deny their femininity by removing the physical evidence of their sex but this merely adds to their allure, as Mann illustrates in the lines:

Weibliche Fülle [...] hatten sie nicht viel zu bieten, doch davon hatte man in Babylon genug bekommen. Die Brüste, hieß es, waren ihnen wegoperiert, das

fanden die an Päderastie gewohnten griechisch-mazedonischen Soldaten gerade sehr anziehend: das weibliche Geschlecht zu den harten, schmalen und trainierten Knabenkörpern (A, 112),

However, on her wedding night Roxane uncharacteristically conforms to a stereotypical image of the woman who is submissive to the wishes of her husband, which Mann described in the words:

Der in allen östlichen Reichen hochberühmte Mund der Roxane, den niemand anders als fest geschlossen oder eisig lächelnd gesehen hatte, zitterte. Ihre Nase ragte rührend pathetisch in dem weichgewordenen und bereiten Gesicht. Von ihrer Stirn kam ein sanftes Leuchten, auch von den silbrigen Augenlidern, die sich schlossen. Sie kniete mit gebeugtem Nacken, eine Demütige. Die Arme, die Pfeile geschwungen hatten, hingen wehrlos. Ihr Körper und ihr Gesicht verklärten sich zärtlich in Erwartung des Gatten und Helden (A, 116).

Alexander's question 'Welches Gesetz verbietet mir, sie anzufassen?' is thus prompted by Roxane's transformation from a figure with overt masculine characteristics, who is aggressive and militaristic, into an image of submissiveness, dressed not as the soldier and warrior to whom Alexander is first attracted but as a woman. In so doing she reawakens his consciousness of his homosexuality; it is this which ultimately distances him from Roxane and consequently results in his rejection of her.

The heterosexual eros to which Alexander is temporarily exposed in his attraction to Roxane poses a potential threat to him. This is suggested by Mann's selection of *wagen* in their simultaneous realisation "Wir haben nichts mehr zu tun, als aufeinander zuzugehen und uns die Hände zu geben, wenn wir's schon wagen" (A, 115). Mann further suggests that this eros is essentially alien for Alexander in depicting his revulsion at the overt display of heterosexual behaviour which takes place following the mass wedding of Macedonian troops to Persian women. Mann shows Alexander's discomfiture when confronted by heterosexuality in a series of descriptions following the wedding ceremony. Alexander's first reaction is flight expressed in the sentence "der König eilte, um nicht sehen zu müssen, wie

die Paare, ineinander verkrampft, hinsanken”, which is then further intimated in Mann’s use of *Entkommen* in “Der König lief, er verstand selbst seine Angst nicht. Ihm schien es, daß es kein Entkommen mehr gab, je weiter ins Freie sie [Alexander and Bagaos] kamen, desto häufiger wurden die aufeinanderliegenden Körper” (A, 153). The fear he senses derives from his confrontation with a form of sexuality both alien and incomprehensible to him. The full extent of his revulsion is expressed in Alexander’s words to Bagaos:

So schlimm war es nie auf dem Schlachtfeld. Zwanzigtausend Menschen paaren sich unter freiem Himmel [...]. Wie die Weiber beim Küssen den gefräßigen Mund aufreißen? Wie sie ihre dicken Zungen spielen lassen? Wie die Männer sie an den Haaren packen, daß ist ja grauenhaft, wie sie sie beuteln (A, 154).

This is an exhibition of raw lust, of mass consummation and sexual gratification from which Alexander, as a homosexual, is excluded. It is both brutal, emphasised in the underlying violence of the verbs *packen*, *beuteln* and *aufreißen*, all of which continue the initial analogy with the battlefield, and devoid of all emotion. The sexual act is reduced to its most basic, the physical satisfaction of a powerful drive which Mann implies, by selecting ‘sich paaren’, a phrase used more commonly with non-humans, borders on the animalistic.

Only once does Alexander actually commit a heterosexual act when, in India, he meets, and is seduced by, the Indian princess Kandake. In a novel which is open about sexual proclivity and both homosexual and heterosexual intercourse Mann is, however, uncharacteristically reticent here and elects to shroud the events about which he writes in ambiguity. This has led to some confusion about the question whether Alexander and Kandake do indeed have sex. Susanne Wolfram, for example, tentatively comments “Ein einziges Mal findet die Vereinigung Alexanders mit einer Frau wenigstens beinahe statt”³⁰, which she follows with her interpretation of the attempt on Alexander’s life by Kandake’s

³⁰ Susanne Wolfram, *Die tödliche Wunde*, 61.

son, Charakter. "Der 'Anblick eines Schwertes eines Feindes, gleichsam eines männlichen Genitalsymbol'", she writes, quoting Fredric Kroll³¹,

verhindert im letzten Moment die Vereinigung mit einer Frau doch noch. Das Schwert fungiert nicht nur als männliches Symbol der Macht, sondern verweist als Symbol des Phallus auf die Alexander entsprechende und angemessene Form des Eros³².

Thus she argues that Karakter's intrusion reminds Alexander of his homosexuality. Yet she is mistaken in her conclusion. She states, as fact, the presence of a sword, where Mann merely speculates "Floß Blut, oder wäre es nur beinah geflossen?", then continues, "Breitete die Königin ihre Arme, klirrte Metall, stürzte Kandaulus [Kandake's elder son] herbei, den bedrohten Fremdling zu retten, der sich augenscheinlich selbst nicht wehren könnte?" (A, 141).

In Alexander, Mann portrays sex in one of two ways. The most common describes it merely as a response to a basic physical need, devoid of emotional attachment, dictated by the sexual urge alone and based on inequality. Philipp's rape of Pausanias, the frenzy of the Macedonian troops' mass consummation of their marriages and Alexander's relationship with the male prostitute Bagaos all conform to this pattern. In each case Mann is direct, at times almost abrupt in his description. He juxtaposes this with an ideal, the emotionally intense union between equals which results in a momentary loss of self, defined by Mann as a union with eternity. This experience he expresses in his description of Alexander during his seduction by Kandake: "Er verlor das Bewußtsein, mit dem er sonst lebte; dafür näherte er sich einem anderen, grenzenlosen, von dem er ein Teil ohne Namen wurde" (A, 140).

³¹ Kroll compares Alexander's seduction by Kandake with his marriage to Roxane when he notes "Die Hochzeit scheint diesmal vollbracht zu sein", he continues, "Doch Alexander wird durch den Anblick des Schwertes eines Feindes, gleichsam eines männlichen Genitalsymbols, aus der mystischen Vereinigung gerissen. Am nächsten Morgen wendet er sich gegen das Kandake-Erlebnis und schreitet zur kriegerischen Tat zurück", Fredric Kroll, Klaus-Mann-Schriftenreihe Vol III, 73-75.

³² Susanne Wolfram, Die tödliche Wunde, 62.

Initially it is unclear whether Mann attributes Alexander's loss of selfhood to his seduction by Kandake or to the drugs she presses upon him for both, according to Mann, may cause this state³³. However, Mann encourages the former interpretation when he uses *besiegt* in the rhetorical question "wie erreichte man das Lager, das Zelt, wo der verkleidete Alexander wiedersank, beseligt, weil zum erstenmal besiegt?" (A, 141). *Besiegt* recalls both Alexander's musing during his seduction, "Sie hat mir den indischen Liebestrank eingegeben [...]. Mit dem hat die Königin Kandake schon den Herakles und den Dionysos besiegt" (A, 140) and echoes the general tradition of Alexander romance which depicted him as invincible in battle yet susceptible and vulnerable to women. In the specific context of *Alexander besiegt* may also refer to the victory of heterosexuality, represented by Kandake, over Alexander's innate homosexuality.

For Alexander, sex with Kandake is only made possible if he suppresses the consciousness that defines him as a distinct individual. This is caused by the interaction of two events - Alexander's decision to enter Kandake's camp disguised as his close friend, advisor and commander Hephaistion and his consumption of drugs prepared for him by Kandake. As Alexander first enters the camp, although he is in disguise, he is still conscious of his real self. This is reflected in his shocked reaction to Kandake's unexpected statement "Du bist nicht du" of which Mann writes "worauf er das Gefühl hatte, als wiche der Boden ihm unter den Füßen" (A, 139), the guilty response of one caught in a misdemeanour. This sense of self only begins to weaken once he has taken the drugs Kandake offers him.

³³ From his mid-twenties until his death in 1949, Mann was an habitual drug user, despite several attempts to combat his addiction. His diaries document the steady growth of his addiction for he meticulously recorded in them the drugs he took (primarily morphine, cocaine and readily available tranquilisers) and their respective effects on him. He drew on this experience in his fiction in which drug users and abusers feature throughout his career. As early as his first novel *Der fromme Tanz* Mann depicted two drug addicts, the young male prostitute Boris, an addict before the novel opens, and Niels who becomes an addict during the course of the novel. In each instance the cocaine they consume enables them to escape the prosaic reality of their existence while simultaneously slowly destroying them. In his 1932 novel *Treffpunkt im Unendlichen* Mann first reprised and then expanded upon this early portrayal. Three characters, the central characters Sebastian and Sonja, and Do, Sebastian's former girlfriend, take drugs; Sebastian and Sonja as recreational users, and Do, first to alleviate the pain she experiences on Sebastian's departure for Paris, with which the novel opens, and then, to satisfy her craving alone. The drugs they all take destroy them. For Do this destruction is both physical and mental; she declines from the epitome of well-being into little more than a walking skeleton, confined to an institution following a drug-induced breakdown, and dependent on the sinister figure of the psychiatrist, Dr Massi. His role in Do's decline, and the nature of this decline, is discussed in more detail in the next chapter. In the example of Sebastian and Sonja, who inadvertently take an overdose of hashish whilst on holiday in Fez, Mann re-examines the loss of self induced by drugs that he introduces in *Alexander*, intensifying his portrayal to illustrate the full destructive potential of drug use - the hashish is ultimately responsible for Sonja's death whilst for Sebastian, who throughout the novel seeks to lose his sense of self, instilled by the process of individuation, the actual experience of it, in which he loses all sense of his physical being and envisages his consciousness floating in an empty chasm, rather than being liberating fills him with fear. These issues are discussed in the next chapter.

Whilst he is still conscious that he is playing a role, that at heart he is still Alexander, he is also conscious of his true sexual inclination. Mann conveys this in Alexander's response to Kandake's question "Wollen wir zusammen schlafen?". He replies "Ich schlafe nicht mit Frauen" (A, 139). However, the first intimation that disguise has initially weakened Alexander's sense of identity appears when he reflects "So leicht ist es, sich selbst zu verlieren" (A, 137) and reinforced in the lines "Daß sie [Kandake] ihn Hephaistion nannte, schmeichelte ihm wieder und verwirrte ihn angenehm" (A, 139); *verwirren* signals that Alexander's grasp on his identity is gradually weakening. The drugs he is offered diminish further his awareness of, and responsibility for, his true self, suggested in Kandake's question "Bist du gerne nicht du?" (A, 139). Only once the last vestiges of his selfhood are removed, indicated by Kandake's enigmatic "Du nicht, weil nicht du - doch du schon" (A, 140) is Alexander vulnerable to her advances.

The experience of heterosexual love is, however, one which is prohibited for Alexander. By sleeping with Kandake Alexander compromises and, temporarily, denies his sexuality, and that of Hephaistion as whom he is still disguised. This is suggested in Mann's powerful statement: "Was er sich gestern Nacht gestattet hatte, war gerade das gewesen, was er sich niemals hätte gestatten dürfen" (A, 141). At this stage, by using the non-specific and imprecise *das*, Mann does not identify the reason for Alexander's guilty conscience. He only clarifies this statement much later when, on his deathbed, in a confession to an angel Alexander mentions, amongst other 'sins', "Das sündhafte Sich-Verlieren an die unanständige Kandake" (A, 181).

In describing her as 'die unanständige Kandake', a reference to her active role as the seductress who tempts him into heterosexual intercourse, Alexander associates her with the guilt he feels. This phrase, however, calls to mind Mann's earlier descriptions of the seduction itself as "[das] unmoralische Märchen" (A, 140), where *Märchen* underlines the sense of the unreal created by Alexander's drug consumption, and as "die unerlaubte Lustbarkeit" (A, 142). Mann's choice of the negative terms *unmoralisch* and *unerlaubt*,

which are both of a judgemental nature and suggest condemnation, emphasises Alexander's later reference, in his confession, to 'Das sündhafte Sich-Verlieren'. At the time of the seduction Mann assesses Alexander's loss of the sense of self positively as "die Seligkeit des aufgehobenen Bewußtseins" (A, 140). The later description implies, however, that Alexander's guilt relates not to the loss of self itself but to the manner in which it is achieved; that is, with Kandake through heterosexual sex, made feasible only through drugs.

In emphasising the homophilia of the age of Alexander, Mann appeared to suggest its potential as a model for a future homosexual Utopia. However, it was unable to realise this potential; by the close of Alexander Mann portrays a world in which the homosexual, formerly at the heart of the community, is condemned to a life on its periphery. The change from imagined Utopia to the anti-utopian reality is the result of the introduction of heterosexuality, in the form of marriage, which displaces the homosexual and, as a result, destroys the idyll. Heterosexuality, Mann infers, brings with it prejudice and mutual incomprehension between the heterosexual majority and the homosexual minority, the combination of which, in Alexander, eventually isolates the king from his men. Mann signals this change in the transformation of the relationship between Alexander and the soldiers. At the start of their campaign against Asia their youth and shared sexuality had bound them to the triumvirate of Alexander, Kleitos and Hephaistion; by the time they reach Opis they are isolated from him. This isolation is partly the result of the combination of Alexander's megalomania but also to a large extent of the soldiers' burgeoning heterosexuality. Within the new, overtly heterosexual environment, Alexander's sexuality is turned against him; in a list of grievances against him the soldiers include his relationship with Bagaos when they complain: "Er ist undankbar, wie dein Vater war, der immer Athen mehr als Mazedonien geliebt hat. Dieser da liebt Asien mehr als Mazedonien und Athen zusammen. Er trägt das bestickte Affenkleid, er schläft mit dem babylonischen Zwitter [Bagaos]" (A, 155). In this context the accusation of homosexuality is transformed into a term of abuse suggested by the troops' reference to Bagaos as 'Zwitter'. Mann emphasises this further with particular reference to Hephaistion.

Eumenes, Alexander's secretary, insinuates a homosexual relationship between Hephaistion and Alexander when, in relation to a gift from Alexander to Hephaistion, Eumenes asks "Was gewisse Herren geleistet hatten?", repeating his questioning with ever greater emphasis until, when Hephaistion refuses to reply, Eumenes replies for him with the words: "Wenn Ihr's nicht sagt, ich sag' es. Ihr habt mit dem König geschlafen, das ist Euere Leistung". That this is an intentional insult is emphasised by Eumenes' next statement: "Das haben andere allerdings auch, der kleine Bagaos zum Beispiel" (A, 162). This identifies Hephaistion with Bagaos, denigrating him to the status of the Babylonian, that is, to little more than a male prostitute, and reducing his undoubted love for Alexander to a commercial proposition.

This portrayal, in which the accusation of homosexuality is deliberately provocative and abusive and in which the homosexual himself is set apart from the masses, brings Alexander close to Mann's portrayals of the homosexual in his other texts. Mann's texts of the Weimar period beginning with Der fromme Tanz of 1926 had established trademark characteristics for the portrayal of the homosexual within heterosexual society. Important amongst these is a frequently indirect approach to the subject matter by which Mann transposes a homosexual relationship into a heterosexual one in which the female partner bears an unmistakeable physical resemblance to a male. His work focuses upon outsiders whom society is unable to accommodate; primary amongst them are the homosexuals, lesbians and bisexuals who people his texts. They inhabit the periphery of society, whether this be the liberal, avant-garde milieu of the European capitals, as in Der fromme Tanz and Treffpunkt im Unendlichen (1932), or the shielded and secluded environs of the boarding school, for example, in the short story 'Die Jungen' (1924) or the play Anja und Esther (1926). Society exerts little influence upon this environment; the characters involved conform merely to mores and values determined by themselves.

Alexander suffers because of his sexuality and this brings him close to Paulchen in Der fromme Tanz and Richard Darmstädter in Treffpunkt im Unendlichen. Their homosexuality

destroys all three: Paulchen and Darmstädter both commit suicide, unable for different reasons to experience homoerotic love with the partner of their choice, Paulchen with Andreas or Darmstädter with the heterosexual Walter. Alexander's destruction, whilst it also has unrequited love at its heart in the shape of Alexander's futile love for Kleitos, takes a different form. It transforms him from the liberator of oppressed nations into the harsh and callous ruler of an autocratic dictatorship.

4.4 The age of Alexander as a parallel to Germany 1928 - 1929

In his brief analysis of Alexander Wolfgang Popp tentatively suggests that "der Rückgriff auf die Geschichte [stellt] vielleicht eine Rechtfertigung dar, [...] aus der Wirklichkeit zu flüchten in eine fiktionalisierende Utopie"³⁴. From this position he then indirectly criticises Mann for failing in his obligation as a writer to confront political developments. However, Popp bases his assessment of the novel and criticism of Mann on a factual inaccuracy. In describing Germany at the time of the novel's publication with the words:

Im Deutschland der zerfallenden Weimarer Republik toben die politischen Kämpfe zwischen Rechts und Links, in denen die Nazis immer mehr Anhängerschaft finden, während Sozialisten, Sozialdemokraten und Kommunisten sich gegenseitig befehlen und denunzieren.

Popp implies that Alexander was a product of the final, turbulent phase of the Weimar Republic, which began with the Wall Street Crash of autumn 1929. Although the novel has a publication date of 1930, which may suggest that it post-dates the collapse of Germany's economy, this date is, in fact, misleading. As Michael Grunewald has noted, and a number of contemporary reviews substantiate, Alexander first appeared in late 1929³⁵. Mann's letters, principally to Pamela Wedekind and Stefan Zweig, further reveal that he had already begun

³⁴ Wolfgang Popp, Männerliebe, 281.

³⁵ Michel Grunewald, Klaus Mann 1906-1949. Eine Bibliographie, 41. See also the reviews by Rudolf Arnheim, Die Weltbühne and Hermann Kasack Die literarische Welt, both of which date from December 1929.

work on the novel in autumn 1928 and that this work was finally completed, with the text ready for publication, a year later³⁶. Therefore, Alexander cannot be, as Popp suggests, a materialise. Indeed, Alexander is the antithesis of 'flight'; far from using history to escape contemporary issues, as Popp assumes, Mann adapts historical fact to respond to the political and social tensions in the Weimar Republic between 1927 and 1929.

The novel is one of only two examples in Mann's early prose that use a specific historical setting in this way; the other is a play, Athen, written by Mann in 1932. It shares with Alexander a setting in ancient Greece and ostensibly recounts the events leading to the suicide of Socrates. In both the play and the novel Mann reappraises history and adapts it in order to comment on the changing nature of Weimar society; he concentrates, in particular, on the danger posed to that society by the rise of nationalism. Mann's approach differs between the texts for it is dictated, at least in part, by the changing political climate in which he wrote. The later of the two texts, Athen, is Mann's response through fiction to the very real threat which nationalism, primarily in the form of the National Socialist ideology, posed to democracy in the last years of the Weimar Republic. It was written at a time when economic crises and the breakdown of law and order by mass civil disobedience had undermined society and brought it almost to the point of collapse. The direct approach which Mann took in the play, despite its seeming distance from contemporary society, corresponds to the categorical statement he had made in 1930 that all writers should use their skills and gifts as writers to alert their readership to impending danger.

In Athen Mann uses the historical setting of ancient Greece merely as a starting point from which to launch a direct, ill-disguised attack on the growing xenophobia and nationalism amongst his contemporaries. He blurs the distinction between past and present. The issues he raises are not those of ancient Greece but of the Weimar Republic. The speech

³⁶ See, for example, his letter to Pamela Wedekind of 18 December 1928, "Ich bin hier, nach zwei Berliner Wochen, meistens allein, bei den Vorbereitungen zu meiner Erzählung über 'Alexander den Großen' (BA, 58), and his letter to Stefan Zweig from July 1929 "Sehr neugierig bin ich, wie Ihnen nun mein 'Alexander' - Roman gefallen wird, den ich dieser Tage fertig mache und der im Herbst, oder, des Vorabdruckes wegen, direkt nach Weihnachten erscheinen wird" (BA, 62).

is that of twentieth century Germany. His characters bear few similarities to their historical counterparts for Mann defines them as archetypes of his own society. Alkibiades, for example, represents the nationalist. Through him, Mann explores the appeal to the young of the extremist ideology of the German Right, a subject he had first broached in the open letter to Stefan Zweig 'Jugend und Radikalismus' from 1930. Sokrates, by contrast, approximates the apolitical intellectual who actively shuns involvement within society and denies that he has either a duty or a responsibility towards it. He is a vehicle which enables Mann to continue the ongoing critique of the aestheticism of the *Dichter* about which he had first written in 1930 in his attack on Gottfried Benn.

Alexander, in contrast to Athen, addresses the question of nationalism indirectly and with more circumspection. Past and present do not merge in Alexander; the past remains a self-contained entity. Although the novel is, without doubt, a fictionalised examination of the life of Alexander the Great and his descent into tyranny and megalomania, it nevertheless stays close to documented historical fact. The central characters, however, perform a dual function. They retain their historical legitimacy as figures integral to the biography of Alexander the Great. At the same time, however, in recreating history Mann also divorces them from their individual historical persona to focus upon them as embodiments of specific ideologies. In this way, Mann uses the age of Alexander as a context in which to introduce the related issues of nationalism, its effects, and the ideal of cooperation and mediation between nations; concerns which had permeated his 1927 pamphlet 'Heute und Morgen' and which, in 1930, he repeated in the related essays 'Die Jugend und Paneuropa', 'Wie wollen wir unsere Zukunft?' and 'Jugend und Radikalismus'.

At its most basic Alexander recounts the demise of an autocratic, authoritarian regime by a single, decisive historical moment, the assassination of Philipp. This leads to the establishment of a new and yet fragile government, headed by Alexander who initially embodies the twin principles of consensus and cooperation between nations. This golden age

is only of short duration, destroyed from within by Alexander's regression to the nationalistic and imperialistic goal of world domination which is superficially reminiscent of Philipp's objectives. These details parallel, in condensed form, Mann's own age. His portrayal of the Macedonian empire under Philipp's rule evokes the aggressive nationalism across Europe of the immediate pre-war years. Philipp's murder and the unrest it causes within the Macedonian empire, which, as the new head of state, Alexander is forced to quell, is reminiscent of the social and political instability of the early post-war years. The growth of the Macedonian empire and the concord between nations recalls the mood of international cooperation, both in Europe and on a more global scale, which existed in the mid-twenties. In the destruction of Alexander's empire, undermined by the insidious effects of its leader's megalomania, however, Mann imbues the novel with a grim predictive air; he first anticipates the catastrophic destruction of collaboration and tolerance between nations then proffers, through the example of Alexander, a coded warning to his readership not to follow the goal of nationalism and expansionism, which, he suggests, can only lead to the destruction of Europe.

Mann based his interpretation of the future of Europe on his personal experience of Germany's changing fortunes. He wrote Alexander at the height of German recovery from the debilitating inflationary crises and political insurrection of the immediate post-war years. By 1928 Germany had completed the process of rehabilitation into the international political forum which had begun with German reassurances of non-aggression towards its neighbours and was then formalised in the Republic's entry into the League of Nations in 1927. With the aid of huge foreign investment, primarily from America, the nation had reconstructed its industrial basis and established itself as the leading industrialised European nation, second in the world only to the United States. Economic recovery brought not only much needed revenue into the nation; it also contributed to the stabilisation of society. The German populace in general enjoyed a better standard of living, improved conditions at work and increased social security benefits. They recorded their support for the changes made by government in elections to the *Reichstag* in 1928; the parties of the centre, traditionally

pro-Weimar in outlook, made dramatic gains at the expense of those at the extremes of the political spectrum, all of which were committed to the overthrow of the Republic and the democratic ideal it embraced.

Given such improvements both in society and the political arena; it seems curious that in his novel Mann should anticipate future disaster. He responded in Alexander, however, to the latent threat posed by the nationalistic and xenophobic ideologies of the right which material improvements in German society masked and which government dangerously ignored. The period from 1924 to 1929 is commonly hailed as the heyday of the Republic, captured in its description as the 'golden twenties'; however, recovery and success had been achieved only at the cost of alienating a significant minority of the population. Disaffection crossed the divides of social class and age. It embraced, for example, unskilled labourers replaced in the workplace by machinery; the lower middle class, hardest hit by inflation and unable to regain its former status or standard of living; white-collar workers whose skills modern technology devalued; demobbed soldiers unable to fit back into society; the farming community which continued in decline, deprived of the investment given to industry, and the academic world, for whom the Republic's commitment to open access to higher education for all denied them their exclusivity and elitism. In its unceasing calls for the overthrow of democracy, the right, far more so than the left, fed upon their collective disenchantment to establish a solid groundswell of support.

Nationalist sensibilities were especially reawakened in 1928 by Germany's decision to enter into negotiations with its former enemies, Britain, France and America, to redraw the provisions made in the Dawes Plan for the payment of German reparations. In 1929 the coalition government of the day proposed that Germany agree to a schedule of payment, proposed by America and formalised in the Young Plan, which would spread reparations over sixty years. The parties of the right seized upon this decision as an attempt by the allies to 'enslave' Germany for generations to come and took the opportunity it presented to agitate once more for the overthrow of the Republic.

The first intimation that Alexander is as much a comment on contemporary society as a biography of Alexander the Great is found in the language of the text. In his descriptive passages Mann's attempts to evoke a sense of the ancient past lead him to lapse, at times, into the ornate and elaborate phraseology typical of his earliest prose. When he introduces direct speech, of which there is little in the novel, his language is unmistakably modern, twentieth century idiomatic and vernacular German. In its execution this is not without its flaws as, for example, when Alexander's troops enter Babylon. The soldiers' respond to the splendour which surrounds them with the comment, "es wird gut sein, wenn unser König etwas Leben in diesen eingeschlafenen Betrieb bringt" (A, 82). Here the idiomatic phrase 'etwas Leben in den Betrieb bringen' is out of place; it jolts the reader back into the present and, as a result, destroys Mann's evocation of the mystique of the Orient with which the passage is imbued.

He uses contemporary terminology and references to greatest effect in two speeches given by Philipp to the Greeks. In the first example Philipp addresses his subjects prior to his attempt to unify the nation, informing them:

Ich bin hart mit euch [...] aber nur, damit ihr eines Tages unter meiner Herrschaft einig werdet. Ich will euer Bestes, will den Aufschwung euer Nation, *mir* sollt ihr's danken, wenn der Großkönig gebüßt hat für euch einstmals angetane Schmach (A, 30).

The second, much shorter speech, announces Philipp's intention to begin his campaign against Persia and is expressed in the words "Unter unserer Führung wird das vereinigte Griechenland gegen den asiatischen Erbfeind ziehen" (A, 31). Initially, both Philipp's speeches appear little more than the bombastic rhetoric of a self-aggrandising, militaristic leader concerned only with the glorification of himself. Indeed, in comments such as "[Philipp] wollte, das war alles, griechischer Nationalheld werden, der asiatische Feldzug sollte ihn dazu machen." (A, 30) Mann actively encourages this interpretation.

Philipp's speeches reflect the language of nationalistic and militaristic aggression³⁷. Their intended goal is to inspire hatred in his audience. To this end he indirectly appeals to the honour of the Greeks by using the emotive term 'Schmach' and legitimises the inherent aggression of his forthcoming campaign by reference to the 'Erbfeind'. *Schmach* and *Erbfeind* are both terms which were in current use prior to and during the Weimar Republic; through them Mann identifies Philipp's xenophobia and nationalism with that of his own period. During the twenties *Schmach* was used specifically by the right when referring to the Versailles Treaty to convey the degree of humiliation Germany had suffered through its imposition. Similarly the prefix *Erb* in Philipp's description of the Persians as the 'Erbfeind', is, in the context of the Weimar Republic, associated exclusively with the rhetoric of the German right and, in particular, with the language of National Socialism. Within this ideology, *Erb* drew upon the associated cultural and racial overtones of the term to unite those of one cultural inheritance or racial background against those of another. Mann emphasises this further when he qualifies Philipp's description of the Persians with the word *asiatisch* in the king's declaration 'das vereinigte Griechenland [wird] gegen den asiatischen Erbfeind ziehen'. The threat believed to be posed by the East runs through Alexander and is, essentially, a reference to contemporary fears held by many during the Weimar Republic. At this time *asiatisch* did not merely describe anything or anyone from the continent of Asia. Rather it became an inherently negative description for anything coming from the East in general and Russia in particular. In the context of Russia, it was identified exclusively with communism perceived as the enemy of Western democracy. This view may not have been held exclusively by the right but it was they who seized upon it to legitimise their particular hostility to the ideology of communism.

Whilst terms such as *Schmach* and *Erbfeind* may alert the reader to the parallel with Weimar it is in Philipp's speeches that Mann truly echoes his own age. They are based primarily upon the antithetical and oppositional pairing Light (identified with the Macedonian empire) and Dark (the Persian empire, invoked in 'Großkönig' and 'der

³⁷ For a discussion of the issues raised here see Michael Townson, Mother tongue and fatherland. Language and Politics in German (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1992), 103-136.

asiatische Erbfeind')³⁸. This distinction, where racial and ethnic origin determines membership of either group, defines the world in clear-cut and unambiguous terms of friend or foe and is, as Michael Townson has illustrated in his study of the influence of nationalism on the German language, a characteristic feature of National Socialist rhetoric. Such rhetoric, Townson notes, is also defined by the dehumanisation of its intended audience³⁹. In Mann's text, this is reflected by the progression between Philipp's speeches. In the second, the royal plural 'Unter unserer Führung' replaces the 'ich' of the first; 'euch' becomes the impersonal 'das vereinigte Griechenland' and the anonymous 'asiatische Erbfeind' substitutes for 'Großkönig', a specific physical if, at this point, unnamed presence.

By far the closest link with the right-wing ideologies of the Weimar Republic is, however, the concept of the *Führer*, which underlies Philipp's first speech and is implied in his second. By 1928 the term *Führer* had become associated exclusively with calls from the political parties on the right for a strong leader to govern Germany. Within the vocabulary of nationalism this single word denoted not merely the concept of leadership *per se*; *Führer* embraced the complementary notions of authority, decisiveness and autocratic rule from above. Its advocates based their arguments upon the totalitarian principle that a single individual, and not an elected government, had the vision and foresight to know instinctively what was beneficial to the greater good of the state.

Mann does not define Philipp as *Führer* as, for example, he later defines Alexander's court historian Kallisthenes⁴⁰. However, through Philipp's speeches and the ideas expounded within them, Mann nevertheless equates him with the leader desired of German nationalists. Philipp is an archetypal, authoritarian leader entrusted with the future of his nation. He adopts the stance of a cultic visionary to whom his following, the anonymous mass, is expected to pay homage. Mann expressed this in Philipp's emphatic statement '*mir* sollt ihr's

³⁸ This distinction is taken from Michael Townson, *Mother tongue and fatherland*, 129.

³⁹ Michael Townson, *Mother tongue and fatherland*, 135.

⁴⁰ In *Alexander* Mann concludes his description of Kallisthenes' incitement of the pages to murder with the words "erklärte ihnen ihr Führer" (A, 118).

danken, wenn der Großkönig gebüßt hat für euch einstmals angetane Schmach'. The king is the active decision-maker, marked in the decisiveness of his declarations; his subjects in contrast are merely the passive recipients of his orders. This does not merely place Philipp on a higher, superior level to the Greeks in his audience; the statements 'ich bin hart mit euch, aber nur, damit ihr eines Tages unter meiner Herrschaft einig werdet' and 'Ich will euer Bestes, will den Aufschwung eurer Nation' also capture the belief, held in the twenties by supporters of the principle of totalitarian and autocratic leadership, that the will of the many should be subordinated to that of a single individual who is then entrusted to act for the greater good of the nation.

Mann neither condemns nor praises Philipp's position as leader; a curious omission given the warnings he expressed against such leadership in the essay 'Fragment von der Jugend' from 1926. Here he had commented upon the ubiquity of those who lured youth with offers of ready-made and easy solutions to their feeling of disorientation in the aftermath of the two turbulent events, defeat in World War One and revolution. He ascribed to them the ironic title *Meister*, which he interchanged with the equally ironic term *Propheten*, and suggested his own position in relation to such *Meister* in his description "Meister sind wohl genug da und haben ausführliche Lehren, mit denen sie uns verführen wollen, sie stehen förmlich an allen Straßenecken" (S, 6-7). His choice of *verführen* in this context both intimated the allure and attraction of the philosophies on offer whilst suggesting at the same time the latent danger of being led astray.

Mann continues in Alexander his condemnation of the *Meister* which he had first introduced in 'Fragment von der Jugend' with his portrayal of the court historian Kallisthenes. What had been a vague criticism in the essay, however, for Mann had not denounced a specific ideology but had merely voiced his opposition to the basic principle involved, becomes, in Alexander, a deliberate, if indirect, attack on nationalism and its proponents. In describing Kallisthenes he substitutes the apolitical term *Meister* of 1926 for the provocative and, in the Weimar Republic, politically sensitive one, *Führer*. Through this

means, Mann links Kallisthenes, and the principles he expounds, with the spirit of aggressive and xenophobic nationalism current in German society of the late 1920s⁴¹.

In Kallisthenes' manipulation of the young pages, Mann depicts the *Führer* he epitomises as a corrupting and destructive force which preys upon the inexperience, ingenuousness and trusting naivety of the young. He performs a clearly defined, although historically inaccurate, role in the novel as the inspiration behind a conspiracy amongst Alexander's pages to assassinate him⁴². In an emotive speech redolent with nationalistic overtones he convinces them of the rectitude of revolt. He begins with the declamation "Er [Alexander] treibt es zu weit!" and then continues "Der Begriff der Freiheit, der unser höchster war, ist ihm ein Spott und ein Gelächter geworden [...]. Daß er sogar von uns, von Hellenen, nun den Kniefall verlangt, vollendet das scheußliche Bild" before finally legitimising the pages' coming crime as their destiny with the words " Wir dürfen länger nicht zusehen, griechische Knaben! Eine Tat erwartet die Geschichte von uns!" (A, 118). The deed to which he exhorts them is that of murder.

In Alexander Kallisthenes is the fervent nationalist that his description as *Führer* suggests. Whilst Alexander's alleged ridicule of the Greek concept of 'freedom' and the humiliation entailed in the practice of *proskynesis*, implied in the reference to 'den Kniefall', give Kallisthenes the pretext for open rebellion, his opposition to his monarch is based not merely on personal antipathy but more significantly on the emperor's status as a non-Greek. When he tells the pages 'daß er sogar von uns [...] den Kniefall verlangt', he clarifies his general reference merely to *uns* with the explanation 'von Hellenen'; the common ethnic origin shared by Kallisthenes and the pages is then further highlighted by *griechisch* in the phrase 'Wir dürfen länger nicht zusehen, griechische Knaben'. In thus drawing specific

⁴¹ For a discussion of the cult of the *Führer* and its place within the National Socialist ideology see Ernst Loewy, Literatur unterm Hakenkreuz. Das dritte Reich und seine Dichtung. Eine Dokumentation (Frankfurt: Europäische Verlagsanstalt, 1966), 103-106.

⁴² In 327BC a small group of Alexander's pages, dissatisfied with his rule and their increasing exclusion from the court, determined to murder him whilst he slept. Alexander was forewarned and did not return to his quarters. News of the plot leaked the next day, the conspirators were arrested, tried and returned to their units for execution. Although there was no evidence to link Callisthenes with the plot, Alexander, nevertheless, took the opportunity to rid himself of a potential enemy at court. Callisthenes was tried for conspiracy and executed.

attention to the key difference between Alexander as a Macedonian, and the conspirators as Greeks, Kallisthenes incites the pages to regicide by calling upon their national honour⁴³.

Following the example of his essay 'Fragment von der Jugend', in which he had shown some understanding for the appeal of the *Meister* to the younger generation, Mann does not condemn the pages in *Alexander* for their complicity in the plot to overthrow the emperor; rather he holds Kallisthenes solely responsible. This is revealed when the leniency of the pages' punishment is compared with that of their leader. Alexander simply orders the pages home, expressing his displeasure in their dismissal: "Ihr sollt nach Griechenland heim. Ich möchte euch nicht mehr sehen". He then justifies his actions to Hephaistion with the instruction: "'Schick sie nach Hause. Ich mag sie nicht strafen, sie sind dumm'" Of Kallisthenes' fate the reader is initially merely told: "Nur Kallisthenes wurde hingerichtet", this execution is barbaric in the extreme however: "Die Henker schnitten ihm Lippen, Nase, Ohren, Geschlecht und Hände ab. So lebte er noch wochenlang in einem Käfig, verwesend bei atmendem Leib" (A, 122).

By including the pages' conspiracy, Mann continues his examination of the susceptibility of the young of his own period to radical and extremist ideologies which he had first begun in 'Fragment on der Jugend'. Initially, he appears naively to attribute their willingness to follow Kallisthenes and their ready acquiescence to his scheme merely to their immaturity, none being older than sixteen and the youngest of all a mere twelve, and to their lack of critical judgement; this is implied in Alexander's dismissive aside to Hephaistion 'sie sind

⁴³ Kallisthenes' argument that Alexander should die because he was not Greek calls to mind arguments used by the nationalist right to legitimise the assassination of the Foreign Secretary Walther Rathenau in 1922. As the most prominent Jewish politician in the early Weimar Republic, Rathenau became the target of verbal attacks by the far right which intensified when he was appointed secretary of state. These attacks focussed on his Jewishness, captured in the lines of a contemporary nationalist song: "Schlagt tot den Walther Rathenau/Die gottverfluchte Judensau" (quoted from Erich Eyck, *A History of the Weimar Republic*, trans. by Harlan P Hanson, and Robert G L White (London: Oxford University Press, 1964), 211). At their heart lay the premise that the Jew and the German were intrinsically different from one another, that only the German could truly desire the best for the fatherland. By appointing a Jew to prominent office thus threatened the nation and its future. This argument formed the basis of the defence offered by the assassins' driver and his brother (the assassins, a former naval officer and an engineer, had died during the police pursuit that ensued after they bombed Rathenau's car). They had acted, they argued in court, for the good of the nation, to prevent "the Jew Rathenau achieving what the Jew [sic] Lenin had done in Russia" (quoted from Erich Eyck, *History of the Weimar Republic*, 215). The right seized on this argument to legitimise the murder, interpreting it as expressing the will of the *Volk* to expel the alien from its midst. It emerged most clearly in a biography of Hans von Seeckt, who had appointed Rathenau, by the nationalist General von Rabenau in which he referred to Rathenau as an "ethnic alien" before accusing Seeckt of "issuing a sharp challenge to those Germans mindful of their race" (quoted from Erich Eyck, *History of the Weimar Republic*, 215) when he chose Rathenau as Foreign Secretary.

dumm'. He further suggests that it is simply adolescent rebellion against authority; the pages undoubtedly respected Kallisthenes but they based this respect not least on the historian's personal opposition to Alexander alone⁴⁴.

In the pages' deposition at their trial, made to the court through their spokesman, Hermelaos, however, Mann implies a more disturbing factor in youth's attraction to such as Kallisthenes. Hermelaos indicts Alexander with the words:

Wir haben Euch doch geliebt. Gerade deshalb hassen wir dich jetzt am meisten, denn du hast uns am meisten enttäuscht. Jeder von uns wäre jubelnd für dich gestorben, wärest du unser Führer, wir deine freien Soldaten geblieben. Aber du wurdest Tyrann, du tratest alles mit Füßen, was hellenisch war, zuletzt hast du von allen griechisch Gesinnten den Besten, unseren Kleitos, selber getötet (A, 121).

This is a forceful statement of their disillusion with Alexander's rule and his state. In their rejection of Alexander the pages also reject the Macedonian state of which he is head. This theme is generally reminiscent of his early prose in which youth's sense of displacement and superfluity within society had been a recurrent concern. Mann then emphasises their disenchantment in Hermelaos' assertion 'Jeder von uns wäre jubelnd für dich gestorben'; in essence, he incorporates into the novel the concept of *Opferbereitschaft*, the readiness of the individual soldier to sacrifice his own life for that of the nation. During the Weimar period, this concept is identified primarily with apologists for war on the right, who had interpreted the soldier's sacrifice positively as both a patriotic duty and an act of supreme loyalty⁴⁵. Mann introduces the concept into *Alexander* to call attention to the similarity between the pages' rejection of their state, expressed in their readiness to accept the sedition of Kallisthenes' plans, and that of German youth in the specific context of the late 1920s. By equating the pages' decision to follow Kallisthenes in his attempt to destroy the Macedonian

⁴⁴ Mann conveys this admiration in the concise description: "Sie verehrten ihn um seiner gewandten hellenischen Bildung, um seiner bravourösen Wortgewandtheit, auch um seiner Verwandtschaft mit Aristoteles willen; vor allem imponieret ihnen sein unnachgiebige Opposition gegen Alexander" (A, 118).

⁴⁵ For an introduction to the concept of *Opferbereitschaft* see Jay W Baird, *To Die for Germany. Heroes in the Nazi Pantheon* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1990), and Jürgen Boettcher, and Justus H Ulbricht, "'Noch immer ging der Weg des neuen Deutschland über Gräber vorwärts'. Einblicke in den politischen Totenkult in Weimar,' in *Hier, hier ist Deutschland. Von nationalen Kulturkonzepten zur nationalsozialistischen Kulturpolitik*, ed. by Ursula Härtle, Burkhard Stenzel, and Justus H Ulbricht (Göttingen: Wallstein, 1997), 57-82.

state through the assassination of Alexander with their disillusion with the state, captured in their reluctance to fight for it, Mann offers a coded warning to his own contemporaries and readers to address the disaffection amongst the young of their own society.

Mann strikes at the very heart of the leadership concept, the belief that the leader approximates a superman, in Alexander to reveal it as essentially fallacious. He first introduced the idea of a superhuman leader into the novel with a heavily ironic and exaggerated description of Alexander, that Mann attributed to the soldiers of the Macedonian empire, as "mehr als ein Mensch" (A, 49). The soldiers base their admiration on Alexander's success in the mini Olympiad arranged after their crossing of the Hellespont which marks the beginning of their campaign against the Persian leader Dareios. Alexander defeats them all; it is this accomplishment alone which earns Alexander, in the soldiers' eyes, his status as a superhuman figure. However, Alexander only achieves his final victory, in the race against his nearest rival Kleitos, with Kleitos' connivance, for he deliberately allows the king to win.

It is, however, in his portrayal of Dareios, that Mann truly undermines contemporary adulation of the leader as superhuman, for he is the very antithesis of the *Führer* and the decisive, visionary leadership the term implies. Dareios is Philipp's Persian counterpart although not his equal in stature; in the government of his empire he mirrors the harsh, autocratic style equated by Mann with Philipp. However, Dareios is essentially weak. Where Philipp takes an active role, Dareios delegates power to mercenaries, who then enforce his rule, and relies upon the prophecies of the oracles; where Philipp initiates action, epitomised in his planned campaign against Persia, Dareios merely responds to it; whereas Philip is decisive, as in his speeches proclaiming the coming offensive against the East, Dareios is merely resigned, expressed for example in the weakness of the speech that he addresses to his troops on the eve of the battle of Issos. "Wir müssen siegen" he states categorically, then justifies this assertion with the vague explanation, "denn das Recht ist bei uns" (A, 69).

In Alexander Mann did not reject the principle of leadership out of hand; he portrays the youthful Alexander as an ideal commander and ruler. What he condemns, and to which

he alludes in defining Kallisthenes as *Führer*, is the principle of dictatorial leadership common to its right-wing incarnation; it is based upon the compliance of a subservient *Gemeinschaft*. When, in his oratory, Philipp adopts the role of the cultic visionary, it is only effective if his listeners accept the subservient role ascribed to them as followers. The bond which had initially existed between Alexander and his pages, invoked in Hermelaos' statement at his trial 'wir haben Euch geliebt', cannot survive once they, in following Kallisthenes, reject his leadership. Mann's treatment of the *Gemeinschaft* is not consistent in Alexander. He frequently confused in his early prose *Gemeinschaft* with its counterpart *Gesellschaft* and, to some extent, this basic confusion continues in Alexander. Recounting Alexander's identification with his army, for example, Mann had described it as a "Rausch von Gemeinschaftsgefühl" (A, 67). Here, Mann uses *Gemeinschaft* as a neutral term to express the positive and instinctive sensation of communality which binds the king to his army.

In the highly charged atmosphere of the Weimar Republic, however, *Gemeinschaft* was a loaded term. It had been appropriated by the right to legitimise their policies of racism and intolerance; this transformed it into an overtly political term identified with nationalism. Mann draws upon this politicised meaning when he states of the Macedonian army "Sie hatten sich, durch Politik und Zufall zusammengewürfelte Schar, noch nie so als Griechen, noch nie so begeistert als Gemeinschaft gefühlt" (A, 49). In this context, his juxtaposition of *Gemeinschaft* and *Schar* is broadly analogous of the contrast between *Gemeinschaft* and *Gesellschaft*. In his choice of *Schar* Mann refers indirectly to the loose affiliations which make up society; in choosing the word *Gemeinschaft*, however, he suggests the group identity based upon a single, common bond, which he defines and, indeed, emphasises in this description as the bond of race.

Given his fierce opposition throughout his career to nationalism and given his calls in 1927 for internationalism made in the essay 'Heute und Morgen', Mann's introduction of an overtly nationalistic concept which ultimately legitimises and, indeed, sanctions the isolation

and intolerance of some within society, appears a surprising inclusion. However, as eventually becomes clear, he challenges, in the notion of the *Gemeinschaft*, the subservience to a leader latent within its nationalist incarnation. This only becomes apparent much later in the text, in the mutiny of the army, and here Mann adopts a position more in keeping with the views he expressed in his essays. The mutiny results from the clash between Alexander's decision to push further into the Asian *hinterland* and his troops' desire to return to their homes. When Alexander informs them:

Wir ziehen weiter [...]. Uns erwartet noch der ganze Orient: das Ganges-Land mit beispiellosen Schätzen, dahinter China, dahinter das Ende der Welt. Die Grenzen dieser Erde werden unseres Reiches Grenzen sein. Wir haben noch viel zu erobern (A, 141),

his words meet with open rebellion, recounted as a series of questions: "Noch weiter? Immer noch nicht nach Haus? Was kümmerte sie das Ende der Welt? [...] Was ginge sie der Ganges, und was China an?". When confronted by their opposition, Alexander demands of them "Wer spricht hier?"; the soldiers answer as one with the simple reply "Wir" (A, 141).

In this context *Wir* refers to the *Gemeinschaft* emphasised by Mann in his description of Alexander's incomprehension at the rebellion. "Daß die Gemeinschaft jemals stärker sein könnte als er [Alexander], der Einzelne, der die Passion und den Willen hatte", he writes, "schien ihm unglaublich" (A, 141). Mann reiterates his position when he notes of the soldiers "Diesmal merkten die Soldaten, daß sie die Stärkeren waren" (A, 142). In referring to Alexander as 'der Einzelne, der die Passion und den Willen hatte' Mann deliberately and unambiguously equates Alexander at the height of his megalomania with the ideal of charismatic leadership advocated by the German right; it had identified both *Passion* and *Wille* as defining characteristics of the individual required to lead the German nation. However, with the soldier's rebellion Mann subverts this ideal of authoritarian leadership and the hierarchy it presupposes, for in showing the collective strength and power of the *Gemeinschaft* when it works as one he simultaneously exposes the relative fragility of the leader.

In Alexander the army represents an idealised community which, in defying Alexander, instinctively opposes the aggression he embodies. He contrasts their strength with the inherent weakness of the political union, as with the Greek army, which he captures in his description of the pages under Kallisthenes' influence. They swear an oath of allegiance to one another which Mann describes with the words:

Sie beginnen die Zeremonie des Schwurs, indem sie sich alle in die weichen Arme schnitten, Blut in eine Schale rinnen ließen, über die sie Formeln und Versprechen murmelten.

Einigen wurde übel. Die anderen drängten sich ehrfurchtsvoll um Kallisthenes, der mit großer Geste die Blutschale hielt. 'Meine griechischen Knaben!' rief er; er küßte jedem die Stirn. Ihnen liefen große Tränen über die kindlichen Backen (A, 118)

Mann emphasises in this description the pagan and mystic bond of blood believed to underpin national identity which Kallisthenes reiterates in his exclamation 'meine griechische Knaben'. In the betrayal of the plot to assassinate Alexander by one of their own, the youngest, unnamed conspirator, Mann denies both the validity of the reputed blood ties between them and their role in legitimising murder. The *Gemeinschaft* falls apart because it is flawed; it acts not for the general good, for in its advocacy of the violent overthrow of legitimate government, which Alexander's assassination would represent, it endorses a fundamental wrong.

In his speech 'Die Jugend und Paneuropa' from 1930 Mann appeals to youth to fight the rise of National Socialism. He defines the goal of nationalism simply as "Glorie und Machtzuwachs des eigenen Landes" (NE, 254); he then takes this one step further to refer exclusively to fascist objectives in the words "das faschistische Land will nichts auf dieser Welt als seine eigene Macht und Herrlichkeit. Diese muß auf Kosten der anderen gehen" (NE, 255). He did not specify what constituted 'das faschistische Land'; however, in his speech, he uses 'Faschismus' as a synonym for National Socialism. Therefore, when he refers to 'das faschistische Land' it is in anticipation of what Germany, at this point in time, may become. His speech attempts to alert his listeners to the essentially destructive threat

nationalism and its proponents posed to the individual state and to the ideal of a united Europe to which he had already given his allegiance in 1927, publicly expressed in the essay 'Heute und Morgen'.

In Alexander, through the example of the king himself, Mann anticipated his forthright attack of 1930 on nationalism and its implications for Germany and recalled his defence of the European ideal from 1927. From the moment Alexander posed the emphatic question "*Was geht mich Griechenland an?*" and uttered his innermost desire "*Ich will keine Kolonien. Ich will das Weltreich*" (A, 88), where the very term *Weltreich* is not without overt political and imperialistic connotations relevant to 1920s Germany, he began the unrelenting if unintentional destruction of both his empire and the spirit of cooperation upon which it was built. His overwhelming desire for power at any cost destroyed everything that he has achieved. By the novel's close Alexander was hated and feared by those around him, whilst his empire was trapped in a self-perpetuating process of disintegration. It was an image which anticipated Mann's apocalyptic vision of Germany's future if dictated by the right; in the essay 'Wie wollen wir unsere Zukunft?' of 1930 he maintained it could only lead to one end, war and the destruction of human civilisation⁴⁶. This is the very opposite to the Utopia to which he referred in his description of Alexander as 'Roman der Utopie'.

4.5 The definition of Utopia in the subtitle 'Roman der Utopie'

Alexander begins with an idyllic depiction of Alexander's childhood reminiscent of Rousseau's Golden Age in which there is no discrepancy between the world of the child and the natural world around him. Mann conveys this in his emphasis of positive terms such as 'schön', in "Das Leben war vollkommen schön" and 'gut' in "Alles schien gut" (A, 9). Yet this idyll is only temporary and is destroyed once Alexander leaves the childhood environment, symbolised with his entry into the "Männerhaus" (A, 13). The impermanence

⁴⁶ In 'Wie wollen wir unsere Zukunft?' Mann stated categorically "Die Front gestaltet sich in unserem Lande so, daß der Teil der Jugend, der denkt und deshalb auch eine Zukunft will, scharf gegen den anderen Teil der Jugend steht, der von Natur aus gar nicht denkt, jetzt aber leider in Ansichten gedrängt worden ist, die nur zu *einem* Ziele führen können: zu einem neuen Kriege und zum Untergange der europäischen Zivilisation" (NE, 305)

of the idyll is already intimated by the disruptive and destructive intrusion of Philipp into Alexander's childhood, for Mann qualifies his statement "Das Leben war vollkommen schön" with the words "solange der Vater sich im Hintergrund hielt" (A, 9). From the point when Alexander leaves childhood, he begins the gradual descent into megalomania, tyranny and aggression which results in his individual isolation and permanent state of fear and the destruction and political isolation of the Macedonian empire.

Alexander's descent into tyranny parallels Olympias' delineation of the history of mankind. This she defines as beginning with matriarchal order, described by her as a positive world of harmony, captured in her words:

es gab Zeiten [...], schöne, friedensfrohe Zeiten, da die Welt viel besser eingerichtet war, als wir Armen sie kennen, das Menschenleben sanft und zufrieden dahinging, bis zur feierlichen Stunde des Todes [...]. Unter unserer Herrschaft war die Erde beinah das Paradies (A, 41).

This early stage of human civilisation corresponds to Alexander's childhood in which his life is determined by strong female figures, primary amongst them Olympias herself, and in which he lives in harmony with his natural environment, noted in Mann's opening words, which are narrated from the limited perspective of the child:

Es gab die Sonne, verzauberte Tiere und geschwind fließendes Wasser. Von den Tieren wußte Alexander, daß in ihnen die Seelen der Verstorbenen wohnten, man faßte diese Hündchen, jenen kleinen Esel lieber zärtlich an, vielleicht waren sie der verwandelte Großvater. Auch in den Wellen der Bäche und Gebirgsflüsse wohnten Wesen, die geheimnisvoll waren, dabei so liebenswert, daß man ihnen stundenlang zuhörte, wenn sie scherzten, tanzten, plätscherten. Ähnliche Wesen hausten in den Bäumen und Gebüschen, besonders reizende und kleine in den Blumen, die man deshalb nicht pflücken durfte (A, 9).

Patriarchy, in Olympias's world history, usurps matriarchy, to bring a new, aggressive element into the world, conveyed by her to Alexander with the unequivocal words: "Das Regiment des Mannes zerstörte bald alles Gute, was wir in Jahrhunderten aufgebaut hatten" (A, 42). Patriarchy is both destructive and negative; it is, according to Olympias, embodied

in Philipp, of whom she claims after his death, "Philipp vereinigte in sich alle schlechten männlichen Eigenschaften, er war *der Mann*" (A, 42).

The destruction of the matriarchy by patriarchy is reflected on a lesser scale in Alexander's life by the transition from child to man. For Alexander the onset of adolescence, implied in Mann's statement "Das Erwachen kam, ohne daß man es merkte, allmählich" (A, 13), is signalled by the dismissal of his nursemaid, Landike, and by his changing perception of his childhood tutor, Leonidas. As a child, Alexander had accepted Leonidas unreservedly, with the simple, affirmatory assessment "Gut war Leonidas" (A, 9). With growing maturity, his initial, non-discriminatory judgement is replaced by the disrespectful realisation "der stockelige Herr Leonidas [war] nicht ernst zu nehmen" (A, 13). After initial reference to them in the opening pages of *Alexander*, neither Landike nor Leonidas appears in the text again for Mann associates them exclusively with Alexander's childhood. As such they are identified with Olympias and the matriarchal principle she embodies. In no longer being directly subject to their influence, nor willing to accept it unconditionally, Alexander unconsciously begins to distance himself emotionally from the ideals and values of the matriarchy. This process of disassociation is completed with his entry into the *Männerhaus*.

In referring to man's 'destruction' of the matriarchal world Olympias drew Alexander's attention to the innate aggression of the patriarchal order. In Alexander's abhorrence of his father's objective, the enforced Macedonian colonisation of Asia, and his personal antagonism towards Philipp, Mann initially appears to suggest that Alexander shares his mother's hatred of the patriarchy Philipp represents. Expressed in terms of the conflict between father and son familiar from Mann's early texts, Alexander and Philipp initially oppose one another as representatives of conflicting and intrinsically antagonistic principles and ideologies. Philipp represents harsh, authoritarian government which subjugates his own and other nations to his will. His goal is indisputedly that of empire-building in order to expand his rule through Macedonian colonisation. Mann does not define Alexander's early goals other than by what they are not, a continuation of his father's objectives. Mann first

introduces this in his account of Alexander's realisation, which he arrives at during Philipp's lifetime, that "täglich klarer wurde ihm, daß das Ziel des Philipp nicht das seine war, wenngleich es ihm äußerlich ähnlich sehen mochte" (A, 30). Mann recalls this statement shortly after Philipp's death in his account of Alexander's planned campaign against Persia:

Nach außen hin ist die Begründung seines asiatischen Zuges der panhellenische Rachegeanke: was Xerxes den Griechen angetan, will Mazedonien an Dareios Kodomannos rächen. [Alexander] behauptet, Philipps Testament zu vollstrecken, nur auszuführen, was dieser geplant. Dabei entfernte er sich immer weiter von Philipps Ideen (A, 45).

'Das Ziel des Philipp' of Mann's earlier statement is echoed here in 'Philipps Ideen' that Mann then clarifies as the forcible overthrow of Dareios.

At first he appears to suggest that the contrast between the objectives of Alexander and those of Philipp lies merely in the scope of their respective goals, expressed in Mann's lines:

Sein Vater wollte nur das Vernünftige, Begrenzte, ihn zieht allein das Grenzenlose an. Philipp hatte sich zunächst um die Geographie Kleinasiens gekümmert; Alexander studiert schon die klimatischen Verhältnisse Irans, läßt sich über Baktrien und Sogdiana berichten (A, 45).

Philipp restricts his sights solely to the Persian empire; Alexander's aims, in contrast, encompass the world. In fighting and ultimately routing Philipp's enemy Dareios, however, Alexander does battle not merely with a physical opponent but also with the principle of rule by conquest his father had represented.

Dareios is Philipp's Persian counterpart and, on his death, assumes Philipp's place as the object of Alexander's hatred. Like Philipp, he embodies the patriarchal principle of overt aggression. His empire, built upon a disregard for the rights of others, epitomises the suffering and oppression which Olympias had defined as characteristic of patriarchal government. In overthrowing this despotic regime, Alexander reasserts the legitimacy of the individual nations which comprise the Persian empire. In place of the foreign governors imposed upon them by Dareios, he restores government to the indigenous people and with it the right to self-determination. At this early stage, Alexander builds an empire based not on

conquest but on its antithesis, consensus; in so doing, he approximates Olympias' ideal of benevolent matriarchal rule.

Alexander's adolescent reaction to his father is not, however, unequivocal rejection. Whilst he does not accept Philipp's imperialist goal, he nevertheless admires the talent his father displays in planning his strategy. Such lines as "[Alexander] kam zu dem Resultate, daß er [die Politik seines Vaters] vorzüglich fand, gleichzeitig aber abscheulich" and "[Philipp] ging Schritt für Schritt vor, er war nie ungestüm, immer verschlagen und konsequent. Sein Sohn beobachtete, angeekelt und bewundernd, diese grausam schlaue berechneten Schritte" (A, 30) reveal the basic ambiguity in Alexander's instinctive response. This originates in the basic conflict between matriarchal revulsion, introduced in the words 'abscheulich' and 'angeekelt', and patriarchal admiration, expressed directly by 'bewundernd' and implied with 'vorzüglich' in the phrase 'er [fand] sie vorzüglich'.

Alexander's character is a complex mix of matriarchal and patriarchal elements. In childhood and early adolescence the matriarchal is dominant, encouraged by Alexander's close proximity to Olympias. The patriarchal is, however, latent within him. It is revealed only occasionally as, for example, in Mann's observation, made just before Alexander begins his campaign against Dareios, "Mit einer Brutalität, die in ihm keiner vermutet hätte, ordnet Alexander alles nach seinen Wünschen" (A, 45). In Olympias' definition, brutality had been identified with the rule of man. As the tyrannical begins to dominate Alexander's personality, his regime comes to resemble the harsh dictatorial government of the system Philipp had represented. The aggressive patriarchal principle takes over and Alexander grows more and more like his father in manner, expressed by Mann most directly in his description:

Der König [Alexander] trank, er wurde lauter und ermunterte die Gesellschaft, indem er selber sich gehen ließ, zu immer größerer Lustigkeit. Wie er, mit geröteter und gedunsener Miene, schon verglasten Augen, alle zu reichlicherem Trinken drängte, fast zwang, konstatierten viele, daß er an seinen Vater erinnerte (A, 109).

The consternation felt by the court hints at the retrograde step Alexander has taken by following the path of patriarchy which expresses itself in tyranny.

Alexander's transition from a potential, ideal matriarchal leader into an actual, patriarchal despot is completed with his decision to adopt the dress and customs of his former enemy, the Persian leader Dareios. Here Alexander's changed appearance and manner lend physical expression to his inner emotional and spiritual metamorphosis. His decision is taken at first only in jest, which Mann emphasises in his use of 'Zum Scherze' in the lines "Alexander stellte sich den Kameraden im Festkleid des Großkönigs vor [...]. Zum Scherze ließ er sie vor sich wiederfallen". This is merely a combination of role-play and pretence; however, it is pretence which belies a more serious import contained in the short qualifying statement with which Mann concludes his description. "Als sie vor ihm den Boden mit den Stirnen berührten", he writes, "wurde [Alexander] plötzlich ernst" (A, 70). In subsequently embracing without qualms the customs, ritual and dress of the Persian empire, which Mann portrays as an archetypal, patriarchal regime epitomised in its figurehead leader Dareios, Alexander also embraces their values and the principles associated with the patriarchy - aggression, brutality, cruelty and barbarity- which are latent within these values.

Seen in this light the work appears the very antithesis of utopian; indeed, in the apparent negativity of its ending with Alexander's empire disintegrating and Alexander himself on the verge of breakdown, Alexander appears to represent an anti-utopian vision of things to come. This suggests that 'Utopie' in the sub-title 'Roman der Utopie' may be something of a misnomer, unless properly understood. Initially, Mann seems to imply that he is describing Utopia in the tradition of such texts as More's Utopia, Defoe's Robinson Crusoe or even the science fiction of his own day. Such images of Utopia were literary responses to the ages in which they were created. They proffered an alternative to contemporary reality which challenged current values and beliefs; by offering a radical vision of an ideal world to come they proposed that change was possible and that the *status quo* could thus be overturned. Characteristically, they were concerned with a future golden age to which mankind should

aspire. When Gabriele Engelhardt writes of Alexander "Bereits im Titel ist auf eine zeitliche Dimension 'Zukunft' hingewiesen"⁴⁷, she implies the concept of progress central to the term 'Utopia' and simultaneously identifies the key factor in Mann's reference to this text as 'Roman der Utopie'. He does not intend to describe a specific Utopia; he merely charts the path to its realisation and leaves the resolution up to his reader to define.

There is little consensus amongst commentators on the definition of 'Utopia' Mann applied to Alexander. For Kroll, in his analysis of the text, 'Utopia' implies a vague, ideal state based either upon the Christian ethic of 'love thy neighbour'⁴⁸. Härle notes merely that it will be "das Reich der Liebe"⁴⁹, a view he shares, in part, with Grunewald, who places the whole firmly in the Christian culture when he notes of Alexander's proposed second coming:

au lieu de sacrifier les autres à ses propres rêves de grandeur, il sera capable de les aimer sans être poussé par le désir de possession. Son amour des autres étant alors exempt d'égoïsme, il parviendra à se donner pour eux. Le sacrifice auquel l'ange fait allusion est, de toute évidence, celui du Christ. De ce fait, Alexandre, le conquérant qui n'a pas réussi à édifier le "royaume du bonheur et de la félicité définitive", apparaît [...] comme un précurseur imparfait du Christ qui, lui, se laissera guider exclusivement par l'amour désintéressé des autres et acceptera de se sacrifier pour eux⁵⁰.

Certainly, this ideal of selfless love, as epitomised by Christ, is one aspect of Mann's text and recalls the message of Der fromme Tanz, conveyed in Andreas' realisation: "so galt es, einen zu finden, dem man alles gab, ohne ihn zu besitzen, dem man helfend treu blieb bis zum Tod, ohne ihn zu besitzen" (FT, 153). In Alexander the love Alexander believes he feels for Kleitos is essentially selfish. It is based upon an on-going power struggle in which he strives for supremacy over Kleitos, conveyed when Mann ascribes the language of battle to Alexander's determination to win Kleitos as his partner:

⁴⁷ Gabriele Engelhardt, Die Zeit-Problematik in der frühen Prosa Klaus Manns, (Munich: Diss Phil, 1982), 122.

⁴⁸ Fredric Kroll, Klaus-Mann-Schriftenreihe, Vol. III, 75.

⁴⁹ Gerhard Härle, Männerweiblichkeit, 300.

⁵⁰ Michel Grunewald, Klaus Mann 1906 - 1949, 307.

Es kam so weit, daß er sich dabei ertappte, diesem Knaben gegenüber der Werbende zu sein. Hier zu siegen! Zwei Jahre lang kannte er kein anderes Ziel mehr. Er hatte in seinem Herzen unabänderlich beschlossen: wenn einer mein Lebensgefährte sein kann, so dieser. Ich will nur einen Freund: diesen. Er ist mir vorbestimmt [...]. Ich will ihn haben, ich muß ihn haben, es soll mein erster, wichtigster Sieg sein (A, 16).

With victory comes possession, which goes against the ethos defined by Grunewald and restated by Härle who interprets Alexander's thirst for power as compensation for his inability to win Kleitos' love⁵¹.

However, the term 'Utopia' contains an implied political dimension for it proposes a future state. To merely define Mann's Utopia as a 'realm of unselfish love' denies this specific, political aspect. If Alexander is to be read, at least in part, as a commentary on the Weimar Republic then Mann's use of 'Utopie' must also be seen in this context. Engelhardt refers to Alexander as a political text when she identifies the Utopia of the novel with its restricted, modern sense of totalitarianism. She writes: "Vom Erscheinungsjahr (1930) her liegt die Vermutung nahe, daß Utopie auch im engeren Sinn politisch zu fassen ist, d.h. daß hier das Anwachsen des Faschismus, bzw. des Rechtsradikalismus gemeint ist"⁵². Her conclusion is flawed however. She bases it primarily on the misleading publication date of 1930. Although the Right was politically active between 1928 and 1929 whilst Mann was working on Alexander, their serious and very real threat to democracy only materialised after the Wall Street Crash of autumn 1929. Nor does Engelhardt take account of Mann's rejection of nationalism and its imperialism expressed in his essay 'Die Jugend und Paneuropa' of 1930. Here he stated categorically "Diktatur über ein vereinigtes Europa könnte nur das Genie sein" and then asked his audience "Wenn [das Genie] unter uns erschiene, Alexander - Napoleon, und trüge auf seiner Stirne das Zeichen, wer folgte ihm nicht? Er käme im Namen des Geistes, der die Völker vereinigen will, statt sie zu trennen" (S, 59).

The positive tone of Mann's comments here echoes the mood of the ending to the novel Alexander. The king is forced to confront the wrongs he has committed in expanding his

⁵¹ Gerhard Härle, Männerweiblichkeit.

⁵² Gabriele Engelhardt, Die Zeit-Problematik in der frühen Prosa Klaus Manns, 122.

empire when an angel rebukes him with the words "Du hast deine Sendung wesentlich verfehlt. So hättest du dir denken können, daß deine Todesstunde kein Wonnefest sein würde" (A, 179). Alexander seeks and receives absolution from the angel with the reassurance "Du wirst wiederkommen, in anderer Erscheinung", though this is only once he had recognised "*ich habe wesentlich gefehlt*" (A, 181). In this line Mann captures the development which Alexander has undergone. In her interpretation, however, Engelhardt ignores this progression and, as a result, transforms the angel's reassuring promise of Alexander's return into an indefinable yet disturbing threat.

Popp correctly identifies the political message underlying Alexander when he claims that in the context of the novel 'Utopia' denotes a future based upon the humanitarian ideal of equality and tolerance for all. He then implies a political dimension to the text when he notes "Der Roman, den Klaus Mann selbst später, 'naiv' und 'keck' nannte, enthält [...] ein tatsächlich naives politisches Programm der Aufhebung von Nationalitäten- und Staatsgrenzen in einen umfassenden Friedens- und Freiheitsstaat"⁵³. Mann's dismissal of his text as both naive and audacious appears in his autobiography Der Wendepunkt in a passage which defines his approach to the story of Alexander the Great. Here he writes: "Der Mazedonier [Alexander] wollte die Welt nicht nur erobern; ihn ging es darum, sie zu einen und unter seinem Zepter glücklich zu machen". Mann then poses the rhetorical question: "War es nicht das Goldene Zeitalter, ja das Paradies, was er zu bringen dachte?" (Wp, 217).

The motivation he perceives as underlying Alexander's actions derived from a desire to unite, which he expressed in Olympias' *Auftrag*, given to Alexander on his succession. Following Philipp's murder Olympias instructs Alexander: "Ziehe nach Asien [...]! Das mütterliche Asien wird dir gehorchen". In the words "Dieser Auftrag geht nicht dahin, daß du erobern sollst, Männer haben schon so viel erobert" she prohibits the use of aggression, before concluding with the statement "Eine Hochzeit wird anzurichten sein" (A, 42). Mann's use of 'Hochzeit' in this context has led Wolfram to maintain that Alexander's failure to

⁵³ Wolfgang Popp, Männerliebe, 280-281.

achieve Utopia lies with his homosexuality. She interprets, with some justification, 'Hochzeit' literally, perceiving Alexander's inability to consummate his marriages to Roxane and Stateira, both of whom she interprets as symbolising the continent of Asia, as the cause of his failure to achieve Utopia⁵⁴.

At the height of his tyranny Alexander believes he can unite East and West literally through marriage, choosing as his second wife Dareios' daughter, Stateira. It is a symbolic gesture of reconciliation with the enemy born of political necessity alone. This is revealed when Alexander first broaches with Hephaistion the subject of his forthcoming marriage, and those arranged by him for his soldiers, with the words "Ich bereite einige Feierlichkeiten [the mass wedding ceremony] vor, die politisch von eminenter Bedeutung sind" (A, 151). Stateira is the symbol of Asia; in marrying her Alexander believes he marries the continent and thus successfully completes the task he has been set. When Hephaistion refuses to take any part in Alexander's plans, he is expected to wed Stateira's younger sister Drypetis, the king first challenges him with the question "Hast du denn alles vergessen?" before reminding him "*Die Hochzeit!! Das Ziel*" (A, 152). Stateira also symbolises, however, the continent of Asia under dictatorial Macedonian rule. Alexander does not sue for her affection. He neither seeks nor requires her consent but forces marriage upon her. In his blind determination to succeed by meeting the requirements of Olympias' *Auftrag*, Alexander fundamentally disregards the spirit of mutual consent and agreement which lay at its very heart. His flight from the celebration feast is tacit acknowledgement of this basic error of judgement for he flees from Hephaistion's reproach⁵⁵.

When he marries his first wife, Roxane, Alexander acknowledges Olympias' figurative use in her *Auftrag* of 'Hochzeit'. As a union founded upon love, this not only acts as a direct contrast to his later marriage to Stateira but, more importantly, it conforms to the spirit of the *Auftrag*. However, in an attempt to comprehend his sudden inability to touch or even approach Roxane, which is the result of his homosexuality, Alexander asks himself: "Habe

⁵⁴ Susanne Wolfram notes "Das vorhersehbare Scheitern an dieser Aufgabe liegt auf Alexanders Homosexualität begründet". She then indirectly draws a parallel between Olympias' *Hochzeit* and Alexander's failed marriages when she continues "Seine beiden Ehen bleiben ungültig, weil sie nicht vollzogen werden", *Die tödliche Wunde*, 49.

⁵⁵ Mann makes it quite clear that it is, in part, Hephasition's silent accusation that caused Alexander to flee when he writes "Das vorwurfsvoll Schweigen des Hephasition, den öden Blick des eingemummten Königstöchterleins ertrug Alexander nicht mehr. Er sprang auf, winkt, ihm zu folgen, dem Bagoas" (A, 152).

ich das Recht auf die eigene Hochzeitsnacht verwirkt, weil man mich dazu bestimmt und gesegnet hat, eine größere Hochzeit anzurichten?" (A, 116). When Olympias instructs Alexander to 'marry' the West (Macedonia) with the East (Asia), it is in the sense of a political union of nations, not imposed from above as in imperialistic aggrandisement, but achieved through negotiation and consent in consequence of which each individual state retains its customs and identity. In effect, it is a plea for Alexander to win the hearts and minds of those he seeks to bring under his protectorate.

In the *Auftrag* Mann alludes to his future ideal of a united Europe for which he had appealed in his essayistic prose to offset the rise of nationalism across the continent. It is testimony to his belief in the dual ideals of pacifism and dialogue between nations. Through Olympias' *Auftrag*, he contrasts two forms of international relations. The first, identified with Philipp and his Persian counterpart, Dareios, follows the politics of aggression and imperialism. Olympias draws attention to this type of government in her critical assessment of Philipp's aims:

Philipp hätte noch dieses Jahr nach Asien den Zug unternommen; aber zu welchem Zweck? Um aus Asien, sollte es ihm irgend möglich sein, mazedonische Kolonien zu machen; um diesen Völkern, die die weisesten und reifsten sind, aufzudrängen seinen unfremden, männlich plumphen Götterglauben; um die ganze Welt noch unglücklicher zu machen, (A, 42).

Imperialism and colonisation denies the legitimacy of other cultures and peoples by oppressively imposing the culture of one nation over another. The second and ideal approach proposes the politics of consensus and mediation between nations that Mann himself had advocated in his essays. In her statement 'eine Hochzeit wird anzurichten' Olympias indirectly exhorts Alexander to pursue this goal which will result in international cooperation. She does not rule out aggression. When she informs Alexander of his future role, in her use of 'Schwert' in the statement: "du bist ausersehen, die Menschheit das Glück zu bringen [...]]! Du erzwingst es mit Liebe und Schwert! Du erzwingst es mit deiner Schönheit, mit deiner Jugend" (A, 43) she draws direct attention to it. Yet it is the context in

which force is used which defines its reception. To overthrow an autocratic dictator, such as Dareios, violence and the sword are acceptable, yet when used to compel allegiance, (as, for example, in Alexander's mass slaughter of the people of Areia) it is condemned.

Alexander has the opportunity to succeed; after a promising start he appears capable of achieving Utopia and yet he still fails. By the novel's close he has destroyed his empire, his friends, and ultimately himself; he epitomises the cruel head of a reviled dictatorship which is the very antithesis of Utopian. This then raises the question - why should he fail? The answer must lie in part with Utopia itself. By its very nature it is an elusive goal which, ultimately, none can attain. Mann suggests, however, that it is, nevertheless, a goal towards which the individual should strive. The answer also lies, however, in Mann's interpretation of history. In Alexander he employs two models. The first is essentially progressive and anticipates Mann's vision of the future expressed in his essay 'Wie wollen wir unsere Zukunft?' of 1930. Here, speaking on behalf of pro-European intellectuals and writers, he stated "Wir glauben nicht an eine *Rückentwicklung* zum Goldenen Zeitalter, sondern an eine *Hinaufentwicklung*" (S, 112); he equates Utopia with this 'Hinaufentwicklung'. His goal is based upon the proposition of thesis-antithesis-synthesis. He regarded the radicalisation of society following its economic collapse and the increasing xenophobia within it as the antithesis of his ideal of a united, pacifist Europe. However, only if this situation occurred did he believe that the ideal could be achieved, for he noted "Diese bitter traurige, unerträgliche traurige Situation hat einen einzigen Vorteil: sie zwingt uns Denkende zu entschiedenster Klarheit" (S, 94). Only through the breakdown of Weimar democracy, he implies, can the higher goal of true international cooperation be achieved. Indeed, on this model Weimar democracy cannot survive, for it is only through its demise that the future can be achieved. This model interprets history as an ongoing process towards a specific if unclear goal, in which each step paves the way for the step to come.

Mann applies the thesis-antithesis-synthesis model of history to Alexander. Philipp's reign represents thesis, Alexander's antithesis and the Utopia to come, synthesis. On this

basis Alexander is doomed to fail for without his failure Utopia cannot be achieved. This is first intimated early in the novel in the tales of ancient heroes Orpheus, Osiris, Tammuz and Adonis that Olympias tells her son to legitimise her incestuous feelings for him⁵⁶. Mann summarises the underlying message of these texts with the words "das Zerstückeltwerden des Gottes war die Voraussetzung für das Wunder seiner Auferstehung; der Jammer mußte groß sein, damit der Jubel unendlich sein durfte" (A, 12), reinforced by the later statement "das Mysterium der blutigen Opferung und der Auferstehung im Lichte" (A, 12). In each case, 'Jammer' and 'Opferung' correspond to the tyranny Alexander eventually imposes upon the world contrasted by the positive terms 'Jubel' and 'Auferstehung im Lichte' both of which are references to a future utopian age.

The phrase 'Auferstehung im Lichte' carries overt religious overtones and evokes the Christian concept of life after death. Mann emphasises the correlation between Christian thought and the life of Alexander the Great in his description of Alexander's entry into Jerusalem. He meets and speaks with a priest, Jaddua; the content of their discussion Mann summarises with the words: "Was er [Jaddua] sagte, ging dahin, daß Alexander der sei, dessen Kommen die Heilige Schrift so oft geweissagt und verkündigt hatte; der von Jehova gesandt war, von persischem Joche zu befreien das erwählte Volk" (A, 72). This is a reference to the book of Daniel which defines the reign of Alexander as a prerequisite for the later creation of God's kingdom on Earth. Again, Alexander's ultimate failure is predicted; his empire is merely an interim period between the tyranny of Persian rule, to which Mann refers in the statement "Das Land ergab sich jedem, der von persischer Tyrannis es befreien wollte" (A, 73), and synthesis, a Christian Utopia of Paradise. In this context it is only through his failure, through creating, in effect, a monster in his empire that a future Utopia can be achieved.

This model appears to equate Utopia exclusively with Christian tradition; it may in consequence be regarded as a vague, imprecise objective, the resolution of which may be

⁵⁶ Each of these tales, as Mann describes them, involve the mother as lover, to which Mann draws attention in the line "Alle diese vergossen ihr Blut, um alle diese klagte die Mutter-Geliebte, die Isis, Ishtar, Astarte oder Kybele hieß" (A, 12).

difficult to conceive. Yet in 'Wie wollen wir unsere Zukunft?' Mann stated quite categorically "Die Utopie bedeutet nicht das Unerfüllbare, sondern das, was sich erfüllen *muß*" (S, 112). He refers here to a concrete goal which, however, he does not define. His intention in this essay is to inspire his audience to undertake positive steps towards a state of Utopia. Alexander shares the same purpose, for it is a call to his readers of the Weimar Republic to learn from Alexander's mistakes and not to perpetuate them in their own society and age. Here, Mann perceives history, through Alexander's example, as essentially repetitive; Philipp is replaced by his opposite, Alexander, who then becomes like Philipp⁵⁷. He emphasises this model of history by integrating the Babylonian legend of Gilgamesch into Alexander.

The epic of Gilgamesch, as adapted by Mann, is in essence a homily on the destructive consequences of arrogance and on the ultimately futile desire for personal glory which costs Gilgamesch, head of the mythical state of Uruk, his friendship with Enkidu, the companion created for him by the gods, his wealth and his peace of mind. In an early example of *mise en abyme* in Mann's texts, he incorporates this tale to reflect upon Alexander and his empire. The relationship between Gilgamesch and Enkidu is the positive complement of that between Alexander and Kleitos⁵⁸; Alexander's arrogance reflects Gilgamesch's blasphemy towards the goddess Ishtar, described with the words

Der Held, dem ihre fette Wollust ein Greuel war, schrie ihr das Allerschlimmste ins Gesicht; war dreist genug, sie einen Schlauch zu nennen, der seinen Träger belästigt; einen Elefanten, der seine Decke abschüttelt; ein Schuh, der seinen Besitzer drückt. Er sagte ihr die Meinung so offen, wie sie ihr noch keiner gesagt, hielt sie schonungslos alles vor, was sie jemals verbrochen hatte, ihre Bosheiten, Flüche und Listen; schließlich *alle* Liebhaber, die sie jemals gehabt [...], wie abscheulich sie mit jedem einzelnen verfahren und umgesprungen (A, 105).

⁵⁷ Fredric Kroll is mistaken when he unequivocally disputes this view, first proposed in an unpublished manuscript by Wolf-Eberhard Heinzel in Studien zu Klaus Manns Alexander-Roman with the words: "Heinzels Irrtum wurzelt in seiner Auffassung von der Struktur des Romans als zyklisch. Zwar ähnelt der gealterte Alexander in manchem seinem Vater Philipp und seinem Gegenspieler Dareios [...]. Aber die Struktur des Romans ist wie auch bei Plutarch von der fallenden Linie des Einzelschicksals Alexanders bestimmt", Klaus-Mann-Schriftenreihe, Vol III 75.

⁵⁸ Mann draws attention to this similarity in his description: "Kleitos schloß eine Sekunde die Augen, mit ihm Alexander. Beide lauchten, eine Sekunde lang, in ihr Inneres, vielleicht auch in das Innere des andern hinüber. Denn sie wußten, nun kam die Geschichte einer großen Freundschaft, die ihre hätte sein können, die ihnen aber nicht zuteil geworden war" (A, 104).

His quest for the meaning of life and search for the plant which will give him eternal life equates with Alexander's attempt to conquer the world and Heaven and his own blasphemy, expressed in the simple demand, summarised as: "Er beanspruchte für seine Person göttliche Ehren" (A, 159); finally Gilgamesch's failure anticipates that of Alexander. Ultimately their shared failure has the same origin; it is caused by their concern only with the self and an obsession with accruing glory for the self. This is expressed in Kleitos' opening words "[Gilgamesch] war sehr ehrgeizig, angeblich für Uruk, in Wirklichkeit aber für sich. Uruks Pracht soll strahlen in allen Städten, proklamierte er schallend. Eigentlich aber wollte nur er strahlend sein" (A, 103), a statement which Kleitos intends for Alexander alone.

That Alexander continues the mistakes that Gilgamesch had made before him, that in his empire-building he shadows his father suggests that Mann in Alexander accepts the fatalist position that change is not possible. Yet throughout the novel Mann gives Alexander the opportunity to change the course and direction of his life, to break the cycle which leads to his destruction. The process begins with Olympias' *Auftrag*; continues with the message of renunciation in the teachings of the *Gymnosophisten*: "die klugen Stimmen empfahlen als Pfad zur Erlösung nicht Nachkommen, Reichtum oder fromme Werke, geschweige denn kriegerische Taten, die blutbefleckt war; sie empfahlen Entsagung" (A, 133). This is the Christian principle of selflessness epitomised by Christ which Alexander is unable to either practice in his relationship with Kleitos or in his creation of an empire which ultimately satisfies only his unsatiable appetite for power. It reaches its most forceful climax when Kleitos reminds him of his fallibility and human frailty in the legend of Gilgamesch.

Alexander ignores the ethos of Olympias' *Auftrag*; he does not act on the advice of the *Gymnosophisten*; he murders Kleitos, unable to accept the message of his text. In so doing, Alexander moves ever further from Utopia, expressed in the image of the *Gymnosophisten* on Alexander's departure: "Mit schmerzlich glimmenden Augen sahen die drei Greise ihm durch die Regennacht nach, wie er die Kreatur beleidigte und sich entfernte vom Pfade der Erkenntnis, der Wonne und Erlösung" (A, 134). In so doing, he fails to break the cycle of

history, essential, Mann implies, for the creation of Utopia. He does not guarantee its achievement; at the time in which he wrote Alexander, the future of Germany and Europe was still undecided. It is for this reason that when Alexander asks the angel whether, on his return, he shall establish Utopia, his question is left unanswered.

Alexander is not merely, as many commentators believe, either a psychological study of Alexander the Great or a disguised autobiography of Klaus Mann. Certainly these elements are a feature of the text. There is little doubt, for example, that Mann drew upon personal experience in depicting the Macedonian leader; as Grunewald has pointed out, Mann himself publicly acknowledged this in 1930 when he wrote:

So betrachte ich als das Wichtigste, was ich bis heute geschrieben habe, den eben abgeschlossenen Roman über Alexander, den nach Osten Ziehenden [...]. Er enthält eben so viel persönliche Beichte, wie meine früheren Dinge (wie etwa 'Anja und Esther; oder 'Der fromme Tanz'⁵⁹

However, Mann alerted his reader to a secondary dimension to his text when, in February 1930, a matter of months after the publication of Alexander, he responded, in a questionnaire about the objectives of his work, with the statement: "Auseinandersetzung mit dieser Zeit, zu dem Zwecke, sie besser zu machen und die Menschheit näher zu bringen ihrem unbekannten, doch ersehnten Ziel". He then qualified his answer with the explanatory words:

Sicher ist es ein modisches Mißverständnis [...] einem Kunstwerk nur dann Daseinsberechtigung zu geben, wenn es etwa einen veralteten Paragraphen befiehlt. Mit ihrem propagandistischen Wert entschuldigt sich gern die krasseste Unkünstlerlichkeit. Mit [sic] scheint aber, je passionierter, bekenntnishafter, 'künstlerischer' ein Kunstwerk ist, desto intensiver wird auch seine ethisch-zeitverbessernde Wirkung sein⁶⁰.

Given the date of this statement it must be assumed that Mann indirectly refers here both to Alexander, the 'Kunstwerk' of his comments, to Utopia, the 'unbekanntes [...] Ziel' of mankind, and to the mixed, primarily negative, critical reaction his novel had received.

⁵⁹ 'Antwort auf drei Fragen', 25 Jahre Bukum. Fest-Almanach auf das Jahr 1930, quoted from Michel Grunewald, Klaus Mann 1906 - 1949, 635.

⁶⁰ 'Antwort auf eine Umfrage bei jungen Dichtern über Tendenzen ihres Schaffens' first printed in Die Kolonne. Zeitung der jungen Gruppe Dresden, 2, February 1930, reprinted in Die neuen Eltern, 253-254, 253.

Conclusion

Mann approached the story of Alexander's life as a writer of fiction and not as an historian to explain not *what* Alexander does and achieves but *why*⁶¹. Following Plutarch, who had attempted to understand Alexander's motivation, the novel, possibly latently influenced by modern psychology, focuses upon him as an individual, not on the accomplishments for which he is known. Mann examines the inner life of the emperor and the motivation that fuels his desire for world domination to trace the origin of his historically well-documented transformation from an ideal of leadership into its destructive and negative converse, tyranny. Mann attributes its cause primarily to Alexander's unrequited love for his companion Kleitos, who spurns his advances in childhood with the simple words "*Du störst mich sehr*" (A, 17); he proposes that Alexander's empire-building compensates for this rejection and that he is led to ever more heinous deeds in a desperate attempt to prove himself to Kleitos and thus to gain his approval, acknowledgement and support.

Through adapting fact, Mann transforms the historical figure of Alexander the Great into an archetypal representative of the homosexual through whom to educate Mann's audience towards greater tolerance of homosexuality; this is the ethical content to which Mann had referred in his answer to the questionnaire. He also noted, however, the 'zeitverbessernde' dimension to 'artistic' novels. This is reflected in Alexander with Mann's introduction of contemporary references intended to alert his readership to the danger posed to themselves, to Germany and indeed to Europe by the increasing nationalistic tensions developing within society. In this respect, as the epic of Gilgamesch, through Mann's adaptation, is intended to sound a warning note to Alexander, to force him to change, so too is Mann's novel intended to act upon his audience; to work against the threat of nationalism and towards the creation of Utopia.

⁶¹ In Geschichte Alexanders des Großen Droysen had defined the fundamentally different rules which applied to the writer's interpretation of historical data and that of the historian when he wrote: "Dem Poeten steht es zu, zu der Handlung, die er darstellt, die Charaktere so zu dichten, daß sich aus ihnen erklärt, was sie tun und leiden. Die historische Forschung steht unter einem anderen Gesetz; auch sie sucht von den Gestalten, deren geschichtliche Bedeutung sie zu verfolgen hat, ein möglichst klares und begründendes Bild zu gewinnen; sie beobachtet, soweit ihre Materialien es gestatten, deren Tätigkeiten, Begabungen, Tendenzen; aber sie dringt nicht bis zur Stelle, wo alle diese Momente ihren Quell, ihren Impuls, ihre Norm haben. Das tiefinnerste Geheimnis der Seele zu finden, damit den sittlichen Wert der Person richtend zu bestimmen, hat sie keine Methoden und keine Kompetenz", quoted from Michel Grunewald, Klaus Mann 1906-1949, 633. In Alexander Mann conforms to Droysen's perception of the novelist, to whom Droysen had referred as the 'Poet'.

Klaus Mann, André Gide and the 'European' novel

A comparative study of Treffpunkt im Unendlichen and Les Faux-monnayeurs

After the historical novel Alexander, Klaus Mann emphatically returned to the present day with the publication in 1932 of Treffpunkt im Unendlichen¹. He selected a setting that is unmistakably that of 1930s Europe to recount what is ultimately little more than a conventional love-story that follows the separate lives of the two central characters, Sebastian and Sonja, as they search for their perfect complement, eventually finding it in each other. Yet if Treffpunkt im Unendlichen were nothing more than a love story, it would not explain Samuel Fischer's positive statement "Das ist eigentlich sein erstes richtiges Buch. Ich sehe da Entwicklungsmöglichkeiten"² or Mann's own assertion, in a letter to Erich Ebermayer from June 1932: "Ich [kenne] den Rang des Buches" (4.6.32, BA77)³. Following Samuel Fischer's 'Entwicklungsmöglichkeiten' and W. E. Süskind's 1932 belief that this work in particular marked an important step in Mann's development, this chapter addresses not the merit of the novel's content but approaches it as a transitional work between the novels that had gone before and those to come.

In Chapter One I illustrated how Mann's early advocacy of Franco-German cooperation, at a time when France was generally portrayed as the scourge of Germany, arose both from his desire for European unity and as a reaction to the growing xenophobia and jingoism in his homeland. Mann's affinity with France, the land and its culture, however, went deeper than the mere political intent this suggests and needs now to be addressed in more detail for, as Michel Grunewald commented in his essay 'Klaus Mann und Frankreich', Mann's contact with French culture and authors played a significant and key role in his own development as a writer and his understanding of the writer's craft⁴. This chapter does not, however, analyse

¹ Klaus Mann, Treffpunkt im Unendlichen, first published by the S. Fischer Verlag, Berlin, 1932, reprinted by Rowohlt, Reinbek, 1984. All references are to this edition.

² Quoted from Golo Mann, *Erinnerungen an meinen Bruder Klaus*, in Klaus Mann, Briefe und Antworten 1922-1949, ed. by Martin Gregor-Dellin (Reinbek: Rowohlt, 1991), 629-661 (640).

³ Mann responded here to the hostile critical response his novel had received with his words tantamount to an act of defiance.

⁴ Michel Grunewald comments in 'Klaus Mann und Frankreich', Text und Kritik Zeitschrift für Literatur 93/94, Sonderband Klaus Mann, Jan 1987, ed. by Heinz Ludwig Arnold, 37-61 "In der Biographie des Intellektuellen Klaus Mann stellt die Beziehung zu Frankreich ein wesentliches Element dar. Von Anfang an haben ihm Werke französischer Autoren in der Entwicklung seines Selbstverständnisses als Schriftsteller geholfen" (38).

the latent influence of French culture on Mann's work for that would defy the scope of this study. Rather, it outlines his familiarity with French literature and culture before concentrating upon its impact on Mann's understanding of the techniques and structures of the modern novel as realised in Treffpunkt im Unendlichen with specific reference to the writings of André Gide.

In André Gide und Klaus Mann⁵, a study of the influence of the French novelist on Klaus Mann, Axel Plathe demonstrates the similarities between Gide's novel Les Faux-monnayeurs, published in 1926, and Mann's novel Der Vulkan, published in 1939, during Mann's European exile. Plathe bases his analysis on the high regard in which Gide and Mann held their respective texts, each regarding them as the pinnacle of their achievement as writers⁶. He draws particular attention to the structure of Mann's work, its use of irony and the inclusion of the motif of the angel, indicating that each of these has its antecedent in Les Faux-monnayeurs. I shall suggest, however, that the influence of Les Faux-monnayeurs on Klaus Mann's work predates the publication of Der Vulkan by seven years and is already apparent in his novel Treffpunkt im Unendlichen. Through detailed reference to Mann's essay 'Der Ideenroman'⁷ from 1929 and with corroboration from the essays 'André Gide'⁸ and 'Zwei europäische Romane'⁹, also from 1929, I shall illustrate how the structure and narration of Treffpunkt im Unendlichen conform to those elements highlighted by Mann, in these essays as defining the modern novel as exemplified by Gide. A comparison of Les Faux-monnayeurs with Treffpunkt im Unendlichen will then demonstrate how the main thematic concerns of Mann's novel suggest an influence from Gide's text.

⁵ Axel Plathe: André Gide und Klaus Mann. Zur Wirkungsgeschichte französischer Literatur in Deutschland (Bouvier: Bonn, 1987) 191-209.

⁶ Plathe draws particular attention to Gide's comments in his autobiography Si le grain ne meurt on Les Faux-monnayeurs where he says "Peut-être approche-t-on de plus près la vérité dans le roman" (Plathe, 192). He also notes Mann's own assessment of Der Vulkan in his autobiography Der Wendepunkt where he noted, in a passage omitted from the English original: "Keines meiner anderen Bücher hat mich solange beschäftigt wie 'Der Vulkan'; die Arbeit, Herbst 1937 begonnen, wurde erst anderthalb Jahre später, Frühling 1939, zum Abschluß gebracht" (Plathe, 193).

⁷ Klaus Mann: 'Der Ideenroman' first published in Wirtschaftskorrespondenz für Polen (Beilage: Buch- und Kunstrevue) Katowice, 9 March 1929. Reprinted in Die neuen Eltern 201-206. Further references are given in the text after quotation.

⁸ Klaus Mann: 'André Gide' first published in Wirtschaftskorrespondenz für Polen (Beilage: Buch- und Kunstrevue) Katowice, 15 May 1929. Reprinted in Die neuen Eltern 223-226. Further references are given in the text after quotation.

⁹ Klaus Mann: 'Zwei europäische Romane', first published in Auf der Suche nach einem Weg where it appeared with the date 1929. Reprinted in Die neuen Eltern 207-211. Further references are given in the text after quotation.

5.1 Klaus Mann and France

Mann felt an affinity with France that went beyond simple Francophilia. Whilst many of Germany's writers turned their gaze to Russia, Italy or America for inspiration and literary models, he recalled in André Gide und die Krise des modernen Denkens, that he and a small number of fellow German liberal intellectuals turned to France. "Manche von uns" he wrote, "fanden die geistigen Entwicklungen, die sich in Paris abzuzeichnen begannen, attraktiver und bedeutungsvoller als irgend etwas, was sich in Moskau oder Rom begab"¹⁰. For these writers, himself included, Mann continued, France was "das gelobte Land" (AG, 10). In Der Wendepunkt, where his remarks were more personalised, he intensified his remarks, defining France as his spiritual home, as "eine Art von 'deuxième patrie'" (Wp, 302-303), where *patrie* approximates the German *Heimat* and *Vaterland* with the emotional ties that each of these suggests.

Mann first travelled to France in spring 1925, aged 18, and turned an intended short visit into an extended tour through the country and into French North Africa that ended in Tunis¹¹. He captured his enthusiasm for the land, and for its capital in particular, in two contemporary essays. In 'Der erste Tag', devoted to his first impressions of Paris, he wrote, for example:

Manche Städte haben Tage, manche selbst Wochen nötig, bis ihr Eigenstes und ihr Charme anfängt, wirksam und deutlich zu werden, Paris überzeugt, ja, überwältigt in Stunden. Von der Minute an, da man im Taxi die stürzende Weite des Place de la Concorde durchquert, ist man verzaubert. Man kann sich dem großen Bann nicht entziehen, wenn man, vom Arc de Triomphe aus, die Champs Élysées hinuntergesehen hat¹².

¹⁰ Klaus Mann, André Gide und die Krise des modernen Denkens (Reinbek: Rowohlt, 1984), 10. Further references are given in the text after quotation.

¹¹ In 1936 Mann recalled this first visit briefly in his speculative article 'Können Deutschland und Frankreich Freunde sein?' where he wrote: "Den ersten Vorschuß, den mir ein Verleger gab, benutzte ich zu einer Reise nach Paris, Südfrankreich und dem französischen Nordafrika", first published in Klaus Mann, Heute und Morgen. Schriften zur Zeit, ed. by Martin Gregor-Dellin (Munich: Nymphenburger, 1969), reprinted in Das Wunder von Madrid. Aufsätze, Reden, Kritiken 1936-1938, ed. by Uwe Naumann, and Michael Töteberg (Reinbek: Rowohlt, 1993), 15-23 (17). Further references are given after quotation in the text. He developed his theme in Der Wendepunkt (154-161) to give, not merely the simple fact of his journey, as in 1936, but offering some four pages detailing his impressions and enthusiasm for the country, in contrast to the single page he devoted to England and Italy, which had also been on his itinerary.

¹² Klaus Mann, 'Der erste Tag', first printed in 8-Uhr Abendblatt, 14 April 1925, reprinted in Die neuen Eltern. Aufsätze, Reden, Kritiken 1924-1933, ed. by Uwe Naumann, and Michael Töteberg (Reinbek: Rowohlt, 1992), 44-46 (45). Further references are given in the text after quotation.

Mann did not content himself with the sights alone. His second essay, 'Casino von Montparnasse', offered a picture of Paris that was removed from the more fashionable tourist areas, which Mann effectively dismissed for perpetuating an intrinsically artificial image of Paris. "Wie in einem *großen* Badeort ist für die Fremden so vieles hier hergerichtet", Mann reflected in the opening paragraph of his essay, "ein wenig lustiger geschminkt, als es sowieso schon wäre, auch ein bißchen 'pariserischer' zurechtgemacht, als es bestimmt sowieso schon wäre"¹³. The casino in the Parisian suburb of Montparnasse, in contrast, lacked the gloss of the *Casino de Paris* and thus gave an image of authentic Paris devoid of the artificiality of the tourist traps. Catering purely for the city's artisans and tradespeople, Mann believed it reflected the genuine face of the capital. The *Casino de Montparnasse*, he wrote, was "ein Ort [...], wo das Volk in der Tat hinkommt, um sich - und nicht um die anderen, die Geldgeber - zu amüsieren. Das war pariserischer", he continued, "als alles, was sonst zur Schau gestellt wird" (NE, 46).

Mann's passion for France did not originate with this trip, however. As he admitted in Der Wendepunkt: "Freilich, ich kam nach Paris mit einer Art von vorgefaßtem Enthusiasmus, entschlossen, alles herrlich zu finden" (Wp, 254)¹⁴. His interest in France and its culture, Mann recalled in 1936 in his speculative article 'Können Deutschland und Frankreich Freunde sein?', began while he was still at school. It was not prompted by the formal foreign language instruction he received there. This Mann dismissed cursorily: "der Unterricht im Englischen und Französischen war miserabel. Unser Französisch-Lehrer [...] hatte eine grausige Aussprache. Wir konnten mit Mühe sagen: 'La maison de ma grandemère est très belle' - aber wirklich nicht viel mehr" (WM, 16). As he explained further two years later in 'Die Wirkung Frankreichs', his attraction to France was also effectively an act of rebellion against the nationalist sentiment his teachers strove to instil in their pupils. "Meine Kindheit während des Krieges [wurde] von den Lehrern im nationalistischen Sinne

¹³ Klaus Mann, 'Casino de Montparnasse', first printed in 8-Uhr-Abendblatt, 23 May 1925, reprinted in Die neuen Elten, 46-48 (46). Further references are given in the text after quotation.

¹⁴ However, as he then conceded: "dieses günstige Vorurteil hätte ja in die bitterste Enttäuschung umschlagen können" (Wp. 156). Instead, as his essays testified, the reality of France surpassed imagination.

beeinflußt", he wrote before continuing, "ich aber [war], vom ersten Moment an, da ich selbständig denken und empfinden lernte, jedem nationalistischen Pathos abgeneigt [...], und ich [fühlte] mich, wohl schon aus Opposition gegen die Schule, zu Frankreich mit einer besonderen Sympathie hingezogen"¹⁵.

With no opportunity to travel to France at that time, Mann satisfied his curiosity at secondhand with works by young French authors, specifically the work of Arthur Rimbaud, to whom Mann devoted his first published essay¹⁶, and Paul Verlaine¹⁷. This introduction to France through its literature and not through contact with its people determined Mann's relationship with the country. As Michel Grunewald notes in 'Klaus Mann und Frankreich', Mann was concerned primarily with French cultural life¹⁸. In the many articles and essays Mann devoted to the country over a period of 25 years he paid only scant, if any, regard to the political and social conditions that prevailed there. For instance, his polemical attack in 'Die Jugend und Paneuropa' on anti-European feeling in France was not delivered as a direct criticism of contemporary political conditions, but introduced indirectly into Mann's review of Henri Massis' *Défense de l'Occident*. Furthermore, whilst vehement in his condemnation of German nationalism, in 'Heute und Morgen' he had mentioned its French counterpart, the *Action Française*, only in passing¹⁹.

His preoccupation with French culture and literature defined Mann's relationship with the country. After his first journey there in 1925 he returned frequently, making extended visits to Paris and the south of France throughout the 1920s and early 1930s before taking up

¹⁵ Klaus Mann, 'Die Wirkung Frankreichs', first published as 'Influences françaises', *Cahiers du Sud*, November 1938. First published in German in Klaus Mann, *Prüfungen. Schriften zur Literatur*, ed. by Martin Gregor-Dellin (Munich: Nymphenburger, 1968), reprinted in Klaus Mann, *Zweimal Deutschland. Aufsätze. Reden. Kritiken 1938-1942*, ed. by Uwe Naumann, and Michael Töteberg (Reinbek: Rowohlt: 1994), 28-38 (28). Further references are given after quotation in the text.

¹⁶ Klaus Mann, 'Arthur Rimbaud', first published in *Die Weltbühne*, September 1924, reprinted in *Die neuen Elten*, 18-20.

¹⁷ Writing of this period in his youth in 'Können Deutschland und Frankreich Freunde sein?' Mann recalled: "Ich begann, mich mit der französischen Literatur zu beschäftigen - auf eigene Faust und ohne daß jemand mir dabei geholfen hätte. Unter eifriger Benutzung eines Lexikons las ich die Gedichte von Arthur Rimbaud und von Paul Verlaine. Ich war hingerissen von der Kraft Rimbauds, die alle Literatur wie ein Gefängnis empfand und sich aus diesem Gefängnis in die Wirklichkeit, in die Freiheit des Lebens rettete; ich war gerührt und bezaubert von der Melancholie und der problematischen Frömmigkeit Verlaines - des großen Sünders, der alle seine Sünden verführerisch besingt und der sie alle bereut" (WM, 16)

¹⁸ Grunewald remarks: "Klaus Mann interessierte sich für alle Aspekte der Wirklichkeit im westlichen Nachbarland Deutschlands, Doch galt seine Aufmerksamkeit [...] weniger dem politischen Geschehen als dem Kulturleben in Frankreich", 'Klaus Mann und Frankreich', 37.

¹⁹ For a discussion of these issues see Chapter One.

permanent residency in March 1933 following his exile from Germany²⁰. In contrast to that first trip, however, these subsequent visits were not only for pleasure. Mann used them to establish links with contemporary French literary circles, seeking out the leading writers and intellectuals of the day and becoming, not merely intimately familiar with French culture, but also accepted into its midst. By the late 1920s, for example, Mann could count as personal friends André Gide, whose influence on Mann's work is discussed later in this chapter, Jean Cocteau and Rene Crevel, who became one of Mann's closest companions²¹.

Mann's entry into these circles was aided by letters of introduction from Ernst Robert Curtius, the influential German Romance scholar²² and, significantly for Klaus Mann personally, a close friend of André Gide²³. Curtius and Mann had met by chance²⁴ in summer 1924 in Heidelberg where Curtius held the seat of Romance philology at the university. Through subsequent visits and meetings, Curtius guided and furthered Mann's knowledge of French literature, encouraging his interest with gifts of books²⁵ and, as Mann recalled some years later, personalising his subject with anecdotes about Mann's preferred authors²⁶. Mann acknowledged the intellectual debt he owed Curtius. In Kind dieser Zeit

²⁰ Mann headed first for the south of France, finally settling temporarily in the coastal resort of Sanary sur Mer, a resort which had attracted many of Germany's artistic community, many of them staying there until, at the latest, the partition of France in 1940. For details of the exile community in Sanary-sur-Mer see Heinke Wunderlich, and Stefanie Menke, Sanary-sur-Mer. Deutsche Literatur im Exil, with Gisela Klermt, Thomas Lambertz, and Heidemarie Vahl (Stuttgart: Metzler, 1996). Sanary sur Mer, however, provided only short-lived refuge for Klaus Mann, for he soon recommenced the itinerant lifestyle that characterised his adult life, with his letters and diaries documenting trips to Holland, Spain, Czechoslovakia, Russia, Switzerland and the United States.

²¹ Rene Crevel committed suicide in 1935 at the age of 35. In his obituary, Mann pointed to the depth of their friendship with his words: "Ich nenne ihn meinen Bruder" before pointing to the similarities between them: "Redeten wir wirklich verschiedene Sprachen? Aber wir hatten ja alle Geistesorgen und noch die Träume gemeinsam [...]. Ich kenne alles, was er gelitten hat, und er hat so viel in Worte gebracht, was ein Teil unseres Lebens war", 'In memoriam Rene Crevel', first published in National-Zeitung, Basel, July 8, 1935. Reprinted in Klaus Mann, Zahnärzte und Künstler. Aufsätze, Reden, Kritiken 1933 - 1936, ed. by Uwe Naumann and Michael Töteberg (Reinbek: Rowohlt, 1993), 310-314 (313-314).

²² Throughout the Weimar Republic, Curtius was instrumental in refining the German public perception of France and its culture, and assumed a prominent role in campaigns for the reinstatement of the cultural ties between France and Germany which war had severed. He was motivated by a fervent belief that similarities in the respective literatures of each nation indicated a common identity which had been masked by mutual distrust and strain. For an introduction to Curtius' thought see Arthur R. Evans, 'Ernst Robert Curtius', On Four Modern Humanists. Hofmannstahl, Gundolf, Curtius, Kantorowicz, ed. by Arthur R. Evans (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1970), 85-145 and Gustav René Hocke, 'Begegnungen mit Ernst Robert Curtius', Merkur 11 (1966), 690-697. The influence of his thought on Klaus Mann's own advocacy of French literature shall be discussed later in this chapter.

²³ Curtius played a key role in promoting Gide to a German public as the quintessential French man of letters. His descriptions of Gide as the archetypal European, the epitome of a new mood in French culture which defied tradition and aimed for international appeal shaped and defined the reception of Gide's novels amongst German intellectuals. They represented a key factor in the rise in popularity of Gide's work during the Weimar Republic amongst intellectuals and writers of all ages, in marked contrast to the period 1900 to 1914 when interest in Gide's early novels, which were just appearing in German translation at this time, was limited to a select, cosmopolitan élite which had little influence on the cultural world as a whole. For a discussion of these views see Axel Plathe, Klaus Mann und André Gide, 35.

²⁴ When Mann recalled this first meeting in his first autobiography, Kind dieser Zeit, (Reinbek: Rowohlt, 1989), written when he was 26, he was vague about this meeting, noting merely "Durch einen höchst glücklichen Zufall, der heute noch für mich bedeutungsvoll geblieben ist, lernte ich den großen Romanisten Ernst Robert Curtius kennen" (186).

²⁵ Of these texts perhaps the most significant for Mann's early development was Curtius' seminal work Die literarischen Wegbereiter des neuen Frankreich, which he presented to Mann in 1924 with the dedication "Dem 'sonderbaren Kinde' aus dem neuen Deutschland. Heidelberg, Juni 1924", quoted from Michel Grunewald, 'Klaus Mann und Frankreich', 5

²⁶ Concentrating on Curtius' influence on his understanding of Gide's work, Mann wrote in André Gide und die Krise des modernen Denkens: "Während [Curtius] seinen Lesern und Studenten die Nuancen und Bezüge in Gides literarischem Werk erläuterte, unterhielt er mich mit Anekdoten aus dem Privatleben des Dichters" (AG, 21).

from 1932, for example, he remarked: "Von französischen Dingen wußte ich [1924] sehr wenig [..]. Es gehört zu dem guten Umständen meines Lebens, daß ich gerade damals Curtius begegnete, der meinen Blick westlicher orientierte" (KdZ, 186). In Der Wendepunkt Mann was more specific, introducing Curtius with the concise statement: "Ernst Robert Curtius, der Heidelberger Romanist, dem ich meine ersten Kenntnisse zeitgenössischer französischer Literatur verdanke" (Wp, 167).

Curtius campaigned for greater cooperation and understanding between Germany and its Western neighbour France, believing that only through such cooperation would European unity arise to safeguard the continent from outside threat. He further argued that the similarities in the respective literatures of France and Germany suggested a common identity from which the tensions of war had alienated the two nations, masking the similarities with distrust and suspicion²⁷. Curtius' influence is latent in Mann's thought; present, for example, in Mann's own call for Franco-German cooperation as the basis of European unity, discussed in Chapter One, and in his belief in the latent affinity between the countries. In 1926, in the essay 'Rene Crevel', Mann phrased his argument for the nations as a solution to the confusion experienced by the youth of both nations in the aftermath of war, basing his views on the similarity of experience between the nations. "[Es] scheint mir", he reflected

als könne die Jugend beider Nationen ihren Weg nur dann finden, diese Zeit nur dann bestehen, wenn sie sich im Bündnis weiß mit der nachbarlichen, mit der Jugend des anderen Landes, und wenn sie versteht: drüben wird um dasselbe gelitten, drüben wird um dasselbe gekämpft. Aus vielen Gründen sind unsere Situationen heute von so verblüffender Ähnlichkeit, daß nicht mehr viel fehlt, bis sie identisch sind (NE, 95)

Ten years later in 1936, whilst in exile in France, Mann ascribed an almost spiritual dimension to the affinity between France and Germany. Recalling his trip of 1925 in the essay 'Können Deutschland und Frankreich Freunde sein', he wrote of the personal impact the nation made on him: "Unvergeßliche erste Begegnung mit [...] einem Volke, das mir so fremd und doch auch auf eine sonderbare Art so vertraut war. Es [war], wie man eine

²⁷ For a discussion of these views see Arthur R Evans, On Four Modern Humanists, *passim*

Gegend in der Wirklichkeit sieht, die man schon aus Träumen und aus Vorstellungen kennt" (WM, 17).

Following Curtius once more, Mann extended the similarity of experience between the youth of both nations to a similarity in the themes and concerns of their respective literatures. In his 1926 essay 'Rene Crevel', which concentrated on Crevel's novel La mort difficile and not on the author himself, Mann offered his earliest analysis of contemporary French literature and echoed in his interpretation, the themes of 'Fragment von der Jugend', drawing indirect parallels between his work as a German writer and that of Crevel. Writing, for example, of the novel's central character, Pierre, Mann commented: "Das ist Pierre: problematisch gewordener Sohn der verabscheuten Bourgeoisie, Künstler und von den Grenzen des Wahnsinns nie weit entfernt, glaubte man seinen Typus nicht schon lange zu kennen?"²⁸. Of the novel's second main male character, Arthur Bruggle, Mann reflected:

Kennen wir ihn nicht, diesen Bruggle? In irgendeiner Maske und Form haben wir ihn alle geliebt. Was wir an ihm *mehr* anbeten sollten, wußten wir nie: seine Grausamkeit oder seine Unschuld. Er stand ohne jedes Vorurteil im Leben, ohne jede Moral und ohne andere Gesetze als die seiner großen Kraft und Schönheit (NE, 97-98)

Although Mann did not draw a direct comparison between Crevel's La mort difficile and his own work, he hinted at the similarities, suggested in the rhetorical questions 'glaubte man seinen Typus nicht schon lange zu kennen?' and 'Kennen wir ihn nicht, diesen Bruggle?' but perhaps most evocatively in the phrase 'ohne jedes Vorurteil [...], ohne jede Moral und ohne andere Gesetze'. Whilst echoing, almost word for word, his demand in 'Fragment von der Jugend' for an aesthetic literature as discussed in Chapter One, also recalls his portrayal of the eponymous hero of the 'Kaspar-Hauser-Legenden', the sequence of short stories with which Vor dem Leben, Mann's first volume of short stories concluded, of Niels in Der fromme Tanz and Till in Kindernovelle²⁹.

²⁸ Klaus Mann, 'René Crevel', first published in Berliner Tageblatt, 30 December 1926. Reprinted in Die neuen Eltern, 95-100 (96-97)

²⁹ Mann captured the sentiment of these words in his description of Kaspar Hauser in 'Fragment von der Jugend'. "Kaspar Hauser, der auf die Erde kam", he wrote, "ohne zu wissen, wer er sei, ohne zu ahnen, wohin er zu gehen habe. Für Kaspar Hauser ist alles offen, er steht unberührt vor dem lebendigen Wunder [...], hingegeben allen Möglichkeiten" (S, 11). This description is latent in Mann's portrayal of Niels who pays scant regard to the conventions and morals of society. The similarities are most evident in Mann's characterisation of Till in Kindernovelle. Speaking through Christiane, Mann notes of Till: "Sie wußte mit jeder Faser ihres Herzens, daß er gut war. sie sagte sich: Er ist zuchtlos, ein Abgrund von Lastern, ohne Ordnung, Ohne Gesetz" (Ms, 153).

Yet if Mann's interpretation of contemporary French literature and his underlying purpose in advocating a closer relationship between the nations belied the latent influence of Ernst Robert Curtius, his motive differs from that of his principal instructor. Mann was drawn to French literature to the point of rejecting, in the later years of the Weimar Republic, much that was produced in his homeland. In the essay 'Jean Desbordes' from 1929, one of Mann's earliest attempts to formulate the influence of French literature on his work, he noted of reading, specifically, the work of Jean Desbordes, Raymond Radiguet and René Crevel: "[mir] widerfährt das rührende und fördernde Erlebnis des sich selber Wiedererkennens im Bild eines anderen, und ich fühle dankbar warme, kameradschaftliche Nähe, wie sie mir aus Büchern deutscher Altergenossen ziemlich selten spürbar wird"³⁰. From this position, while Curtius approached his subject matter as a scholar, Mann, in contrast, searched in France for models for his own fiction. In 1942 Mann stated this intention outright in André Gide und die Krise des modernen Denkens where, despite generalising his remarks to refer to the group of German intellectuals with whom he identified, he clearly expressed his personal approach when he commented: "In der ausgeglichenen Sphäre französischer Zivilisation hofften wir die Vorbilder und Ideen zu finden, deren wir zur Abründung und Klärung unseres eigenen zerrissenen Weltbildes so dringend bedurften" (AG,10).

In 1938 Mann examined the influence of French literature on his own in the wide-ranging essay 'Die Wirkung Frankreichs'. It charted his progression from a devotee of German literature to an equally ardent admirer of French literature, denoting this as a natural progression in his desire to become a 'good' European³¹. There followed a broadly chronological list of those French authors who had had the greatest influence upon him, a list which included Rimbaud and Verlaine, Huysmans and Cocteau, René Crevel and Julien Greene. To each of these authors, Mann expressed his debt of gratitude, for what they had

³⁰ Klaus Mann, 'Jean Desbordes', first printed in Neue Schweizer Rundschau, April 1929, reprinted in Die neuen Eltern, 211-216 (215-216)

³¹ In the essay, Mann noted: "auf den jungen Menschen wirken zuerst die großen Gestalten der eigenen Literatur - anders wäre es unnatürlich. Der junge Deutsche, aus dem ein guter deutscher Europäer werden soll, wird ergriffen von Schiller und Heine, etwas später von Nietzsche, noch etwas später von Goethe, gleichzeitig aber entzückt er sich auch an den Romantikern, an der deutschen Shakespeare-Ausgabe; begeistert sich für Georg Büchner und Frank Wedekind, für die frühen Dramen von Gerhart Hauptmann; diesen wird er hinter sich lassen, wenn er zu Rilke, Stefan George und Hofmannsthal gelangt [...]. Gleichzeitig liebt er auch schon Verlaine" (ZD, 28 - 29)

written, for what their example had taught him or, more simply, for their friendship. He reserved special praise, however, for André Gide, introducing him with the concise statement: "In keiner Periode meines Lebens hat Gide aufgehört, mich zu beeinflussen" (ZD, 30). He concluded his extended discussion of Gide's texts and themes³² with the words:

Wenn ich [...] durchhalte, wenn ich die Pein dieses Hier-Seins bestehen, so gehört zu denen, die mich bewahrt haben, zu denen, die meine Dankbarkeit nie vergessen darf, der französische Schriftsteller Anré Gide - und dieses nicht nur durch sein dichterisches oder intellektuelles Werk, sondern durch das Beispiel seines Erdenlebens (ZD, 32)

Here Mann intimated both the depth of his admiration for Gide and the profound influence that Gide's thought had on his own work. Gide stood alone amongst the French writers with whom Mann was acquainted, combining the roles of father-figure, friend and mentor in a friendship that lasted over two decades and is of significance in the indirect influence it exerted on Mann's work.

5.1.2 Klaus Mann and André Gide 1925 - 1949

Of the numerous articles by Mann on European and world literature, those dedicated to the novels and person of André Gide are remarkable for their volume. In contrast to the many diverse authors about whom he chose to write in his critical prose³³, Mann repeatedly returned to the discussion of Gide's texts, producing between 1927, when his first review was published, and his death in 1949 over a dozen reviews and essays exclusively on Gide, then, in 1943, a biography, André Gide and the Crisis of Modern Thought³⁴. Although Mann often broadened his statements to assess Gide's impact on writers of his, that is, the younger generation, his critiques form less an objective analysis of Gide's work but more a

³² Mann devoted some two pages to his discussion of Gide's work in contrast to the other authors in this section who, on average, were assigned little more than a single paragraph.

³³ A selective survey from 1924 to 1933 would include, for example, his criticism of Gottfried Benn and attack on Ernst Jünger, essays on the French novelists René Crevel, Jean Cocteau and Antoine de Saint-Exupéry, on his early model Stefan George, on Thomas and Heinrich Mann and his contemporaries Alfred Döblin and Erich Ebermayer. His interest also extended beyond Europe to include Ernest Hemingway, John Dos Passos and Walt Whitman.

³⁴ Klaus Mann: André Gide and the Crisis of Modern Thought (Creative Age Press: New York, 1943). Later translated and revised by the author and published as André Gide: Die Geschichte eines Europäers (Zurich: Steinberg, 1948). Reprinted as André Gide und die Krise des modernen Denkens (Reinbek: Rowohlt, 1984).

deeply personal account of its importance for Mann in his own development as a writer. Mann regarded Gide both as one of the most consistent influences on his work and as a writer with whom he felt a great affinity³⁵. He believed that, in his innovation and experimentation, in particular with the novel form, Gide epitomised all that Mann himself wished to achieve in his own literature. This sense of affinity determined the nature of his analyses, all of which, including the biography, are written from an extremely subjective position which brooked none but limited criticism. Indeed, it is only in later years that Mann passes any form of negative judgement with regard to Gide and his work, and then only in its mildest form.

Their friendship lasted from 1926 until 1949 yet, in view of its length, actual meetings between Mann and Gide were, in fact, surprisingly rare, with contact between them maintained through their correspondence. Although this correspondence closely documents the period of Mann's exile from 1933 until 1945, and the post-war years until his death in May 1949, regrettably much of that from the key period of 1926 to 1933 was lost during the Third Reich. The five extant letters, written by Mann to Gide between 1926 and 1932, however, echo the unreserved respect and admiration that is a characteristic feature of the later letters. Furthermore, between 1933 and 1949 the remarks expressed by both men with regard to the other remained essentially unchanged. For these reasons, it has been assumed that although the majority of this documentation is of a later date, the impression it creates of their relationship between 1933 and 1949 is representative of their relationship as a whole.

Their correspondence reveals a formal, reserved and almost exclusively professional relationship based on mutual respect which prohibited any personal dimension other than praise for the other's work. Mann only breached the inherent formality of this relationship on one occasion, when in November 1935 he assumed an intimacy which did not exist. In

³⁵ See for example Mann's comment in his autobiography *The Turning Point. Thirty-five Years in this Century* (New York: Markus Wiener, 1984) where he draws a distinction between the influence of his father and that of Gide and, in so doing, indicates a latent sense of spiritual affinity with Gide's work expressed in the words: "I don't want to decide to whom I owe the more profound and lasting stimulus, to my father or André Gide. For, if the former's intellectual cosmos is the basis and starting point of my own thinking and striving, Gide's work has accompanied me through the years as an older brother, a beloved friend" (Wp, 197). This passage is omitted from Mann's later and more distanced analysis of his relationship with Gide's work given in *Der Wendepunkt* (Reinbek: Rowohlt, 1989) 224-229.

August 1935 Mann had written to Gide to inform him of the imminent closure of his journal *Die Sammlung*³⁶ to which Gide had replied with the following reassurance: "Ma confiance en vous [...] est de plus en plus grande à mesure que j'apprends à vous mieux connaître; et je sais que l'on peut compter sur vous" (9.8.35, Corr, 633). When, after a period of three months, Mann responded to Gide's letter in November 1935, he told him uncharacteristically: "Mir geht es nicht besonders gut. Ich habe gegen die furchtbarsten Depressionen zu kämpfen, und immer gegen die Versuchung zur Droge. (Das sage ich Ihnen sehr im Vertrauen, und weil ich hoffe, Sie für meinen Freund halten zu dürfen" (Corr, 633-634), he transgressed against the integral reserve of their relationship. Gide did not respond other than sending Mann a copy of his book *Les nouvelles nourritures*³⁷. Mann realised from Gide's silence the embarrassment he had caused. He tacitly acknowledged his error in mistaking Gide's general encouragement as an invitation for greater familiarity in a letter dated 18 December 1935. Here he wrote: 'für meinen letzten Brief [...] muß ich um Entschuldigung bitten: es war sicher ein *schlechter* Brief, denn er war in einer schlechten Stunde geschrieben, ich hätte ihn nicht abschicken sollen" (Corr, 635).

The letters, furthermore, testify to the inherent one-sidedness of the relationship between Mann and Gide. Primarily Mann was the initiator of any correspondence and it was invariably he who sought to re-establish contact between them. A note in Gide's diary from July 1931 confirms the suspicion that the relationship was of greater importance to Mann than to Gide. Whilst visiting Thomas Mann and his family in Munich, Gide described, in his journal, a trip they had undertaken to the Starnberger See. "Course en auto au Starnberger See, où m'emmène la famille de Thomas Mann, que j'ai le plus grand plaisir à revoir", he noted and continued, "Les deux jeunes enfants³⁸ [...] nous accompagnent

³⁶ Between 1933 and 1935 Gide, with Heinrich Mann and Aldous Huxley, acted as patron of *Die Sammlung*. However, in contrast to Heinrich Mann and Huxley, Gide's role was primarily symbolic. He contributed rarely and made, indeed, scarce reference to the journal in his correspondence with Klaus Mann.

³⁷ André Gide: *Les nouvelles nourritures* (Paris: Gallimard, 1935). Plathe suggests that when Mann wrote to Gide in December 1935 and told him: "Das Buch ist herrlich [...]. Ich finde *alles* in ihm, was ich suche. Es hat so vielerlei Töne. Es antwortet auf so vielerlei Fragen" (Corr, 635) it was characteristic of his approach to Gide's work as a whole which imbued it with an intrinsic cathartic role in his own life. Plathe proposes that his reaction to *Les nouvelles nourritures* is indicative of Mann transposing onto Gide's text, the need for comfort and reassurance which Gide was unable to give him. Axel Plathe: *André Gide und Klaus Mann*, 62.

³⁸ Thomas Mann's youngest children Elisabeth and Michael.

et Klaus que je ne connaissais encore qu'à peine"³⁹. Gide's qualifying statement "que je ne connaissais encore qu'à peine" suggests that, initially at least, their relationship was not as close as Mann later intimated.

This extract from Gide's diary was published in 1939 and prompted an immediate response from Klaus Mann. In the only remaining letter from Mann to be written in French, he expressed his pleasure at seeing his name, then continued: "c'était une petite déception aussi. Vous avez écrit à propos de moi: ... 'que je connais à peine ...' et je me rappelle, avec une certaine petite tristesse, combien j'étais fier de votre amitié, dans ces temps déjà si lointains" (4.6.39 Corr, 646). At this stage Mann's concern, however, is less with the implied indifference towards him in 1931 and more with the potential embarrassment Gide's revelation might cause him. Mann drew Gide's attention to this in his letter from 4 June 1939 when he suggested the possible reaction of a future reviewer and wrote: "Le lecteur qui connaît votre journal *Munichois*, et mon article [Die Wirkung Frankreichs] aussi, doit penser: eh bien - ce jeune homme fait beaucoup de bruit sur le 'grand rôle' qu'André Gide avait 'joué' dans sa vie - tandis que Gide, lui, seulement constate qu'il le connaisse à peine" (4.6.39 Corr, 647). In the essay 'Die Wirkung Frankreichs', published in 1938, Mann had testified to his personal admiration for Gide as a person and writer, and had concluded his remarks with the statement: "Durch mehr als ein Jahrzehnt ist mir Gide ein beratender Freund, ein tröstendes Vorbild gewesen"⁴⁰, an assertion which Gide's diary entry certainly seemed to negate⁴¹.

In *Der Wendepunkt*, where he recounted this incident once more, Mann gave a possibly more accurate interpretation of Gide's comment and assessment of their relationship when he noted: "Naiverweise, töricht-eitlerweise hatte ich geglaubt, daß eine Beziehung, die mir so viel bedeutete, auch im Bewußtsein des Partners etwas anderes sein müsse als nur eine flüchtige, vielleicht sogar lästige Bekanntschaft" (Wp, 225). This is characteristic of the more objective approach he adopted in 1949 when assessing his friendship with Gide and

³⁹ Quoted from Axel Plathe: *André Gide und Klaus Mann*, 58.

⁴⁰ Klaus Mann: 'Die Wirkung Frankreichs' in Klaus Mann: *Zweimal Deutschland*, 28-38 (32).

⁴¹ Gide responded to Mann's reproach, in a letter dated 13 June 1939. Here, he sought to lessen the force of his statement and to reassure Mann of his friendship when he informed him: "C'est là l'inconvenient d'une publication à ce point rétrospective. Le lecteur a grande tendance à *actualiser* maints jugements qui purent, à leur date, être exacts mais que la suite des jours a modifiés. [...] Dans un journal tout est fluide et à l'état d'écoulement, de fuite ou de devenir" (Corr, 649-650).

which resulted in the realisation of its inherent one-sidedness, encapsulated in the short statements: "Ich bewunderte ihn. Er ließ es sich gefallen" (Wp, 224).

In his analyses of Gide's work, Mann assumed he wrote for a well-informed audience familiar with the texts under discussion. His assumption was justified; during the Weimar Republic interest in Gide and his novels grew, particularly amongst the younger readers to whom Mann addressed his remarks. Although Gide's name had first become known in Germany at the turn of the century, until the 1920s his appeal had been limited to a small group of admirers found, Axel Plathe states, only "in den Kreisen liberaler, kosmopolitischer Intellektueller"⁴². During the Weimar Republic interest increased with the translation, into German, of his work which thus made it more easily accessible to a German-speaking audience. At this time, Gide's name also appeared more frequently and more regularly than other French authors in the Republic's newspapers and journals, which placed him at the heart of a post-war revival of French literature⁴³. This high profile generated an interest amongst the younger generation, particularly those, such as Klaus Mann, who were from the middle class and who, politically, could neither embrace the socialist ideals of communism nor identify with the paroles of nationalism. In general, they empathised with the problems and concerns Gide's characters had to confront. They viewed them as pertinent to their own situation in the post-war period and responded to an underlying optimism in his novels, believing they proposed a possible solution to the confusion of the post-war climate. This led them to idealise and idolise Gide, ascribing to him the attributes of a prophet who, in contrast to themselves, could foresee and project a future resolution to their deep sense of personal chaos⁴⁴.

⁴² Axel Plathe: *André Gide und Klaus Mann*, 32.

⁴³ In his analysis of letters sent to Gide by German readers, Peter Schnyder describes the reception of Gide's work during the Republic, and comments "Vergleichen wir verschiedene Pressestimmen über Gide mit jenen über andere französische Schriftsteller, so zeigt sich, daß er offenkundig häufiger erwähnt und besprochen wird. Da und dort markiert schon die Art und Weise der Aufmachung so etwas wie eine Rangordnung: In *Zeitbilder* vom 29. Januar 1929 werden in der Rubrik Pariser Dichter in Berlin' Jules Romains und Gide kurz präsentiert. Romains Porträt entspricht dem eines Paßfotos; jenes von Gide hat fast Postkartengröße [...]. Im Oktober 1926 erscheint dann folgerichtig in der *Frankfurter Zeitung* ein Artikel über 'Französische Romantik von heute', Gide steht im Mittelpunkt der Nachkriegsliteratur", Peter Schnyder, 'Literarische Wahlverwandtschaften. Deutsche Gide-Leser schreiben Gide (1920-1950)', Siepe & Theis 1992, 280-301, (289-290). Schnyder's views are echoed in Axel Plathe's more concise assessment "in den deutschen Darstellungen der modernen französischen Literatur, die zwischen 1920 und 1930 erschienen und deren Verfasser sich als Vermittler zwischen deutscher und französischer Literatur und Kultur verstehen, [wird] in Gide das Bild des Repräsentanten eines neuen Frankreich gezeichnet, der die erstarrte Statik der französischen Kultur' zu überwinden sucht und gleichzeitig über Frankreichs Grenzen hinauswirken kann", Axel Plathe, *André Gide und Klaus Mann*, 35.

⁴⁴ In 'Literarische Wahlverwandtschaften' Peter Schnyder describes this idolisation variously as "es [gibt] Leser, die einfach ihre Freude am gelesenen Werk haben, häufig auch darum, weil dieses [...] eigene, un- oder vorbewußte Wünsche, Sehnsüchte, Verhaltensweisen darstellt und damit domestizieren hilft, weil es den eigenen Standort relativiert, weil es identifikatorische Alternative bietet, aber auch mögliche individuelle oder gesellschaftliche Veränderungen simulieren und mithin antizipieren läßt. Verschiedene Leser verlegen diese Idealisierung gern in den Autor selbst, der ja in ihren Augen ein ideales Ich verkörpert" (282), "Neben der Rolle des idealen Meisters kann er auch jene des idealen Vaters erfüllen [...]. Gide wird bezeichnenderweise zum Führer in einer orientierungslosen, ja anarchisch sich gebärenden Zeit erhoben" (283) and "Von Gides Werk geht eine befreiende Wirkung aus, es bietet in jenen schwierigen Zeiten eine nicht zu unterschätzende Orientierung" (285).

Elements of this interpretation are also contained in Mann's reviews of Gide's texts. Mann believed that, because of Gide's apparent deep understanding and insight into the mind of the young, his novels were relevant to the younger generation, for the *angst* they depicted, transcended all time. Mann's belief in the relevance of Gide's work did not waver, indeed it recurs frequently in the appraisals of Gide's novels that Mann wrote between 1927 and 1933⁴⁵; however, his perception of the writer, André Gide, evolved throughout the Weimar Republic to take account of changes in the author's life and in society at large. Mann was particularly attracted by two aspects of Gide and his work, considering him an intellectual figurehead, with reference, in particular, to his commitment to broad socialist principles and a future based on a united Europe, and regarding him as the true exponent of the novelist's craft in the modern age.

5.2 Les Faux-monnayeurs as the paradigm for Mann's interpretation of the modern, 'European' novel

In May 1929 Mann published the essay 'André Gide', the third in a series of five cameo portraits by Mann of contemporary French cultural figures⁴⁶. He gave a broad overview of Gide's work, identifying in the process the importance of one novel in particular, Gide's Les Faux-monnayeurs, which he had first read in translation on its publication in 1928⁴⁷. Mann noted:

Kein Buch, das in diesem Jahrzehnt erschienen ist, weist, so klar und so kühn wie dieses, auf neue Möglichkeiten, eröffnet so überraschende und schöne Ausblicke. Gides 'erster Roman'⁴⁸ ist nicht nur ein Kunstwerk von stärkstem Reiz, rührendster Gefühlsstärke, sondern auch wegweisendes Experiment von großer Bedeutung (NE, 225).

⁴⁵ Mann gave his clearest expression to this in the closing paragraphs of 'Der Ideenroman' where he reflected: "Die folgende Generation zu kennen, [...] ist eine Leistung, die ich sehr bewundere. Was es auszusprechen gilt, ist, daß die Jugend jene erkennende Liebe erwidert, die Gide ihr schenkt. unsere jüngeren Brüder, unsere Söhne [...] werden sich noch in seinen Knabengestalten wiedererkennen" (NE, 206).

⁴⁶ Entitled 'Pariser Köpfe' the series was published in Wirtschaftskorrespondenz für Polen (Beilage Buch- und Kunstrevue) Katowice. It began on May 29 1929 with three articles - 'Die Surrealisten', an appraisal of the surrealist art and literature movement in France, portraits of the artist 'Frans Masereel', and André Gide, the article under discussion here. On June 15 1929 the series concluded with three further pieces - portraits of the writers Yvan and Claire Goll, of Foujita and of Yvonne George.

⁴⁷ André Gide: Les Faux-monnayeurs (Paris: Gallimard, 1925). Published in German as Die Falschmünzer (Stuttgart: Deutsche Verlags-Anstalt, 1928) translated by Ferdinand Hardekopf. In February 1928 Mann wrote to Gide from Milwaukee informing him "Obwohl ich solche Briefe nicht leiden kann, muß ich Ihnen schreiben, wie leidenschaftlich mir die «Faux monnayeurs» [sic] gefallen" (Corr, 607).

⁴⁸ Mann borrows here from Gide's dedication in Les Faux-monnayeurs where he wrote "A Roger Martin du Gard je dédie mon premier roman en témoignage d'amitié profonde" in André Gide: Les Faux-monnayeurs (Paris: Folio, 1980). Further references are given in the text after quotation.

Mann's recognition that Les Faux-monnayeurs offered 'neue Möglichkeiten' and, more importantly, that it was a 'wegweisendes Experiment von großer Bedeutung' indicated not only his growing realisation of the infinite possibilities of the novel genre but also suggested to him that in its challenge to convention, its experimentation and inherent complexity it were of paramount importance in the development of the novel genre in the twentieth century.

Mann's reading of Les Faux-monnayeurs prompted a personal interest in the techniques and concerns of the modern novel which rapidly extended to include such diverse authors as Virginia Woolf, James Joyce and Alfred Döblin. As a result, Gide's novel assumes a pivotal role in understanding Mann's own development as a novelist in the last years of the Weimar Republic, between 1929 and March 1933. He expressed his interpretation of Gide's approach to the novel in March 1929 in an essay entitled 'Der Ideenroman', devoted exclusively to Les Faux-monnayeurs, and the only essay by Mann to include an analysis of Gide's novelistic technique⁴⁹. This essay not only reveals Mann's own perception of the novel but, more importantly, it provides an invaluable starting point for an investigation of Mann's final novel of the Weimar period Treffpunkt im Unendlichen (1932).

Mann's interpretation of the novel of ideas in 'Der Ideenroman' and the slightly later essay 'André Gide', his terminology and the analogies he employs are taken from the chapter in Les Faux-monnayeurs, 'Édouard expose ses idées sur le roman' (FM, 179-191). Indeed, this chapter, where the fictional novelist, Édouard refers to his own novel Les Faux-monnayeurs as a "roman des idées" (FM, 187), is the source for the title of Mann's essay 'Der Ideenroman'. Mann believed the novel of ideas was the natural result of the rise of the cinema, in the early twentieth century, as a form of entertainment, better able than the written word to convey the immediacy of action. Film had superseded the traditional *Handlungsroman* in popular culture. It had thus been imperative that novelists redefine their genre and question the underlying purpose of their work. According to Mann, this had

⁴⁹ Mann refined and defined the ideas he expressed in this essay more precisely in André Gide und die Krise des modernen Denkens, 153-177.

resulted in "Zwei Möglichkeiten: sachlichste soziale Reportage mit ethisch-erzieherischer Endabsicht [...] oder, was Gide den Ideenroman nennt" (NE, 202).

This definition of contemporary European literature corresponds, in general terms, to the duality of Mann's own approach to literature in the period between 1927 and 1933. His realisation, expressed in 1927 in the essay 'Heute und Morgen' and discussed in Chapter One, that the exclusively aesthetic stance of his earliest prose was no longer admissible, had resulted in a growing personal commitment to social *engagement*. Initially it was voiced exclusively in his essayistic prose but was then crystallised in exile into his personal fight against German fascism. This perception of the writer's role as critic of society is reflected in 'Der Ideenroman', with his description of one part of contemporary literature as "sachlichste soziale Reportage mit ethisch erzieherischer Endabsicht" (NE, 202). The balance to this was provided by the novel of ideas. Whilst Mann did not debate the relative merits of either approach to the novel, implying on the contrary that both could co-exist, his praise was nonetheless reserved for the more innovative, and essentially artistic, namely, the *Ideenroman* as exemplified by Les Faux-monnayeurs. This may be explained by his own belief, which was repeated throughout the later years of the Weimar Republic, that, whilst the writer should function as critic, this should not prohibit the desire to create a work of art with aesthetic appeal that is divorced from the world in which it was created.

5.3 Les Faux-monnayeurs and Treffpunkt im Unendlichen, a comparison

5.3.1 Structure of the novels

In his essay 'Der Ideenroman', Mann described Les Faux-monnayeurs as a "fugenhaft[er] Ideenroman", an analogy borrowed directly from Gide's text⁵⁰ and then continued "Wie musikalisch alles ineinandergreift! Leidenschaften und Philosophien, erotische Anziehungen, Feindschaften, vielfältige Schicksale fügen sich sinnvoll zur Figur" (NE, 203-204). He repeated this description once more in the essay 'Andre Gide', where he noted:

⁵⁰ In 'Édouard expose ses idées sur le roman' Édouard had explained his objective in writing his novel Les Faux-monnayeurs with the words: "Ce que je voudrais faire [...] c'est quelque chose qui serait comme l'*Art de la fugue*. Et je ne vois pas pourquoi ce qui fut possible en musique serait impossible en littérature" (FM, 187).

Die «Falschmünzer» sind nichts Geringeres als ein neuer Typ von Roman, ihr Autor hat ihn den «fugenhaften Ideenroman» genannt. Denn fugenhaft greifen die vielen Schicksale dieser Erzählung ineinander, höchst reizvoll-schwierig eins ins andere verflochten (NE, 225).

Alongside the central concerns of Bernard's search for self-realisation and Édouard's hesitant love for his nephew Olivier, Gide wove into Les Faux-monnayeurs numerous secondary story-lines and concerns, and it is the nature of their interaction which provides the basis for Mann's and, indeed, Gide's own equation of this novel with the fugue in music. The musical form of the fugue intricately combines a number of individual melodies and musical themes, the overall effect of which is to create the impression of one melody both pursuing, and being pursued, by another⁵¹. In adapting this analogy from Gide, Mann implied that, as these melodies overlap in music, so, too, do Gide's storylines. In his description of Les Faux-monnayeurs Mann's use of *verflochten* further suggests that these story-lines are embedded, seemingly inextricably, within each other. At the same time, Mann suggests in this term that these story-lines also complement one another⁵² in a similar way to the interaction of the melodies in the fugue which achieve harmony, and thus are the complement of one another through the laws of counterpoint.

However, as a definition of the structure of the modern novel, Mann's comparison of Les Faux-monnayeurs with the fugue in music is ultimately abstract and conveys little of the intrinsic complexity of this novel form. He clarified his understanding of the structure of the modern novel and, in particular, the novel of ideas, with greater precision in his essay 'Zwei europäische Romane'. He devoted this essay to the contrasting styles of Virginia Woolf and Jean Cocteau.

Making specific reference to Woolf's novel Mrs Dalloway⁵³, Mann noted, once more, the development in the novel genre when he commented: "Man hat sich früher unter einem

⁵¹ For details of the musical form of the fugue see Percy A. Scholes, The Oxford Companion to Music 10th edn, ed. and revised by John Owen Ward (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1992), 376-378.

⁵² The interdependency between the many story-lines of Les Faux-monnayeurs is demonstrated when aspects of one story-line elucidate another.

⁵³ Axel Plathe is mistaken in his assertion that Mann's comments refer to Woolf's novel To the Lighthouse. See Plathe: Andre Gide und Klaus Mann.

Roman etwas anderes vorgestellt. Einen Roman schreiben hieß, eine ganz bestimmte Geschichte erzählen". However, Woolf's novel, he believed, represented a fundamental departure from this tradition for, as Mann continued, "Hier soll Leben gezeigt werden, scheinbar ohne Auswahl [...]. Denn kein Ding existiert vom anderen abgetrennt, alles ist Gewebe, Muster, Teppich und mystische Einheit" (NE, 207). The visual precision of his image of the intricately interwoven patterns of a carpet captured the complexity of structure of the modern novel in conveying a sense both of the multiplicity of plot strands, which makes an accurate description of plot difficult, and the infinite possibilities of their interaction.

Mann adapted this definition of the modern novel in Treffpunkt im Unendlichen, a text which reflects, in its structure, the complexities he had identified in the essays 'Zwei europäische Romane', 'Der Ideenroman' and 'André Gide'. In his description of Woolf's Mrs Dalloway in the essay 'Zwei europäische Romane', Mann suggested that the modern novel challenged the belief that the novel should follow the single fate of one character to the exclusion of all others. This widened the novel form to place individual fates in the context of a greater whole, which Mann termed, in 'Zwei europäische Romane', merely *Leben*. In his qualifying statement in his description of Mrs Dalloway 'kein Ding existiert vom anderen abgetrennt' Mann further emphasised the breadth of the modern novel. In Treffpunkt im Unendlichen Mann suggests this concept when he notes, through his protagonist, Sebastian "Man gehört immer in einen Zusammenhang, bleibt immer Glied einer Reihe" (TiU, 27).

In his description of Woolf's Mrs Dalloway Mann also provided his reader with an explanation for the structure of his own novel, Treffpunkt im Unendlichen, and the importance of the protagonists Sebastian and Sonja within it when he wrote:

Ein Mittelpunkt des verschlungenen Systems ist anzunehmen [...]. Nur daß diese Mittelpunkts- und Hauptperson nicht mehr gezeigt wird, weil gerade *ihr* Schicksal so über alle anderen hinaus interessant und wesentlich wäre; vielmehr, damit man von ihr [...] den Weg ins Labyrinth hinein und wieder aus ihm herausfände (NE, 207).

Treffpunkt im Unendlichen traces the circuitous route taken by Sebastian and his female counterpart Sonja towards their eventual, and fated, meeting. This meeting is anticipated and, indeed, prefigured in the *Märchen* outlined by Sebastian's Parisian colleague Sylvester Marschalk:

Ich möchte ein Märchen schreiben [...]. Und in diesem Märchen liebt ein Knabe ein Mädchen, das er nicht kennt und von dem er nicht einmal weiß, ob sie lebt; und er liebt sie mit seiner ganzen Seele; und er fühlt sich ihr zugehörig ganz und gar [...]. Seine Einsamkeit ist aufgehoben, aufgehoben im Traum (TiU, 67)⁵⁴.

However, Sonja and Sebastian appear merely as nominal protagonists, for their relationship is easily lost amidst numerous secondary story-lines as Mann introduces the individual and collective fates of a further ten characters. The inclusion of these secondary story-lines, and the complexity of structure they necessitate, differentiates Treffpunkt im Unendlichen from Mann's earlier texts Der fromme Tanz of 1926 and Alexander from 1930, each of which had been restricted to a simple, primarily linear plot centred upon a single story-line; Andreas' search for meaning in his life in Der fromme Tanz, and the mythologised history of Alexander the Great in Alexander. In both instances, this approach had excluded both subsidiary story-lines and secondary characters who had remained shadowy, ill-defined figures, of importance only in their reflection upon the hero. In consequence, in being more progressive, Treffpunkt im Unendlichen is more reminiscent of Mann's later novels Mephisto from 1936 and Der Vulkan from 1939.

The paths of these ten characters cross and recross throughout Treffpunkt im Unendlichen. In common with Gide in Les Faux-monnayeurs this approach frequently requires Mann to disrupt the flow of the narrative intentionally by suspending one story-line, often at a crucial moment in its development, in favour of another, apparently unrelated, line.

This creates a sense of simultaneity; that at a given moment in time numerous events take

⁵⁴ Mann's use of *mise en abyme* demonstrates a greater understanding of its function as reflective upon the text than Mann had demonstrated in 1929 in his essay 'André Gide'. Here he had implied that *mise en abyme* was comparable to didacticism when he commented: "[Das] Ineinanderverschachteln der beiden Romane - dessen, der existiert, und dessen, der geschrieben werden soll - ist also nicht romantische Spielerei, sondern Methode, um die Bedenken und Erwägungen des Autors anzubringen - Vorwand also zur Beichte" (NE, 203). This misconception lies in Mann's unequivocal identification of Édouard with Gide in the statement that Édouard is "André Gides Doppelgänger" (NE, 203).

place in a variety of diverse locations, all of which are ultimately related to one another. At the same time, he suggests a world beyond the fixed parameters of his text. In this Mann follows Gide who, in his approach to the novel, believed that his readers should not be fooled into thinking that the events they witness in the text are self-contained. Rather, by including, or sometimes merely hinting at, issues and story-lines that are apparently unrelated to the central concern, the novelist, Gide maintained, emphasised the limitations of the novel form; that the process of selection required in a work of fiction permitted only the depiction of one small part of a greater whole.

The novel alternates between three geographical centres - Berlin and Paris, the setting for all the initial action, then later Algeria - and three central characters - Sonja, Sebastian and the psychologist, Dr Massis. Each is the centre of a subsidiary group of characters; the first of these revolves around events amongst the Parisian avant-garde with the writer Sebastian at its centre. The second, set amongst the world of the Berlin theatre and focused on Sonja, parallels and complements the first. The third group, which is also found in Berlin, had had Sebastian at its heart originally; however, with his decision to travel to Paris, he vacates this position, and so enables Massis to appropriate and then expand upon it⁵⁵. Of Massis' sphere only one half, the small, drug-dependent clique with his secretary Frau Grete, Sebastian's former lover Do and the suicidal writer Richard Darmstädter at its heart, is mediated directly; of the other, the bourgeois capitalist world, only mention is made.

Within each group there are further subdivisions. Sebastian mediates between an ostentatious, hedonistic, avant-garde lifestyle, represented by the ageing actress Greta Valentin, and the impecunious literary world of Sylvester Marschalk. Whilst her profession and relationship with the dancer Gregor Gregori identify Sonja with the theatre, her affair with the industrialist Wilhelm Bayer introduces her to Berlin's affluent professional elite.

⁵⁵ The existence of this former group is implied in Frau Grete's pessimistic statement following Sebastian's departure: "nun wird unser netter kleiner Kreis ganz auseinanderfallen" (TiU, 29). His position within this group is identified in Do's confirmatory remark "Er war doch das Zentrum" (TiU, 29). It is further confirmed by the narrator's explanation of Massis' involvement with them as "An Sebastian's Kreis war er durch Frau Grete gekommen" (TiU, 44).

Neither story-line nor group exists in isolation from each other. Each of the secondary figures is subordinated initially to one of the three groups. However, there are no rigid boundaries between these groups, for characters mediate between the groups and, indeed, migrate from group to group. Through their interaction, Mann thus establishes points-of-contact between all the characters. This enables him to explore the symbiotic relationship between seemingly disparate and unrelated people and events. The choice taken by one character of a specific course of action has ramifications far beyond the limited sphere of that character's influence. The 'domino effect', which this suggests, is shown specifically in Treffpunkt im Unendlichen in Darmstädter's suicide.

For Darmstädter, suicide represents the only viable solution both to his failed relationship with Frau Grete's son, Walter, and to his estrangement from his father. He perceives only the immediate consequences of his action that, as his nominated heir, Walter shall benefit financially from his death. The ramifications are, however, more far-reaching, and result initially in Walter's imprisonment on suspicion of murder. However, they then extend to include Frau Grete; the subsequent publicity surrounding the suicide uncovers not only the well kept secret that she is Walter's mother, but also reveals the extent to which she has deceived her lover, Konsul Bruch, upon whose continued devotion she had depended for her future financial security. The despair into which she is plunged following the break-up of her relationship with Bruch then tempts her, in turn, to suicide.

In Les Faux-monnayeurs Gide had suggested that a single event may have implications far exceeding its initial significance. The death of the schoolboy, Boris, which at first appears merely a tragic accident but later is shown to have been engineered by others through a corrupted form of Russian roulette, is a clear demonstration of this. It results in children being withdrawn from Azäis' care and, in consequence, challenges the survival of the school, with guilt for his death being borne ostensibly by the 'League of Strong Men', the schoolboy fraternity which arranges Boris' death. On closer analysis, however, their

actions are determined by the sinister figure of Strouvilhou. In consequence, the schoolboys themselves are turned into victims. Yet Strouvilhou, though undoubtedly evil, is not solely responsible for Boris' death; he exploits a situation created ultimately by Édouard's suggestion that Boris attend the school, thus exposing him, indirectly, to the danger posed by Strouvilhou. Through the interaction of seemingly disparate events, Gide questioned absolute definitions of right and wrong, guilt and innocence for, when viewed from a wider perspective, all the characters are implicated, in this instance, in Boris' death.

The correlation between Mann's text Treffpunkt im Unendlichen and Gide's novel Les Faux-monnayeurs is then underlined when Mann intimates the indirect complicity of Sonja and Sebastian in the demise of another, although, initially, they appear innocent of involvement. The suicide of Sebastian's Parisian lover, Greta Valentin, can be traced to the rejection of her by the industrialist Wilhelm Bayer. Yet his decision is dictated by the intensification of his affair in Berlin with Sonja. Do's descent into a destructive addiction to morphine, although instigated by Dr Massis, is the direct consequence of Sebastian's sudden resolution to leave her and Berlin; in her subsequent despair Do turns to Massis who, by making her dependent on him and the drugs he offers as a fatal solace, acts as the agent of her decline. Sebastian compounds his guilt when, at their final meeting in Berlin, he does not dissuade Do from marrying Massis although he has, by this time, recognised the threat posed by Massis⁵⁶.

Through its structure Gide suggested that Les Faux-monnayeurs and the events it recounts formed only part of a greater whole. Whilst many of the events he narrates occur more or less concurrently, by including diary entries and letters which predate the novel⁵⁷,

⁵⁶ When Do turns to Sebastian, it is to gain his advice on whether she should marry Massis. However, Sebastian responds merely to the way in which she asks him for this advice, described as "schüchtern, als wenn sie ihn um einen viel zu großen Gefallen bäte" and replies, "Ich frage dich auch nicht um Rat, ob ich Greta heiraten soll". His answer is callous, indicated by the narrator's clarifying statement "meinte er hart" (TiU, 127). His failure to intervene at this stage, despite his recognition of the danger posed by Massis, is a combination of his belief in his own powerlessness in being able to prevent Do from her determined course of action and of an implied fatalism expressed in the words: "er glaubte sie nicht daran hindern zu dürfen, wenn sie denn zur Hölle fahren wollte" (TiU, 125).

⁵⁷ These letters and diaries tell, in particular, of Édouard's former love for Laura, of her marriage to Douviers, which is sanctioned and approved by Édouard, and of her adultery, which results in an unwanted pregnancy and is the point at which Les Faux-monnayeurs begins.

Gide disrupted not only the chronological progression of the novel, but he also challenged the temporal dimensions of his text. As a result, it suggests a life beyond the parameters of the text, intimating, as it does, a former existence with which the novel is not concerned. This is further emphasised in its ending. Although Gide resolves the main story-lines⁵⁸, he does not bring it to a definite close, for Les Faux-monnayeurs ends with Edouard's diary entry: "Je suis bien curieux de connaître Caloub" (FM, 378), a reference to Bernard's younger brother who, other than a cursory mention at the beginning, has not been involved within the text. Gide anticipates here the continuation of the lives of his characters; this is further emphasised in Édouard's suggestion for the conclusion of his own novel: "'Pourrait être continué ...' c'est sur ces mots que je voudrais terminer mes *Faux-monnayeurs*" (FM, 322).

In leaving the ending of Les Faux-monnayeurs open, Gide emphasised the limitations of the novel form. In leaving the reader speculating as to its continuation, he deliberately draws attention to the fact that fiction is restricted in what it can achieve, for it can illustrate only a fraction of life. Mann incorporated this aspect of Les Faux-monnayeurs into Treffpunkt im Unendlichen by also making his ending inconclusive. Whilst the main story-lines are resolved, thus dictating that the events of Treffpunkt im Unendlichen can continue no further, Mann leaves much unanswered; significantly, the question of Sebastian's future once Sonja, in whom he meets his perfect complement and upon whom his life comes to depend, has died. Furthermore, Mann emphasises the openness of his ending by including two apparently extraneous pieces of information. The first of these is the announcement of Massis' appointment as publicity manager and artistic director for Gregor Gregori⁵⁹. The second is in a diary entry written by Sonja's younger brother, Peti, in which he expresses his fear for his schoolfriend Elmar⁶⁰. Either one of these intimates a possible continuation in the

⁵⁸ That these events are resolved is demonstrated, in short, by Bernard's decision to return to his father; Laura's reconciliation with her husband Douviers, who has agreed to bring up her child as his own, by the fact that Édouard and Olivier are finally united and through Georges' escape from the influence of Ghéridanisol and, by extension, from Strouvillou.

⁵⁹ This is announced in a fictional newspaper cutting as "Kleine Theater - B.Z. vom 18. Mai. Doktor Bernhard Massis hat eine Aufforderung Gregor Gregoris, Propagandachef der Schauburg und künstlerischer Berater der Direktion zu werden, angenommen" (TiU, 252).

⁶⁰ Peti notes in his diary: "Ich muß aufhören, denn ich habe wirklich unbeschreibliche Angst, daß mit Elmar etwas Ernsthaftes los ist (TiU, 252). This is strangely prophetic, for his concern for Elmar and the conviction that he is seriously ill, corresponds to that felt by Sebastian for Sonja.

life of the novel. Indeed, the news of Massis' appointment in a key position on Gregori's staff instils a sense of future foreboding; throughout the novel, Massis abuses and exploits positions of authority in order to gain a power over others which, ultimately, destroys.

Whilst in its structure Treffpunkt im Unendlichen relies upon the techniques of the modern novel derived from the paradigm of Les Faux-monnayeurs, it is also determined by the mathematical proposition, to which the title refers, that parallel lines cross in infinity. This proposition is central to the main story-line of the meeting between Sonja and Sebastian. During the course of the novel they live essentially parallel lives, associating with the same people, even sharing the same thoughts⁶¹. Through this technique Mann aims to show their spiritual affinity and proximity which they are unable to bridge, except in an artificial infinity of a drug-induced 'high', because of the individuation to which they are subject.

The metaphor of parallel is not restricted, however, merely to this plot strand, but extends to all aspects of the novel to include both characters and events. For example, Sonja's attempts to quench her thirst with orange juice in the final chapter, "Sonja [bestellte] eine Orange pressée. 'Ich habe ekelhaft Durst', sagte sie hastig" (TiU, 248), remind the reader of Sebastian's thirst in Chapter One:

Als er sich eine Zigarette anzündete, schmeckte sie ihm nicht. Sein Mund war ausgetrocknet, der Rauch biß ihn am Gaumen und in der Kehle. Er überlegte, ob er eine von den Orangen essen sollte, die er oben im Netz in einer Tüte wußte. Aber er stellte sich das Schälen mühsam vor. Man holt sich klebrige Finger, dachte er und aß etwas Schokolade, was ihn noch durstiger machte (TiU, 31).

⁶¹ Sonja and Sebastian are linked both through Gregori, to whom Sonja is briefly engaged and with whom Sebastian has worked closely in the past, and through Wilhelm Bayer, the lover of Sonja and Greta Valentin. Their social milieux, Sebastian's in Paris and Sonja's in Berlin, embrace the same characters, notably the gigolo Bob Mardorf and the gossip columnist Maurice Larue. Mann alerts the reader to their mental proximity in his narration of their respective reactions to news of the execution of three young criminals in the United States. Sonja's reflection: "Wenn ich wenigstens irgendwen hätte, mit dem zusammen ich an diese drei weinenden jungen Mörder denken könnte: Ihr schien es, als sei dies nun der einzige Maßstab für den Wert irgendeiner menschlichen Beziehung, die noch für sie kommen könnte: ob den anderen auch der Gedanke an diese drei Knaben so tief erschütterte. Irgendwo muß doch einer sein" (TiU, 135) is then mirrored by Sebastian's response: "Er sehnte sich plötzlich mit einer ungestümen Heftigkeit nach irgendeinem Menschen - irgendeinem -, mit dem er über diese drei weinenden jungen Mörder sprechen könnte. Die Intensität der Anteilnahme, die jemand an dem Jammer dieser kindlichen Angeklagten nahm, schien ihm der Maßstab dafür zu werden, wie nahe oder ferne ein Mensch ihm war. «Irgendwo muß es doch einen geben»" (TiU, 191-192). Mann's simultaneity is, however, somewhat flawed here, for Sonja reads the report in March whilst Sebastian is unaware of it until a month later, in April.

Sonja's fever, emphasised in the descriptions "Ihre Stirne war glühend heiß" and "Ihre Wangen, die vorhin so weiß waren, glühten jetzt" (TiU, 249), which Sebastian tries to alleviate by applying cold compresses, recalls his attempts to escape the heat of the train he takes from Berlin to Paris: "Er legte die Stirne gegen die Fensterscheibe, empfand mit Dankbarkeit, daß sie kühl war, und schloß die Augen" (TiU, 32). Sebastian's feeling of gratitude at the sudden coolness is echoed by Sonja's, 'Danke', when he prepares the first compress for her: "Er legte ihr das feuchte Tuch auf die Stirne. Sie lächelte mühsam. 'Danke', sagte sie" (TiU, 249).

Mann continues the parallels between Paris and Berlin in the figures of Sylvester Marschalk and Richard Darmstädter. He initially compares Marschalk with what Darmstädter had once been, the penniless writer who suffers because his poverty prevents him truly living the artistic lifestyle he craves. Mann then continues the comparison by mirroring both Darmstädter and Marschalk in their intellectual endeavours. Of the diversity of Marschalk's interests Mann writes:

Er las fanatisch, und fanatisch produzierte er. Er schrieb nicht nur - Sonnette und Detektivromane, klassische Komödien, Satiren und Essays -, er komponierte auch Fugen, modellierte, studierte Physik, Mathematik und Chemie; vor ein paar Wochen hatte er seine Prüfung in chinesischer Schrift und Sprache gemacht (TiU, 63),

whilst of Darmstädter he remarks more generally:

Er beschäftigt sich mit Musik, komponiert an einem Oratorium und an einer Symphonie für Jazz. Andererseits arbeitet er philosophisch und bewahrt in seinem Schreibtisch Einwürfe zu großen Studien über Spinoza, den deutschen Idealismus, Kierkegaard (TiU, 149).

However, Mann then broadens his description to point to more personal and psychological similarities. They both have homosexual inclinations, which Darmstädter affirms openly in his infatuation with Frau Grete's son, Walter, but which Marschalk has yet to recognise as such. In conversation with Sebastian, for example, Marschalk adopts the role of the

lady-killer and yet is unable to play it with any conviction. "Er erging sich in männlich ordinären Redensarten", the narrator comments, before adding "bis er plötzlich angeekelt die Tasse wegschob und in einen anderen Ton verfiel" (TiU, 67). His disgust arises not from his subject matter, his latest conquest, but from the self-deception the role demands of him, suddenly admitting: "ich habe diese Frauen alle so satt"; he then hints at his latent homosexuality, with the euphemism 'Abenteuern', when he confides to Sebastian "ich sehne mich nach anderen Abenteuern".

Both Darmstädter and Marschalk are outsiders who share a deep inferiority complex originating in their ethnic origins. Darmstädter, for example, is a Jew whose experience of his heritage as both 'Fluch' and 'Auszeichnung' is characteristic of his masochism:

er [lernte] sehr früh empfinden, daß er Jude war. Früher als die meisten machte er sich mit einer übertriebenen und masochistischen Schärfe klar, was dies bedeute, und er sagte sich, daß es vor allem ein Fluch war, dann freilich auch eine Auszeichnung (TiU, 148).

As the verb 'empfinden' suggests, his first realisation of his Jewishness is not conscious; once it becomes so his attitude towards it is contradictory; he tortures himself with the belief that he belongs to a race which is damned and yet accepts that the Jews are the chosen people in his statement: "ich gehöre einer verdamnten und auserwählten Rasse an" (TiU, 148). By associating with Aryans of whom he believes himself, as a Jew, unworthy, he heightens his sense of racial inferiority, illustrated through Darmstädter's childhood conviction, "Ich bin es nicht wert, blonde Freunde zu haben" (TiU, 149) where 'blond' is synonymous with Aryan. This sentiment is repeated once more in his plans for a potential book, of which he notes: "Eigenes Kapitel über die Liebe des dunklen Menschen zum hellen. Die Liebe des jüdischen Menschen zum Arier" (TiU, 176). Mann then offers an apparently impartial assessment via Dr Massis' personal notes on Darmstädter's complex psychology. Massis comments: "Seine masochistischen Hinneigung zu dem blonden Proletariertypus ist doppelt begründet: in der

Instinktverlassenheit seiner *Rasse*, die sich zum Kontrasttyp hingezogen fühlt, und in der Untergangsbereitschaft seiner *Klasse*" (TiU, 150).

Marschalk is originally from Eastern Europe and regards himself, on that basis, as inferior to his Western counterparts for "er kam aus einem Winkel Europas, aus dem zu stammen nicht ehrenvoll war", a place of which the reader is merely told "Wo Ungarn und Rumänien aneinanderstoßen, lag der Ort, wo [Marschalk] geboren war. Er war ungarisch gewesen, gehörte aber jetzt Rumänien" (TiU, 63). This change in nationality robs him of his ethnic identity and instils in him a reverence for race which becomes "der einzige Wert, der bei ihm galt" (TiU, 63). It expresses itself in his love for his pure-bred dog, Ariel, a luxury he can ill-afford, and more importantly, through a fervent, nationalistic pride in his adopted homeland, France. This manifests itself in his sympathy with the aims of the nationalist movement *Action française*. The incongruity of this support is indicated in the statement "der Fremdling aus dem Ostwinkel Europas war französischer Nationalist" (TiU, 65), for by definition nationalism rejects the alien and the foreign.

Both Marschalk's nationalism and his adoration of the racially pure indicate a latent masochism; they remind him of his own 'impurity' for he is the product of many different cultures:

serbisches Blut mischte sich in ihm mit mazedonischem; etwas keltisches kam hinzu, wie er behauptete. Er war klein, schmal, hart und elastisch. Sein rassig magerer Kopf mit dem dichten und schönen Haar hätte in der Tat der eines französischen Aristokraten sein könne; nur die dunklen, weiten, mandelförmigen Augen blickten etwas schwermütig-orientalisch (TiU, 65).

As potential suicides, Darmstädter and Marschalk sublimate their desire for death in their work. When this is no longer possible, or when their work is not successful, the temptation to take their own lives becomes ever greater. Following his failed attempt at a sexual relationship with Frau Grete's son, Walter, Darmstädter, for example, plans an extensive treatise on the essential isolation of one human from another. Whilst he can temporarily fool

himself into believing that his preparations and notes will be realised in book form, in deliberating upon his will, he unconsciously acknowledges that death, through suicide, is imminent.

When Sebastian visits him for the last time in Paris, Marschalk denounces the philistinism of the society of which he is a part, declaring

Nur Mißerfolge, nichts als Mißerfolge. In dieser verrotteten demokratischen Welt ist kein Platz mehr für einen wie mich. Die Ausstattungsrevue und der Unterhaltungsroman triumphieren. Die Bühnen schicken mir meine klassischen Komödien zurück, die Verleger meine Sonette und Oden, meine historischen Erzählungen; die Zeitschriften meine Essays über altfranzösische, orientalische und antike Literatur (TiU, 201).

His assertion 'in dieser [...] Welt ist kein Platz mehr für einen wie mich' is deliberately ambiguous. It appears to refer to his desire to create 'serious' art. This view would bring his portrayal close to Mann's views in 'Heute und Morgen' from 1927; here he attacked modern writers for insisting that art have a specific and defined purpose and thus ascribing utilitarian principles to it. However, Marschalk's outburst is preceded by the impersonal words: "manchmal glaubt man, es geht nicht mehr" (TiU, 201); this is the first suggestion that Marschalk is close to ending his life, to which he then alludes when he confides in Sebastian: "Es ist schön, daß du da bist [...], ich hatte nämlich für heute abend - etwas ganz Gräßliches vor" (TiU, 202). Marschalk does not commit suicide; instead he joins the French army. That this is merely a surrogate for death, however, is suggested in his preparations; he leaves his collected works in the care of his sponsor, the Duc d'Acquitaine, informing him at the same time "Ich schreibe nicht mehr, ab heute. Die Literatur liegt hinter mir. Ich werde Soldat" (TiU, 240). By turning his back on the literature which had given his life meaning, Marschalk also turns his back on life itself⁶².

⁶² It is to be assumed that in Mann's original, these similarities were more marked, for it is clear, from a diary entry from 1932, that Mann had initially made both men Jewish and had only removed the Jewish overtones from Marschalk at a later stage following complaints. In his diaries Mann noted in 1932: "Um 12 Uhr: Dobò, der «Treffpunkt»-Korrekturen hat und gekränkt über einige Züge des Sylvester Marschalk ist. Verspreche ihm [...] wenigstens das Jüdische auszumerzen" (TbI, 38, 8.2.32).

Sebastian connects Marschalk to Darmstädter, for he is befriended by both men. Mann adopts this technique once more in establishing the parallels between Greta Valentin, who is involved with Sebastian in Paris, and Sonja, whom he first meets in Africa. In common with Marschalk and Darmstädter, Greta Valentin and Sonja are complementary figures whose lives are linked by their involvement with the German industrial W. Bayer. He ends his affair with Greta in anticipation of beginning a new one with Sonja. Initially, the similarities between them are easily seen.

Although otherwise physically dissimilar, they are each tanned, for as the novel opens, Greta has just returned from a trip to Cuba, Sonja from a skiing holiday in Switzerland. They have personal connections with Munich, the city of Sonja's birth, associated in Greta's mind with the risqué and avant-garde. "Große Münchener Zeit von 1910", she recalls dispassionately in memory shortly after meeting Sebastian, "Wedekind und die Scharfrichter. Literarisches Kabarett, Atelierfeste, Greta, nackt unterm weißen Pelzmantel, großes Gejohle, Lyriker verlobt sich denselben Abend mit ihr" (TiU, 92) and then dismisses the era with the simple statement "Ja Ja, das waren Zeiten, recht kindlich und flott" (TiU, 93). The stage drew both women to Berlin; for Sonja, Berlin is the first step in her career as a starring actress. In contrast, for Greta, who arrived in the capital during the inflationary era that followed the end of war, it had marked the pinnacle of her success as a dancer; in conversation with Sebastian she summarises this time when she tells him "damals hatte ich gerade meine große Zeit. Deutsches Theater in München, Alkazar Hamburg, Balkantournee, jedes Jahr ein paar Monate Kurfürstendamm" (TiU, 93). The closest connection between them occurs, however, when Sonja whilst travelling through southern Europe, reflects on news of Greta's suicide: "Was ist neulich dieser armer Person in Paris passiert, der Freundin von Bayer?" (TiU, 208).

This symmetry, as Frederic Kroll has identified, is used particularly in Chapters Three and Ten⁶³. He draws attention to their respective length (at 42 and 31 pages respectively they

⁶³ Kroll also draws attention to the fact that dinner parties feature in both as do outbursts by jealous women; Julia Bayer, in Three, rails against her husband, Wilhelm Bayer and Sonja, whilst in Ten, Froschele attacks both Sonja and Gregor Gregori. Frederic Kroll (ed): *Klaus-Mann-Schriftenreihe* Vol 3 *Vor der Sintflut 1927-1933* (Wiesbaden: Edition Klaus Blahak, 1979) 150-178, (171-173).

are the longest in the novel), their place within the text (as the antepenultimate chapter, Ten is the inverse of Chapter Three) and to events within them. Such events include, for example, the introduction of Greta Valentin in Chapter Three and her death in Chapter Ten; the answer to Sebastian's query as to Greta's age, posed in Three, is provided in Ten; Marschalk outlines the *Märchen* he aims to write in Chapter Three, and, by Sebastian's farewell visit in Chapter Ten, this *Märchen* is complete and ready for recitation.

5.3.2 Narration

Mann highlighted the key difficulty underlying the complexity of the novel of ideas when, in the essay 'Zwei europäische Romane', he qualified his description of Woolf's novel Mrs Dalloway with the words:

soviel vom Teppich man aufzeigen, soviel Gewebe man verfolgen möchte, Auswahl muß sein. Sonst käme keine Erzählung zustande, sondern einfach das Leben, das sich in seinem ganzen Umfang doch bekanntlich nicht erzählen läßt (NE 207).

He had already intimated the need for selection and order when, with regard to the plot of Les Faux-monnayeurs, he had noted in 'Der Ideenroman' that "Hineinverwoben sind Weisheit, Liebe und Erfahrung des Dichters, dessen Geist all diese Schicksale ordnete" (NE, 205). An instinctive response to Mann's phrase supposes that this is merely his acknowledgement of Gide's expertise as a novelist in skilfully constructing a novel of great complexity. However, closer analysis suggests that Mann's association of *Dichter* with 'Weisheit', 'Liebe' and 'Erfahrung' is, in the context of Les Faux-monnayeurs, confusing and ultimately misleading. The 'Weisheit, Liebe und Erfahrung' which is conveyed within Les Faux-monnayeurs is not voiced by the actual author, Gide. Whilst he is ultimately responsible for its construction and for all forms of its narration, Gide does not overtly participate within the novel. Rather the *Dichter* to whom Mann refers here is Gide's creation, the fictional author who assumes the role initially of the overt narrator of Les Faux-monnayeurs.

Mann's confusion between the fictional author and Gide has its origins in Les Faux-monnayeurs in the ambiguously titled chapter 'L'auteur juge ses personnages' (FM, 215-218) to which Mann made indirect reference when he noted:

Die Blicke, die [Gide] uns in seine Werkstatt tun läßt, sind nicht von koketter und trickhafter Art, wie wir es etwa bei älteren Erzählern finden, hier wird mit offenen Karten gespielt. Wir erleben die Sorgen mit, die sich der Autor um seine Figuren macht: Wie wird sich dieser entwickeln, wie jener? Er teilt uns noch, was ihn am tiefsten quält, mit: Die Zweifel an der eigenen Leistung⁶⁴ (NE, 203).

Mann assumed that the author of the title was Gide and that 'L'auteur juge ses personnages' had been included to demonstrate the difficulties experienced by the novelist when writing. Closer analysis not only disputes this but also suggests a threefold purpose in its inclusion. Initially it invites comparison with Édouard's earlier statement in 'Édouard expose ses idées sur le roman' that the novel should not be made to conform to a predetermined plan, but should be allowed to evolve naturally⁶⁵. The reader is thus presented with the 'theoretical' position in Édouard's comment and its practical realisation in 'L'auteur juge ses personnages'. In turn, this chapter highlights the fact that Les Faux-monnayeurs is *not* reality but essentially an artificial construct. Finally, in acknowledging their flaws and weaknesses and, at times, his own dislike of them, the author of the title dissociates himself from his characters. In so doing, he both challenges the reader's own perception of the principal characters of Les Faux-monnayeurs and prevents the reader's unconditional identification with them.

However, the concerns and reservations voiced about the characters and the concession that chance had intervened in his novel (which caused the 'author' to exclaim: "Je ne les cherchais point ; c'est en suivant Bernard et Olivier que je les ai trouvés sur ma route" (FM, 218)), are expressed not by Gide but by the unnamed, fictional writer who is ultimately

⁶⁴ Gide concluded his remarks in 'L'auteur juge ses personnages' with the words: "S'il m'arrive jamais d'inventer encore une histoire, je ne la laisserai plus habiter que par des caractères trempés, que la vie, loin d'émousser, aguise. Laura, Douviers, La Pérouse, Azaïs ... que faire avec tous ces gens-là?" (FM, 218).

⁶⁵ Édouard had insisted in his long exposition on the nature of the novel that "un plan, pour un livre de ce genre, est essentiellement inadmissible. Tout y serait faussé si j'y décidais rien par avance. J'attends que la réalité me le dicte" (FM, 185)

Gide's creation. When Mann makes the statement: "Hineingewoben sind die Weisheit, Liebe und Erfahrung des Dichters", *Dichter* should refer to this anonymous fictional author and his role as the narrator of Les Faux-monnayeurs. That the wisdom, love and experience are 'woven into' the novel indicates that his role as narrator transcends that of the mere impartial and distanced chronicler of events as they unfold. His views are integral to Les Faux-monnayeurs. In selecting the terms *Weisheit* and *Erfahrung*, Mann recognises that the narrator of Gide's novel approaches his subject matter from a position of greater maturity than the characters in the novel. When he then chooses the word *Liebe*, Mann further acknowledges that the narrator does not approach his subject from a position of objectivity for *Liebe* suggests a high degree of subjective, emotional identification with his characters.

Although the fictional author of Les Faux-monnayeurs bears most responsibility for its recounting, he is not the sole narrative agent. Each of the characters, though most frequently Édouard, Bernard and Olivier, acts as an interdiegetic narrator⁶⁶, either with the inclusion of their diaries and letters or through their apparently unmediated thought processes. None of the narrators is granted omniscience. The position of the interdiegetic narrators as participants within the novel precludes this; their knowledge is restricted to the immediate sphere of their own influence, thereby denying an awareness of the implications for others of the events they relate. For example, when Bernard Profitendieu decides to leave home having discovered he is illegitimate, he believes it concerns no-one other than himself.

Indeed, in his farewell letter to M. Profitendieu, he claims that it will be a relief to all, and especially to his mother, as he explains "comme ma vue lui rappelait sans cesse quelque chose de sa vie qu'elle aurait voulu effacer, je pense qu'elle vue verra partir avec soulagement et plaisir" (FM, 23). What he does not and cannot anticipate is the devastating effect his departure will have on M. Profitendieu's personal and married life. This is revealed to the reader only much later in the novel when Profitendieu confides in Édouard:

⁶⁶ This term is taken from Schlomith Rimmon-Kenan, Narrative Fiction, Contemporary Poetics (London: Routledge, 1990), 94. the 'interdiegetic narrator' she defines as a character performing a dual role as a figure in the narrative told by the external narrator and as the narrator of a secondary tale within the main story.

S'il se doutait que, depuis son départ, je n'ai pas cessé de penser à lui, de la suivre . . . Mais tout de même, ce que vous pouvez lui dire, c'est que vous m'avez vu [...] ce que vous seul pouvez lui dire. C'est que je ne lui en veux pas, [...] que je n'ai jamais cessé de l'aimer . . . comme un fils. [...] ce que vous pouvez lui dire aussi [...] c'est que sa mère m'a quitté (FM, 328).

In contrast, the fictional author's status as extradiegetic narrator⁶⁷ makes him superior to the novel, for he is not personally involved within the text; however, his asides to the reader, expressing his surprise at the turn events have taken, emphasise the limitations of his knowledge. That the fictional author is not omniscient is most apparent in the chapter 'L'auteur juge ses personnages'. Here the fictional author compares the traveller, journeying at night, with an author, for neither can see clearly the path they are to take.

Le voyageur, parvenu au haut de la colline, s'assied et regarde avant de reprendre sa marche, à présent déclinée; il cherche à distinguer où le conduit enfin ce chemin sinueux qu'il a pris, qui lui semble se perdre dans l'ombre et, car le soir tombe, dans la nuit. Ainsi l'auteur imprévoyant s'arrête un instant, reprend souffle, et se demande avec inquiétude où va le mener son récit (FM, 215).

Consequently, there is no single, dominant authority or point of view, for the interaction between narrators, by changing the point of focalisation, constantly changes the narratorial perspective within the novel. This permits Gide to approach a single event from a number of differing positions with correspondingly diverse interpretations, all dependent upon the narrator's subjective position.

Although Mann made no detailed study of the narrative technique of Les Faux-monnayeurs in his essay 'Der Ideenroman', a study of Treffpunkt im Unendlichen reveals similarities between the narration of his text and that of Les Faux-monnayeurs. Mann distinguished Treffpunkt im Unendlichen from his earlier novels Der fromme Tanz and Alexander. In each of these he had relied principally on retrospective, omniscient narration from a position close to the protagonist to guide, instruct and even determine the reader's views.

⁶⁷ Rimmon-Kenan, in Narrative Fiction. Contemporary Poetics, 94, defines the 'extradiegetic narrator' as a narrator who is external to the tale he relates, being neither a figure nor involved in the events of which he tells.

Conventional, omniscient narration still dominates in Treffpunkt im Unendlichen. However, Mann does not rely exclusively upon it for, in contrast to Der fromme Tanz and Alexander, it is neither the sole and definitive form of narration nor is it the instrument of covert didacticism⁶⁸. Mann experiments with the possibilities of the interaction between forms of narration, introducing into Treffpunkt im Unendlichen notebook entries, letter extracts and his characters' apparently unmediated thoughts, the latter in the form of stream-of-consciousness writing, a technique which also enabled him to include a psychological dimension in this work, interspersing retrospection with simultaneous narration, signalled by recourse to the present tense. He broadens his definition of a narrator to embrace characters within his text; each of the main characters contributes to the narration of the novel for Mann. There is no unanimity between narrators and contradiction is frequent. This reinforces that there is no single, incontrovertible and infallible 'higher' authority within the text; with the inclusion of each view or impression without evaluation, a composite image of characters and events gradually emerges. This is illustrated by the contrasting and conflicting images of Gregor Gregori that emerge during the novel and which derive from four main sources - the extradiegetic narrator, Sebastian, Froschele and Sonja. These images range from the overtly negative, as a self-obsessed dancer willing to sacrifice his ideals and his friends to his ambition, to the overtly positive, an angel whose love can save Froschele from the destructive influence of the metropolis Berlin.⁶⁹

The interdiegetic narrators are all personally involved in the events they narrate, with the result there is little distance between them and their narrative. In consequence they convey subjective impressions and interpretations relative to their participation in the events they describe. Mann exploits this aspect, in particular, in his descriptions of a character's intrinsic merit for these are ascribed primarily to the interdiegetic narrators. By contrast, through his position as external to events, the extradiegetic narrator proffers an apparently more objective standpoint. He restricts his view to that which is either easily verifiable, such as

⁶⁸ For a discussion of the narration in these novels see Chapters Three and Four.

⁶⁹ Reflecting on his friendship with the actor, Sebastian for example notes of Gregori's search for fame: "Wie ungetreu gegen unsere gemeinsame Jugend! Er verrät alles - für was? Vielleicht für Geld, vielleicht für die Glorie der Sechstagerennen und der Boulevardpresse?" (TiU, 131). At the opposite extreme is Froschele's confusion: "Große, blaue schillernde Flügel schienen [Gregori] von den Schultern zu wachsen, und statt des tadellosen Abendzuges trug er vor Froscheles tränengeblendeten und kranken Augen ein weißes Gewand [...]. Weihnachtsengel - ' zitterte Froscheles Mund." (TiU, 160-161).

descriptions of physical appearance, or to that which is generally known, a character's greed for power or abuse of others, for example. This is not to suggest that the extradiegetic narrator is impartial, for he is not. Direct interjections aimed at the reader and commentary upon events as they develop illustrate his identification with the characters.

The complexity of the structure and narration of Treffpunkt im Unendlichen demands the reader's active participation in the reading process. This is again in contrast to both Der fromme Tanz and Alexander where linear progression and simple narrative technique had, to some extent, encouraged the reader to read the text passively, with little interaction with the events recounted.. In contrast to the characters within Treffpunkt im Unendlichen, whose participation within the text restricts their perspective, the reader shares, with the omniscient narrator, an overview of all the story-lines. Consequently, it is the reader of Treffpunkt im Unendlichen, in common with the reader of Gide's Les Faux-monnayeurs and Woolf's Mrs Dalloway, who establishes the points of contact between many diverse story-lines and characters.

5.4 The Themes of Les Faux-monnayeurs and Treffpunkt im Unendlichen

In its structure and narration, Mann's novel Treffpunkt im Unendlichen suggests that he regarded Gide's Les Faux-monnayeurs as paradigmatic both for the European modern novel and his own text. It is in his choice of thematic concerns, though, that Mann demonstrates his close affinity to Gide for he includes in Treffpunkt im Unendlichen a concern with the nature of freedom, an adaptation of Gidean sincerity and an investigation into the nature of evil. Initial points-of-contact between the texts are suggested, however, by Mann's reliance on Gide's creation, Édouard in his portrayal of the writer Sebastian.

5.4.1 Édouard and Sebastian

Édouard in Les Faux-monnayeurs and Sebastian in Treffpunkt im Unendlichen appear to bear only superficial similarity, initially, to one another. For example, they each occupy a

central position within their respective texts⁷⁰; although both are professional authors neither is shown to actually write and, finally, they are each required to advise on the prudence of the marriage of a former lover to another. However, in his characterisation of Sebastian, Mann incorporates three specific aspects of Gide's portrayal of Édouard. These are the writer's distorted relationship with reality, the correspondence between the experience of love and artistic production and the importance of travel as a means of breaking the ties between themselves and others.

In the novelist, Édouard, in Les Faux-monnayeurs Gide created a figure, only able to comprehend reality once it had been mediated through the aesthetic. It is suggested in Édouard's admission:

Rien n'a pour moi d'existence, que *poétique* (et je rends à ce mot son plein sens) - à commencer par moi-même. Il me semble parfois que je n'existe pas vraiment, mais simplement que j'imagine que je suis. Ce à quoi je parviens le plus difficilement à croire c'est à ma propre réalité (FM, 73).

He is unable to divorce his skills as a writer from his life, for the events within it and their stylisation all form intrinsic elements of his work. This Édouard acknowledges in the statement "Depuis plus d'un an que j'y travaille, il ne m'arrive rien que je n'y verse, et que je n'y veuille faire entrer: ce que je vois, ce que je sais, tout ce que m'apprend la vie des autres et la mienne" (FM, 184). However, this approach is, at times, inappropriate to the situation; following the breakdown in his relationship with Bernard, for example, M. Profitendieu confides his misery to Édouard. Relating this incident in his diary Édouard notes that rather than paying attention to the message behind M. Profitendieu's words he focuses upon Profitendieu's overuse of the verb 'savoir':

Depuis quelques instants, mon émotion fléchissait, car je venais de m'apercevoir que le verbe 'savoir' figurait dans presque toutes ses phrases. Je devins aussitôt moins soucieux de ce qu'il me disait que d'observer ce pli qui pouvait être professionnel (FM, 328).

⁷⁰ For example, Édouard shares with the narrator, through his diaries, responsibility for much of the actual narration of Les Faux-monnayeurs. Furthermore, he unifies the many disparate strands of the novel, for the paths of all the subsidiary characters cross his own whilst, at the same time, he alone transcends the generation divide and, as a result, acts as mediator between the opposing generational groupings. Sebastian's importance, whilst less complicated, is calculated in direct proportion to his pivotal role within the plot of Treffpunkt im Unendlichen.

The scene between M. Profitendieu and Édouard is recalled when, in Treffpunkt im Unendlichen Sebastian and Do meet for the first time since his departure for Paris. Whilst Do tells him about her new relationship with Massis, Sebastian initially listens attentively as Édouard had first listened to Profitendieu. Sebastian cannot condone the means used by Massis to win over Do, of which he notes "dieser verdächtige Mensch [hatte] nicht nur mit geistigen Mitteln gearbeitet [...], sondern auch mit sehr materiellen, die nicht mehr im Gebiet des «Interessanten» lagen" and then dismisses Massis' approach as "unanständig" (TiU, 125). However, Sebastian is unable to condemn Massis because of his tendency "die Angelegenheiten seiner Freunde [...] zuerst ästhetisch, dann erst moralisch oder von einem noch schlichteren Standpunkt aus zu beurteilen" (TiU, 124-5). The precedence of the aesthetic sense in his interpretation of events thus brings Sebastian close to Édouard in Les Faux-monnayeurs.

Both Édouard and Sebastian fall in love, Édouard with his nephew, Olivier, and Sebastian with Sonja and it is here that their greatest similarity is revealed. Although each had believed himself to have been in love in the past, in particular in Édouard's former relationship with Laura and Sebastian's with Do, the experience of loving and exposure to true love liberates in each a stifled and repressed creative force. Édouard's fascination with the idea of writing, expressed in the words "A vrai dire, du livre même, je n'ai pas encore écrit une ligne. Mais j'y ai déjà beaucoup travaillé. J'y pense chaque jour et sans cesse" (FM, 186) had prevented him from writing; the longer he dwelt upon his intention of composing a 'pure' novel freed of all conventional forms of writing, the less the act of writing could be accomplished. Édouard's obsession with the *idea* of writing prevents him from the *act* of writing. In Treffpunkt im Unendlichen Sebastian's reluctance is reflected in his conviction "Ich bin noch zu jung [...]. Erst muß ich Stoff sammeln" (TiU, 53). Here Sebastian's 'Stoff sammeln' is comparable to Édouard's 'J'y pense chaque jour et sans cesse' in that it is essentially a delaying tactic.

The beloved Olivier, in Les Faux-monnayeurs and Sonja, in Treffpunkt im Unendlichen represents the vitality and energy from which creativity arises. The connection between love and the creative impetus is expressed in Sebastian's letter to Do, written shortly after meeting Sonja in which he informs Do:

ich werde arbeiten. [...]. Nun kommen Bücher [...]. Was habe ich denn gewußt von allen meinen Kräften? Jetzt könnte mich nichts mehr stören. Weißt Du, so nach Bäume ausreisen fühle ich mich. Mögen Bürgerkriege die Zivilisation zerfetzen - das meine ich ganz im Ernst -: mögen sie, mögen sie. Solange sie lebt (TiU, 220).

The energy conveyed here in Sebastian's statement is reminiscent of Édouard's diary entry in Les Faux-monnayeurs when, having realised that his love for Olivier is reciprocated, he notes: "Rapporté à Olivier ses affaires. Sitôt de retour de chez Passavant, travail. Exaltation calme et lusive. Joie inconnue jusqu'à ce jour. Écrit trente pages de *Faux-Monnayeurs*, sans hésitation, sans ratures" (FM, 322). He then continues "C'est par lui [Olivier], c'est à travers lui que je sens et que je respire" (FM, 324). Mann recalls the connection, implied by Édouard, between life and love when, in his letter to Do, Sebastian makes the simple statement: "Jetzt fängt das Leben für mich erst an" (TiU, 220)⁷¹.

The reader first meets Édouard and Sebastian whilst each travels to Paris, Édouard from Britain and Sebastian from Berlin with each embracing the itinerant lifestyle which travel represents. During Les Faux-monnayeurs, for example, Édouard journeys from Britain to Paris, then to Switzerland and, after a short sojourn in Saas-Fé, returns once more to Paris. Sebastian alternates only between Berlin and Paris initially, but this soon extends to Morocco and, in particular, Fez, where he meets Sonja. The decision to travel is not a result of conscious deliberation but is a spontaneous decision, reflected, for instance, in an entry in Édouard's diary which predates the action of Les Faux-monnayeurs. Here he notes his intention to travel to London with the words: "Je m'embarque demain pour Londres. J'ai pris soudain la résolution de partir. Il est temps" (FM, 124). Sebastian's determination to leave

⁷¹ Both novels close before this new vitality can be realised; indeed, Sonja's death in Treffpunkt im Unendlichen leaves unanswered the question of what Sebastian shall do once his 'muse' has died.

Berlin is of a comparable abruptness and is reflected in Do's incomprehension at his departure as she poses the questions: "Warum, woher war plötzlich diese Unruhe über ihn gekommen? Und die fixe Idee, sie müßten sich «vorübergehend» trennen? Und, schon ein paar Wochen später, der Entschluß abzureisen, auf und davon?" (TiU, 306).

The choice of 'sich vorübergehend trennen' and 'auf und davon' in Mann's text intimates the key importance that travel represents for Sebastian. Both phrases imply the end of a relationship hastened by the decision to travel. In the context of both novels, travel for Édouard and Sebastian, is a means by which to break the personal ties between themselves and those around them. This is illustrated most clearly with Édouard, who only leaves for London because he is convinced of his young nephew Olivier's indifference towards him. To remain in Paris, and thus in close proximity to Olivier, is impossible, a realisation Édouard expresses in his diary when he notes: "Partir parce que l'on a trop grande envie de rester" (FM, 124). Travel, therefore, enables Édouard to distance himself from Olivier and the pain associated with him.

A parallel situation arises in Treffpunkt im Unendlichen when, following the death of Greta Valentin, Sebastian decides to leave Paris. In this context travel reflects Sebastian's desire to escape a deep-felt sense of guilt for her suicide, expressed in his self-recriminatory reflection: "ich habe zu wenig Liebe auf dein Gesicht verwendet. Hätte ich mehr Liebe darauf verwendet - ich hätte es vielleicht halten können. Aber ich war wiedere einmal ungenügend" (TiU, 199-200). In consequence, travel then represents his flight from a past inextricably involved with Greta Valentin and which he identifies exclusively with Paris⁷².

However, in contrast to Édouard in Les Faux-monnayeurs, the restlessness of travel for Sebastian also corresponds to a more fundamental and compulsive desire for freedom. It is this which underlies his decision to leave Do and to which Sebastian refers when, on meeting her once more, he poses the question: "Warum mußte ich nun wirklich fort von ihr

⁷² The correlation between Paris and Greta is indicated in the narrator's comment: "er [Sebastian] dachte Paris, und meinte Greta. Er dachte Greta, und meinte Paris" (TiU, 205).

[Do]? Ja, das gehört wohl zu den Zwangsideen unserer Generation: immer fort zu müssen. Oder ist es meine private Zwangsidee?" (TiU, 124). Here, in his repetition of *Zwangsidee*, Sebastian draws specific attention to the fact that he has no control over his actions, suggesting, rather, that they are determined by an innate and unconscious part of his psyche.

Implicit in Sebastian's answer to these questions, "Es war eben einfach zu gemütlich bei ihr" (TiU, 124), is his aversion to the security, suggested by his choice of *gemütlich*, which this relationship represents. In this respect, whereby the breaking of ties occasioned by travel is synonymous with freedom, Sebastian resembles another central character in Les Faux-monnayeurs, namely, Bernard Profitendieu and his mistaken definition of freedom.

5.4.2 The illusion of freedom

In Les Faux-monnayeurs Bernard regards the inadvertent discovery of his illegitimacy, the opening episode of the novel, as an opportunity to escape the constraints and traditions of his bourgeois home. Rather than confront the issue of his illegitimacy, in a letter to his father he justifies his decision to leave home as for the common good. In severing the ties in this way between himself and his family, which in this context stands for society, Bernard believes he attains his freedom. When he gives away his remaining money, thus making himself destitute, Bernard finalises his severance from home and, at the same time, affirms his sense of freedom, conveyed in the following description of him by the narrator: "A présent, il se sent heureux comme un roi. Il n'a plus rien; tout est à lui" (FM, 59).

In rejecting his family and embracing an unconventional life as Édouard's secretary, Bernard also rejects the order and predictive nature of his social class. This is emphasised, in particular, in the journey he, Édouard and Laura take to the Swiss resort of Saas-Fé where, in the secluded environs of Saas-Fé, Bernard attempts a life devoid of society's strictures for here his life is governed by spontaneity. However, rather than bringing a sense of liberation, the life he leads as Édouard's secretary eventually results only in a feeling of dissatisfaction, for having spurned all that had previously governed and structured his life Bernard quickly

experiences a sense of disorientation. This suggests that he is fundamentally mistaken in his definition of freedom the source of which lies in Édouard's warning to him: "Echapper à la question n'est pas la résoudre" (FM, 340).

Édouard encourages Bernard to determine, for himself, the responsibilities and duties incumbent upon him, a view expressed in his advice to Bernard: "La réponse me paraît simple: c'est de trouver cette règle en soi-même; d'avoir pour but le développement de soi" (FM, 339). Of necessity, this approach demands confrontation, both with the self and with the society of which Bernard forms a part. Bernard signals his acceptance of the society he had previously rejected first by sitting his *baccalauréat*, an event which takes place before his conversation with Édouard, and then reinforces it, subsequent to this conversation, by returning home.

In his essay 'Der Ideenroman' Mann identified the source of Bernard's dissatisfaction with the freedom he had attained: "Bernard wußte keinen Halt mehr, denn er hatte sich zu frei gemacht" (NE, 204). Mann had already indicated his awareness of the theme of freedom present within Les Faux-monnayeurs and the inherent contradiction in its nature when, in the same essay, he quoted Bernard's confession to Édouard as: "Ich wollte [...] weder gesetzlos bleiben, noch mein Gesetz von irgendwelcher anderen Seite empfangen" (NE, 204)⁷³. When Mann introduced into Treffpunkt im Unendlichen his own treatment of both the nature and illusion of freedom, he initially incorporated the salient features of Gide's earlier presentation in Les Faux-monnayeurs. Thus, for instance, Sebastian, a character who bears some similarities with Bernard in Les Faux-monnayeurs⁷⁴, primarily defines his freedom as synonymous with financial security⁷⁵. He then asserts this freedom through travel, demonstrated, in particular, when he leaves Paris for Fez. In common with Saas-Fé in

⁷³ In Gide's original, Bernard stated "C'est alors que je me suis demandé comment établir une règle, puisque je n'acceptais pas de vivre sans règle et que cette règle je ne l'acceptais pas d'autrui" (FM, 339).

⁷⁴ For example, neither fits easily into family-orientated society; Bernard on the grounds of his illegitimacy and Sebastian as an orphan. They assert their desire for freedom and independence at an early age, attained, they each believe, by leaving home.

⁷⁵ The narrator establishes this connection when he defines Sebastian's freedom with the words: "Sebastian war frei. Das war der einzige Luxus, den er sich leistete [...]. Er kannte finanzielle Schwierigkeiten, aber sie waren nie so arg, nie so katastrophal, daß sie seine Freiheit ernsthaft gefährdeten" (TiU, 53).

Les Faux-monnayeurs, this destination represents a place of retreat from the pressures of contemporary society. Sebastian and Sonja, whom he meets in Fez, have both fled to Africa to escape the rigours and demands placed upon them; in Sonja's case by her relationships with Gregori and Bayer. However, in common with Bernard in Les Faux-monnayeurs each recognises that this can only be a temporary refuge.

Neither he nor Sonja intend evading society permanently. This is first suggested in their determination to take Salem, the urchin they unofficially adopt whilst in Fez, with them on their return to Europe; the narrator says: "Sie waren fest dazu entschlossen, ihn mit nach Europa zu nehmen, wenn sie eines Tages dorthin zurückmußten" (TiU, 217). Initially, their return appears only a possibility, indicated by the narrator's use of 'wenn', yet one to which they shall be compelled, the force of 'zurückmußten'. That this return, however, becomes inevitable is emphasised when Sebastian writes to Do to inform her: "Anfang Juni sind wir, denke ich, wieder am Kurfürstendamm" (TiU, 220). In this context, Sebastian's reference to Berlin's main shopping street, the *Kurfürstendamm*, indirectly acknowledges his return to the civilisation he had previously rejected.

Mann develops Gide's theme of freedom to identify it with death and the defeat of individuation which death represents. This is initially suggested, not through Sebastian, but through Richard Darmstädter. Shortly before he dies, and before he has consciously articulated the desire to commit suicide, Darmstädter anticipates death when he reflects on its implications and concludes "Die Zeit - aufgehoben. Freiheit" (TiU, 175). In Treffpunkt im Unendlichen awareness of the passing of time is a specific and defining characteristic of human existence; by definition life, that is, the consciousness of being, is the corollary of individuation. The suspension or absence of time, suggested in Darmstädter's choice of *aufgehoben*, therefore implies a correspondence with death.

Mann first introduces this association between time, individuation, death and the freedom it brings, when he recounts the effect of drugs on the individual's perception of

time. This relates, in particular, to Sebastian's observation, deduced whilst under the influence of morphia that "das Opiat verwischte den Zeitbegriff; selige Ungenauigkeit, die letzte Fessel - die: daß man die Zeit zu Ende leben muß - zeigte sich gnädig gelockert" (TiU, 128). Here the concept of time is unequivocally identified with *Fessel*; this is then associated in turn with the phrase 'daß man die Zeit zu Ende leben muß'. The end of conscious time, to which this phrase refers indirectly, is synonymous with the end of life itself and thus, in consequence, with death⁷⁶.

However, Mann's choice of *Fessel* must also be taken in the context of Darmstädter's use of the word *Freiheit*. Sebastian acknowledges time merely as 'die letzte Fessel'. More commonly, in Mann's prose the bonds which exist between mankind and life are those imposed by individuation. These can only be released through death. Thus, when Darmstädter desires the suspension of time, which by his suicide in Chapter Nine has already been linked with death, he simultaneously asserts his right to deny individualism and individuation by rejecting life. It is this definitive destruction of the ties between himself and the world, through death, and the inherent denial of individuation which suicide represents in Treffpunkt im Unendlichen that Darmstädter, and through him, Mann, defines ultimately as freedom.

5.4.3 Sincerity and the authentic self

In 'Der Ideenroman' Mann sought to persuade his own generation of the specific relevance of Les Faux-monnayeurs to themselves by emphasising Gide's apparent insight into the mind of the young. This led Mann to make the confident statement, with reference to two of Gide's central characters Bernard and Olivier⁷⁷, "Wer sich nicht in Olivier wiedererkennt, findet sich in Bernard (oder in beiden auf einmal). *Das sind wir*" (NE, 205). He believed,

⁷⁶ The reader is reminded of his association later in Treffpunkt im Unendlichen whilst Sonja and Sebastian are in Fez. Of their time in the city the narrator notes: "Sie waren seit vier Wochen in Fez, aber beiden kam es vor, als seien sie nie woanders gewesen. Die Zeit hatte aufgehört" (TiU, 215). Kroll has already indicated that Sonja's journey to Fez from Berlin is dominated by images of death, beginning with a man lying, seemingly, for dead across her path shortly after she leaves the capital, and intensifying with her images of death after visiting a Spanish apothecary. He then proposes that, in essence, her time in Fez is preparatory for her subsequent death which is hastened by her drugs overdose and its consequences. Mann's inclusion of the phrase *Die Zeit hatte aufgehört* which has been specifically identified with death earlier in the text certainly appears to lend corroboration to Kroll's conclusions.

⁷⁷ Mann is, however, mistaken in his earlier assertion "Der Roman ist um zwei Knaben herum geschrieben: Olivier und Bernard. Sie sind das Zentrum, um das herum die Kreise all der anderen Schicksale sich bewegen" (NE, 204). Whilst Bernard, indeed, is the centre of one aspect of the novel, the other is not formed around Olivier, who is superseded, after an initial prominence in the novel, by the fictional novelist Edouard. He then becomes, essentially, the true centre of Les Faux-monnayeurs.

furthermore, that Gide was granted greater credence by his advocacy of a new morality, tempered by a sense of duty. This is conveyed in Mann's statement:

Lafcadio⁷⁸, Bernard, Olivier sind sich einer neuen Sittlichkeit bewußt, die sie zwar manchmal, im herkömmlichen Sinn, verbrecherisch werden läßt. Sie haben eine amoralische Vornehmheit, einen skrupellosen, eleganten Anstand (NE, 206).

Mann's comments refer indirectly to Gide's rejection in Les Faux-monnayeurs of received morality imposed by others in favour of a new morality based on truth to oneself. It is expressed in the novel through the latent criticism of the hypocrisy of the bourgeois moral code, and of its suffocating nature, which prohibited the development of the authentic self.

The human condition, Gide suggested through his author Édouard in Les Faux-monnayeurs, demands that in their daily lives humans unconsciously perform a variety of different roles, which are often at variance to one another, and assume a number of differing guises⁷⁹. Yet despite this, a core of the individual remains which cannot be influenced or determined by external forces, for it exists at a level beneath consciousness, revealing itself only in moments of solitude as conveyed in Édouard's realisation: "Ce n'est que dans la solitude que parfois le substrat m'apparaît" (FM, 73). As a result of this, the core is not subject to constant variation and change and in consequence guarantees permanence and continuity of being. It is this core, or as Édouard refers to it, the *substratum* of the human psyche, which contains the individual's true personality and which is implied in the phrase 'authentic being'.

To act in accordance with the authentic self corresponds, in Gidean terminology, to acting sincerely. By definition, it is a deeply personal and ultimately subjective determination by the individual, of what is fitting and applicable for that individual in a given situation.

⁷⁸ A reference to the protagonist of Gide's novel Les Caves du Vatican (Paris: Gallimard, 1922).

⁷⁹ Édouard notes in his diary in Les Faux-monnayeurs: "Je ne suis jamais que ce que je crois que je suis - et cela varie sans cesse, de sorte que souvent, si je n'étais là pour les accointer, mon être du matin ne reconnaîtrait pas celui du soir" (FM, 72-73)

Frequently this can only be achieved by transgressing the wishes or expectations of others, most generally in the form of those of society. The resulting conflict between the desire for sincerity, that is, truth to the authentic self, and the inability to realise it within middle class French society recurs throughout Les Faux-monnayeurs, most clearly in the attempts by the younger generation to escape the suffocating and rigid moral and social codes of behaviour prescribed by family, school and church⁸⁰.

Should the individual comply unconditionally with the expectations of others they compromise their own sincerity. Gide suggested that once this precedent is set, it begins a potentially irreversible process of elaborate deception and masquerade, which may ultimately result in the appearance of authenticity replacing authenticity itself. Gide anticipated the discrepancy between such modes of being in his title Les Faux-monnayeurs. At its most literal, this refers to the small group of schoolboys, led by Ghéridanisol, who are involved in a plan masterminded by Ghéridanisol's sinister cousin Strouvilhou, to bring counterfeit coins into circulation. Through the *leitmotif* of false coinage Gide introduced the theme of counterfeit and deception, that is, of insincerity. By extension, this includes all the characters who, in turn, act as prevaricators. The reasons are diverse but by far the most compelling is the desire for harmony, whether on the small scale of interpersonal relationships as in the dissemblance of lovers, making Edouard reach the somewhat surprising conclusion "Quiconque aime vraiment renonce à la sincérité" (FM, 72) or on a broader scale of social concord. To achieve such harmony the individual, of necessity, must compromise part, if not all, of their authenticity for harmony; Gide's d'accord parfait" (FM, 163) cannot accommodate the contrary dissonances of true authenticity. In consequence, for social cohesion, sincerity is sacrificed to insincerity, that is to the perpetuation of artifice. This is implied, in particular, by the old schoolmaster, La Pérouse, when he exclaims: "A l'harmonie! [...] Je ne vois là qu'une acoutumance au mal, au péché. La sensibilité s'émousse; la pureté se ternit; les réactions se font moins vives; on tolère, on accepte" (FM, 162-163).

⁸⁰ For example, in his criminal activities, which range from shoplifting to passing counterfeit coins, Georges Molinier defies the law which his father, in his capacity as a magistrate, is legally obliged to uphold, whilst Armand Azais' rebels against Pastor Azais' piety in his sexual licentiousness.

The processes of deception and hypocrisy which harmony requires are depicted in operation in the boarding school presided over by the formidable figure of Pastor Azaïs. His precepts and attitudes determine the nature of the school and in their rigidity mimic those of bourgeois society. The school creates the illusion of a harmony which upholds social and moral order yet this is revealed as a mere façade of bourgeois respectability, encouraged by Pastor Azaïs who tolerates no contradiction. Through an excess of piety he unwittingly engenders hypocrisy. As Édouard notes: "On ne peut discuter, mettre au point; on est contraint d'acquiescer. Azaïs impose autour de lui hypocrisie, pour peu qu'on ne partage pas sa croyance" (FM, 106) Azaïs' faith in the rectitude of his acts blinds him to the dark undercurrents of evil in the school. He accepts at face value, for example, the schoolboys' explanation of the 'League of Strong Men', which systematically brings about the death of the vulnerable outsider Boris, as an honourable institution; by blinding himself to the self-evident truth of this organisation he perpetuates its fallacy.

Azaïs has created a façade of respectability which is accepted as genuine. Only when this is cast into doubt through Azaïs confrontation with the heinous truth of the 'League of Strong Men' is the fallaciousness of this façade revealed. It is such culpability in the perpetuation of a myth, and in the blindness to reality that Gide conveyed with the image of the false coin; because it has the appearance of the genuine article the counterfeit coin will be accepted as real until its reality is questioned⁸¹.

The school reflects in microcosm the greater whole of society; Gide suggests the same tensions, hypocrisies and deceptions are rampant in society as in the school, and for the same reason; bourgeois society, he implied, is unable to tolerate deviance from its established norms and therefore substitutes deception for authenticity. For those unable to accept the

⁸¹ When he explains his theory of the novel and his concept of reality, Édouard comments: "imaginez une pièce d'or de dix francs qui soit fausse. Elle ne vaut en réalité que deux sous. Elle vaudra dix francs tant qu'on ne reconnaîtra pas quelle est fausse" (FM, 189). Bernard reiterates this point when he notes, on producing the real counterfeit coin, "Écoutez comme elle sonne bien. Presque le même son que les autres. On jurerait qu'elle est en or [...]. Elle n'a pas tout à fait leoids, je crois; mais elle a ll'éclat et presque le son d'une vrai pièce" (FM, 189).

dictates of society or who have seen through its fallacy, the only option is insincerity. As Pastor Vedel's son, Armand, indicates in discussion with Olivier on life with his father: "Quoi que je dise ou fasse, toujours une partie de moi reste en arrière, qui regarde l'autre se compromettre, qui l'observe, qui se fiche d'elle et la siffle, ou qui l'applaudit" and then raises the question: "Quand on est ainsi divisé, comment veux-tu qu'on soit sincère" (FM, 356).

It is this question with which Les Faux-monnayeurs is concerned. The division Armand recognises here is characteristic of all the characters. Through the model of the school, which, in its structure and moral codes, reflects society, Gide reveals the division which society demands of the individual. This is accepted as reality, as in the school, until its reality is questioned.

Both Bernard and Olivier decide not to conform with the hypocritical ideals and expectations of their parents and the class they represent. Bernard, in particular, believes himself liberated from these expectations through the discovery of his illegitimacy, a fact which in itself exposes the fallacy and hypocrisy of the social order for the truth of his birth has been concealed, not only from him, but from a wider public. Both Olivier and Bernard respond to an inner compulsion divorced from the expectations of those around them; indeed Olivier, in particular, acts against the direct wishes of his family in becoming secretary to the Comte de Passavant. They each embody the spirit of independence, and truth to the self, alluded to by La Pérouse when he laments to Édouard: "Si l'on pouvait recouvrer l'intransigeance de la jeunesse" (FM, 163), for, in being uncompromising, this spirit is essentially sincere. It is to this that Mann referred in his praise of Les Faux-monnayeurs in the essay 'Der Ideenroman' as *die neue Sittlichkeit*.

In Les Faux-monnayeurs Gide suggested that the unspoken expectations of society, mediated through its institutions, the Church, Judiciary, Family and School, compromised sincerity and authenticity. He highlighted, in particular, the sacrifice of sincerity to the

dynamics of communal living, with its emphasis on concordance, and illustrated that this had, as its concomitant, the artifice characteristic of role-play. When Mann introduces Gide's theme of sincerity into Treffpunkt im Unendlichen he emphasises this specific aspect of Gide's theme. Mann interprets sincerity as a form of deception, either of oneself or of others. Through the medium of role-play, allusions to which recur throughout the novel, he then examines specifically the function of role within human life, the discrepancy and potential for conflict between the appearance of the real and reality itself, and finally, the implications for an individual's authenticity when the divisions between role and actuality are no longer rigidly maintained.

In common with Gide in Les Faux-monnayeurs, Mann suggests in Treffpunkt im Unendlichen that role play is a fundamental and unavoidable characteristic of all human life. At some point in the novel, either consciously or unconsciously, all Mann's characters perform a part contrary to their authentic self. The assumption of a role places a barrier between the individual and their immediate environment and represents a basic form of self-preservation. For example, in Chapter Three, when, in the presence of overt affluence at Bayer's reception, Sonja masks her discomfiture through pretence by unconsciously conforming to a stereotypical image of herself. This is described by the narrator as:

Ohne daß sie es wollte oder nur bemerkte, wurde Sonja nun doch ein wenig beeindruckt von all diesen gestärkten Hemdbrüsten, den schimmernden Dekolletés. Die Folge war, daß sie sich nicht mehr völlig natürlich gab. Sie überakzentuierte, sie stilisierte den Typ, als der sie eingeführt war, den man von ihr erwartete [...] (TiU, 55)

Such phrases as 'sie [gab] sich nicht mehr völlig natürlich' and 'sie stilisierte den Typ [...], den man von ihr erwartete' prohibit the reader's unconditional identification of this pose with Sonja herself. This is further confirmed by the narrator's concluding remark: "[sie] verhielt sich zunächst genau so, wie man es bei ihr voraussetzte" (TiU, 55).

Furthermore, Mann implies that through role, the individual is empowered to cope and confront society. He conveys this, again in relation to Sonja, by demonstrating the effect on

her once she is deprived of a mask, a condition to which he ascribes the term *hautlos*. This occurs on two separate occasions in Treffpunkt im Unendlichen, the first during Bayer's dinner party, where she is described with the words: "Sonja, die wie hautlos durch diese Gesellschaft ging [...], fühlte, daß sie es ganz einfach nicht mehr lange machen könne" (TiU, 61), and then later to illustrate the debilitating effect of Berlin on her mental health, conveyed in the phrase "dazu verurteilt, hautlos durch [das] Treiben zu gehen" (TiU, 110). In both instances, Sonya is vulnerable to the reality of the society of which she is a part. She no longer accepts the veneer which masquerades as reality. However, in discovering the truth of those around her, Sonja exposes herself; the denial of a role, implied by Mann in *hautlos*, prevents Sonja from first filtering her impressions in accordance to the role she has adopted, and thus denies her an escape from reality.

Sonja assumes a role in order to cope with a given situation; by contrast, for the ageing actress Greta Valentin role-play gains an importance of a far greater existential nature. Following Wilhelm Bayer's rejection of her in favour of Sonja, Greta assumes an artificial air of insouciance, conveyed in the narrator's statement: "Greta lebte weiter, mit jener etwas forcierten, penetranten Ausgelassenheit, die ihre alten Freunde von Montparnasse beunruhigte" (TiU, 189). That this is merely a role in conflict with reality is further emphasised when the narrator notes her deteriorating relationship with Sebastian and comments on her behaviour, in particular: "sie [war] entweder von jener outrierten und nervösen Fröhlichkeit, die sie in Gesellschaft immer zeigte, oder sie wurde ganz stumm, saß da und starrte vor sich hin" (TiU, 190). In this context, the choice of *outriert* suggests the artificiality of her exuberance.

Essentially, the role Greta assumes here is a surrogate for life which she adopts to mask a deep and recurring sense of isolation. It gradually emerges that it also belies, however, a latent but increasingly strong desire for death. Mann suggests a direct correlation between the role and her suicide by juxtaposing the intensification of her role, expressed with the

words "sie [wurde] wieder sehr laut und unternehmungslustig" and Greta's subsequent suggestion, related by the narrator as "Man müsse eine Autofahrt durchs Bois unternehmen" (TiU, 192). Such a drive through the Bois de Boulogne, referred to in Treffpunkt im Unendlichen by its abbreviation *Bois*, features twice in the novel - here in Chapter Ten and in its parallel, Chapter Three. In this earlier incident, in which both Sebastian and Greta are involved, Mann unmistakably associates the drive with death, first by introducing such motifs for death as water, and the image of eternity represented by the never-ending vista of the night sky, and then in the following detailed description of Greta herself:

Sie stellte den Motor ab, als bekäme sie plötzlich Angst weiterzufahren. Mit einem Gesicht, das von Angst und Trauer verstört schien, schmiegte sie sich an Sebastian. Ihn erschreckte, wie sie sich verändert hatte. Ihr Gesicht hatte jetzt etwas Maskenhaftes [...]. Die Fläche der Wangen schien leblos, unempfindlich, wie vom Schmerz versteinert, die etwas aufgesprungenen, breiten und trockenen Lippen standen halb offen, mit einem hoffnungslos wehen Ausdruck (TiU, 90)

Greta's fatal car crash in Chapter Ten mirrors not only this initial incident, for Greta drives once more at speed in the dead of night, but also recalls this description and, in particular, its emphasis on death, evoked specifically in the terms *leblos*, *unempfindlich* and *versteinert*.

All the relationships in Treffpunkt im Unendlichen, with the notable exception of that between Sonja and Sebastian, contain an element of deception. This is indicated most clearly in the relationship between Darmstädter and Frau Grete's son, Walter, wherein Walter disguises his true identity behind the pseudonym of Tom. For most, however, the adoption of a role and thus the perpetuation of a deceit against the authentic self, is dictated by a desire to conform to an image held by another. This brings Mann close to Gide who, through Édouard, noted in Les Faux-monnayeurs: "Tant qu'il aime et veut être aimé, l'amoureux ne peut se donner pour ce qu'il es vraiment, et, de plus, il ne voit pas l'autre - mais bien, en son lieu, une idole qu'il pare, et qu'il divinise, et qu'il crée" (FM, 74). Mann initially represents this denial of sincerity with Frau Grete's relationship with Konsul Bruch.

The image Bruch constructs of Frau Grete and upon which they base their relationship ultimately corresponds only to his own idealisation of her. He is attracted to Frau Grete initially by her voice which causes him to pose the question: "Sicher waren Sie Künstlerin?" (TiU, 71). Frau Grete replies neither in the affirmative nor the negative, giving rather the imprecise answer: "Das kann man wohl sagen [...]. Ja, gewissermaßen bin ich es noch" (TiU, 71). At this stage of Treffpunkt im Unendlichen the reader is aware that Frau Grete is, in fact, Massis' secretary and as the novel progresses it becomes increasingly clear that the closest she has come to being a professional artiste is as a film extra⁸². However, Bruch's question and Frau Grete's ambiguous reply signals here the key aspect underlying Mann's presentation of sincerity, namely that all the characters, not merely those involved directly in the theatre, act in their everyday lives.

Mann implies in Treffpunkt im Unendlichen that the failure to acknowledge the reality of another's being is common to all human relationships. This is reinforced when Sonja transposes her own image and interpretation onto another individual and thus confuses her interpretation of reality with reality itself. This is demonstrated in her failed affair with Kurt Petersen, her co-star from the play 'Wen liebt Amélie'. Sonja makes the erroneous assumption that the part he adopts within the play, that of Amélie's naive and manipulated lover Françoise, and Kurt himself are identical⁸³. In consequence, Sonja significantly assesses Kurt's actions not according to his real self but rather according to his role within the play. Thus, whilst she regards his hesitant behaviour towards her as somewhat unnatural, she accepts and, indeed, rationalises it as being in character, corresponding as it does to the image she has created of him⁸⁴. When reality, in the form of Kurt's long-term relationship with Lisa, by whom he has a child, confronts Sonja, it not only reveals the discrepancy between her interpretation of him but also destroys the relationship itself⁸⁵.

⁸² In fact, the jobs which she has performed in the past have been somewhat mundane. They include waitress, receptionist, and photographer's assistant and model.

⁸³ Mann signals this confusion by referring to Petersen as "Kurt-François" (TiU, 113)

⁸⁴ The narrator describes the innocence of their relationship when he notes: "Sonja und Kurt pflegten sich im Taxi zu küssen oder sich im Kino die Hände zu streicheln, wie es die Ladenmädchen mit ihrem Schätzen tun; aber mehr war zwischen ihnen noch nicht geschehen. Sonja lag gewiß daran nicht viel, aber die fand, daß es nachgerade unnatürlich wäre, wenn es ausblieb". Sonja then explains this in the words "Er hat Hemmungen [...]. Dieses Kind! Ihm imponiert mein Name, und ich bin ja auch mindestens zwei Jahre älter als er: (TiU, 116).

⁸⁵ The destruction of a relationship through deception is the common denominator of all the relationships with the exception of Darmstädter's with Walter wherein Darmstädter is unable to accept Walter's refusal to compromise his authenticity.

In Treffpunkt im Unendlichen Mann proposes that, in striving to conform to an image imposed unconsciously by another, the individual acts to the detriment of the authentic self; by definition, role-play demands that the individuals compromise their sincerity or intrinsic being. In her relationship with Konsul Bruch, Frau Grete consciously complies with Bruch's idealisation of her, deliberately perpetuating the deception of their relationship for she regards him as the guarantor of her future financial security⁸⁶. Through Sonja and her relationships with Gregor Gregori and Wilhelm Bayer, however, Mann demonstrates both the destructive nature of enforced compliance, and the pressures to which it subjects the individual.

Both Gregori and Bayer possess a preconceived image of Sonja based upon a latent ideal to which she is expected to conform. For Gregori she represents "die mütterliche Herbe, die gütig Unnahbare, die sanft Verschleierte" whilst Bayer regards her as "die grausam scherzhafte Amazone [...], die auf eine Liebeserklärung mit einem sportlichen Witz antwortete" (TiU, 107). These images ignore the reality of Sonja in favour of the illusion. This is first conveyed, indirectly, when she dismisses Bayer's perception of her as merely "albern" (TiU, 49) and is then intensified when she challenges him following his proposal of marriage. Convinced of her unemotional approach to life, he had proposed marriage as a sound financial proposition. Sonja retorts, however, first with "Ich lege natürlich großen Wert auf Ihr Geld", by which she appears to confirm his preconceptions, but then continues with the telling accusation: "aber anderseits fürchte ich, das Sie mich etwas einseitig auffassen" (TiU, 87). This criticism could also be levelled at Gregori for he too only acknowledges one aspect of her personality to the exclusion of the others.

Increasingly, the dissemblance which is a necessary and fundamental requirement of Sonja's profession, determines her private life. Although their perceptions of her are diametrically opposed to one another and, indeed, contrary to Sonja herself, she nevertheless strives to conform: "[sie tat] ihr Bestes, den übermäßig gespannten Ansprüchen der beiden

⁸⁶ Frau Grete elucidates this when, in conversation with Froschele, she insists on the need to keep her association with Massis secret. She begins with the optimistic statement: "der olle Bruch ist ganz ernsthaft an mir interessiert [...]. Der will glatt sein Lebensabend mit mir verbringen" the extent of her deception of him is then revealed when she insists to Froschele: "Der hält mich doch für 'ne bessere Bürgersdame mit exzentrischem Einschlag" (TiU, 138).

zu genügen" (TiU, 107). It demands, in turn, a third, self-imposed role of her: "[sie kam] sich freilich immer ein wenig wie eine Krankenschwester vor, die zwei Patientien [...] zuliebe eine Komödie spielen muß" (TiU, 107). The reference to *eine Komödie* with its connection to the theatre and the world of make believe that theatre represents, alerts the reader to the fact that Sonja's relationship with both men is based upon pretence. By extension, this demands that she become unauthentic for she is required both to dissemble and, to some extent, to expunge her real self.

Her inability to distance herself from the roles she is expected to perform in her complicated relationships with Gregori and Bayer⁸⁷ subjects her to great personal pressure. This increases once she is no longer able to maintain the division between life and the theatre. Through a limited form of *mise en abyme*, the fictitious play 'Wen liebt Amélie', in which Sonja is to star, parallels the situation in which Sonja finds herself. The plot revolves around two men in love with the same woman, Amélie played by Sonja. Each man has a vastly different perception of her and expects that she will conform to the roles they have assigned her. The part Sonja is expected to perform on stage corresponds to those she performs for Gregori and Bayer. It is contained in the following description:

die Amélie [...] hatte alle Register, in denen eine Schauspielerin gern paradiert: die mütterlichen und die koketten, die tragischen und die leichtsinnigen, das Zärtliche der kleinen Geliebten und die mysteriöse Kälte der Grande dame [sic] (TiU, 112).

The play blurs the distinction between reality and illusion; as a result Sonja no longer gains the respite from her unauthentic self that her professional play-acting as an actress had previously granted her. The inability to differentiate between what is real and what is merely role-play eventually brings her to the verge of suicide.

Wilhelm Bayer's wife, Julia, demonstrates that enforced compliance to another's image at the expense of the individual's sincerity is ultimately destructive. She suffers in the role of

⁸⁷ Mann expresses this in particular in his statement: "Sonja hätte sich über all das lustig machen können, aber sie hatte die beiden zu gern" (TiU, 107). Here, ridicule represents a means to create distance which is denied Sonja.

the conventional housewife which her husband requires her to perform. This is voiced by Sonja in her question to Bayer: "Warum zwingen Sie die Ärmste dazu, mondäne Hausfrau zu spielen?" (TiU, 77). Here the verb *spielen* indicates that this role is not representative of the true person. Sonja then anticipates the pressure under which she later suffers when she adds: "Sie [Julia] kann's doch nicht schaffen, es muß schauderhaft für sie sein" (TiU, 77).

Julia conforms to the role expected of her by her husband under duress, for Bayer has issued her with an ultimatum, which he outlines to Sonja in the brutal statement: "Solange sie mit mir zusammenlebt und nicht eingesperrt ist, muß sie es schaffen" (TiU, 77). Here *einsperren* refers to Bayer's accusations of her mental instability and his threat to hospitalise his wife. Julia Bayer certainly does demonstrate some aspects of mental instability but this is a direct consequence of the strain to which she is subjected and, indeed, is evidence of her identifying with a secondary role. It is expressed in the words:

Den ganzen Abend hatte sie [Julia] sich zusammennehmen müssen, all dem konventionellen Unsinn zuzuhören und ihn selbst zu plappern, so daß sie nun eine unsagbare Lust spürte: sich gehen zu lassen. 'Schließlich bin ich doch ein wenig geisteskrank', dachte sie trotzig (TiU, 75).

The very fact that she consciously justifies her coming actions with the phrase 'Schließlich bin ich doch ein wenig geisteskrank' labels this as a role which need not correspond to actuality. By acting as if mentally disturbed, realised in the text merely as mild eccentricity, Julia finds the release from conformity to the stifling image her husband demands of her.

Bayer's insistence that Julia comply with his desired image of her leads to her mental collapse. That he is ultimately responsible for this is voiced by Sonja who concedes "Ohne Frage, geisteskrank ist sie" but then speculates: "Zu überlegen ist nur, was sie geisteskrank gemacht hat und ob sie nicht vielleicht zu heilen wäre, wenn Sie, W.B., sich etwas netter und anständiger gegen sie aufführten" (TiU, 85-86). The source of Julia's mental illness lies ultimately with the constant denial of her true nature or authentic self as she strives to

conform with Bayer's image of her⁸⁸. In contrast to Julia, Sonja escapes the total destruction of her authenticity, the final consequence of her unconditionally conforming to the contradictory images held of her by Gregori and Bayer, by terminating all contact with them and, indeed, with Berlin, a city she identifies with the turbulence in her own life.

Through their professional connection with the theatre, both Sonja, in her capacity as an actress, and Gregori, as a dancer, both have to adopt convincingly a variety of guises and roles, for the theatre, as the bastion of the unreal, encourages and indeed exists merely for the illusion it creates. However, Mann investigates, through Gregori, the implications for an individual's authenticity when the role begins to dictate the person, an approach which can be identified in Les Faux-monnayeurs when Armand Vedel draws a fundamental distinction between himself and his father. This he defines as "je sais que je joue; tandis que [...] mon père, par exemple, et pour ne pas parler de toi, coupe dedans quand il joue au pasteur" (FM, 356).

Gregori epitomises the ambitious artiste who is determined to achieve greatness at any cost. In direct consequence of this ambition, he subordinates his actions to a sole objective, expressed in the narrator's concise statement: "Er wollte herrschen, er gierte nach Macht" (TiU, 100). To complete the metamorphosis from struggling, radical dancer into successful theatre director he replaces an early career dominated by the experimental and *avant-garde* with an ultra-conservative approach to art. This demands that he compromise and, indeed, reject the values and principles which, in the past, had characterised his work, and leads Gregori's former partner and friend, Sebastian, to denounce both him and his all-consuming ambition with the words: "Wie ungetreu gegen unsere gemeinsame Jugend! Er verrät alles - für was? Vielleicht für Geld, vielleicht für die Glorie der Sechstagerennen und der Boulevardpresse?" (TiU, 131)⁸⁹. Yet the treachery perceived by Sebastian here is not merely to the ideals of his and Gregori's youth, but is of a more fundamentally existential nature for the adjunct of Gregori's ambition is the sacrifice of his authentic self.

⁸⁸ Her mental destruction by Bayer is complemented by her physical destruction through the drugs to which she is introduced by Massis and to which she eventually becomes addicted.

⁸⁹ Sebastian comes close to the truth here for, as is gradually revealed, Gregori craves all these symbols of success.

Sebastian intimates the form that Gregori's success takes when he reflects on its origin and concludes: "Alles, was fein und selten in ihm ist, so zu vergrößern, daß Erfolg daraus wird, und sich mit bravourösem Fälschertrick vorzumachen" (TiU, 131). Gregori must consciously adopt a public persona, determined solely by that which will serve his ambition, in conflict with the truth of his real self. Sebastian's choice of the verb *sich vormachen* and his use of the noun *Fälschertrick* suggest both the artifice and deception of the self, inherent to Gregori's approach. They recall his earlier dismissal of Gregori's political involvement as "Alles Schwindel" (TiU, 33). Sonja similarly alludes to this element of masquerade identified by Sebastian when she recognises "irgend etwas ist bei ihm nicht in Ordnung" (TiU, 168). She then captures Gregori's new nature when she later clarifies this statement with "Er besteht [...] völlig aus Lüge" (TiU, 186). Her reference to *Lüge* in respect to Gregori's character is synonymous with Gide's insincerity, namely the compromising of authenticity.

Mann further signals the discrepancy between the *role* of 'Gregor Gregori' and the *character* Gregori in Treffpunkt im Unendlichen with phrases such as: "[Gregori] prätendierte geistige Ziele" (TiU, 97) and "so stilisierte er seine Person" (TiU, 100) or when Sebastian, recalling his former collaboration with the dancer, recollects "Gregor, um diese Zeit, war durch und durch Tänzer, er kannte noch nicht die geistigen Gesten seiner spätere Haltung" (TiU, 98). Again, the choice of terminology to describe Gregori, in particular *prätendierte* and the phrase *die geistigen Gesten*, whereby *Gesten* implies that he is acting, suggests his assumption of a role. That he is the determiner of this role and its execution is conveyed by the active verb *stilisierte*.

The gradual demise of Gregori's authentic self is represented by the loss of his capacity for spontaneity. His actions are first mediated through the conscious mind and assessed according to their conformity with the image he wishes to convey. This is expressed most clearly in his treatment of others; he first calculates their value in relation to his desire to succeed and their ability to aid this success. For example, he deliberately cultivates those in

authority who are instrumental in his rise to power. This is suggested in the following description:

[Gregori] traf auf dem Korridor einen hohen Verwaltungsdirektor, mit dem er sich fünf Minuten lang unterhielt. Er brillierte und funkelte, zierte sich mit hochgezogenen Schultern, schielte verführerisch mit blaugrün schillernden Augen [...]. Der Direktor [...] fühlte sich bezaubert und schüttelte am Schluß Gregori warm, fast heftig die Hand (TiU, 38-39)

This represents what is tantamount to a seduction of the *Verwaltungsdirektor*. That it is a deliberate ploy through which to progress in the world of the theatre is illustrated most forcibly by Gregori's appraisal of this meeting as: "Aus solchen Siegen baut sich eine Karriere" (TiU, 39).

By way of contrast, Gregori makes no effort in relation to Sonja's companion, Froschele, who, although besotted, can offer him nothing materially. Mann conveys Gregori's callous disregard for her in the succinct phrase: "Gregori nahm sich nicht die Mühe, alle seine Reize für sie zusammenzunehmen" (TiU, 101). It is only once he discovers and covets her dog, Leu, that he devotes any of his time to Froschele, concealing his antipathy behind a veneer of courtesy. When Froschele refuses his request, made bluntly by Gregori to her as "Ich will den Hund", he immediately terminates all contact between them for she is no longer of any use to him.

The denial of his authenticity through the assumption of a role is essentially destructive of Gregori himself and of the relationships in which he is involved. By consistently suppressing his true self to the image he wishes to project, Gregori gradually becomes little more than an empty shell masking this by adopting a variety of public roles. In the process, he loses his own legitimacy; the private man can no longer be distinguished from the public figure. This he seeks to redress through Sonja as she acknowledges with reference to their engagement: "Er will sich menschlich bei mir legitimieren. Sich beweisen, das auch er ein Privatleben hat,

das er für eine öffentliche Sache zurückstellt. Das Schlimmste daran: er will es nicht nur sich, sondern auch der Welt beweisen" (TiU, 186).

5.4.4 The nature of evil - a study of the contrasting roles of Strouvilhou and Dr. Massis

Evil and the consciousness of its presence permeates Gide's Les Faux-monnayeurs. It is made visible primarily in the figure of Strouvilhou, the mysterious mastermind behind the schoolchildren's criminal activities. That he is inherently evil is emphasised in Édouard's memories of their common past in Pastor Vedel's school. He recalls Strouvilhou's deliberate provocation of Vedel and then comments to Laura: "la discussion sur le figuier stérile de l'Évangile et les arbres qui ne portent pas de fruits ... 'Je ne suis pas un arbre fruitier, moi. De l'ombre, c'est ça que je porte, Monsieur le pasteur'" (FM, 103). Édouard draws specific attention here to the biblical comparison between the health of the tree and the state of the human soul⁹⁰; as a tree is judged by the fruit it bears, the individual is judged according to the state of his spiritual health. Strouvilhou, however, extends the theological parallel between the diseased tree and the evil with which it is associated to include the shadow it casts, the 'ombre' of Édouard's quotation. In mainstream Western theological thought the metaphor of shade, and the darkness that is inherent to it, stands for the forces of evil. By identifying with the shadow, Strouvilhou, without doubt, also identifies with the evil it represents.

Strouvilhou's reference to shade also suggests, however, the barrenness of evil. This is further emphasised in his essential nihilism, which is expressed by his deep-rooted opposition to life and mankind. He demonstrates this antipathy towards humanity most clearly in his emphatic words to the Comte de Passavant: "Je prétends que s'il y a quelque chose de plus méprisable que l'homme, et de plus abject, c'est beaucoup d'hommes" (FM, 316), then reinforcing this inherent misanthropy by evoking apocalyptic visions of disaster when he informs Passavant:

⁹⁰ This comparison is taken from Matthew 7, 17 - 20: "every sound tree bears good fruit, but the bad tree bears evil fruit. A sound tree cannot bear evil fruit, nor can a bad tree bear good fruit. Every tree that does not bear good fruit is cut down and thrown into the fire. Thus you will know them by their fruits". The same message is repeated in Luke 6, 43 - 44: "For no good tree bears bad fruit, nor again does a bad tree bear good fruit; for each tree is known by its own fruit".

Il ne m'arrive pas de monter dans un tram ou dans un train sans souhaiter un bel accident qui réduise en bouillie toute cette ordure vivante; oh! moi compris, parbleu; d'entrer dans une salle de spectacle sans désirer l'écroulement du lustre ou l'éclatement d'une bombe (FM, 316-317).

In Les Faux-monnayeurs evil, as mediated through Strouvilhou, is depicted as ultimately disruptive to the established order. Strouvilhou acknowledges neither the precepts of society nor the Christian ethic upon which it is based, establishing himself, indeed, as essentially an Antichrist figure in his unequivocal opposition to Christianity. He rejects Christian teaching and practice in the belief that it encourages and then perpetuates hypocrisy and self-deceit in the name of altruism. He justifies his position by insisting that man's close affiliation with the animal kingdom dictates a fundamental and irreversible egocentrism. Strouvilhou advocates that mankind should be regarded no differently than the animal kingdom from which it is descended. He, therefore, makes the provocative proposal that Christian humanitarianism should be replaced by survival of the fittest and that in place of compassion to the weak and infirm, an extreme form of eugenics should be introduced⁹¹.

Whilst the reader is aware of Strouvilhou's existence, for the majority of the Les Faux-monnayeurs he remains, nonetheless, ill-defined, appearing only once, in its closing stages shortly before Boris' death, initially by deliberately only referring to Strouvilhou indirectly Gide exemplifies his underlying message about the nature of evil as ubiquitous, insidious and invasive. Strouvilhou's unseen presence is felt throughout the novel and intrudes in all areas of human life, even encroaching upon the relative sanctity of the resort of Saas-Fé⁹². He, and the evil he represents, exploits opportunity; Gide suggests that the propensity for evil is latent in all human beings. It is revealed, particularly, through the

⁹¹ Strouvilhou elucidates his desire for survival of the fittest with the words: "En protégeant les malheureux, les faibles, les rachitiques, les blessés, nous faisons fausse route; et c'est pourquoi je hais la religion qui nous l'enseigne. La grand paix que les philanthropes eux-mêmes, prétendent puiser dans la contemplation de la nature, faune et flore, vient de ce qu'à l'état sauvage, seuls les êtres robustes prospèrent; tout le reste, déchet, sert d'engrais". He then explains the need for eugenics when he notes "C'est l'amélioration de la race, à laquelle il faut travailler. Mais toute sélection implique la suppression des malvenus, et c'est à quoi notre chrétienne de société ne saurait se résoudre. Elle ne sait même pas prendre sur elle de châtrer les dégénérés; et ce sont les plus prolifiques. Ce qu'il faudrait, ce ne sont pas des hôpitaux, c'est des haras" (FM, 318).

⁹² Here an entry in the visitors' book at the hotel, noted by Édouard in his diary (FM, 191) and later confirmed by Boris' guardian Mme Sophroniska (FM, 205), indicates that evil, in the form of Strouvilhou, had preceeded Édouard, Laura and Bernard.

schoolchildren who comprise the 'League of Strong Men'. They are first attracted to Strouvilhou's plans to circulate counterfeit coins because they seek a path to escape the stifling atmosphere of their school and the restrictions of bourgeois convention and manners. Their later inadvertent complicity in the death of Boris, through which Gide demonstrates the destructive capacity of evil, similarly corresponds to this desire to challenge the strictures of their social class⁹³.

The prevalence of evil within society is further emphasised by Gide in his characters' idiom, for they readily refer to the Devil for all acts of a morally or socially reprehensible nature. Gide alerts his reader to this dimension of his portrayal of evil in the opening paragraph of Les Faux-monnayeurs in which Bernard discovers his mother's love-letters from his unknown father. The narrator excuses his intrusion into his mother's private sphere with the words: "La famille respectait sa solitude; le démon pas" (FM, 11). The narrator's reference here, as elsewhere in the novel, to *le démon* unconsciously acknowledges the presence of evil in the lives of the characters.

In Treffpunkt in Unendlichen Mann represented evil through the figure of the sinister psychiatrist, Dr Bernhard Massis. Although Massis bears some similarity to Strouvilhou, for he is also a nihilist who destroys for destruction's sake and whose influence pervades all aspects of the novel⁹⁴, Mann's portrayal of evil differs greatly in emphasis from that given in Les Faux-monnayeurs. In essence, Gide merely described evil; he did not pass judgement on it. For him, evil existed as an integral and unavoidable part of human life, its influence was all-pervasive and only recognised once it was too late⁹⁵. For this reason he keeps Strouvilhou in the background, his presence felt rather than seen. By contrast, in Treffpunkt im Unendlichen Mann develops evil as a central concern through the figure of Dr Massis. By so doing, he offers his reader a detailed and precise study of both evil itself and its implications for those who come into contact with it.

⁹³ Gide had already introduced criminal activity and wrong-doing as tantamount to rebellion through Georges Molinier, who subsequently becomes a member of the 'League of Strong Men'. He expresses his rebellion against authority by shoplifting. He directly opposes his father whose profession as a magistrate makes him the upholder of the law which Georges blatantly flouts.

⁹⁴ Through his acquaintanceship with Froschele, Massis establishes an indirect link between himself, Sonja and Gregori, thus having access to the world of the theatre. His association with Sebastian predates the opening of Treffpunkt im Unendlichen and, following Sebastian's departure for Paris, is maintained through Do. Finally, Julia Bayer acts as the mediator between Massis and the world of the Berlin industrial élite, represented by her husband Wilhelm Bayer.

⁹⁵ This is demonstrated, in particular, in the general dismay at Boris' death as gradually the real motives behind the 'League of Strong Men' emerge.

In defining Dr Massis in Treffpunkt im Unendlichen Mann draws upon contemporary suspicions of developments in the fields of psychiatry and psychoanalysis. In From Faust to Strangelove⁹⁶, a study of portrayals of the scientist from the Middle Ages to the twentieth century, Roslyn Haynes has illustrated how fiction, in literature and later in film, exploited fears about this new branch of the sciences to reaffirm the scientist as evil. She notes in clarification that the "indictment of psychologists in literature [...] sprang from the [...] uneasy feeling that they treated the mind and the personality, seemingly the last bastion of spiritual and moral consciousness, as a mechanism and assumed control over them"⁹⁷. When Mann notes in his portrayal of Dr Massis: "Er hatte als Psychiater angefangen, kurze Zeit lang [...] hatte er sogar praktiziert. Auch heute versuchte er noch bisweilen sich eines Menschen zu bemächtigen, indem er ihn psychoanalytierte" (TiU, 43), he reflects such general anxieties that the scientist may exploit his knowledge and skill to satisfy a latent desire for power over others. However, when Mann subsequently refers to Massis as "Menschenfänger" (TiU, 43 & 150) "Hexenmeister" (TiU, 125) and "Zauberkünstler" (TiU, 143)⁹⁸, each of which suggest roles associated with the Devil, he relies upon a much older literary tradition of identifying the scientist with the forces of evil⁹⁹. Sonja's later dismissal of Massis as "ein Satansbröcklein" (TiU, 184) then intimates that, whilst Massis is not synonymous with the Devil, he embodies elements common to the Devil's representative, a role associated in popular folklore and literature with the figure of Mephistopheles.

Massis is the ultimate dissembler who deliberately masks his true self. To accusations that he had abused his training in psychoanalysis to coerce a young girl into committing suicide he responds with the unequivocal statement "Ich bin weder ein Verführer noch ein Scharlatan" (TiU). Yet, as Treffpunkt im Unendlichen progresses, this statement is ultimately

⁹⁶ Roslyn D. Haynes: From Faust to Strangelove. Representations of the Scientist in Western Literature (Baltimore and London: John Hopkins University Press, 1994).

⁹⁷ Haynes: From Faust to Strangelove, 201.

⁹⁸ By referring to Massis as a 'Zauberkünstler', Klaus Mann recalls the sinister Cipolla in Thomas Mann's Mario und der Zauberer published in 1930. There are similarities between the characters. Both Massis and Cipolla exercise a cruel, manipulative and ultimately destructive power over others, using their training as psychiatrist and hypnotist respectively to control the minds and actions of others. At the same time they permit their authors to investigate the seductive fascination evil can have for others who, whilst recognising the threat it poses, are powerless to act against it.

⁹⁹ Haynes suggests that this association originated with the medieval alchemist of the Faust legend. Here, the spirit of inquiry and investigation determining Faust's work arose from a desire for knowledge and comprehension; this had been interpreted as a profane challenge to a divine order founded upon a belief in God's omniscience and mankind's relative ignorance. The antithetical pairing good (God) / evil (scientist) is then established unequivocally with the introduction of Mephistopheles as Satan's representative on Earth and his subsequent alignment with Faust. The suspicion of the scientist was continued by the German Romantic movement of the early nineteenth century. The Romantics, she then continues, refined the early theological approach to the natural sciences to make a general statement on the nature of the scientist, defining him as a sinister, inhuman and evil force whose obsession with science poses a destructive threat to the innocent. However, in her analysis, Haynes does draw specific attention to the apparent anomaly of late nineteenth century portrayals of the scientist. At this time, she explains, the general dominance of rationality resulted in praise for the scientist who, in his search for a rational explanation of human existence, epitomised this new *zeitgeist*.

revealed as untrue. Whilst accusations of charlatanism are not literally true, for Massis is a qualified psychiatrist, the image he gives of himself to others is primarily based on artifice. The authentic Massis is revealed only in his notebooks, in which he makes no endeavour to conceal his real motives, and in his relationship with his secretary, Frau Grete, of which the narrator notes:

Mit ihr [Frau Grete] - das war auffallend - gab er sich natürlich und weniger präntiös als mit irgend jemandem sonst. Er konnte ganz gesund und ordinär mit ihr schimpfen, und auch über seine privatesten und heimlichsten Angelegenheiten besprach er sich mit ihr in nicht gerade stilisierten Formen (TiU, 44)¹⁰⁰.

By contrast, in his dealings with others he adopts a variety of guises all of which are calculated to make him attractive to them (in this respect he represents the allure of evil) and to satisfy an insatiable desire for power over those of his acquaintance. Thus, for example, he appears to Do as the knight errant, exhibiting what is, for her, an irresistible display of gallantry; for Gregori, in contrast, he places himself in a subservient role by posing as a fervent admirer and proponent of Gregori's concept of the theatre; as a result, he both flatters Gregori's ego and appeals to his desire for power¹⁰¹.

The public persona stands in opposition to the private person. This discrepancy between reality and artifice is initially intimated by Massis in his speech which the narrator describes in the following words: "[Massis] hatte einen deutlich gallischen Akzent, obwohl seine Vorfahren seit verschiedenen Generationen Deutsche waren" (TiU, 29). He deliberately encourages a public image of himself which is intended to obscure the inner person. It is this which the narrator emphasises in the statement:

Wozu er sich [...] bekannte, immer ließ er noch geheime Hintergründe ahnen, niemals war im letzten festzustellen, wo sein Standort war. Was er preisgegeben hatte, nahm er durch ein ironisches Wort wieder zurück und

¹⁰⁰ This is very reminiscent of Gregori and, indeed, there are parallels between Massis and Gregori for example, in their desire for power and their ruthless exploitation of others.

¹⁰¹ Following the opening night of Gregori's theatre, the Schauburg, Massis writes to him: "Ich habe der Eröffnung Ihrer Schauburg beigewohnt, und es war für mich der zeitgemäßeste, aktuellste, herzerfrischendste Abend, den mir das sterile Berliner Theaterleben seit Jahren beschert hat [...]. Ich sehe Ihre Sendung als eine eminent politische [...]. *Sie sind der geborene Diktator*, - auf Ihrem Gebiet; denn Sie sind [...] eine *wirklich* radikale, weil wirklich kompromißfeindliche und sachliche Natur. Der große Erfolg, den Sie haben entscheidet. *Ich bekenne mich als Erfolgsanbeter*" (TiU, 237-238). This apparent adulation echoes Gregori's own views on the theatre and himself, expressed initially in his dismissive attitude towards the contemporary theatre, emphasised in the derogatory *verschlampt* of his statement: "Es muß Schwung in diesen verschlammten Betrieb kommen!" (TiU, 100). It is then reinforced with the quasi-political statement: "Man hat in diesem Berliner Sumpf aufzuräumen" (TiU, 101) where *Sumpf* once more reflects his disgust at contemporary theatre.

hatte er sich zu weit hervorgewagt, verhüllt er sich nachher um so gründlicher. Dabei wollte er nicht unzuverlässig oder unredlich scheinen, aber hinter jeder definitiven Erkenntnis, die er aussagte, hatte er stets eine noch definitivere in petto. Dieses Spiel hatte denselben Reiz wie der Blick in den Spiegel, dem ein anderer Spiegel gegenübersteht: die Verführung der unendlichen Perspektive, die foppende Kulissenwirkung einer falschen Ewigkeit (TiU, 40).

This is not merely the complexity of human nature, for all the characters reveal some complex and contradictory aspects of themselves; rather, Massis cultivates diversity to confuse and perplex those with whom he is in contact. It is realised in his ability to reconcile a bewildering array of conflicting and contradictory theoretical positions, such as, for example, Marxism and its inherent atheism with religious fervour, or the individualism of aestheticism with the demands of the collective good¹⁰². His academic publications similarly reflect this characteristic for, whilst reflecting an array of diverse interests, they share the common denominator that they bewilder as much as they enlighten¹⁰³.

Massis is inherently negative and nihilistic. This is illustrated by Mann with the metaphor of disease and emphasised in Massis' praise for the pathological and diseased over the healthy which is found in a notebook entry by him:

Es wird niemals eine müßige Beschäftigung werden, sich mit dem Pathologischen abzugeben, mögen die Gesundheitsliteraten reden, was sie wollen. Das Pathologische bleibt potenziertes Leben, und richtig verstanden, ist der abnorme Fall repräsentativer als der normale (TiU, 182).

Massis, in his capacity as a psychiatrist, draws the conclusion he reaches here from his studies of the diseased mind, where the darker side of the human psyche, which is normally repressed, comes to the fore. When he refers to this as 'potenziertes Leben', as life in concentrated form, he suggests that a single pathological case highlights characteristic features of the human psyche which are latent in many.

¹⁰² Again, Mann recalls here Mephistopheles in *Faust I* whose constantly changing views are designed to perplex and confuse those with whom he is in contact.

¹⁰³ The narrator comments of these publications: "All diese Aufsätze zeichneten sich dadurch aus, daß sie dem Leser durch einen zugleich scharfen und verdunkelnden Stil imponierten. Der Inhalt der Sätze war nie ganz zu verstehen, deshalb vermutete man stets, daß sich noch die merkwürdigsten Erkenntnisse hinter ihnen verbargen" (TiU, 44).

Massis' comments follow Darmstädter's suicide in the previous chapter to which Massis, indirectly, encourages him¹⁰⁴ and whose specific situation he then uses to justify his deduction:

Der durch und durch pathologische und exzeptionelle Richard bedeutete mir geradezu den Repräsentant einer ganzen Schicht, die Hunderttausende umfaßt. In ihm ist nur eine Situation pointiert sichtbar geworden, die in unzähligen anderen Fällen nicht deutlich werden konnte, mangels Temperament und Begabung ihrer Träger (TiU, 182).

Massis, initially, appears to argue in circles; Richard is described as exceptional, and thus atypical, yet is chosen to represent 'Hunderttausende'. It is the act of committing suicide to which instinct, mentioned by Massis merely as 'eine Situation', drives Darmstädter, that makes him exceptional and earns him Massis' commendation. When he claims that the countless, anonymous others lack both his 'Temperament' and 'Begabung', he criticises them for their inability to express the negative destructive side of their personalities.

By concentrating upon the abnormal and essentially unhealthy as the potential of life, Massis denies the vitalistic. This is reinforced by his abhorrence and rejection of the positive, represented in Treffpunkt im Unendlichen by Sonja of whom Massis asks "Was ist im Grunde das Uninteressante an einem Mädchen wie dieser Sonja?". He replies with the revealing answer "*Daß sie nicht pathologisch ist*" (TiU, 182)¹⁰⁵. Mann extends the metaphor of disease to make a more fundamental statement on Massis' nature which is suggested indirectly in his physical appearance. In each of his earlier texts, Der fromme Tanz and Alexander, Mann had used description to define a character's spiritual health. He returns to this technique in Treffpunkt im Unendlichen when he describes Massis' skin as "mattgelb, rauh und angegriffen" (TiU, 28). The choice of *mattgelb*, denoting sallowness, suggests the presence of hidden, internal disease. Frau Grete's accusatory "Sie können sich

¹⁰⁴ The nature of this encouragement shall be discussed later in this chapter.

¹⁰⁵ Sonja instinctively recognises Massis as a negative and, ultimately, destructive force. This is first conveyed in her general sense of horror and disgust at all that Massis represents, expressed in the description: "Sonja konnte nur mit Widerwillen an die Idylle denken, die allabendlich sich in Doktor Massis' Kabinett herstellte. Ihr Sauberkeitsinstinkt sträubte sich gegen das Bild" (TiU, 119). Here *Sauberkeitsinstinkt* acts as the appositional complement to Massis' *Pathologische*. She later reinforces this impression with the unequivocal "dieser ekelhafte Massis" (TiU, 184). In Chapter Seven Mann further emphasises the close correlation between disease and the drugs Massis supplies, and Sonja's intrinsic health, when he intercuts Froschele's and Frau Grete's drug consumption with the exercise routine undertaken by Sonja and her instructor Hugo Müller in the neighbouring room (TiU, 136-139).

immer nur über Gefühle lustig machen, zu denen Sie selber zu verdorben sind" (TiU, 30), a reference to Massis' inability to understand the positive emotion of love, defines this disease as spiritual rather than physical in nature.

Furthermore, Frau Grete's *verdorben*, with its overtones of corruption, ruin and destruction, highlights this additional dimension to Massis' character. Once more Mann relies upon the outer appearance of his character to demonstrate the inner person. His description of Massis begins with the impartial statement: "ein kleiner Herr mit hängendem schwarzem Schnurrbart" (TiU, 22) in which *Herr*, in contrast to the *Mann* used for Richard Darmstädter¹⁰⁶, merely denotes Massis' greater age. By the close of *Treffpunkt im Unendlichen*, however, the neutral *klein* of Mann's opening statement, made at a time when the reader is still ignorant of Massis' evil, is replaced by the stronger, and negatively-charged, description "gnomenhaft zusammengekauert" (TiU, 241)¹⁰⁷. Mann's choice of *gnomenhaft*, reinforced by the graphic expression *zusammengekauert*, suggests the appearance of physical deformity. Mann reinforces this impression with *verwachsen* and *hochbrüstig* in the following description of Massis in formal dress taken from the same passage: "Doktor Massis [...] in seinem plumpen und staubigen Frack - das halbsteife Hemd bauschte sich derart, daß er hochbrüstig und verwachsen aussah" (TiU, 241). Here Mann identifies physical deformity with moral, or spiritual, corruption thereby recalling the image of the Devil's cloven hoof used in popular folklore to illustrate his inherent evil¹⁰⁸.

This corruption is realised in Massis' treatment of others through which Mann reveals that Massis is both a corrupt and corrupting force. He neither recognises nor acknowledges any moral precepts and the limitations they place upon the individual. This is demonstrated, for example, when he legitimises his destruction of Frau Grete, Do, Froschele and Julia

¹⁰⁶ In the opening pages of the novel, before any of the characters have been named, Darmstädter is described merely as "ein junger brünetter Mann, ohne Hut, mit offenem Trenchcoat" (TiU, 22).

¹⁰⁷ This description also recalls an earlier description of one of the more unusual items kept in Massis' room, described by the narrator as "ein menschlicher Embryo, im Spiritus gräßlich gekrümmt" (TiU, 40).

¹⁰⁸ Mann uses this specific association in an attempt to convey Gregor Gregori's latent amorality suggested by Sonja's description of a recent dream to Sebastian. "Ich habe geträumt", she informs him, "daß ich die Hauptrolle in einem sehr frommen und heiligen Theaterstück probierte, und Gregor Gregori führte Regie. Er war sehr beweglich und elegant, wie immer [...]. Mir fiel nur auf, daß er ein wenig hinkte und daß sein einer Schuh ein gut Stück kürzer als der andere war. Ich dachte mir nichts weiter dabei [...]. Erst als ich sein verzerrtes Gesicht sah, wurde mir klar, daß es sich um einen *Pferdefuß* handelte" (TiU, 215).

Bayer through drug addiction as furthering scientific research¹⁰⁹. Indeed, he exhibits a callous disregard for human life by reducing them in his notes merely to "Studienobjekte" (TiU, 182), a phrase which denies them their intrinsic human status. His corruption of others, and his heartlessness, is shown most clearly through his gradual destruction of Sonja's companion Froschele; she represents the naivety and vulnerability that contact with evil destroys, for she is both exploited and manipulated by Massis as he reduces her to his level of amorality. This is first suggested in his notebook entry "es [amüsiert] mich zu beobachten, wie weit ich Froschele bringe", which identifies him as the active determiner of her decline, and is then reinforced by the subsequent entry: "Froschele ist mein Ergötzen, weil bei ihr die Saat wahrhaft aufgeht, die man sich die Mühe genommen hat zu säen" (TiU, 182). Massis refers specifically here to Froschele's gradually diminishing sense of right and wrong, as her growing and all-consuming drug addiction, to which she has been introduced by Massis, dictates her actions. The extent of her demise is implied in Massis' appraisal: "Ich glaube, daß sie heute schon so weit wäre, einen Mord zu begehen" and further emphasised in his concise and brutal statement: "Ich sehe sie noch im Zuchthaus enden" (TiU, 182). Froschele herself acknowledges the negative and destructive entity Massis represents when, in a moment of clarity in her drug-crazed state, she summarises her time in Berlin with the words: "Froschele, aus Landshut [...], in die Hände von ein paar Menschen geraten, die nichts konnten, als sie zugrunde richten" (TiU, 158).

Massis' amorality complements his spiritual emptiness; indeed, it originates in the fundamental absence of a soul. This is first intimated in Frau Grete's derogatory comment to Massis: "Sie sind und bleiben ein gefühlloses, altes Schwein" (TiU, 30) whereby *gefühllos* denotes a lack of spiritual depth and, at the same time, brings him close to Mephistopheles as the epitome of lovelessness. It is then suggested, indirectly, in the following description of Massis: "Seine Augen hinter den Brillengläsern hatten etwas merkwürdig Blindes" (TiU, 103). In all his early work, Mann relied upon the conventional idea of the eyes as the mediator of the soul. As introduced into Treffpunkt im Unendlichen, blindness initially

¹⁰⁹ Again, Mann relies upon a conventional image of the scientist here. In From Faust to Strangelove Haynes identifies that modern, twentieth century writers frequently portray the scientist as essentially amoral who is ready to permit any atrocity in the name of scientific research.

merely precludes expression and thus prevents access to the soul. However, within the context of the novel, Mann broadens the definition of blindness by associating it with physical death, defined here as the absence of the soul in the body.

Blindness as a metaphor for death is demonstrated most clearly through Sonja. Whilst caught in a cloudburst during her flight from Berlin, the torrential rain and the sea to either side of her are subsumed into an overwhelming desire to commit suicide. It prompts the following passage:

'Der gute Ford wird ins Meer geblasen werden; schonungslos; glatt ins Meer. Erst fliegt mal das Dach weg. Donnerwetter, die Schraube da vorne geht schon wieder los. Daß die *nie* hält! Und dieser Scheibenwischer, der macht das Glas ja nur noch trüber, man sieht wirklich gar nichts [...]. Scheibe vollkommen blind. Tränenblind. Meine Augen auch bald [...]. Gummihandschuh drückt die Augen zu (TiU, 208-209).

Here *blind* refers not to the physical disability of blindness, rather to the sightlessness of death; this is emphasised in Sonja's allusion to the rite of closing the eyes after death, expressed in the phrase 'Gummihandschuh drückt die Augen zu'. The reader is reminded of this incident when, in Chapter Twelve, the narrator notes Sebastian's anxiety at Sonja's distress following a drug overdose, which brings her close to death, when he comments: "[Sebastian] konnte sie nicht anschreien, denn er glaubte ohnmächtig werden zu müssen vor Angst. Sonja, wahnsinnig vor seinen sehenden Augen" (TiU, 226). Mann's phrase *sehende Augen* is directly opposed to blindness and as such refers to life.

Sonja's use of *tränenblind* recalls its earlier occurrence in Chapter Two in which Do turns to Massis following Sebastian's departure for Paris. Here, the sentence "sie sah ihm [Massis] aus tränenblinden Augen nach, wie er geheimnisvoll durchs Zimmer huschte" (TiU, 47) refers, initially, merely to her distress after her separation from Sebastian; at the same time however, it alludes indirectly to death. When she visits she is described with the words:

Ihre Augen waren geschwollen vom Weinen. Sie trug ein schwarzes Kostüm mit ein wenig glattem schwarzen Pelz am Kragen und an den Manschetten.

Wie eine junge Witwe - dachte Massis wieder¹¹⁰ und er haßte Sebastian, weil sie um ihn trauerte (TiU, 45).

That Massis is similarly associated with death and, specifically, with the destruction of others, is expressed in Sebastian's description of Do's drug dependency as "Sublimier Selbstmord [...] in den Armen des Doktor Massis" (TiU, 125). Essentially, Massis represents the agent who causes her gradual decline. Her decline is portrayed in the text by her metamorphosis throughout the text. In Chapter One, although upset at Sebastian's departure, she is otherwise in good health. This is reflected in the positive images of her as both carefree, in the descriptions "Sie winkte mit dem Kofferschein wie mit einer Blume", "Sie lachte mit großem und geschwungenem Mund" (TiU, 22), and attractive, which is implied in Sebastian's short observation to himself "wie schön Dos Hand war, mit den langen, schlanken, spitz zulaufenden Fingern" (TiU, 25). By Chapter Twelve, however, the positive image has changed into a negative one. Here the drugs on which she is dependent have taken hold, seriously damaging her health and ravaging her physical appearance: "Sie schien noch magerer geworden, und da sie sich erhob, um den Stand des Rennens zu beurteilen, wirkte sie mit dem weißgepuderten Kindergesicht über der langen schwarzen Figur ganz wie ein Plakat des Toulouse-Lautrec" (TiU, 241). This is in direct contrast to the image of health and vitality given at the novel's start.

Massis is a parasite who preys upon vulnerability. Do, Frau Grete, Froschele, Julia Bayer and Richard Darmstädter all turn to him in despair at the pain to which life has exposed them¹¹¹. He encourages their confidence only to exploit it later. This is expressed most clearly in the narrator's comment, specific to Darmstädter: "Eine Seele bot sich ihm an, die Geschichte eines Herzens öffnete sich ihm, das kostete der alte Menschenfänger wie der Feinschmecker ein besonderes Gericht" (TiU, 150). The phrase 'eine Seele bot sich ihm an' recalls once more the traditional image of Mephistopheles in search of a soul to corrupt.

¹¹⁰ This refers to Massis' sardonic comment in Chapter One: "Kleine Do sieht wie eine Witwe aus" to which Do responds with the unequivocal statement "Ich bin auch eine!" (TiU, 28).

¹¹¹ Do, Froschele, Frau Grete and Julia Bayer turn to Massis because they are disillusioned with life. This is reminiscent of Faust's exclamation in Faust I "So ist mir das Dasein eine Last/ Der Tod erwünscht, das Leben mir verhaßt" (1570-1571).

In appearing as their benefactor, Massis ultimately causes the destruction of Do, Froschele, Frau Grete and Julia Bayer¹¹². He offers drugs as a means to escape temporarily from their misery, but in return, he demands their lives. What Mann introduces here is, essentially, an adaptation of the irreversible pact between Faust and Mephistopheles. For Do the pact reached between herself and Massis is formalised into engagement, the characteristics of which, defined by Sebastian as based upon awe, submission and subjugation to Massis' will¹¹³, also determine the relationship between Massis and the other characters. Every time any of them injects the morphine supplied to them by Massis, they reaffirm their pact with him and, at the same time, tighten the bond between themselves and Massis. The physical manifestation of this bond, their self-perpetuating drug-dependency, makes their escape from him increasingly difficult.

Frau Grete alerts the reader to the apparently inevitable outcome of their dependency in her oblique warning to Do and Froschele: "Der [Massis] ist ganz übel [...]. Ich warte nicht erst, bis er mich kaputt macht". However, when she continues with the confident statement, "Eines Tages bin ich weg von hier" (TiU, 120), it belies the inherent difficulty of escaping from Massis' clutches¹¹⁴. In making each of them drug dependent and thus, by extension, dependent upon him, he holds power over Do, Froschele, Frau Grete and Julia Bayer; he exerts and emphasises this power by withholding their morphine seemingly at will¹¹⁵. Of them all, only Froschele attempts to break the pact by undergoing a drugs withdrawal programme. However, she fails in her attempt to break her dependency on both the drugs and Massis, acknowledging the impossibility of living without drugs when, during

¹¹² Darmstädter's death is not a direct consequence of the drugs he consumes, rather he is encouraged indirectly to commit suicide by Massis' cryptic dedication: "Das Paradies wäre eine Verbesserung. Aber das Nichts ist die Vollendung. - George (sic) Clemenceau/ Für Richard Darmstädter/ vor seiner Abreise" (TiU, 151). Here death, conveyed by *Das Paradies* and *Das Nichts*, is proposed as a better alternative to life. Furthermore, *Abreise* emphasises that Massis prompts Darmstädter to commit suicide for although it refers to Darmstädter's immediate intention to travel to the South of France with Frau Grete's son, Walter, *abreisen* is also associated within *Treffpunkt im Unendlichen* with death.

¹¹³ This is indicated in the narrator's transcription of Sebastian's thought processes whilst Do describes her relationship with Massis: "Sebastian hörte sehr genau hin, in welcher Art sie [Do] von Massis redete: er fand, es war keine sehr zärtliche Art, aber eine sehr ehrfurchtsvolle. Sie war ihm hörig, ohne ihn zu lieben. Er hatte sie ganz in seiner Gewalt [...]. Sebastian fand seine liebe Do völlig abhängig von einem Menschen, den er als äußerst gefährlich kannte" (TiU, 124).

¹¹⁴ This is in contrast to the ease with which Georges Molinier in *Les Faux-monnayeurs* easily escapes the clutches of Strouvillou. This is conveyed in the words: "Georges n'était si corrompu que son admiration pour Ghéridanisol ne cédât enfin à l'horreur. Lorsqu'il revint ce soir chez ses parents, il se jeta dans les bras de sa mère; et Pauline eut un élan de reconnaissance vers Dieu, qui, par ce drame affreux, ramenait à elle sons fils" (FM, 375).

¹¹⁵ See, for example, Massis' manipulation of Froschele, whom he reduces to theft by denying her morphine for which she is reduced to begging. His callous ruthlessness is emphasised in his reaction to Froschele's desperation described merely as "er [kicherte] boshaft und schüttelte den Kopf" (TiU, 146).

the treatment itself, she recognises: "Nicht auszuhalten, die Erde ohne das Gift, wenn man sie erst einmal in seiner Verzauberung kennengelernt hat" (TiU, 158).

Conclusion

Treffpunkt im Unendlichen, Mann explained in The Turning Point, was conceived as "a protest against the prevailing mood of neo-primitivism" (TP, 247). Mann did not define his words more closely yet it can be assumed he chose the term 'neo-primitivism' to suggest a simplicity of plot and structure that contrasted starkly with the complexity of his own work. Given the date and context of his novel's publication in 1932, it can also be assumed that 'neo-primitivism' evoked the ideal of *völkisch* literature advocated by the far right, which proposed simple narrative structures to recreate an historical, primarily agrarian idyll and dismissed as decadent the complex and modern. Yet this view of literature could equally have applied to Mann's early novels; thus, if he wished to write in protest, he was compelled to reject the style and structure characteristic of these earlier texts. This he achieved with Treffpunkt im Unendlichen, differentiating this text from Der fromme Tanz, Alexander and his short stories not only through the complexity of its structure, its narration and themes but also with specific reference to the period in which it is set. To this extent the novel is experimental and, as such, it has its flaws and weaknesses; his reference to the social issues and political tensions of Germany in the early 1930s, for example, lacks the incisiveness and analysis that would characterise his later work, most particularly in Mephisto (1936) and Der Vulkan (1939). However, Treffpunkt im Unendlichen also anticipated, in its style, techniques and even characterisation, these powerful indictments of National Socialism.

However, Treffpunkt im Unendlichen also exemplified Mann's belief that the writer could perform a dual role, that of the polemicist or critic of the age, and that of the artist, who created in his fiction 'literary' texts divorced from the outside world. Whilst in his essays at this time, he was clearly condemning the rise of National Socialism in his homeland and the xenophobia characterising European society, Treffpunkt im Unendlichen all but ignores these issues, introducing them as background colour but without exploring

their implications. In place of such investigation, Mann offered a 'literary text' in his novel which, despite its contemporary reference, has a timeless quality. It could, in truth, be set in any age and any country.

It cannot be denied that the work is derivative; however, this is in keeping with Mann's 1926 statement that the novelist had a duty to expand and build upon the traditions and works that had gone before. Although, as demonstrated, Mann undoubtedly followed Gide's Les Faux-monnayeurs by incorporating many of his themes and concerns into Treffpunkt im Unendlichen, I believe he selected only those which most closely approximated the themes of his own work throughout the Weimar Republic.

Conclusion

Wo beginnt die Geschichte? Wo sind die Quellen unseres [...] Lebens? Welche versunkenen Abenteuer und Leidenschaften haben unser Wesen geformt? Woher kommen die widerspruchsvollen Züge und Tendenzen, aus denen unser Charakter sich zusammensetzt?

Ohne Frage, wir sind tiefer verwurzelt, als unser Bewußtsein es wahrhaben will. Niemand, nichts ist zusammenhanglos [...]. Jeder unserer Gesten wiederholt einen urväterlichen Ritus und antizipiert zugleich die Gebärden künftiger Geschlechter (Wp, 9).

In many ways, these words, written by Mann in 1949 in the opening paragraphs of his autobiography Der Wendepunkt, express the original curiosity that led to this study. Where Mann investigated the influences on him as an individual, this study aimed to investigate the influences on his work, those he acknowledged and those present at a more subconscious level, arising from a German literary heritage with which Mann was intimately familiar. It has traced these influences and Mann's divergence from them throughout his early career, addressing how, and even if, he matures as a writer between 1924 and 1933, the decisive year of exile.

His interests were wide-ranging and diverse; primary amongst them understandably was a concern with German literature, however, he added to this a more general concern with the cultures of other nations, politics, philosophy and science. All these informed his writing and, combined with the greater understanding brought with age, caused him to readdress and revise his views of the writer's craft and art throughout his career with the defining characteristics of his work in exile originating in the Weimar Republic.

In addressing Mann's view of art and literature between 1924 and 1930, the last year in which he offered a detailed investigation of his views in his essays before exile, I have shown that, during these six years, Mann gradually rejected his exclusive adherence to the tenets of the aesthetic movement. In youth, he had accepted, without question, the autonomy of art, that is, the belief that art should exist purely in and for itself. He had defended his views with the argument: as society showed no interest in the writer's work, then the writer

need not concern himself with society. Only with the rise of European fascism in the late 1920s did he change his opinion. He now proposed, in his debate with Gottfried Benn, that should the writer fail to address the specific historical moment by challenging its political and social context, then he would bring about his own downfall with his work judged and dismissed as irrelevant. Thus, by 1930, he advocated that the writer had a responsibility to society to address through his work the issues which affected this society.

Mann did not reject the views of his youth, rather he attempted to reconcile them with each other by proposing that the writer performed a dual role; on the one hand he was the aesthetic creator of 'pure' literature and on the other the political and social activist. Thus he could create the 'literary' texts Alexander (1930) and Treffpunkt im Unendlichen (1932) whilst forcibly voicing his opposition to political events in Germany and Europe in his essays. In exile the two roles would coalesce as Mann became the fierce campaigner against fascism with his fiction and his essays from these years acting as the complement and extension of one another.

That Mann's views were not necessarily compatible with many of his contemporaries was clearly in evidence in the attacks by Bertolt Brecht and Gottfried Benn. It was also revealed in the reviews of his work discussed in Chapter Two. Here, right and left appeared united in their condemnation, whether this be on moral, ideological or artistic grounds, believing Mann to be continuing, in his fiction, a form of literature they could not condone. Whilst those close to him attempted to counteract and dispute these attacks, offering in their reviews an open challenge to the criticisms made, the overwhelming impression from reading the contemporary critiques of his work must be that, while he had his readership, this was, in all probability, relatively small in number and not drawn from the mainstream.

The reviews considered were not impartial attempts to assess Mann's work. They were written against ideological and personal considerations external to the texts themselves. Even those such as Süskind and Ebermayer who insisted that the review be a critique of the piece

alone did not achieve impartiality, over-emphasising the merits of Mann's work in an attempt to defend him. However, as I illustrated, this approach was characteristic of the time, an age in which criticism was accepted as an extension of political and ideological belief. In Mann's case this was intensified by his relationship to Thomas and Heinrich Mann, both writers of such high status through careful phraseology, could be indirectly attacked through the son.

Mann's reticence towards the critical press of his own country was borne out by the fierce attacks on him. However, this conclusion must remain tentative as many of the reviews that were written during the Weimar Republic, including both those collected by Klaus Mann and those kept in libraries, archives and private collections in Germany, were either lost or destroyed between 1933 and 1945 thus making it impossible to gain a truly representative overview of them in their entirety.

Some, but not all, of the criticism made of Mann's texts were without doubt valid, as I indicated in their discussion. His work was indeed flawed and, in the initial stages of his career, was certainly anachronistic in an age of experimentation and new challenges. This was clearly demonstrated in his first novel, Der fromme Tanz of 1926 which, in its structures and themes echoed the *Bildungsroman* format characterised by Goethe's Wilhelm Meisters Lehrjahre. Mann ignored developments in the genre during the early years of this century, where writers had aimed for a more realistic portrayal of the individual's progress, preferring to continue the practice of earlier years - using the artificial device of a providential plot and mentors to depict the growth of his central character Andreas. Yet if the text is anachronistic in this respect, it is hardly surprising, for the novel reflected the views of literature Mann expressed in the contemporary essay 'Fragment von der Jugend'.

Der fromme Tanz is, in my opinion, the weakest of Mann's novels from the period 1924 to 1933, but this is, in part at least, a consequence of his youth and immaturity as a writer; Mann was, after all, only eighteen when the book was published. He revealed his youth primarily in an over-simplistic plot and ill-defined secondary characters who are little more

than stereotypes, although these are partly dictated by the *Bildungsroman* format he adopted. In choosing this genre, Mann had opted for a tried and tested novel form, choosing the security of a well-defined and quintessentially German form. With growing maturity, however, he broke free of tradition and began to interact more closely with developments within Weimar, and more broadly, European culture. As with the reappraisal of his views of literature, art and society, this process was gradual and began with his historical novel Alexander.

In many respects Alexander represented a compromise between tradition and innovation. The historical novel as a genre was not unique to the Weimar Republic for it dated back to the early days of the novel as a literary form. However, in choosing to write one himself, Mann drew not on this tradition but on its renaissance during the later years of the Weimar Republic. He conformed to the view of the historical novel as offering its writers the opportunity to comment indirectly on the age in which they lived. The novel was undoubtedly a fictional biography of Alexander the Great, whereby Mann used the techniques of modern psychology to investigate the Macedonian leader's decline into tyranny; however, it was also a means for Mann to attack the homophobia of his age, as entrenched within the Republic's statutes, and the rise of nationalism. In this respect, Alexander represented his first literary confrontation with an ideology he could not condone. However, when compared with the vehement attacks on National Socialism in Mephisto and Der Vulkan, Mann's attempt to undermine its ideology failed, however, for it was indirect and hidden by a mass of historical data. It is, therefore, easily overlooked, so much so that it has not been addressed in modern Klaus Mann criticism.

If evidence were required of Mann's development as a writer I believe it is revealed in Treffpunkt im Unendlichen. Of all Mann's novels of the Weimar period, indeed of all his fictional prose of this period, on reflection, only this novel can be deemed to be the product of its age. I have shown that here Mann adopted the techniques of the modern novel of ideas, popularised by Gide, whose Les Faux-monnayeurs acted as Mann's paradigm, Virginia

Woolff and, in the context of Germany, Alfred Döblin. It cannot be denied that the novel was derivative; as I have demonstrated, the parallels with Gide's Les Faux-monnayeurs are too many to draw any other conclusion. However, in my opinion, these parallels were intentional. It was fully in keeping with Mann's praise for France and French culture in his essays that he should strive to emulate it in his own, that he should seek his models as much there as in his homeland.

Given the 1932 date of this novel, a time when the Francophobia of the immediate post-war years was once more coming to the fore, it must also be interpreted as an act of provocation, a literary rebuttal of the anti-French feeling in Germany at this time. As with his attack on nationalism in Alexander, however, Mann must also be adjudged to have failed in this respect for, given the evidence of his reviews, it is unlikely that any of his contemporaries recognised the correlation between the texts.

In Treffpunkt im Unendlichen Mann broke with the stylistic conventions of his earlier work and demonstrated his growing maturity as a writer by incorporating a more complicated plot and narrative structure. This allowed for a multiplicity of storylines and narrators, in contrast to the simple storyline and omniscient narration of Der fromme Tanz and, indeed, of Alexander. Furthermore, it bridged the years before exile with those after it for in Treffpunkt im Unendlichen he anticipated in its structure and techniques Flucht in den Norden of 1934, his first work to be published in exile, Symphonie Pathétique (1935), Mephisto (1936) and Der Vulkan (1939), thus to establish a continuum which the caesura of exile often obscures. Yet, despite being the most 'modern' of his novels, even in Treffpunkt im Unendlichen Mann did not dispense with tradition, drawing upon the Faust legend for his study of evil in the figure of Dr Massis and, in so doing, anticipating again his more detailed study in Mephisto.

Mann's friends and mentors believed him to be on a specific path, with each new work contributing to his development as a writer. Viewed as a whole, it is immediately apparent

that they were justified in this opinion. In many respects, the Weimar Republic was Mann's testing ground as he attempted to find his place within German cultural life. It is to be expected that his work from these, his debut years, would be flawed, with weaknesses in structure, narration and style. It is also self-evident that between 1924 and 1933, it would lead to frequent re-appraisals of the role of literature and the artist within society and that this would lead to some contradiction as he sought to define himself and his own role as a writer. In part, he was forced by circumstance to readdress his perception of literature and the autonomy of the artist as he witnessed his ideological enemies, the far right, appropriate this early belief for their own political ends. However, it was also part of his growing maturity as both a writer and an individual that led him to a better grasp of the political, cultural and social context in which he lived.

Can Mann be defined a 'Weimar' writer? The answer to this question, I believe, must be no. Mann did not truly ascribe to the cultural trends which have since been associated with the Weimar Republic. He was acutely aware of the concerns and developments of this period, participating in the cultural, political and social debates of the age through his essays, yet the trends of his age are only infrequently incorporated into his fiction. He disagreed with calls for the politicisation of literature, risking the condemnation of left and right alike; he avoided direct contemporary reference on the model of the *Zeitroman*, including this almost as an afterthought, for example, in Treffpunkt im Unendlichen; he ignored the rise of *Neue Sachlichkeit* with its concomitant demands for factuality and reality in literature; he embraced without reservation his literary heritage at a time when demands were high for the writer to break with the traditions of the past, earning in consequence, the ridicule and censure of such as Brecht, Axel Eggebrecht and Kurt Tucholsky. Tradition, Mann believed, offered the writer a guiding hand; this, I believe, is reflected in his novels of the Weimar period. Yet in Mann's opinion, to follow tradition did not dictate rigid adherence to that which had gone before. In being neither static nor inviolable, he believed, it could be adapted to suit every age and every style. To this end, he himself adapted that which had gone before, seeking inspiration and guidance in the works of others in order to shape and inform his own.

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