

THE INTERPLAY OF *SEIN* AND *BEDEUTEN*
IN THOMAS MANN'S *JOSEPH UND SEINE BRÜDER*

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ABSTRACT OF THESIS

The interplay and theme of *Sein* and *Bedeuten* in Thomas Mann's novel tetralogy *Joseph und seine Brüder* has hitherto received comparatively little critical attention. I attempt to show that this issue unites the tetralogy's stylistic and thematic structure.

My introduction deals extensively with the theoretical foundation and with the cognitive implications of *Sein* and *Bedeuten*.

The first two chapters contain a closely contextualized examination of stylistic devices. They deal with central pairs of opposites (and their inherent duality), with (leit)motifs and central metaphors. In these two chapters I attempt to show how Mann uses these stylistic devices to reinforce and reflect the constant interplay of *Sein* and *Bedeuten*.

Chapter Three is concerned with the psychology of characters other than Joseph. It examines the concept of mythical consciousness and of identification and imitation as a source of identity. Mann portrays people whose ego-consciousness is only partially or not at all developed. I try to show how he succeeds in this portrayal of minds which appear so different from the self-consciousness and awareness of the modern individual. The second half of the chapter deals with the central female character of the novel's third volume, with her role and function as both personal and transpersonal figure.

Chapter Four is entirely devoted to the central character of Joseph, whom Mann uses to draw a microscopic picture of the development of consciousness in mankind. In the final volume Joseph becomes the Provider, in whom the separation between the individual and the collective, between being and meaning has finally been overcome. He becomes a symbol of a genuine union of opposites, where conflicting ele-

ments are joined in a synthesis, in which they maintain their inherent nature and in which neither agency dominates.

Chapter Five investigates the development of the narrator, which often parallels that of the characters. It also examines how the central theme is not only expressed by but embodied in the narrative voice.

In the Conclusion the tetralogy's concept of reality, the issues of mediacy versus fact, of metaphor and meaning, the movement from the actual to the symbolic which we observe in the novel, particularly in the changing concept of sacrifice and the divinity, are given a final consideration in terms of the interplay of *Sein* and *Bedeutung*.

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PREFACE

I would like to express my deep gratitude to my supervisor Professor M. W. Swales for his patient and constructive criticism, for his care and most of all for the unceasing encouragement he has given me over many years.

Particular thanks go also to Dr. Viiu Menning, who first turned me into a student of literature and was dedicated enough to proof-read my thesis. I am also indebted to the staff of the Institute of Germanic Studies for their help and friendly advice.

Finally I would like to express my gratitude to Mr. Reg Freeson, who bore with me through quite a few ups and downs, always supporting me and countering my self-doubts with optimism and humour.

BIBLIOGRAPHICAL NOTES

References to Thomas Mann's published works are to the Frankfurter Ausgabe in thirteen volumes, 1974, and are given in Roman numbers, followed by Arabic page numbers (e.g. IV, 9). Essays will be identified by short titles.

References to other primary sources are given in footnotes.

References to the works of C. G. Jung are, unless otherwise indicated, taken from the *Gesammelte Werke*. Sources of quotations are indicated by the volume number, followed by a Roman number if published in more than one volume, followed by the number of the paragraph from which the quotation is taken (e.g. GW 9/I, 67).

SURVEY OF SECONDARY LITERATURE

Hermann Kurzke in his book *Thomas-Mann-Forschung 1969-1976* states that, in general, Thomas Mann criticism concentrates too much on detail and fails to draw general conclusions from the individual insights. He writes: 'Im Verhältnis zu Aufwand und Exaktheit der Detailanalysen sind die Ergebnisse und Synthesen oft erstaunlich mager. Für viele scheint Thomas Mann eine Art germanistischer Exerzierplatz zu sein, auf dem man Griffe drillt, ohne nach ihrem Sinn zu fragen.'¹

He comments on the paralyzing effect which such criticism often has, 'weil hinter den Einzelkenntnissen oft kein organisierender Sinn aufzufinden ist' (ibid., p. 22). Thus more often than not critics tend to make one particular strand of criticism absolute, to make it into an end in itself, without asking what it achieves within the text as a whole. The impression created by this method is that the particular aspect that preoccupies the critic provides the complete answer to all the questions that arise in the reader's mind. Not surprisingly, such a critical enterprise fails to convince—and this is particularly the case with the *Joseph* novels because of the many antinomies and the dialectic playfulness that inform the tetralogy.

With regard to the *Joseph* novels we can distinguish four principal strands of criticism: exploration of the sources used by Mann; discussion of the novel's religious concept and *Menschheitsbild*; discussion of its narrative structure and form; and analysis of the interplay of myth and psychology in the tetralogy.² Yet while these strands do represent

¹ Hermann Kurzke, *Thomas-Mann-Forschung 1969-1976: Ein kritischer Bericht* (Frankfurt am Main: Fischer, 1977), p. 19 (= Kurzke I).

² cf. Hermann Kurzke, *Thomas Mann: Epoche — Werk — Wirkung* (Munich, Beck, 1985), p. 243 (= Kurzke II).

valuable approaches to Mann's art, they all display the shortcomings which Kurzke highlights, as I shall briefly try to show in my summary. It is my view that all these major strands of criticism can be brought together, as indeed they are in the novel itself, in terms of one sustained concern which unites, both thematically and stylistically, the multiple facets of the novel. That concern is the interplay of *Sein* and *Bedeutung*, to which I shall return later in this introduction.

(i) SOURCE MATERIAL

Thomas Mann's research material for the *Joseph* novels is stored in the Zurich archives (cf. Kurzke II, p. 243). This material has been analyzed in great detail and consequently the sources and their use in the novel are altogether well-known. It is particularly Herbert Lehnert³ and Manfred Dierks⁴ whose work in this field has proved of lasting value. Dierks, apart from summarizing and analyzing the sources, has also attempted to show the extent of their influence on Mann's thinking and their importance for the understanding of the novel. His work continues to be a standard reference guide particularly in the field of myth and psychology and is invaluable for any critic who tries to assess and comment on the influence of Schopenhauer, Freud and Jung or Bachofen. It is usefully supplemented by Willy R. Berger's book⁵ on

³ Herbert Lehnert, *Thomas Mann: Fiktion, Mythos, Religion* (Stuttgart, Berlin, Köln Mainz: Kohlhammer, 1965). Subsequent references are to this work.

⁴ Manfred Dierks, *Studien zu Mythos und Psychologie bei Thomas Mann* (Beme: Franke, 1972).

⁵ Willy R. Berger, *Die mythologischen Motive in Thomas Manns Roman "Joseph und seine Brüder"* (Cologne, Vienna: Böhlau, 1971).

the mythological motifs in the novel, which provides an enormous amount of interesting detail. While Berger is fairly exhaustive in his research, he does not make it his task to draw comprehensive conclusions from it, or to assess its relevance to the novel as a whole. This is a characteristic weakness of much of the Thomas Mann *Quellenforschung*, as Dietmar Mieth⁶ hints when he comments: 'Wenn man das von H. Lehnert, W. Berger und M. Dierks gebotene Material studiert, erhält man den Eindruck, daß nichts in diesem Werk von vorneherein als »Original« zu betrachten ist' (p. 21), and, 'die quellenanalytischen Untersuchungen scheinen doch eher zu einer Hermeneutik des Autors als zu einer Hermeneutik des Werkes zu führen' (p. 22). Critics have shown the author's indebtedness to ancient and modern sources and materials and thereby made a valuable and necessary contribution to our understanding of the novel. They tend, however, to lose sight of the end product, which is not a ponderous compendium of facts and knowledge but a novel of charm, gaiety and wit—a novel that delights in creating the substance of the world of the Old Testament and playfully exploits its ancient and modern meanings.

(ii) RELIGION AND ETHICS

Criticism on the novel's religious concept and *Menschheitsbild* can be roughly divided into two fields. There are those who claim that it undermines the religious sphere and makes it relative, and those who see it as a 'religious' novel, albeit more often in the spirit of some secular,

⁶ Dietmar Mieth, *Epik und Ethik: Eine theologisch-ethische Interpretation der Josephromane Thomas Manns* (Tübingen: Niemeyer, 1976).

broadly humanistic and ethical religiosity, rather than in theological terms. The first group, oddly, makes bedfellows of certain Catholic and Marxist critics. The reason for this lies in the fact that both groups are bound by an absolute dogma. In the first case it is the absolute belief in the patriarchal and personal God of the Bible, who must not be subjected to a wider interpretation. In the second case it is the absolute denial of any God and the dismissal of religious belief as irrational and superstitious. Thomas Mann himself once commented with regret on the dislike of the *Joseph* novels by the Catholic Church, who perceived the work as a relativization of the Christian religion: ‘Da aber [...] die katholische Kirche das Werk nicht mag, weil es das Christentum relativiert, so bleibt ihm nur eine Humanistengemeinde, welche sich die Sympathie mit dem Menschlichen frei gefallen läßt, von der es in Heiterkeit lebt’ (XI, 240).⁷ In his book Dietmar Mieth gives a detailed review particularly of the early reception by the Catholic Church (pp. 205-21). This focused on what was perceived as Mann’s central concern to deny or at least diminish God, ‘der Dichter erhebe sich selbst über Gott, er anerkenne nicht eine unmittelbare göttliche Offenbarung, weil er nicht an Wunder glaube’ (Mieth, p. 209) and on his alleged lack of respect for the biblical mystery (ibid.).

This view—albeit approvingly—appears to be echoed by Helmut Beck⁸ in his assessment of Mann’s attitude to the Bible and religion. He writes: ‘Thomas Mann steht zur Bibel im Verhältnis nüchterner Sachlichkeit; er sieht in ihr *eine*, wenn auch besonders bedeutungsvoll gewordene, literarische Leistung neben anderen, die im Lichte historischer Kritik zu betrachten, dem modernen Menschen freisteht’ (p. 14).

⁷ *Die Entstehung des Doktor Faustus*.

⁸ Helmut Beck, ‘Thomas Manns Josephstetralogie und das Gestaltungsprinzip der epischen Ironie’, in *Betrachtungen und Überblicke: Zum Werk Thomas Manns*, ed. by Georg Wenzel (Berlin and Weimar: Aufbau, 1966), pp. 11-106.

Beck's view of Mann seems to be coloured too much by his own convictions. It appears somewhat too undifferentiated, because it ignores the Bible's mythological aspects and fails to recognize Mann's delight in the interplay of old and new meanings. Beck also perceives an almost entirely ironical treatment of the Jewish God in particular:

Zweifellos treibt Thomas Mann die Ironisierung des Gottes Israel sehr weit — man denke an eine so köstliche, spaßhaft ironische Wendung wie „O Tag von Gottes Apotheose!“ —, zweifellos macht er sich über die Vorstellung eines von Engeln und einer väterlichen Gottesgestalt bevölkerten Himmels lustig — aber welcher Mensch des 20. Jahrhunderts, auch wenn er nicht auf dem Boden des dialektischen Materialismus steht, kann an solcher Auffassung festhalten, will er nicht alle Erkenntnis moderner Wissenschaft leugnen? (p. 23)

Although, without doubt, Mann has much fun with the angelic court, the view Beck voices here seems schematic and ill-judged. Given the historical background against which the novel was written, it appears more than unlikely that its author was intent on nothing but mockery of the living God of a people who were persecuted and subjected to genocide at that particular time. Furthermore, it is precisely this typical modern attitude, which believes itself wholly in the know (by courtesy of modern science), which the narrator mocks in the novel, for instance, when he laments the unenlightened minds of the Egyptians, who did not know why the Nile flooded or failed to do so:

Dennoch bleibt es uns, die wir so viel besser, ja vollkommen Bescheid wissen, ein Bedauern, daß niemand von uns damals zur Stelle war, um das Dunkel ihres Geistes zu lichten und ihnen über die wahre Bewandnis, die es mit dem Wasser Ägyptens hat, erleuchtete Auskunft zu geben. (V, 1577-78)

Clearly the narrator's irony not only aims at others but, unlike some of the critics, he is also capable of directing it against himself.

Common to both religious and positivistic criticism is a concern to explain the work of art through its creative, demonstrable knowledge

and beliefs, particularly in terms of its author—and a corresponding unwillingness to attend to the text.

Dietmar Mieth's assessment of the tetralogy is extremely positive and optimistic, and while indebted to the tradition of Catholic criticism, he clearly belongs to the humanist-ethical group. He judges Joseph's ethical development to be exemplary. Mieth also develops a concept of an 'ethical model', which he establishes in his introduction. It emphasizes the intended therapeutic effect of epic narration: 'Das Erzählen [...] geschieht in anamnetischer und therapeutischer Absicht. Epik ist daher immer schon eine genuine Form der Ethik gewesen' (p. 8). This concept apparently implies that the reading of the novel has a direct and improving effect on the reader, but the contention is, to say the least, doubtful.⁹ In the course of his interesting analysis Mieth emphasizes the predominantly aesthetic unity of the tetralogy and acknowledges the general relativization of religious, political or other dogmas. In such relativization and implied ethical analogies he also perceives the link between the novel and theology: 'Die Entsprechung zwischen den Josephromanen und der Theologie liegt nicht im Glauben, sondern im Ethos' (p. 221). Central to the novel are synthesis and reconciliation, 'Was systematisch unversöhnte Antinomie ist, ist im dichterischen Bild versöhnt' (p. 35).

Mieth's view and his emphasis on the equilibrium that is achieved and signalled by the novel continue that critical strand which sees the novel's religion in terms of humanism and ethics. Lehnert, for instance, like Mieth, distinguishes between theology and religion and discerns, 'Eine wenn auch vage und von wissenschaftlicher Theologie wenig

⁹ cf. Hermann Kurzke, 'Ästhetizistisches Wirkungsbewußtsein und narrative Ethik bei Thomas Mann', in *Stationen der Thomas-Mann-Forschung*, ed. by Hermann Kurzke (Würzburg: Königshausen & Neumann, 1985), pp. 210-227 (= Kurzke III). He also gives a more detailed examination of the concept (p. 215-16).

berührte Religiosität zusammen mit der Humanität des Gleichgewichtes zwischen Leben und Tod, dem Apollinischen und dem Dionysischen' (p. 93). Those who perceive the novel's religion in terms of humanism, not surprisingly, tend to concentrate on the *Menschheitsbild* and *Menschwerdung* as shown in the novel. Thus for Käte Hamburger,¹⁰ Joseph is 'nicht mehr, aber auch nicht weniger als der Mensch' and consequently Joseph's development, from the egoistical individual to the socially-caring member of the collective, is symbolic of present or future human development.

A fairly widely-held opinion is expressed by Hermann Kurzke, who sees Mann's position as follows: 'Es geht ihm um den sozial verantwortlichen Künstler, nicht um die Wiederbelebung eines religiösen Mythos. Gefragt ist die soziale Nützlichkeit des Gottesglaubens, nicht seine religiöse Wahrheit' (Kurzke II, p. 253). Yet, reducing religion in the novel entirely to terms of usefulness, social or otherwise, is in my opinion a somewhat too pragmatic attitude to take. It seems to imply that there is a single message which Mann tried to put across and thus turns the novel into an ideological exercise. The tetralogy, however, is not so much concerned with definitive answers, as largely with an act of exploration.

While the orthodox views, be they Catholic or Marxist, perceive the *Joseph* novels ultimately as denial of religion, the 'congregation of humanists' of whom Mann spoke sees in them the acknowledgement of religion. They do so not in terms of a theological definition or of a particular creed; rather they widen the concept of religion and interpret it in terms of ethics and humanism. While in a theological discussion this may not be permissible, with regard to the *Joseph* tetralogy it is quite

¹⁰ Käte Hamburger, *Thomas Manns biblisches Werk: Der Joseph-Roman: Die Moses-Erzählung ›Das Gesetz‹* (Frankfurt am Main: Fischer, 1984), p. 127 (= Hamburger II).

justifiable, because it reflects the open attitude that is so characteristic of the four novels. Again it should be said that the *Joseph* novels are above all an exploration of religious concepts, of the concept of God and the relationship between God and man, which they constantly reinterpret and develop freely.

(iii) NARRATIVE ASPECTS

As an analysis of narrative structure and form, Käte Hamburger's book (Hamburger II) on the novels is still a most useful study. Hamburger establishes humour as one of the central stylistic means and sees as its function 'die Hervorbringung des Sinnes der Joseph-Geschichte' (p. 66). She makes a clear distinction between humour and irony, by attributing a mostly judging and mocking attitude to the latter, and contrasting it with humour: 'Die humoristische Haltung ist dagegen nicht verurteilend' (p. 79).

Erich Heller¹¹ in his famous study traces the term irony in the work of Thomas Mann and is very close to Hamburger's definition of humour, 'Was immer die Ironie in ihren zahllosen Abwandlungen und Nuancen für Thomas Mann bedeutet hat, es ist die Ironie dieses Doppelsegens, die über *Joseph und seinen Brüdern* waltet, und ist hier vielleicht mehr als Ironie: nämlich Humor' (p. 281). By contrast, Helmut Beck's interpretation, which, as we have seen above, reflects a very judgmental attitude, seems closer to Hamburger's and the traditional

¹¹ Erich Heller, *Thomas Mann: Der ironische Deutsche* (Frankfurt am Main: Suhrkamp, 1970), pp. 275-282. I decided to use Heller's German edition of his book, as it is 'vom Autor neu geschrieben und [...] gegenüber der englischen [Ausgabe] wesentlich erweitert' (p. 4).

definition of irony.

One of the most careful studies of the narrative structure and form in the *Joseph* novels continues to be Jürgen Hohmeyer's book.¹² He establishes (and shows with numerous examples) that there is a mixed narrative situation in the novel, by which he means that there are two dominant narrative forces at work in the tetralogy: the disincarnate 'Geist der Erzählung' and the personal voice of a commenting, reflecting narrator:

Die Wirklichkeitsillusion der fiktional erzählten, vom Geist der Erzählung erschaffenen Welt kann nur so lange aufrechterhalten werden, als sie ungestört von außen bleibt. In den Werken der gemischten Erzählsituation tritt nun aber die Person des Erzählers neben den abstrakten Geist. (p. 73)

In this way Hohmeyer gives a very valid explanation for the basic narrative dichotomy, which moves almost constantly from 'showing' to 'telling' and thus forms the successful union of primal narrative and modern sophistication and self-awareness. Hohmeyer further uses the mixed narrative situation to explain the many paradoxes which characterize the novel:

Die Erzählsituation der Romantetralogie *Joseph und seine Brüder* weist eine Reihe von Paradoxien auf, die aber nicht als Zufälligkeiten oder gar Mängel angesehen werden können, sondern die sich folgerichtig aus dem Mischungscharakter des Werkes ergeben und Ausdruck eines wohlbegründeten Kunstprinzips sind. (p. 65)

Hohmeyer is mainly concerned with narrative form and structure, yet in his last chapter, he also relates it to some of the novel's most important motifs and metaphors. By doing so he shows how the novel's narrative structure parallels the events told:

Die Situation der Romanfiguren zwischen Gebundenheit und Freiheit in ihrem Verhältnis zum überkommenen Mythos entspricht bis in Einzelheiten demjenigen des Romans (oder des Au-

¹² Jürgen Hohmeyer, *Thomas Manns Roman „Joseph und seine Brüder“: Studien zu einer gemischten Erzählsituation* (Marburg: Elwert, 1965).

tors) zum überlieferten Stoff, das in der Doppelheit der gemischten Erzählsituation seinen Ausdruck findet. (p. 121)

Hohmeyer's conclusions about the narrative structure form in my opinion an important aspect of what I consider the novel's central theme, that is, the interplay of *Sein* and *Bedeutend*, to which I shall return.

(iv) MYTH AND ENLIGHTENMENT

There is a general tendency among critics to contrast myth and enlightenment. The argument they present is usually that in Joseph's development we observe his 'departure' from the mythical world and his movement towards an enlightened, that is, rational and humanistic attitude as is reflected in his politics as the provider. Thus Koopmann,¹³ for instance, speaks about the 'Aufklärungsgläubigkeit' and the 'Kulturoptimismus der Josephsromane' (p. 328). While this argument is acceptable as such, it is problematic, in the sense that it all too often is linked to a condemnation of myth and an uncritical endorsement of the enlightened view. Elaine Murdaugh¹⁴ is quite representative of this point of view, and while she acknowledges that the novel does not dismiss myth, it is her opinion that it is the 'lesson' of the novel 'that the human being should liberate himself from the mythical existence' (p. 30). On her reading, only a pragmatic attitude which utilizes myth is acceptable: 'The myth remains binding, because it is universal and funda-

¹³ Helmut Koopmann, 'Der Untergang des Abendlandes und der Aufgang des Morgenlandes: Thomas Mann, die Josephsromane und Spengler', *Jahrbuch der Deutschen Schillergesellschaft*, 24 (1980), 300-331.

¹⁴ Elaine Murdaugh, *Salvation in the Secular: The Moral Law in Thomas Mann's «Joseph und seine Brüder»* Stanford German Studies, vol. 10 (Berne: Lang, 1976).

mental, but the ego asserts its autonomy by humanizing the myth and bending it to the unique requirements of the historical age' (p. 32). Her assessment of Eliezer shows perhaps most revealingly how misleading this low rating of myth or mythical consciousness can be. Thus she writes, 'There seems therefore to be no question but that Eliezer, in his innocence, was intended as a primitive human type which embodied the Will as Schopenhauer understood it' (p. 39). Anybody describing Eliezer as a 'primitive type' fails to realize that Joseph never loses touch with the teaching that Eliezer passes on to him.

Murdaugh's disparagement of myth is also echoed by Cunningham,¹⁵ who writes, 'while the work does not deny that myth has still the power to subvert the rational mind, it unambiguously asserts the moral superiority of reason, and illustrates the proper function of myth as a tool of the rational mind' (p. 318). Antal Mádl¹⁶ also echoes essentially this view when he concludes: 'Thomas Mann will den Mythos nicht für die Gegenwart neu aufbauen, sondern er will ihn erklären und dadurch seine Zeit als eine überholte, nie wiederkehrende Zeit begreifbar machen' (p. 130).

Instead of responding to the invitation which the novel extends to the reader—that we enter into a different type of consciousness—critics all too often impose a value judgement and confine themselves to a simple interpretative schema: myth is essentially viewed as something negative, as a 'primitive' state of mind that exists but needs to be overcome.¹⁷ This attitude coexists with a rather facile and undifferentiatedly positive view of the modern enlightened mind.

¹⁵ Raymond Cunningham, *Myth and Politics in Thomas Mann's 'Joseph und seine Brüder'* (Stuttgart: Heinz, Akademischer Verlag, 1985).

¹⁶ Antal Mádl, *Thomas Manns Humanismus* (Berlin: Rütten & Loenig, 1980).

¹⁷ Many other names could be listed here, for instance, Willy R. Berger or Gunter Reiss.

The abuse of myth in Nazi Germany which formed the historical background against which the novel was written makes it difficult to argue in favour of myth. Mann wanted to reclaim myth from the contexts of its political abuse; his intention was ‘den Mythos den fascistischen Dunkelmännern aus den Händen zu nehmen und ins Humane «umzufunktionieren»’.¹⁸ This much-quoted statement is usually interpreted as an affirmation of myth if applied by rational minds as a useful tool, and a condemnation of myth as an irrational factor with close links to romanticism. Yet the unreflecting endorsement of the enlightened attitude that consigns myth to functioning as a mere tool of the rational mind is equally problematic, because of what Horkheimer and Adorno¹⁹ have revealed as the dialectic of the enlightenment:

Aufklärung macht ihrem Prinzip nach selbst vor dem Minimum an Glauben nicht halt, ohne das die bürgerliche Welt nicht existieren kann. [...] Das anti-autoritäre Prinzip muß schließlich ins eigene Gegenteil, in die Instanz gegen die Vernunft selber umschlagen: die Abschaffung alles von sich aus Verbindlichen, die es leistet, erlaubt es der Herrschaft, die ihr jeweils adäquaten Bindungen souverän zu dekretieren und zu manipulieren. Nach Bürgertugend und Menschenliebe, für die sie schon keine guten Gründe hatte, hat denn auch die Philosophie Autorität und Hierarchie als Tugenden verkündigt, als diese längst auf Grund der Aufklärung zu Lügen geworden waren. Aber auch gegen solche Perversion ihrer selbst besaß die Aufklärung kein Argument, denn die lautere Wahrheit genießt vor der Entstellung, die Rationalisierung vor der Ratio keinen Vorzug, wenn sie nicht etwa einen praktischen für sich aufzuweisen hat. (p. 100)

In other words, the conscious *use* of myth for a particular purpose cannot be endorsed wholeheartedly, because myth thus becomes merely an effective tool of manipulation and control, which can be used in both a beneficial or detrimental way. The contrast with Fascist practices in this

¹⁸ Karl Kerényi, *Gespräch in Briefen*, ed. by Karl Kerényi (Frankfurt am Main: Fischer, 1960), p. 98.

¹⁹ Max Horkheimer and Theodor W. Adorno, *Dialektik der Aufklärung: Philosophische Fragmente* (Frankfurt am Main: Fischer, 1989).

respect is then merely one of underlying motivation and not in principle. In addition, at the very heart of the novel is not only the theme of opposites, but also of reconciliation. The novel does not advocate that one opposite replace the other but, in line with Joseph's particular blessing, it strives for a union of opposites. The whole attitude of merely endorsing rationality seems somewhat too simplistic, and Hermann Kurzke comments that

Thomas Mann durchaus versucht, den erreichten Stand von Aufklärung als verbindliches Maß zu nehmen, das weder durch Rückfall in irrationalistische Remythisierung (wie im faschistischen Mythos) noch aber auch durch abstrakte aufklärerische Utopien einer ganz mythosfreien, ganz emanzipierten Welt desavouiert werden darf.²⁰ (Kurzke I, p. 219)

It cannot be emphasized too strongly that to discern in the novel a critique of enlightenment and rationality is not to convert it into an apology for obscurantism or the irrational. If we are to do justice to the *Joseph* novels, we must insist on the fact that they do more than simply illustrate the *proper* use of myth. The novel is dialectic not only in its structure, but also in the treatment of its themes. Kurzke has repeatedly demanded that the novel, and particularly the thematic complex of myth and psychology, must be perceived as the dialectic of the enlightenment:

Das Thema Mythos und Psychologie muß als Dialektik der Aufklärung aufgefaßt werden, damit es möglich wird, Remythisierung von Mythos zu unterscheiden, damit also eine historische Dialektik statt einem immerwährenden Pendeln zwischen zwei gleichberechtigten Polen sichtbar gemacht werden kann. Thomas Mann ist ein in seiner individuellen, seiner sozialen und seiner nationalen Identität bedrohter Intellektueller, der die Zerstörung, den Untergang und das Zur-Lüge-Werden der bürgerlichen Gesellschaft seiner Zeit als Zerstörung aller Verbindlichkeiten und damit als Zerstörung von Mythos erfährt. (Kurzke I, 143)

²⁰ This assessment can be supported with Mann's reflections on this issue in his essay *Vom Buch der Bücher und Joseph* (XIII, esp. pp. 205-206).

It seems to me that too little critical attention has been given to this issue and I shall return to it later.

(v) PSYCHOLOGY AND PSYCHOANALYSIS

In light of the fact that Mann, in his essays, makes many, often extended, references to psychoanalysis and modern psychological theory, it is not surprising that his work in general, and the *Joseph* novels in particular, have been closely examined for their implications under this aspect. Traditionally Mann has been closely associated with Freud, which is in part due to the fact that this was an influence he acknowledged quite openly. Manfred Dierks's book is probably still the most important contribution to this whole issue. After a close examination of the sources and material used by Mann, he discerns, however, only a comparatively small influence of Freudian theory (Dierks, p. 157), and he shows conclusively that *Totem und Tabu* is 'die einzige Arbeit Freuds, die konkret auf das *Joseph*-Werk eingewirkt hat' (p. 160). He traces the influence of psychoanalysis back almost entirely to this particular work. Dierks comments further: 'Und dies Werk vermittelt in der Tat fast alle Grundzüge der Psychoanalyse [...]. Außer durch *Totem und Tabu* können wir der Psychoanalyse ja doch nur geringen lokalisierbaren inhaltlichen und chronologisch interessanten Einfluß auf den *Joseph* zusprechen' (p. 138). He names two thematic strands as important: '1. Die patriarchalische Grundkonzeption der Freudschen Kulturtheorie' and '2. Die genetische Bestimmung von Mythen und Göttern als «Projektion»' (p. 160).

In the light of this assessment, particularly the emphasis on the strong patriarchal element in Freud's theories, it is not altogether surprising that critics following Freud tend to emphasize the father-son relationship. Michael Zeller,²¹ for instance, seems to perceive it as the central theme of the tetralogy. Similarly Koopmann,²² who, while acknowledging the *Joseph* novels as an act of 'Gegen-Geschichte' (p. 66) against the Fascist use of myth, also sees the father-son relationship (and its psychoanalytical implications) as the predominant theme (p. 67); he writes, 'in den Vordergrund drängen sich jetzt Geschichten von verlorenen Söhnen und, deutlicher noch, Geschichten von verlorenen Vätern, aber auch Erzählungen von allerlei zweideutigen, ja tief verdächtigen Beziehungen zwischen Vater und Sohn und von Ersatzlösungen durch Ersatzväter' (p. 67). This basic tendency is still evident in more recent criticism. Thus Burghard Dedner,²³ in a very interesting essay on the tetralogy, interprets the attacks on Joseph almost entirely in Freudian terms, making particular reference to *Totem und Tabu*. In his interpretation both attacks, that is, by the brothers and by Mut-em-enet, symbolize the (ritualistic) killing of the father. He is right, of course, when he views Joseph's resistance (particularly in the second attack) as a refusal of 'einer Schändung der Vaterfiguren' (p. 38). Yet his interpretation shows particularly clearly how restrictive a predominantly Freudian interpretation is. Thus he does not examine the possibility that the image of the father may symbolize something that transcends the novel's actual father figures, Jaakob, Mont-kaw and Potiphar, or even

²¹ Michael Zeller, *Väter und Söhne bei Thomas Mann: Der Generationsschritt als geschichtlicher Prozess* (Bonn: Bouvier, 1974).

²² Helmut Koopmann, *Thomas Mann: Konstanten seines literarischen Werks* (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1975).

²³ Burghard Dedner, 'Mitleidsethik und Lachritual: Über die Ambivalenz des Komischen in den Josephs-Romanen', *Thomas Mann Jahrbuch*, 1 (1988), 27-46 (cf. particularly his section III).

the patriarchal God of the Bible. I believe however that it is impossible to interpret a text as rich as the *Joseph* novels purely in terms of a personal psychological theory. — say, Freudian

The attempt to interpret the protagonist, or the novel, in the rigid framework of Freudian or indeed other restrictive theories almost inevitably brings in its wake a good many absurdities. One of the problems with these interpretations is their tendency to interpret almost everything on a literal level. Karen Drabek Vogt's study²⁴ provides a perfect example of this. Having (in my opinion correctly) identified Mut-em-enet as a symbolic figure of the Great Mother, she then loses all sense of proportion, when she attributes the seven lean years to Joseph's failure to sleep with Mut:

Joseph's failure to impregnate Mut violates the annual cycle of nature, and the loss of fertility is predictable. Joseph's choice must result in famine, the failure of rain. The seven years of famine are caused by the absence of rain—without fertilization, nature (and Mut) cannot bring forth life and the earth will remain barren. One important consequence of Joseph's personal decision is thus the devastation and death that it will bring upon the people [...]. By anticipating these consequences, however, Joseph prepares for the victory of the ethical agency over instinctual nature. If man can overcome the consequence of rejecting woman, he is no longer dependent on her for survival. (p. 118)

Here it becomes evident that the failure to distinguish between the literal and the figurative is a problem that is not entirely confined to the so-called mythical mind *à la* Eliezer. An additional problem arising from such reductive interpretations is that they often appear to under-rate Mann's artistic creativity, and almost entirely ignore his playfulness and sense of humour.

With regard to Jung, Dierks discerns and shows parallels between

²⁴ Karen Drabek Vogt, *Vision and Revision: The Concept of Inspiration in Thomas Mann's Fiction* (New York: Lang, 1987, Germanic Studies in America no. 55).

Mann's and Jung's thinking, which he attributes, however, almost entirely to the influence of Schopenhauer's philosophy, common to both Mann and Jung.²⁵ Critics who are close to the Jungian school of psychology therefore find themselves on the defensive, which often makes them too eager to prove that Mann's true links were with Jung, rather than Freud. Joachim Schulze, in his essay *Traumdeutung und Mythos*,²⁶ acknowledges Mann's indebtedness to Freud's theory of dreams. He also shows very plausibly the parallels between Mann's concept of dreams and Jung's theory, which regards dreams not merely as repressed wishes, but maintains that they may in fact anticipate future states of mind and consciousness and in this way almost rehearse the future. Schulze further enforces the links to Jungian thought through the similar approach to mythology common to both Mann and Jung.²⁷ He makes many valid points; yet in his eagerness to show hidden Jungian influences, he somewhat overshoots the mark, in my opinion, when he suggests a possible 'Kryptomnesie' (p. 520) on Mann's part and more: 'Aber es gibt auch ein bewußtes Verschweigen, sogar — oder muß man sagen: gerade? — von grundlegend wichtigen Quellen' (p. 520). The implication he seems to make is that Mann felt it to be a reduction of his status as a creative artist if he admitted to all his sources. Yet his creativity is as evident in his use of the sources as it is in his work as a whole. Thus Schulze's suggestion of a conscious denial of certain sources on Mann's part is hard to prove and must remain questionable.

²⁵ cf. particularly, pp. 257-260, note 60.

²⁶ Joachim J. Schulze, 'Traumdeutung und Mythos: Über den Einfluß der Psychoanalyse auf Thomas Mann's Joseph-Roman', *Poetica*, 2 (1968), 501-520.

²⁷ He extends this link in his later essay 'Joseph-Gregorius und der Mythos vom Sonnenhelden: Zum psychologischen Hintergrund eines Handlungsschemas bei Thomas Mann', in *Jahrbuch der Deutschen Schillergesellschaft*, 15 (1971), 465-496.

Donald F. Nelson, in his study of myth and psychology in *Felix Krull*,²⁸ is also at pains to justify his extensive use of Jung's psychological theory with regard to this particular novel—and the implications of his argument extend to the *Joseph* novels. Making reference to Mann's letters, he tries to show the latter's changing attitude to Jung, his ambivalence and eventual denial of him as an influence on his own thinking.²⁹ Like Schulze, Nelson also implies that Mann no longer acknowledged his indebtedness to Jung due to the latter's very questionable, but also much maligned, attitude to the Fascist regime in Nazi Germany up until the war.³⁰ Nelson feels the need to justify his use of Jung's analytical psychology. He makes, however, no attempt to show links between Erich Neumann, a pupil of Jung's, and Mann, even though he makes extensive use of Neumann's theories to support his own interpretation of *Felix Krull*. It seems odd that with regard to Jung critics feel that they must justify themselves if they invoke him as a source, while no such need is felt with other sources, used by critics, which had clearly no direct influence on Mann.

With regard to the Freud versus Jung influence on Mann and his use of sources, I think that Dierks actually does point in the right direction, when he refers to the influence of Schopenhauer's philosophy, which both Mann and Jung shared. Further parallels could also be adduced. Thus Mann and Jung were complete contemporaries, born within six weeks of each other, and had the same formative intellectual influences, Schopenhauer, Nietzsche and Wagner. They also had later in-

²⁸ Donald F. Nelson, *Portrait of the Artist as Hermes: A Study of Myth and Psychology in Thomas Mann's 'Felix Krull'* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1971).

²⁹ cf. p. 132, note 11.

³⁰ For a detailed and fairly detached assessment of Jung's involvement, particularly as president of the *Internationale Allgemeine Ärztliche Gesellschaft für Psychotherapie* between the years 1934-1939, see Gerhard Wehr *Carl Gustav Jung: Leben, Werk, Wirkung* (Munich: Diogenes, 1988), pp. 273-296.

fluences in common, whether Freud, or other minor ones, like Bachofen, which are however relevant to the *Joseph* novels. Parallels in their thinking therefore cannot be surprising. While the tracing of sources for a work of art can be an interesting and even exciting enterprise, it can also be tiresome and futile if it becomes an end in itself—or if it is claimed to provide the key which unlocks the meaning of the work in question. Again one must emphasize that Mann was above all a creative artist and made very free use of sources, regardless of their intellectual compatibility, as long as they served his purpose.

In my analysis of the tetralogy I have made extensive use of Jungian theories, because they seem to illustrate the process we observe in the novel particularly well. This does not mean, however, that I attempt to show a particular Jungian or other influence. Jung's and Neumann's writing on the development of consciousness and the individuation process helped me to illuminate how the interplay of *Sein* and *Bedeutung* also embraces the question of myth and psychology in the novel. As if to prove my point about common sources and influences, Nelson, who also makes extensive use of these two sources, in his analysis of *Felix Krull* follows a path which is very similar to that in my fourth chapter, on Joseph's process of individuation.

Psychology is undoubtedly a very important element in the novel and it is always linked to myth. In the tetralogy we observe in Joseph's development the movement from the mythical world and from mythical thinking to the conscious adoption of roles and awakening consciousness. We see how the individual gradually emerges from the collective and increasingly frees himself from binding patterns. One of the simplest formulas applied by critics therefore equates mythical thinking with total lack of consciousness (rather than a different type of con-

sciousness)—with a state to be overcome. By contrast they elevate the rational and enlightened mind, which is then presented as something closely akin to a state of total consciousness, to the rank of a perfection to be achieved.

As a result the unconscious often appears as a profoundly questionable agency, slightly reminiscent of the role of the devil in Christian theology, and irreconcilable with ethical human behaviour. However, this attitude appears to ignore beneficial and indispensable elements of the unconscious, such as intuition. Cunningham, for instance, describes the brothers' assault on Joseph as 'a regression into a subconscious—and therefore sub-human state' (p. 64). He also asserts that Joseph before his second 'fall' 'has to revert to the wilful separation of his conscious and subconscious world' (p. 120). In both cases there is a two-fold implication at work: first that the subconscious is a dangerous realm, and second that entry into that realm or liberation from it can be brought about at will. Yet the brothers' attack on Joseph (leaving aside Ruben) is clearly unpremeditated and committed entirely on impulse and the spur of the moment. Furthermore, the phrase 'wilful separation of the conscious and subconscious world' seems to suggest that a state of total consciousness is actually possible. Yet it is precisely Joseph's mistaken belief in his own total consciousness that leads him to ignore unconscious elements in his own behaviour and reaction to Mut-emet's advances.

In summary, rationality and enlightenment, desirable though they are, are clearly not the final answer, neither to myth, nor to psychology. In the novel ancient and modern discourses blend, and thereby it offers both a validation and a critique of the unconscious.

(vi) *SEIN AND BEDEUTEN*

Given the extensive research that has been done on the novel, it is surprising that the interplay of *Sein* and *Bedeuten* has received comparatively little attention, even though it is explicitly stated in the novel from the beginning:

Die Könige von Babel und beider Ägypten, jener bartlockige Kurigalzu sowohl wie der Horus im Palaste zu Theben, genannt Amun-ist-zufrieden, und alle ihre Vorgänger und Nachfolger *waren* Erscheinungen des Sonnengottes im Fleische — das heißt, der Mythos wurde in ihnen zum Mysterium, und zwischen Sein und Bedeuten fehlte es an jedem Unterscheidungsraum. Zeiten, in denen man darüber streiten konnte, ob die Oblate der Leib des Opfers ›sei‹ oder ihn nur ›bedeute‹, sollten erst dreitausend Jahre später sich einstellen; aber auch diese höchst müßigen Erörterungen haben nichts daran zu ändern vermocht, daß das Wesen des Geheimnisses zeitlose Gegenwart ist und bleibt. (IV, 32)

Although in criticism of the *Joseph* novels references to the theme of *Sein* and *Bedeuten* can be found not infrequently, they are often merely at random, or give the impression of being more or less incidental.

Erich Heller, in his book *Thomas Mann: Der ironische Deutsche*, briefly touches upon the theme of *Sein* and *Bedeuten* (pp. 292-93) and traces it back to its origins in the author's earlier work. This, he writes, was concerned mainly with the separation of being and meaning and the inner conflict and crisis arising from this split. Heller does not examine the theme in more detail and with regard to the *Joseph* novels simply equates it with the play of irony (p. 297).

Käte Hamburger, in the introduction to her first analysis³¹ of the *Joseph* tetralogy, gave some attention to the theme of being and meaning, establishing it and pin-pointing its occurrence in the novel.

³¹ Käte Hamburger, *Thomas Manns Roman «Joseph und seine Brüder»* (Stockholm: Bermann-Fischer, 1945) (= Hamburger I).

She formulates the theme largely in terms of allegory and symbol, stating that allegory represents meaning only (p. 29), whereas the symbol unites being and meaning. She writes,

die jeweilige Realität, die dargestellt wird [...] wird zugleich *transparent* für etwas, das sie «an sich» nicht ist, d.h. einen *Sinn*, der sich in ihr spiegelt. Mit anderen Worten: die geschilderte Wirklichkeit gewinnt eine *symbolische* Bedeutung — so wie das Stück farbigen Zeuges, aus dem eine Fahne besteht oder das sie eigentlich «ist», zugleich die Idee der Nation, des Vaterlandes «bedeutet». Sie ist ein Symbol, nämlich eine Sache, die zugleich «ist» und «bedeutet», so daß sich ihr Sein und Sinn untrennbar verschlingen. (p. 28)

Hamburger thus remains faithful to the Goethean definition. The problems arising from this concept and its limitations have been shown by Gunter Reiss in the introduction to his book on allegory and narrative art³² and may account for the fact that Hamburger omits the chapter entirely in her later editions of the book. She relates the theme particularly to narrative and structure, discerning the novel's 'zuinnerst «kritische», deutend interpretierende Form und Gestaltungstendenz' (Hamburger I, p. 42) and comments that this is the basic difference between old epics and the modern novel in general. One of the core elements in her analysis, apart from the function of humour, is the interpretation of myth as symbolic, which she contrasts with the dissolution of myth through rationality:

Mochte Josephs Geschichte nur eine schwache Anspielung auf diese Mythen sein, eine Anspielung *war* sie jedenfalls doch. Und hinter der lächelnden Feststellung, daß sie *nur* ein Abglanz, eine Anspielung ist, steht doch der ernstere, der eigentliche Sinn, daß es mit dieser Anspielung denn—och eine Bewandnis haben müsse — da dies, daß in der Geschichte Josephs der Mythos ad absurdum geführt wird, darum nicht der sie erschöpfende Sinn sein kann, weil alsdann die Beziehung Josephs auf den Mythos, die den Kern des Romans ausmacht, sich gleichfalls als sinnlos, als leeres Spiel erweisen würde. Die Antwort auf diese Problemstellung ist, daß es mit dem Mythos zuletzt keine reale, sondern eine *symbolische* Bewandnis hat. (Hamburger II, p. 88)

³² Gunter Reiss, „Allegorisierung“ und moderne Erzählkunst (Munich: Fink, 1970).

Hamburger's initial distinction between *Sein* and *Bedeutung* becomes gradually reduced to 'das Eigentliche' and 'das Uneigentliche'—a distinction which she links to the central function of humour (Hamburger II, p. 88). She does not further develop the theme of *Sein* and *Bedeutung*, or consider it in its wider aspects; nor is she concerned with its inherent dialectic.

Gunter Reiss in his introduction presents a general outline of the philosophical discussion (of the last two centuries) surrounding the changing concept of the symbol. He is particularly concerned with a 'rehabilitation' of allegory and sets both terms in their historical context, which he makes the foundation of his argument. He clearly comes out in favour of allegory, thereby reducing the narrative process to one of overtly conscious and rational play. This, however, also creates the impression that the work is nothing but an aesthetic exercise and Hermann Kurzke points out: 'Die »allegorisierend« ein anderes bedeutende Verwendung des Mythos löst bei Reiss jede verbindliche Aussage des Werks auf, nur die nackte Thematisierung des Mythosverlustes und die daraus folgende Selbstreflexion der Erzählerproblematik bleibt als Botschaft' (Kurzke I, p. 218). Symbol and allegory are not perceived as part of a dialectical process by which meaning is conveyed.

With regard to the *Joseph* tetralogy Reiss comments that the union of being and meaning is initially given in myth and the mythical world: 'Denn die mythische Welt ist ja vor allem eine Welt, in der die Dinge noch nicht geschieden sind. Eine Einheit herrscht noch vor, die dem erzählenden Bewußtsein durch den „Sündenfall“ verloren gegangen ist' (p. 160). His argument is that only an allegorization of myth can bring about a renewed union of being and meaning, and he seems to reduce this new union entirely to the narrative consciousness, which now no

longer merely tells a story, but 'demonstrates' it:

Dieses „Zeigen“ bedingt die Selbstanalyse eines erzählerischen Verfahrens, dessen Ziel es ist, in der ‚Allegorisierung‘ des Mythos Sein und Bedeuten zu neuer Einheit zusammenzubringen. Da es aber heterogene Elemente sind, die vermittelt werden müssen, setzt der ‚allegorisierende‘ Akt seine Selbsterörterung voraus. (pp. 160-161)

Reiss makes many valid observations about the narrative act. It seems to me, however, that he takes the narrator's comments too much at their face value and thus ignores not only the rich source of irony they contain, but more importantly, the evident delight in manipulating the reader's expectation, which by far exceeds any act of mediation and narrative self-reflection. Furthermore, Reiss does not examine or even acknowledge the developing consciousness of the protagonist which parallels that of the narrative act, and thereby he ignores the novel's larger context.

The particular problem arising from the absolute endorsement of allegorization, be it that of myth, or of Joseph as an allegorical counterfigure to Hitler (cf. Cunningham), is that it is extremely limiting. While one often recognizes elements of truth in the shown parallels, a feeling of dissatisfaction usually remains. The novel, unlike many of its critics, always leaves something open, and instead of giving watertight answers, it almost always leaves room for doubt and scepticism, and, more importantly perhaps, for the reader's own imagination and projection. Critics often tend either to offer a neat and tidy formula, which then becomes a rather Procrustian bed for the novel as a whole, or they resort to the somewhat indifferent *Schwebezustand*³³ which condemns the novel to a state of limbo, moving forever between the opposites, rather than embracing and thus uniting them, as they are united in Joseph's

³³ cf. Mieth, p. 25, and Hamburger II, p. 50.

blessing, or anticipated in *Höllenfahrt*, as a possible union of *Geist* and *Seele* (IV, 48-9). Neither attitude does justice to the novel's suggestive richness.

If one accepts that the novel has an intensely dialectical structure, both stylistically and thematically, it becomes apparent that all these different approaches to the novel comment on each other and are actually interlinking. They are brought together in the novel's central concern at both thematic and stylistic levels, that is, the interplay of *Sein* and *Bedeuten*, of being and meaning. In the studies by Hamburger and Reiss, this whole issue is implicit, yet there it is conceptualized in terms of allegory *versus* symbol. Thus, contrary to what we observe in the novel, which strives for a union of opposites (as reflected in Joseph's particular blessing), here the issues are presented in terms of either/or, enacting a tug of war between ancient and modern discourse, between symbol and allegory.

INTRODUCTION

The conceptual framework of the *Joseph* novels derives from Thomas Mann's engagement with three kinds of intellectual concern: philosophy, myth and modern psychology. Common to all these three strands there is, as I have already suggested, one sustained concern, which provides the overall unity of the whole tetralogy: the interplay of *Sein* and *Bedeuten*. It is a theme which brings together ancient and modern worlds, which establishes modes of difference and similarity, of duality and oneness. It also informs the central psychological argument of the novel sequence in that the consciousness of the main character is intensely attuned to the interplay of fact and meaning, of being and reflectivity. Moreover, the interplay of *Sein* and *Bedeuten* is inseparable from the narrative mode, which fuses story-telling and discursive commentary. *Sein* and *Bedeuten* is essentially a theme of duality and opposites and conciliation—all of which are at the centre of the novel and arise from Joseph's particular blessing.

(i) PHILOSOPHY

The issue of *Sein* and *Bedeuten* informs the novel's philosophical framework, which consists of a discussion of reality and essence, of phenomena and noumena. The greatest single influence on Thomas Mann's thinking apart from Nietzsche was undoubtedly Schopenhauer.³⁴ In so far as Mann became acquainted with other philosophies, it was through Schopenhauer and often this remained his only perspec-

³⁴ Regarding the lasting influence of Schopenhauer's thinking on Thomas Mann, see also Helmut Koopmann, 'Thomas Mann und Schopenhauer', in *Thomas Mann und die Tradition*, ed. by Peter Pütz (Frankfurt am Main: Athenäum, 1971), pp. 180-200 (cf. particularly pp. 188-194).

tive. Schopenhauer's philosophy influenced even his approach to contemporary thinkers. This is pointed out by Hermann Kurzke in his notes on Mann's *Schopenhauer* essay of 1938. He writes:

[Es] wird hier deutlich, daß wichtige Elemente der Philosophie Thomas Manns dem Werk Schopenhauers verpflichtet sind: von ihm her werden ältere Philosophen (ohne eigene Primärlektüre) referiert und beurteilt (v.a. Platon, Kant und Hegel), in ihre Fluchtlinien werden neuere gestellt (v.a. Nietzsche und Freud).³⁵

The reader must therefore be aware that much of the conceptual framework of the novel is filtered through Schopenhauer's thinking.

In his *Schopenhauer* essay Mann, as he was prone to do, argues *ab ovo* and traces Schopenhauer's philosophy back to Plato. He gives a condensed summary of the Platonic concept of the world, how it teaches that the world in which we live, with everything we perceive in it, including ourselves, is but a world of phenomena or appearances:

Die Dinge dieser Welt, lehrte der griechische Denker, haben kein wahres Sein: sie werden immer, sind aber nie. Zu Objekten eigentlicher Erkenntnis taugen sie nicht, denn solche kann es nur geben von dem, was an und für sich und immer auf gleiche Weise ist; sie aber, in ihrer Vielheit und ihrem bloß relativen, geborgten Sein, das man ebensowohl ein Nichtsein nennen könnte, sind immer nur das Objekt eines durch sinnliche Empfindung veranlaßten Dafürhaltens. Sie sind Schatten. Das allein wahrhaft Seiende, das immer ist und nie wird und vergeht, sind die realen Urbilder jener Schattenbilder, die ewigen *Ideen*, die Urformen aller Dinge. Diese haben keine Vielheit, denn jedes ist seinem Wesen nach nur Eines, das Urbild eben, dessen Nachbilder oder Schatten lauter ihm gleichnamige, einzelne, vergängliche Dinge derselben Art sind. (IX, 531-32)

It is one of the most difficult philosophical concepts, obscure and paradoxical, because it requires the human mind not only to deny the reality of everything it experiences and perceives, but at the same time also to accept that this is as much reality as we will ever know. The eternal *ideas* are the unchangeable forms, while the world of phenomena is

³⁵ In Thomas Mann, *Essays 3: Schriften über Musik und Philosophie*, ed. by Hermann Kurzke (Frankfurt am Main: Fischer, 1982), p. 291.

subject to constant change. Variety marks only the world of phenomena. It does not exist in the world of ideas, where everything is oneness—a fact which Mann illustrates very effectively with the use of the definite and the indefinite article: ‘*Der Löwe, das ist die Idee; ein Löwe, das ist bloße Erscheinung*’ (IX, 532). The idea is undifferentiated. Causality, space and time determine everything in the world of phenomena. They do not exist in the world of ideas, because they are phenomena themselves and only means of perception for us.

In a similar way Mann also highlights the basic structure of Kant’s philosophy, which he derives largely from Schopenhauer’s *Die Welt als Wille und Vorstellung*,³⁶ which compares Plato’s concept of ideas with Kant’s ‘Ding an sich’, the thing in itself. Mann writes:

Dies ist Kants Grundkonzeption, und man sieht, sie ist derjenigen Platons sehr nahe verwandt. Beide erklären die sichtbare Welt für eine Erscheinung, will sagen: für nichtigen Schein, der Bedeutung und einige Wirklichkeit nur durch das gewinnt, was hindurchscheinend sich darin ausdrückt. Für beide liegt die wahre Wirklichkeit über, hinter, kurz »jenseits« der Erscheinung, und ob sie nun »Idee« oder »Ding an sich« genannt wird, gilt ungefähr gleichviel. (IX, 536-37)

Still following Schopenhauer, Mann links Schopenhauer’s philosophy of will to Kant and Plato. Schopenhauer himself identified his concept of will with Kant’s ‘thing in itself’, also pointing out its close relation to Plato’s ideas, a link which Mann describes as ‘etwas sehr Kühnes, fast Unerlaubtes’ (IX, 537). Schopenhauer’s use of the term ‘will’ must not be confused with the human will. While the former is his name for the noumenon, he considers the latter as mere manifestation of this will in the world of phenomena. For him *will* describes the driving force behind all life, organic or inorganic, ‘bloßer blinder Drang zum Daseyn,

³⁶ Arthur Schopenhauer, *Die Welt als Wille und Vorstellung, I-II*, 3rd edn, Zürcher Ausgabe, Werke in zehn Bänden, Volume I-IV (Zurich: Diogenes, 1977), p. 222 (=WWV I-II). (‘Der Text folgt der historisch-kritischen Ausgabe von Arthur Hübscher (3. Auflage, Brockhaus, Wiesbaden 1972)’.)

ohne Zweck und Ziel' (WWV I, 209). It is without knowledge (Erkenntnis) or consciousness.

Whatever name is given to the noumenon—idea, thing in itself, or will—and whatever the marginal differences between those concepts may be, the philosophies of Plato, Kant and Schopenhauer have in common that they make the division into ideas (or noumena) and phenomena. At a later point in his *Schopenhauer* essay Mann writes: 'Plato bedeutet durch diese wertende Unterscheidung zwischen Erscheinung und Idee, Empirie und Geist, Scheinwelt und Welt der Wahrheit, Zeitlichkeit und Ewigkeit ein ungeheures Ereignis in der Geschichte des menschlichen Geistes' (IX, 533). In this list we immediately recognize a catalogue of opposites which is part of a pattern that is characteristic of Mann's thinking and which runs right through his work. In *Joseph und seine Brüder* it appears most distinctly in the theme of *Sein* and *Bedeutend*. It pervades the novel and embraces it like a bracket; it is reflected in the style, for instance, the use of symbols and motifs, in characterization and in the narrative itself.

The difference between *Sein* and *Bedeutend*, between what something is and what something means or represents, is a philosophical distinction. In human experience it is not an absolute distinction, but permanent interplay. Yet, only by making this distinction can we understand this interplay and reach a greater understanding of human life as such. It is the difference between the real and the ideal, together with the underlying paradox about which Mann wrote:

Denn paradox ist es allerdings, zu behaupten, daß Erkenntnis nur dem Unsichtbaren, Gedachten, im Geiste Angeschauten gelten könne; paradox ist es, die sichtbare Welt für eine Erscheinung zu erklären, die, an sich nichtig, nur durch das in ihr sich Ausdrückende Bedeutung und geborgte Realität gewinne. Die Realität des Wirklichen — nur eine Leihgabe des Geistigen! (IX, 532-33)

The understanding of this central paradox is essential for the understanding of the theme of *Sein* and *Bedeutend*. What we perceive as reality is only illusion which we invest with meaning—often only deceptive meaning. By contrast, what we perceive as purely spiritual, that is, the *Urbilder* and *ideas* which lie entirely outside our reach and of which we can only perceive the ‘shadows’, that is the real *Sein* and its indwelling meaning. Not only is human reality subject to illusion, but it is itself illusion; it is imperfect facts invested with questionable meaning. Jaakob alludes to this aspect in his old age and says about his wedding night: ‘so daß ich nur meiner Meinung nach glücklich war, nicht aber in Wahrheit’ (IV, 479). Schopenhauer’s pessimism would describe this state of affairs as innate to human life. To be able to make this troubling distinction, a certain degree of consciousness is necessary. This is perhaps the reason why Joseph is the only character in the novel who can actually grasp it readily and fully.

(ii) PSYCHOLOGY: CONSCIOUSNESS AND IDENTITY

The theme of developing consciousness is a major theme in the novel. Its link to the question of identity is evident. Identity can only be perceived through consciousness. Joseph, who has the most highly-developed consciousness of all the characters in the novel, is also the one with the most clearly-outlined sense of identity. By the end of the novel he knows very clearly *who* he is. We see him move from a state of *participation mystique* to one of differentiation, from identification to individuation, and we observe the emergence of his true identity, that is,

the *Self*. The OED defines identity as ‘the sameness of a person or thing at all times or in all circumstances; the condition or fact that a person or thing is itself and not something else; individuality, personality’. This definition takes us directly back to the world of ideas: identity is an unchangeable entity. This is why we can perceive it only in the way it expresses itself and never directly, and also why we always depend on comparisons to describe it: ‘Denn nur durch Vergleichung unterscheidet man sich und erfährt, was man ist, um ganz zu werden, der man sein soll’ (V, 1142). The concept of likeness thus plays an important part in the novel and phrases of comparison and likeness, such as *so wie*, *gleichwie* or simply *wie*, are abundant throughout. The notion of likeness implies only partial overlap, that is, it also indicates that there is a difference: likeness is not identity, but only the interplay of likeness and unlikeness, that is comparison, enables us to develop a sense of identity, a sense of our Self.

A person’s identity or character determines his or her whole course of life. This observation proves relevant to the often-raised question about the novel’s apparent determinism. Again we have to refer to Schopenhauer on this subject and his reflections in *Transscendente Spekulation über die anscheinende Absichtlichkeit im Schicksale des Einzelnen*. He writes:

Dies Alles beruht darauf, daß unsere Thaten das notwendige Produkt zweier Faktoren sind, deren einer, unser Charakter unabänderlich feststeht, uns jedoch nur *a posteriori*, also allmählig, bekannt wird; der andere aber sind die Motive: diese liegen außerhalb, werden durch den Weltlauf nothwendig herbeigeführt und bestimmen den gegebenen Charakter, unter Voraussetzung seiner feststehenden Beschaffenheit, mit einer Nothwendigkeit, welche der mechanischen gleichkommt. Das über den so erfolgenden Verlauf nun aber urtheilende Ich ist das Subjekt des Erkennens, als solches jenen Beiden fremd und bloß der kritische Zuschauer ihres Wirkens. Da mag es denn freilich

zu Zeiten sich verwundern.³⁷

Schopenhauer here maintains that character (identity) is not subject to change, but only appears to be so, because it unfolds, or becomes revealed, only gradually and due to circumstances. Ego-consciousness ('das urtheilende Ich'), which is clearly separated from character, is the agency through which we perceive. Character and identity, on the other hand, are fixed and cannot be separated from one another.

The distinction between identity and ego-consciousness reflects that of *Sein* and *Bedeutend*, although again it is a theoretical distinction which is not borne out in human experience. It is also reflected in the individuation process, which psychologists explain as a movement during which the centre of identity shifts away from ego-consciousness to the Self. The Self now emerges as the true centre of the individuated being. Identity, that is, the Self, is essence because of its unchangeable nature. By contrast, ego-consciousness changes and develops all the time. It is the interpreting agent, which constantly tries to invest our actions with meaning. This process gradually enables us to perceive our Self, which exists, however, with or without ego-consciousness. In the novel we can see this in the figures of the young Jaakob and Esau. Both have only a very blurred sense of Self-conception, because their ego-consciousness is—compared with the modern mind—little or not at all developed. They each have clear-cut identities, however, determining the very different courses of their lives.

These issues will prove important when we examine the concept of identity as it is presented in the novel. To clarify my point further I return once more to Schopenhauer and that part of his philosophy which

³⁷ Arthur Schopenhauer, 'Transscendente Spekulation über die anscheinende Absichtlichkeit im Schicksale des Einzelnen', in *Parerga und Paralipomena: kleine philosophische Schriften*, Zürcher Ausgabe, Werke in zehn Bänden, Volume VII (Zurich: Diogenes, 1977), pp. 219-245 (pp. 229-30) (= *Parerga* I).

had such great impact on both Thomas Buddenbrook and Thomas Mann, that is, *Ueber den Tod und sein Verhältniß zur Unzerstörbarkeit unsers Wesens an sich*:

In das *Bewußtseyn* aber setzt Jeder sein Ich: dieses erscheint ihm daher als an die Individualität gebunden, mit welcher ohnehin alles Das untergeht, was ihm, als Diesem, eigenthümlich ist und ihn von den Andern unterscheidet. Seine Fortdauer ohne die Individualität wird ihm daher vom Fortbestehn der übrigen Wesen ununterscheidbar, und er sieht sein Ich versinken. [...]

Könnte er hingegen zum *Bewußtseyn* bringen was er noch überdies und außerdem ist; so würde er seine Individualität willig fahren lassen [...] und sagen: »Was kümmert der Verlust dieser Individualität mich, der ich die Möglichkeit zahlloser Individualitäten in mir trage?« (WWV II, 575; 576)

For Schopenhauer the *principium individuationis* is the principle of separation. He calls it the veil of Maya, that web of illusions in which human existence is forever caught up. It belongs entirely to the world of phenomena and consequently disappears with death. Like everything else in the world of phenomena, it is subject to time, space and causality. Lifting the veil of Maya thus means overcoming the *principium individuationis*. Schopenhauer regarded the *principium individuationis* as essentially negative and the source of all woe. The *Joseph* novels, however, do not share his pessimistic view, but present their own serenely conciliatory resolution of the dilemma, by linking individuation to re-integration into the collective. They achieve this through the Hermes-figure Joseph, the provider. In that figure there is enshrined the ego-consciousness merging into the Self: 'in Joseph mündet das Ich aus übermütiger Absolutheit zurück ins Kollektive, Gemeinsame, und der Gegensatz von Künstlertum und Bürgerlichkeit, von Vereinzelung und Gemeinschaft, Individuum und Kollektiv hebt sich im Märchen auf' (XI, 666-67).³⁸

³⁸ *Ein Vortrag.*

Jaakob and Joseph are the only characters who ever see through the web of illusions to which human life is subjected. Fraud and illusion shape Jaakob's life more than anything else. Their power, however, proves that the distinction between *Sein* and *Bedeuten* is ultimately unworkable and unlivable, because meanings, once they are accepted, become the experiential reality in the life of the individual. Jaakob accepts the animal's blood on Joseph's torn Ketônnet as that of his son and it therefore becomes reality to him:

Daß aber Jaakob das Blut des Tieres notwendig und unwidersprechlich für Josephs Blut halten mußte, wirkte auch wieder auf Joseph zurück und hob in seinen Augen den Unterschied zwischen dem ›Dies ist mein Blut‹ und dem ›Dies bedeutet mein Blut‹ praktisch auf. Jaakob hielt ihn für tot; und da er's unwidersprechlicher Weise tat — war Joseph also tot oder nicht? (IV, 669)

Joseph, who has a natural gift for philosophical thinking and abstraction, recognizes not only the illusion which is at work here, but also its power and 'reality'. He realizes that in human affairs reality is not just fact, but facts (*Sein*) invested with meaning (*Bedeuten*). His insight is not just momentary, but becomes a powerful factor in the development of his consciousness and central to the whole narrative act.

(iii) MYTH AND PSYCHOLOGY

1. Development

It is well known that the issue of myth and psychology goes back to Alfred Bäumler's introduction to Bachofen's work (cf. Kurzke II, p. 250). Thomas Mann read it early in 1926, before he had actually started

writing *Joseph und seine Brüder*.³⁹ In his *Pariser Rechenschaft*, written in early 1926, Mann strongly disagrees with the view Bäumler expressed in this introduction, that is, that myth and psychology excluded one another; he writes polemically:

»Psychologie und Mythos schließen sich ebenso aus wie Sokratismus und Musik«. Wahrhaftig? Hat es nie logische Musik gegeben? Ist es nicht vielleicht eine kleine Beschränktheit, ein für allemal auf der Verwechslung der Musik mit romantisch-nächtigmutterrechtlichem Wonneweben zu bestehen? (XI, 49)

It is probably from this point that Mann began developing his own thinking on the matter.

Central to his concept of myth and psychology is the idea of myth becoming living reality—mainly through imitation or *participation mystique*, which, following C.G. Jung, he described as ‘den primitiven Rest von Ununterschiedenheit zwischen Subjekt und Objekt’.⁴⁰ Jung had adopted the term from Lévy-Bruhl to describe an undifferentiated mental stage:

Lévy-Bruhl hat mit genialem Griff das, was er «participation mystique» nannte, als das Kennzeichen primitiver Geistesart herausgehoben. Was er bezeichnete, ist einfach der unbestimmt große Rest von *Ununterschiedenheit zwischen Subjekt und Objekt*, der bei Primitiven noch solche Dimensionen besitzt, daß er dem europäischen Bewußtseinsmenschen unbedingt auffallen muß. Insofern der Unterschied zwischen Subjekt und Objekt nicht bewußt wird, herrscht unbewußte Identität. Dann ist das Unbewußte ins Objekt projiziert und das Objekt ins Subjekt introjiziert, das heißt psychologisiert. Dann benehmen sich Tiere und Pflanzen wie Menschen, Menschen sind zugleich Tiere, und alles ist von Spuk und Göttern belebt. (GW 13, 66)

The exploration of this subject fascinated Mann and it was of greatest importance from the beginning of his writing of the *Joseph* novels. In

³⁹ It should however be noted that Mann first used the formula of ‘Mythos und Psychologie’ in his much earlier essay (1910) *Der alte Fontane*, (cf. IX, 32-3).

⁴⁰ ‘Joseph und seine Brüder’, in *Dichter über ihre Dichtungen: Thomas Mann*, volume II, ed. by Hans Wysling (Munich/Frankfurt am Main: Heimeran/Fischer, 1979), pp. 82-353 (p. 109) (= *DüD*). Letter to Ludwig Held, dated 1.3.1930.

the novel he explores unconscious and conscious imitation, different understandings of identity and self-perception in general. While his disagreement with Bäumler was the starting-point, it is useful to remember that Mann did not start with a fixed concept in this regard. Rather it developed parallel to the writing of the novel. Thus in 1930 his approach is still almost playful: ‘Mythus und Psychologie, — die antiintellektualistischen Frömmeler wollten das weit geschieden wissen. Und doch konnte es, so schien mir, lustig sein, vermitteltst einer mythischen Psychologie eine Psychologie des Mythus zu versuchen’ (XI, 137).⁴¹

While the first part of the tetralogy was written and published in Germany (*Die Geschichten Jaakobs*, Berlin 1933), most of the novel was written against a background of great upheaval in Mann’s life. Particularly the Egyptian volumes bear the mark of their author’s exile, his active fight against Nazi ideology, and the catastrophe of the second World War. The often-quoted phrase about ‘die Umfunktionierung des Mythos ins Humane’ was, however, not the starting-point, but marked the end of the genesis of the *Joseph* novels. The phrase was in fact first used by Ernst Bloch⁴² and Mann adopted it only in 1941. It is often quoted incomplete and with a shifted emphasis:

und was sollte mein Element derzeit wohl sein als Mythos plus Psychologie. Längst bin ich ein leidenschaftlicher Freund dieser Combination; denn tatsächlich ist Psychologie das Mittel, den Mythos den fascistischen Dunkelmännern aus den Händen zu nehmen und ins Humane «umzufunktionieren». Diese Verbindung repräsentiert mir geradezu die Welt der Zukunft, ein Menschentum, das gesegnet ist oben vom Geiste herab und «aus der Tiefe, die unten liegt». (Kerényi, pp. 97-98)

The quotation shows the wide spectrum covered by the heading myth and psychology, and politics in the novel must be considered under this heading and not separately. Although it gets clearly translated into pol-

⁴¹ *Lebensabriß*.

⁴² cf. Kurzke II, p. 251.

itics, psychology remains at the centre of the novel. The Hermes-figure Joseph should not be seen as merely an allegorical counter-figure to Hitler.

2. The Dialectic of Myth and Psychology

The word myth has been used to mean many things. Myths have been treated as purely fictional accounts, as mere fairy-tales; they have also been considered as an expression of ancient religion, or as a dramatic record of historical events, to mention just some views.⁴³ Much has been written about myth and psychology in the *Joseph* novels, about imitation and the binding patterns of myth. Very often, however, critics treat myth as if it were an independent realm, a mere product of fantasy. They lose sight of the fact that myth *describes* an event, for instance, a psychic event, but that it is not the mere facticity of the event; it is also the interpretative version of that event.

It was with the rise of modern psychology and the discoveries made by Freud that myths acquired an altogether different dimension. In ad-

⁴³ Joseph Campbell, *The Hero With a Thousand Faces* (London: Paladin, 1988), cf. p. 382: 'Mythology has been interpreted by the modern intellect as a primitive, fumbling effort to explain the world of nature (Frazer); as a production of poetical fantasy from prehistoric times, misunderstood by succeeding ages (Müller); as a repository of allegorical instruction, to shape the individual to his group (Durkheim); as a group dream, symptomatic of archetypal urges within the depths of the human psyche (Jung); as the traditional vehicle of man's profoundest metaphysical insights (Coomaraswamy); and as God's Revelation to His children (the Church).'

With particular reference to myth and literature John White's study *Mythology in the Modern Novel: A Study in Prefigurative Techniques* (Princeton, New Jersey: Princeton University Press, 1971) provides a useful examination of myth criticism and the different meanings attached to 'myth', cf. particularly pp. 32-41. He distinguishes two fundamental meanings of myth: 'first, some primitive or typical, recurrent pattern of human behaviour, found both in literature and life, and second, a more specific form, linked with a particular culture and dealing with named characters and locations, and transmitted to us nowadays primarily through the medium of literature' (p. 38).

dition, Jung's concepts of archetypes and the collective unconscious have proved of great impact. In the wake of Freud's and Jung's thought, myths can be understood as manifestations of psychic events, as expressions of the soul and as the language by which communication between the unconscious and the conscious mind becomes possible. Jung writes:

Das Mythologem ist die ureigentlichste Sprache dieser psychischen Vorgänge, und keine intellektuelle Formulierung kann auch nur annähernd die Fülle und Ausdruckskraft des mythischen Bildes erreichen. Es handelt sich um Urbilder, die darum auch am besten und treffendsten durch eine bildhafte Sprache wiedergegeben werden. (GW 12, 28)

'Bildhafte Sprache', that is metaphorical language, constantly mediates between *Sein* and *Bedeutend*. Through symbols and myths, in other words, via projection, our consciousness is enabled to grasp unconscious happenings and developments in the psyche. Using the example of the hero-myth to illustrate this point, Jung writes: 'So ist der Heldenmythus ein unbewußtes Drama, welches nur in der Projektion erscheint, vergleichbar den Vorgängen im Höhlengleichnis des PLATON' (GW 5, 612). The relationship between psychic reality and myth can be seen as that of *Sein* and *Bedeutend*, although here again it must be emphasized that treating them as seemingly separate categories is an artificial exercise which does not reflect the permanent interplay that takes place between them.

Myths are not fiction nor do they allegorize events, for allegory always presumes the complete control of consciousness. For the same reason it is misleading to consider myth as 'freely adaptable'.⁴⁴ They are more a product of the unconscious than of consciousness. Ego-consciousness can neither invent a myth out of nothing, nor adapt it at will.

⁴⁴ cf. Cunningham, pp. 160-64.

If it does so, we are no longer confronted with a myth:

Wenn wir von der Bewußtseins-Unabhängigkeit und Spontaneität des Archetyps und des Symbols sprechen, bezieht sich das darauf, daß das Ich als Zentrum des Bewußtseins nicht aktiv und wissentlich am Entstehen und Auftauchen des Symbols oder des Archetyps beteiligt ist, das heißt, daß das Bewußtsein kein Symbol «machen» oder einen Archetyp erleben «wollen» kann.⁴⁵

Yet this is only part of the story; for on the other hand, myths, archetypes and symbols also relate to the conscious experience of an individual, because they are valid for the psyche as a whole and thus unite consciousness and the unconscious, not treating them as separate entities:

Denn die Manifestationen des Unbewußten sind eben nicht nur Spontanausdruck unbewußter Prozesse, sondern auch Reaktionen auf die Bewußtseinssituation des Menschen, die, wie uns das vom Traum her am geläufigsten ist, kompensatorisch zum Bewußtsein verlaufen. Das heißt aber, das Erscheinen der archetypischen Bilder und Symbole wird auch durch die individuelle, typologische Struktur, durch die Situation des Einzelnen, die Haltung seines Bewußtseins, sein Alter usw. mitdeterminiert. (Neumann III, p. 25)

Therefore, due to the fact that myth expresses unconscious happenings but at the same time responds to the conscious life of a person, it partakes of both unconscious and conscious realms. Thus although conscious experience has an undoubted impact on the development of myth, this impact is not subject to control or manipulation by ego-consciousness.

In the novel, however, this does appear to be the case with Joseph. Yet the different myths he ‘adopts’ express at each stage the development and state of his psyche, of his conscious and unconscious life. Had he learnt about the Hermes-myth when he still lived with his father, he would probably not have responded to it, because at that time it

⁴⁵ Erich Neumann, *Die grosse Mutter: Eine Phänomenologie der weiblichen Gestaltungen des Unbewussten* (Olten: Walter, 1988), p. 25 (= Neumann III).

would not have expressed a psychic truth for him. In Joseph the provider, by contrast, we meet a sophisticated, self-conscious individual who recognizes the mythical pattern in his life and even chooses to enact it. The dialectic of the situation is, however, that he is led to do so not by rational but by pre-conscious promptings. Having told him the myth of Hermes, Pharaoh asks Joseph whether he had known it before. Joseph's answer is a suitably dialectic one:

»Bekannt, höchster Herr?« erwiderte dieser. »Ja und nein, — erlaube deinem Knecht die doppelte Antwort!« [...]

»Auch dir, Herr der Kronen«, antwortete Joseph, »war er bekannt in gewissem Sinne von je, da du ihn ja einen fernen Bruder des Ibisköpfigen nanntest [...]. War er dir also bekannt oder nicht? Er war dir vertraut. Das ist mehr als bekannt, und in der Vertrautheit heben auch mein Ja und Nein sich auf und sind ein und dasselbe.« (V, 1429)

What Joseph tries to explain here is that something can well be familiar without actually being known. As knowing implies consciousness, familiarity must here refer to unconscious knowledge.

If we accept that it was Mann's intention 'den Mythos ins Humane umzufunktionieren', then it is crucial that we do not reduce myth to a handy tool that can be used by the enlightened mind for the benefit of the commonwealth. Here, and in the novel, we are confronted with the dialectic of enlightenment. Commenting on the relationship between myth and enlightenment, and referring to Adorno's and Horkheimer's work *Dialektik der Aufklärung*, Hermann Kurzke sums it up as follows:

Die faschistische Phase erscheint keineswegs als irrationalistischer Mythos in der Tradition der Romantik, sondern als dialektische Konsequenz der Aufklärung, deren totalitäre Entmythologisierung auch ihre Tugenden mitzerschlägt, die schließlich zur rationellen Beherrschungstechnik, zum Massenbetrug verkommt und die Mythen nun ihrerseits gezielt zur Lenkung der Massen einsetzt. (Kurzke II, p. 248)

Therefore Mann's undertaking cannot have been simply to endorse the



manipulative use of myth, and a rational approach must not be mistaken as recommending total rationalization. What he demonstrates in the unifying figure of Joseph is the interplay between conscious and unconscious elements, whereby myth becomes the factor that turns this interplay into a form of communication which can be understood and interpreted by the conscious mind. Myth in the novel is neither mere fancy-dress for the modern knowing subject, which Joseph is, nor is it the inescapable shaping agency of that life. 'Die bindenden Muster der Tiefe' is one of the recurring phrases of the novel. If we consider myths to be these patterns, the thing in itself, as it were, we convert metaphor into determining fact. Myth is bound by these patterns of depths, that is, by the psyche, because it is an expression of psychic reality. The individual is not bound by myth, although it may appear so to an observer. We are, however, bound by the development of our psyche, by our Self, which comprises our state of consciousness and our unconscious.

Myth only has truth and validity in so far as it expresses what is actually happening. That myths are still valid in the life of modern man is reflected in the fact that modern psychology needs them to illustrate psychic conditions. We speak, for instance, of an Oedipus or Electra complex. A person with an Oedipus-complex is not bound by the myth, nor on the other hand, can he freely opt for a more comfortable one. He is bound by a psychic reality and he can become conscious of it through the metaphors of myth. Although consciousness does not provide the cure, no cure is possible without it. This point is very strongly made by the novel.

For the human psyche these patterns—of which myths are merely an expression—are only binding while they remain unconscious. Although a pattern can unconsciously be perceived and recognized, it

can only be broken if this perception is raised to consciousness. If the perception remains unconscious, we merely get what appears to the observer instinctive imitation of patterns or myths. The novel demonstrates this throughout. The conflict between Jaakob and Esau over the blessing is just one example. Both 'know' their role exactly; both perceive the pattern. They are bound by it, because they do not become conscious of it.

Denn wenn hier heiklerweise von Leuten erzählt wird, die nicht immer ganz genau wußten, wer sie waren [...] — so betraf diese gelegentliche Unklarheit doch nur das Individuelle und Zeitliche und war geradezu die Folge davon, daß, wer der einzelne wesentlich, außer der Zeit, mythischer- und typischerweise war, jeder ganz ausgezeichnet wußte. (IV, 201)

Yet breaking the pattern often means only a new state of consciousness and consequently a new pattern. It is for this reason that Joseph, despite his recognition of the underlying pattern, must fall a second time. While his first fall was dominated by the archetype of the jealous brethren and that of the young harvest god, in his second fall we see the archetype of the Great Mother at work and that of Osiris and Gilgamesh. The link is pointed out by the narrator: 'im ersten Leben hatten diese Wirkungen [der Liebenswürdigkeit Josephs] die negative Form des Hasses angenommen, diesmal die übermäßig positive und darum auch wieder verderbliche Form der Liebesleidenschaft' (V, 1239). In the figure of Joseph we observe the gradual emergence of an individual from a 'prehistoric' mythical world: 'Ich erzählte die Geburt des Ich aus dem mythischen Kollektiv' (XI, 665).⁴⁶ It is a process of liberation and of individuation.

Overcoming separation, reconciliation and the union of opposites are at the heart of the novel. This comprises the interplay between such

⁴⁶ *Ein Vortrag.*

concepts as *Sein* and *Bedeuten*, between the Self and ego-consciousness, or individuality and the collective, and perhaps even between the world of ideas and phenomena. It is further reflected in the reconciliation between Joseph and his brothers, and in Joseph as an individuated being whose central concern lies with the common good. The union of opposites is contained in Joseph's special blessing, the blessing which induced Mann to write the novel:

Mein eigentlicher und geheimer Text steht in der Bibel, in der Geschichte zuletzt. Es ist der Segen des sterbenden Jakob über Joseph: »Von dem Allmächtigen bist du gesegnet *mit Segen oben vom Himmel herab, mit Segen von der Tiefe, die unten liegt.*« Damit man sich zu einem Werk entschließe, muß es, als Stoff, irgendwo einen Punkt haben, bei dessen Berührung einem regelmäßig das Herz aufgeht. Dies ist dieser produktive Punkt. -⁴⁷

(iv) *HÖLLENFAHRT*

1. Exposition

The section *Höllenfahrt* is divided into ten chapters and is the introduction to the novel. Like an exposition it outlines and introduces the major motifs, themes and symbols, and also gives the novel its philosophical setting. It opens with an ancient symbol for the soul, the image of the well: 'Tief ist der Brunnen der Vergangenheit. Sollte man ihn nicht unergründlich nennen?' (IV, 9). As in the the fairy-tale, we dive into the well to explore the past and search for origins, that is, our origins, for the novel is about Joseph, but also about mankind; it is a 'verschämte Menschheitsdichtung' (XI, 658).

⁴⁷ Thomas Mann, *Briefe*, volumes I and II, ed. by Erika Mann, (Frankfurt am Main: Fischer, 1962) (= *Briefe I or II.*), *Briefe I*, 263. Letter to Ernst Bertram, dated 28.12.1926.

The leitmotif of the journey, of 'Wanderschaft' and restlessness, is introduced through the figure of Abraham. The reader's experience is invoked through the simile of the 'Küstengänger', which compares the reader and the narrator to the wandering voyager who is forever lured on to new headlands and distances which open before him:

denn mit unserer Forscherangelegentlichkeit treibt das Unerforschliche eine Art von foppendem Spiel: es bietet ihr Scheinhalte und Wegesziele, hinter denen, wenn sie erreicht sind, neue Vergangenheitsstrecken sich auftun, wie es dem Küstengänger ergeht, der des Wanderns kein Ende findet, weil hinter jeder lehmgigen Dünenkulisse, die er erstrebte, neue Weiten zu neuen Vorbergen vorwärtslocken. (IV, 9)

Like this endless wanderer we, too, find no end to our journey. In our search for the beginning we find many beginnings.

These chapters also introduce the idea of a somewhat amorphous identity. Partly this idea is linked to a different perception of time. We learn that Joseph, in dream-like fashion, sometimes thought of Abraham as his great-grandfather, a notion which is dismissed by the narrator without much ado, when he informs us that there were at least twenty generations between them: 'Zuweilen hielt er den Mondwanderer wohl gar für seinen Urgroßvater, was aber mit voller Strenge aus dem Gebiet des Möglichen zu verweisen ist' (IV, 15). In this way not only time, space and events become increasingly relative, but also personalities. We also learn that most probably Abraham was not even the man who left his hometown Ur to go and search for God: 'Denn wahrscheinlich, wie wir nun hinzufügen wollen, war der Ur-Mann gar nicht der eigentliche und wirkliche Mann aus Ur. [...] *sein Vater* schon war es gewesen, der von dort ausgewandert war' (IV, 17). The difference between *Sein* and *Bedeutend* may loom large in the modern mind, but is evidently non-existent here.

The key-words in these sections are ‘träumerisch’, ‘Kulisse’, and ‘Scheinanfang’. ‘Träumerisch’, ‘träumerischerweise’ and related words are used in connection with Joseph and his people and in contrast to us. They indicate that their perception and thinking-patterns were different from ours. In part this is attributed to the oral tradition of storytelling and passing on of history, which was more immediate and more intimate:

die Erinnerung, auf mündlicher Überlieferung von Geschlecht zu Geschlecht beruhend, war unmittelbarer und zutraulich-ungehinderter, die Zeit einheitlicher und darum von kürzerem Durchblick; kurzum, es war dem jungen Joseph nicht zu verargen, wenn er sie träumerisch zusammenzog. (IV, 16)

The narrator also points out that concepts of time differ, despite precise measurements. Time can be experienced individually, which is the modern experience, but it can also be experienced collectively. The world in which the young Joseph grows up is the world of the collective. Life is perceived in collective terms and it is the fate of the collective that matters. Time is therefore experienced as ‘ein stilleres, stummeres, gleicheres Zeitgebilde; die Zeit war minder tätig’ (IV, 16). The link between time and identity becomes particularly evident in the patriarchal world of the novel. These people perceive themselves entirely as part of the collective and that is where they find their identity. They *identify* with figures of the past, who form a living part of the collective. As a consequence, any concept of time clearly distinguishing past, present and future is constantly transcended and becomes irrelevant. The precise measurement of time is simply not important. That perception of time is also a matter of consciousness is a fact which we all can confirm from our own childhood.

The word ‘Kulisse’ refers initially to us as travellers and to our journey in search of beginnings. We remember the ‘Dünenkulisse’ (IV, 9)

which lured the wanderer along the coast. The same is happening to us on our expedition: new vistas only appear to be the beginning but lure us further and further into the well of the past, into

jene Brunnentiefe der Zeiten, wo der Mythos zu Hause ist und die Urnormen, Urformen des Lebens gründet. Denn Mythos ist Lebensgründung; er ist das zeitlose Schema, die fromme Formel, in die das Leben eingeht, indem es aus dem Unbewußten seine Züge reproduziert. (IX, 493)⁴⁸

Not even Noah's flood marked the beginning for—so our learned guide informs us—it too was only an event which 'die Flut-Überlieferung nicht etwa gestiftet, aber ihr zum letzten Male Nahrung zugeführt, sie mit entsetzlicher Wirklichkeitsanschauung belebt hatte und nachkommenden Geschlechtern nun als *die* Sintflut galt' (IV, 30). Thus it was not the original cataclysmic flood, but merely revived ancient memories. It was just *a* flood, although it was looked upon as *the* flood. We are also told that the memory of the flood is shared by all the peoples in the world; the Chinese 'Noah', for instance, was called Yau (IV, 31). Not even the destruction of Atlantis was *the* beginning, but again merely 'eine Wiederholung, das Gegenwärtigwerden von etwas tief Vergangenen, eine fürchterliche Gedächtnisauffrischung' (IV, 31-2).

In our search for *the* beginning we find many *a* beginning; we find originals, but not *the* original: 'Nun war aber dies Original nicht eigentlich ein Original, nicht *das* Original' (IV, 20). We go back further and further. In vain do we search for the beginning of animal farming (IV, 23), of agriculture (IV, 24) and of writing and language: Sanskrit, too, must have developed from a root which probably united Arian, Semitic and Hamitic languages and was perhaps spoken in Atlantis (IV, 28).

Everything turns out to be but a 'Scheinanfang'. Our journey takes us beyond Atlantis into the Saurean world, to Paradise with its four big

⁴⁸ Freud und die Zukunft.

rivers forming the image of the sun-wheel (IV, 37), right to the end of time and space, yet still not to the beginning:

Nicht hier, nicht am Anfange von Raum und Zeit wurde die Frucht vom Baume der Lust und des Todes gebrochen und gekostet. Das liegt vorher. Der Brunnen der Zeiten erweist sich als ausgelotet, bevor das End- und Anfangsziel erreicht wird, das wir erstreben; die Geschichte des Menschen ist älter als die materielle Welt, die seines Willens Werk ist, älter als das Leben, das auf seinem Willen besteht. (IV, 38-9)

The history and origins of mankind go beyond the world of appearances. This is why we could only find 'apparent beginnings', why the distinction and the interplay between the definite and indefinite article, between *a* beginning and *the* beginning, was so crucial. It is in this way that the theme of *Sein* and *Bedeuten* is first established. The origin and beginning, we are told, cannot be found in the world of time and space; it is outside the world of phenomena.

Here we move into the world of the *nunc stans*, the ever-lasting present: 'Jederzeit, das ist das Wort des Geheimnisses. Das Geheimnis hat keine Zeit; aber die Form der Zeitlosigkeit ist das Jetzt und Hier' (IV, 31). The novel links the *nunc stans* to myth and mystery. The power of events like Noah's flood consisted 'weniger darin, daß etwas Vergangenes sich wiederholte, als darin, daß es gegenwärtig wurde' (IV, 30). This concept is not only applied to events but, again, to personalities as well. For instance, the Kings of Babel and Egypt, including all their predecessors and all their successors, were each one a reincarnation of the sun-god:

das heißt, der Mythos wurde in ihnen zum Mysterium, und zwischen Sein und Bedeuten fehlte es an jedem Unterscheidungsraum. Zeiten, in denen man darüber streiten konnte, ob die Oblate der Leib des Opfers ›sei‹ oder ihn nur ›bedeute‹, sollten erst 3000 Jahre später sich einstellen; aber auch diese höchst müßigen Erörterungen haben nichts daran zu ändern vermocht, daß das Wesen des Geheimnisses zeitlose Gegenwart ist und bleibt. (IV, 32)

Myth and mystery are timeless. Whatever it is they express, it clearly transcends the world of phenomena.

2. Der Roman der Seele

Chapter Eight of *Höllenfahrt* relates the *Roman der Seele*, followed by an interpretation in Chapter Nine. Going back to Gnostic sources⁴⁹ it tells the 'story' of the soul. The soul is anthropomorphized, and we learn how as a beautiful youth, 'ein Licht-Menschenwesen' (IV, 39), it fell in love with its own reflection and became enthralled and fettered by the lower world. This image not only explains man's dual nature, but also the consequences that resulted:

Denn nun schreitet die Lehre zu einer Scheidung der Welt in die drei personalen Elemente der Materie, der Seele und des Geistes fort, zwischen denen, im Zusammenspiel mit der Gottheit, jener Roman sich entspinnt, dessen eigentlicher Held die abenteuernde und im Abenteuer schöpferische Seele des Menschen ist und der, ein voller Mythos in seiner Vereinigung von Ur-Kunde und Prophetie des Letzten, über den wahren Ort des Paradieses und die Geschichte des ›Falles‹ klare Auskunft gibt. (IV, 40)

The *Roman der Seele* is a myth of creation and salvation. Here the novel reveals its concept of a 'complete' mythos, which comprises the oldest records and prophecies concerning the most distant future. The soul is the hero of this 'Ur-Mythos'. Matter, soul and *Geist* are established as three different principles, whereby soul and matter are almost opposing principles, while *Geist* is seen as closely related to the soul, although the soul is older:

Die Urmenschenseele ist das Älteste, genauer ein Ältestes, denn sie war immer, vor der Zeit und den Formen, wie Gott immer war und auch die Materie. Was den Geist betrifft [...], so ist er ihr

⁴⁹ cf. Berger, pp. 246-47.

zwar auf unbestimmte Art hochverwandt, doch nicht sie selbst noch einmal, denn er ist jünger. (IV, 42)

Geist is the bringer of light and its task is to free the soul from the world of darkness and matter, and return it to the world of light. The relation between *Geist* and *Seele* is problematic. *Geist* is seen as the principle of the future, and *Seele* as that of the past. That this is a relative distinction is obvious, because we are no longer in the world of time and space: 'Wir wissen längst, daß das Geheimnis die Zeitfälle frei behandelt und sehr wohl in der Vergangenheit sprechen mag, wenn es die Zukunft meint. Es ist möglich, daß die Aussage, Seele und Geist seien eins gewesen, eigentlich aussagen will, daß sie einmal eins werden sollen' (IV, 48).

The principle of *Geist* and thought becomes firmly linked to the motif of *Wanderschaft* and restlessness. *Geist* is 'der Bote der Mahnung, das Prinzip der Anstoßnahme, des Widerspruchs und der Wanderschaft' (IV, 49). This is also the reason why Jaakob cannot settle in some township but persists with his nomadic life in tents: 'Mit einem Worte: es war der Geist, der würdig machende und auch wieder entwürdigende Geist, der es dem Jaakob verwehrte, in städtisch gegründeter Selbsthaftigkeit zu leben' (IV, 52). In this final chapter of the *Höllenfahrt* the narrator links himself and his art to this motif of restlessness, for he too wanders restlessly, like the moon, his planet:

so wollen wir kein Hehl machen aus unserem natürlichen und unbegrenzten Verständnis für des Alten unruhigen Widerwillen gegen die Vorstellung des Bleibens und festen Hausens. Kennen denn wir dergleichen? Ist nicht auch uns Rastlosigkeit bestimmt und ein Herz gegeben, das von Ruhe nicht weiß? Des Erzählers Gestirn — ist es nicht der Mond, der Herr des Weges, der Wanderer, der in seinen Stationen zieht, aus jeder sich wieder lösend? (IV, 52).

Thus the moon becomes firmly established as the symbol of restlessness

and *Geist*.

'Our' undertaking, that is, our journey into the past, reflects that of the soul. We, too, search for knowledge and like the soul we also experience a feeling of 'lust': 'Wir kosten vom Tode und seiner Erkenntnis, wenn wir als erzählende Abenteurer in die Vergangenheit fahren: daher unsere Lust und unser bleiches Bangen' (IV, 53). The two opposites of human existence which opened the *Höllenfahrt*, 'natürlich-lusthaft' and 'übernatürlich-elend' (IV, 9), also close it. They stand for *Seele* and *Geist* and, as we shall see, they reflect again the interplay of *Sein* and *Bedeutung*. Knowledge (Erkenntnis) does not mean that of good and evil, that is, of moral terms, but the knowledge of matter by the soul, which resulted in the creation of the world of forms and death, and the creation of man, 'natürlich-lusthaftes [Sein]'. *Geist* is the bringer of consciousness; it interprets and gives meaning, thus causing 'die Unruhe übernatürlichen Elendes in der Brust eines einzelnen unter lauter lusthaft Einverstandenen' (IV, 49). The union of *Geist* and *Seele* is the novel's salvation myth:

Das Geheimnis aber und die stille Hoffnung Gottes liegt vielleicht in ihrer Vereinigung, nämlich in dem echten Eingehen des Geistes in die Welt der Seele, in der wechselseitigen Durchdringung der beiden Prinzipien und der Heiligung des einen durch das andere zur Gegenwart eines Menschentums, das gesegnet wäre mit Segen oben vom Himmel herab und mit Segen von der Tiefe, die unten liegt. (IV, 48-49)

To demonstrate this union, translating it into human terms which are meaningful and which can be understood in other than merely theoretical terms, is what the novel has set out to do.

CHAPTER ONE: CENTRAL PAIRS OF OPPOSITES

(i) TWO CENTRAL SYMBOLS

The novel's underlying structure is dialectic. For example, the tetralogy sub-divides into two pairs, the Patriarchal and the Egyptian volumes, marked by a clear stylistic difference. It reflects the gradual awakening of consciousness, the emergence of the individual from a prehistoric mythical world. The blurred self-conception that dominates the first two volumes is replaced in the Egyptian volumes by clear and sharp outlines and a genuine experience of individuated identity, on the part of the central character. Furthermore the novel contains numerous symbols, motifs and themes, of which the central ones appear in pairs of opposites, for instance, moon and sun, darkness and light, *Geist* and *Seele*, death and (re)birth, the tree of life and the tree of death, matriarchal and patriarchal consciousness to mention only some. This dialectic structure constitutes and culminates in the central and all-embracing theme of *Sein* and *Bedeutung*, which informs this whole range of opposed symbols. These binary oppositions address the place of consciousness, reflectivity and knowingness within the density of living and lived experience. The symbols therefore express as themes the issue of matter becoming articulate, patterned and significant.

As the novel is a *Menschheitsdichtung*, duality is and ought to be its essence. Being confronted with opposing forces and torn between them is after all the very essence of human experience. In a process of endless cell division this duality continues even within the separate elements. Jung provided us with the terminology of *animus* and *anima*, which in Mann's tetralogy parallel *Geist* and *Seele*, yet the fact that both male and female psychology contain elements of the other has long been known. The gods and goddesses of ancient mythologies

give ample evidence of this.

This dialectic appears particularly in the symbol of the moon, which seems to contain and unite within itself paradoxical concepts. Yet this is precisely the nature of the true symbol as it is explained by Jung: 'Der von Thesis und Antithesis bearbeitete Rohstoff, der in seinem Formungsprozeß die Gegensätze vereinigt, ist das lebendige S[ymbol]' (GW 6, 908). A symbol, unlike the mere sign, always contains and expresses something yet unknown, but of whose existence one is nevertheless aware:

Mit diesem Begriff [des Symbols] ist ein unbestimmter, beziehungsweise vieldeutiger Ausdruck, der auf eine schwer definierbare, nicht völlig erkannte Sache hinweist, gemeint. Das «Zeichen» hat eine feste Bedeutung, weil es eine (konventionelle) Abkürzung für oder ein allgemein gebrauchter Hinweis auf eine bekannte Sache ist. (GW 5, 180)

How a living symbol works on a person can be seen very clearly in the novel. While symbols are consciously employed by the narrator and fully known to him, this is not the case with the characters. They often depend on a symbol or symbolism to give expression to something they are aware of, but can neither formulate nor define. For instance, at the beginning of the novel, when Jaakob sees Joseph sitting at the open well, this image conjures up and expresses his unknown fears and premonitions about Joseph: 'Das Kind aber sitzt allein am Brunnen bei Nacht, unbesonnen und bloß, ohne Wehr, und vergißt des Vaters' (IV, 82). The well, which plays such an important role in the history of his tribe and, indeed, a beneficial one, should rationally be a symbol of something positive and not signal danger. His fears are irrational and a product of his unconscious. Yet only the narrator can explain to us what is unknown to Jaakob:

Das kam aber daher, daß er die Brunnentiefe nicht denken konnte, ohne daß die Idee der Unterwelt und des Totenreiches sich in

den Gedanken, ihn vertiefend und heiligend, einmengte, — diese Idee, die zwar nicht in seinen religiösen Meinungen, wohl aber in den Tiefen seiner Seele und Einbildungskraft, uralte mythisches Erbgut der Völker, das sie war, eine wichtige Rolle spielte. (IV, 93)

If Jaakob were capable of such an assessment of the symbolic value of the well and thus of his own feelings and motivations in connection with it, the well would cease to be a living symbol for him:

Solange ein S[ymbol] lebendig ist, ist es der Ausdruck einer sonstwie nicht besser zu kennzeichnenden Sache. Das S[ymbol] ist nur lebendig solange es bedeutungsschwanger ist. Ist aber sein Sinn aus ihm geboren, d.h. ist derjenige Ausdruck gefunden, welcher die gesuchte, erwartete oder geahnte Sache noch besser als das bisherige S[ymbol] formuliert, so ist das Symbol tot, d.h. es hat nur noch eine historische Bedeutung. (GW 6, 896)

All over the world moon-mythology seems to have preceded sun-mythology. Light, in whatever form it appears, but particularly the light of the planets, is always an archetypal symbol of consciousness and *Geist*. It is representative of the illumination of the psyche, which the 'primitive' mind projected into the sky:

Die Lichtkörper sind archetypisch immer Symbole der Bewußtseins- und Geistseite der menschlichen Psyche. Deswegen ist ihre Stellung in den Mythologien, Religionen und Riten charakteristisch für die psychischen Konstellationen, welche in der Gruppe herrschen, die diese Mythologie usw. aus ihrem Unbewußten an den Himmel projiziert hat. (Neumann III, p. 66)

The mind, however, does not perceive this as projection; if anything, it seems to be the reverse process, as is pointed out indirectly in the novel, when it explains Esau's outlook on life and the factors that determine his actions: 'Seine Art, die Dinge und sich selbst zu sehen, war durch eingeborene Denkvorschriften bedingt und bestimmt, die ihn banden, wie alle Welt, und ihre Prägung von kosmischen Kreislaufbildern empfangen hatten' (IV, 134). The moon and the stars are initially of much greater impact, because they illuminate darkness, whereas the sun—to

the unscientific mind—merely illuminates the day. To come to a complete understanding of the moon (and later the sun) as a symbol, we have to put aside our educated modern minds and accept that the sensory perception of moon and sun does not correspond to scientific findings. It is by no means obvious that the moon and the planets only reflect light or that the sun is the bringer of daylight even on a rainy day when it cannot be seen. Furthermore, due to their constantly-changing appearance, neither the sun nor the moon is initially perceived as a single planet:

Die Sonne gilt ursprünglich ebenso als Lichtkörper des hellen Tages- wie der Mond als Lichtkörper des dunklen Nachthimmels. Aus diesem Grund gibt es für den Frühmenschen ebenso wenig *die* Sonne wie *den* Mond. So wie der Mensch einen jungen, einen vollen, einen sterbenden und einen gestorbenen Mond kennt, bezieht er sich auf die Ostsonne des Morgens, die Zenitsonne des Mittags und die Westsonne des Abends wie auf verschiedene Individualitäten. (Neumann III, p. 66)

In this way the human psyche projects its own most fundamental experience on moon and sun. Such externalization enables it to perceive and comprehend what is in fact its own experience. Much of the thought expressed here goes back to Bachofen's findings, particularly in his main work, *Das Mutterrecht*. Through this same source it has also entered into the novel. Manfred Dierks in his book *Studien zu Mythos und Psychologie bei Thomas Mann* has devoted a whole chapter to Mann and Bachofen. He shows the great change in attitude which Mann underwent, starting from his negative reaction to Bäumler, the editor of some of Bachofen's work,⁵⁰ to his final acknowledgement in a letter to Karl Kerényi, where Mann states that he studied Bachofen to nearly the same extent as he did Schopenhauer (Kerényi, p. 124).

⁵⁰ Mann gradually came to the conviction that Bachofen's work had been grossly misinterpreted and abused by certain interested parties. Thus in a letter to Harry Slochower, dated 19.6.1942, he writes, 'Bachofen ist von den Klages-Weibern frech mißdeutet und mißbraucht worden, und Bäumler nun gar ist mir ein *Graus*' (*Briefe II*, 262).

Bachofen's influence on the *Joseph* novels can perhaps stand alongside Schopenhauer's. Initially it is most obvious in the development of symbols.

1. The Moon

a) Symbol of the Unconscious

In the novel—as in mythology—the moon precedes the sun as a symbol, and the novel opens with the illuminated night-sky. The first chapter has the title *Ischtar*, the name of the Assyro-Babylonian mother-goddess. In her person we find the characteristics not only of the Greek Aphrodite, but also of Demeter and Kore, whose myths are a central element in the novel, particularly in the Egyptian volumes. The chapter concentrates on the main constellations and the planets. It emphasizes particularly the changed colours and appearance of the landscape in the pale moonlight and the human attributes that are projected into the star constellations. Mars is called 'der siebennamige Feind, der Elamiter, der Pest und Tod verhängt', while Saturn is given the epithet, 'der Beständige und Gerechte' (IV, 61). The constellation Orion appears as 'vertraute Figur [...], ein Jäger auch er, gegürtet und wohlbewehrt' (IV, 61). Ischtar, however, queens over it all, as 'die Schwester, Gattin und Mutter, Astarte, die Königin, der Sonne folgend' (IV, 61). In this way 'das Ewig-Weibliche' or the Great Mother opens the novel and 'zieht uns hinan'.

Invoking the theme from *Höllenfahrt*, the chapter hints in every way at beginnings. Inconspicuously it also mentions the fig-tree and the olive-tree (IV, 59 and 60), soon to be identified as the tree of knowl-

edge and the tree of life respectively. It is largely atmospheric, mentioning smells, colours, light and other perceptions of the senses, thus establishing the style of the first and second parts of the tetralogy. The world depicted here is not one dominated by intellect, which is governed by reason and rationality. Instead it is marked by emotion, intuition and inspiration—traditionally regarded as female characteristics. We see this world not in the glaring light of the sun, which illuminates even the darkest corners, but in the soft and deceptive light of the moon, ‘das Mondlicht in seiner Scheingenaugigkeit’ (IV, 68). The deceptive nature of the moonlight and the distortions it produces are repeatedly emphasized. It is not the spirit of Apollo and modern consciousness which rules here and which we will encounter in the Egyptian volumes. This is Bachofen’s matriarchal world and Neumann’s *matriarchal consciousness*, where ego and consciousness are still dominated by the unconscious. The moon is its major symbol.

The difference between the conscious use of a symbol and the experience of a living symbol transpires clearly through the different use of the moon as a symbol by the narrator and by the characters. The narrator employs the moon consciously as a symbol and his voice and consciousness can be clearly perceived. He uses the moon, for instance, to introduce the motif of *Todeshochzeit*, comparing Jaakob’s wedding to the full moon. It represents the peak of life, upon which gradual decline must follow:

Denn des Lebens Hochzeitpunkt ist des Todes Punkt und ein Fest der Wende, da der Mond den Tag seiner Höhe und Fülle begeht und kehrt von nun an sein Angesicht wieder der Sonne zu, in die er versinken soll. Jaakob sollte erkennen, die er liebte, und zu sterben beginnen. (IV, 287)

For the characters the moon is a living symbol and they use it to give expression to feelings and experiences which they cannot formulate in

rational terms, because they remain mostly unconscious. The moon's physical attributes, its changing appearance and disappearance, dominate. Thus the concept of beauty derives from the moon. When Jaakob sees Lea and Rahel for the first time together, he thinks: 'Da haben wir es: der blöde Mond und der schöne' (IV, 237). Isaak's dwindling eyesight is compared to the waning moon: 'Darum nahmen seine Augen ab, wie der sterbende Mond' (IV, 200).

The moon is used as a literal comparison for people. Laban, for instance, is referred to as a 'Schwarzmonddämon' (IV, 370) and similarly Esau as 'Dunkelmond' (IV, 134). Both terms refer to the new moon and consequently to the absence of light, and they reflect the total lack of consciousness which marks both Laban and Esau. Both show no evidence of *Geist*: Laban's life is ruled by crude superstition and Esau's by utter thoughtlessness. They experience life entirely as fate and thus as an external force on which they mostly fail to have any influence.

The connection between the moon and *Geist*, which has been so firmly established at the end of *Höllenfahrt*, contains also the reason for the strong link between Jaakob and the moon. When Jaakob is blessed by Isaak, the moon is used as an archetypal symbol:

Die Herrschaft vermachte er [Isaak] ihm [Jaakob] im Kampfe der Welthälften, der lichten und dunklen, den Sieg über den Drachen der Wüste, und setzte ihn ein zum schönen Monde und zum Bringer der Wende, der Erneuerung und des großen Lachens. (IV, 211)

In this blessing, clearly, we are not listening to the language of rationality. It is filled with archetypal motifs, which, to a more rational mind, are meaningless unless interpreted. To Jaakob, however, the blessing is perfectly clear, although he certainly could not explain it. To him the symbolic language and its images are alive and instinctively he understands their inherent meaning and message. He knows that he, the shepherd,

becomes the ‘Mondmann’, like Abraham, and in contrast to Esau, the hunter: ‘Durch des Vaters Segen war Jaakob endgültig zum Mann des vollen und ›schönen‹ Mondes geworden, Esau aber zum Dunkelmond, also zum Sonnenmann, also zum Mann der Unterwelt’ (IV, 134). The reference to the underworld is a reference to the unconscious. The underlying concept here is that the new moon is invisible when it has been absorbed by the sun. This derives from the basic astronomical fact that the new moon occurs when the moon is closest to the sun, that is, in conjunction, whereas the full moon takes place when it is in opposition to the sun and furthest away. Therefore the seeming paradox of Esau’s epithets of ‘Dunkelmond’ and ‘Sonnenmann’ can be given a very rational explanation. The sun in this world and state of consciousness is not perceived as the bringer of light, but as the devouring destroyer of light. It is the moon which illuminates the night and symbolically first brings consciousness. Thus Jaakob as ‘Mondmann’ becomes the representative of *Geist*, while Esau as ‘Sonnenmann’ represents domination through the unconscious—the underworld. At this early stage in developing consciousness, the unconscious appears as a deeply antagonistic force, which is in permanent conflict with those elements of *Geist* striving for consciousness, rationality and control. The debate between *Geist* and *Seele* as principles of life or death, which we saw explored in *Höllenfahrt*, is also manifest in the conflict between Jaakob and Esau.

b) Lunar Grammar and Matriarchal Consciousness

The opening chapter of the second *Hauptstück* is a correlative to the *Ischtar* chapter and it, too, has a highly suggestive title: *Mondgrammatik*. This title, which at first glance appears puzzling, is explained by the narrator. The chapter asserts two different types of ‘clarity’—that of the moon and that of the sun:

Aber die Klarheit der Sonne ist eine und eine andere des Mondes Klarheit, die ja bei jenem übernützlichen Gespräch wunderbar obgewaltet hatte. In ihr nehmen die Dinge sich anders aus als in jener, und sie mochte diejenige sein, die damals und dort dem Geist als die wahre Klarheit erschien. (IV, 121)

That clarity here refers to consciousness is evident from the chapter’s concentration on Eliezer’s sense of identity and self-perception. Eliezer’s identity is almost entirely mythical, that is, he has a clear sense of identity, which rests, however, on identification with the ‘mythical’ Eliezer who courted Rebekka for Isaak. His identity springs from his role. Therefore when he tells this story to Joseph, which he often does, he tends to mingle present and past tense, the first and third person. While the more rational modern mind—and the clarity of the sun—would take issue with this, Joseph listens to it with delight:

Dem hörte Joseph mit einem Ergötzen zu, das durch keinerlei Befremden über die grammatische Form beeinträchtigt wurde, in der Eliezer es zum besten gab, und dem jede Anstoßnahme fernblieb daran, daß des Alten Ich sich nicht als fest umzirkelt erwies, sondern gleichsam nach hinten offenstand, ins Frühere, außer seiner eigenen Individualität Gelegene überfloß und sich Erlebnisstoff einverleibte, dessen Erinnerungs- und Wiedererzeugungsform eigentlich und bei Sonnenlicht betrachtet die dritte Person statt der ersten hätte sein müssen. (IV, 122-23)

Eliezer, as critics have pointed out (cf. Berger and Heller), is not so much an individual as an institution; the novel refers to him as ‘diese Einrichtung von einem Greise’ (IV, 634). Although Jaakob is well aware that his Eliezer is not the one who courted Rebekka for Isaak, it is a dis-

inction he does not always bother with, as the narrator confides in us: 'Darum sei unter uns gesagt und zugegeben, daß Jaakob mit ›Eliezer‹ dennoch seinen eigenen Hausvogt und ersten Knecht gemeint hatte, — *auch* ihn nämlich, beide auf einmal also, und nicht nur beide, sondern ›den‹ Eliezer überhaupt' (IV, 121-22). The use of the definite article signals to the reader that we are here concerned with the 'idea' of Eliezer, the archetype if one likes, as much as with the 'phenomenon', that is, in its present incarnation, in the shape of Jaakob's servant. Most of the time no clear distinction is made between them, and they represent a natural union. In the world of the first two volumes the need to distinguish between being and meaning is not felt.

The 'grammar of the moon' refers to the lack of distinction between the first and the third persons. It is about open identity, which (like the moon) is not firmly outlined, 'fest umzirkelt' (IV, 122), and refers to a state of consciousness in which the unconscious—and comparative darkness—still dominates over consciousness and ego. The experience of individuality does not enter into it. Yet the narrator points out that these distinctions may be somewhat overrated anyway:

Was aber auch heißt denn hier ›eigentlich‹, und ist etwa des Menschen Ich überhaupt ein handfest in sich geschlossen und streng in seine zeitlich-fleischlichen Grenzen abgedichtetes Ding? [...] Der Gedanke der Individualität steht zuletzt in der gleichen Begriffsreihe wie derjenige der Einheit und Ganzheit, der Gesamtheit, des Alls, und die Unterscheidung zwischen Geist überhaupt und individuellem Geist besaß bei weitem nicht immer solche Gewalt über die Gemüter wie in dem Heute, das wir verlassen haben. (IV, 123)

Even in this early quotation we can see the allusion to Joseph's blessing and future development. The idea which is put to us here is that our modern concept of *Geist*, that is, the independent Apollonian spirit, is but one form of *Geist* and not its totality. There is another form of

Geist, and it is this which is presented through the moon symbolism in the first two volumes. Unlike the Apollonian spirit it is closely linked to the forces of the unconscious and therefore intuition and inspiration are its characteristic forms of expression, rather than detached analytical thought. It is deeply rooted in the unconscious, from where it receives its impulses. Its development is an organic process of growth, change and fluctuation. For this reason it has also been called 'moon-consciousness'. Neumann distinguishes between these two forms of *Geist* as patriarchal and matriarchal consciousness:

Die Mondperiodik mit ihrem nächtlichen Hintergrund ist das Symbol eines Geistes, der wächst und sich wandelt im Zusammenhang mit den dunklen Prozessen des Unbewußten. Das Mond-Bewußtsein, wie man auch das matriachale Bewußtsein nennen könnte, ist niemals vom Unbewußten abgelöst, denn es ist eine Phase, eine Geistphase, dieses Unbewußten selber. Das Ich des matriarchalen Bewußtseins hat keine freie und unabhängige Eigenaktivität, sondern es ist passiv abwartend, auf den Geist-Impuls eingestellt, den das Unbewußte ihm zuträgt.⁵¹

The novel describes these two different types of *Geist* as 'Geist überhaupt' and 'individueller Geist' (IV, 123). 'Geist überhaupt', that is *Geist* in its essence, we can observe in the first two volumes. In *Joseph in Ägypten*, by contrast, we see it most of all as an independent analytical force. Yet the novel does not idealize one or the other.⁵² Instead it suggests that only unity and wholeness can provide the ultimate answer. This is the answer given by the novel in the last volume, *Joseph der Ernährer*. Yet reconciliation can only follow upon separation.

⁵¹ Erich Neumann, *Zur Psychologie des Weiblichen* (Frankfurt am Main: Fischer, 1983), pp. 76-77 (= Neumann II).

⁵² In fact, such idealization was the centre of Mann's criticism of Bäumler in *Pariser Recherche*, where he sums up the latter's view as: 'Novalis und Friedrich Schlegel sind Romantiker in Anführungsstrichen, achtzehntes Jahrhundert im Grunde, rational infiziert, verwerflich. Arndt, Görres, [Jacob] Grimm, endlich Bachofen sind die Wahren, denn nur sie sind zutiefst beherrscht und bestimmt von dem großen ›Zurück‹, von der mütterlich-nächtigen Idee der Vergangenheit, während bei jenen diejenige der Zukunft auf männlich-allzu-männliche Art vorwalte' (XI, 48-49).

Sein and *Bedeutend*, *Geist* as essence and *Geist* as analytical and interpreting force, matriarchal and patriarchal consciousness have to be separated first in order to achieve a higher consciousness in a new union.

Apparently the words *moon* and *Mond* derive from the same Sanskrit root as *mind* and *mens*—a linguistic confirmation of the moon as a symbol of *Geist*.⁵³ With regard to the question of *Geist* and consciousness in the novel, the moon is the first light in the darkness of the unconscious and therefore one of its functions here is to represent the half-illuminated consciousness of the world of Jaakob, with its amorphous sense of identity. Hence it is the central symbol in the first two books of the tetralogy and much less important in the Egyptian volumes.

Käte Hamburger in her celebrated analysis of the novel (Hamburger II) comments on the stylistic difference between the Patriarchal and the Egyptian volumes:

Der gemeinsame Stilunterschied dieser Bände von den Patriarchenbänden beruht, wie mehrfach schon betont, darauf, daß in dem Maße, in dem die menschliche Sphäre rationaler wird, der mythische Schleier, der anfangs über dem Geschehen lag, sich allmählich verflüchtigt und die irdischen Konturen der Gestalten und Geschehnisse sich immer deutlicher abzeichnen. (p. 74)

While Hamburger establishes humour as a decisive representational factor in this process, I would argue that this 'mythical veil' and its gradual removal depend also very much on the changing use of the moon as a symbol and the decline in its use. It runs parallel to an increasing use of the sun as a symbol for a different, independent form of *Geist*. This change reflects the growing consciousness and more and more firmly-outlined sense of identity Joseph experiences.

⁵³ cf. Neumann II, pp. 73-74.

c) Joseph and the Moon

The symbolic function of the moon changes in accordance with Joseph's development. Initially it is a living symbol to him as to everybody else. We first see him sitting at the well on a moon-lit night. His relationship to the planet is obviously special and marked by largely irrational elements. For him the moon is full of mythical and symbolic meaning and in his youthful naïveté he virtually tries to seduce and corrupt it with the beauty of his naked body:

Es war so, daß er es süß und hoffnungsvoll gefunden hatte, dem Monde, dem er sich horoskopisch und durch allerlei Ahnung und Spekulation verbunden fühlte, seine junge Nacktheit darzustellen in der Überzeugung, dieser werde Gefallen daran haben, und in der berechneten Absicht, ihn — oder das obere Wesen überhaupt — damit zu bestechen und für sich einzunehmen. (IV, 79)

Referring to this opening scene the narrator tells us that because of the link between the moon, which we have seen as a symbol of beauty, and the Egyptian god Thot, who is the god of the written word and sign, Joseph associates beauty and 'die Idee der Weisheit und des Schrifttums' (IV, 411) with the moon. Clearly, though quite unconsciously, he projects his own characteristics onto the planet and perceives in it 'Schönheits- und Zeichenzauber auf einmal und als Einheit also' (IV, 411). Through this projection the scene turns out to be quite narcissistic and it echoes and evokes the image of narcissism that led to the fall of the soul described in *Höllenfahrt*: 'Dann aber habe er [ein Jünglingswesen aus reinem Licht] niederschauend sein Spiegelbild in der Materie erblickt, habe es liebgewonnen, sich zu ihm hinabgelassen und sei so in die Bande der niederen Natur geraten' (IV, 40). We see, as a parallel to Joseph's developing consciousness, how the moon changes from a living symbol and increasingly becomes a sign or an analogy. When

Joseph is inside the well, which is half-covered with a stone, his awakened consciousness controls his thoughts and replaces his formerly unconscious speculations and premonitions:

der Stein deckte sein Rund wie der Schatten den Dunkelmond. Was für Josephs Verstandesaufmerksamkeit durchs Geschehen schimmerte, war das Urvorbild des Gestirntodes: des toten Mondes, den man nicht sieht drei Tage lang [...]; und als das Gräßliche Wirklichkeit wurde, die Brüder ihn aufs Brunnenrund und auf den Rand der Grube hißten und er hinab mußte [...], da war seinem wachsamem Witz die Anspielung völlig deutlich gewesen auf den Stern, der am Abend ein Weib ist und am Morgen ein Mann und der in den Brunnen des Abgrundes hinabsinkt als Abendstern. (IV, 583)

Joseph now perceives the analogy to planetary events and attributes and recognizes the allusion. He no longer merely projects his feelings and psychic experience into the planet, but uses it for comparison. The conjunction *wie* has firmly established itself in his thinking. He becomes conscious of the moon as a symbol, that is, what it implies and alludes to, and he perceives the parallel to his Self and his life. He no longer interprets the moon's attributes literally and the symbol is transformed into a metaphor and simile.

Like the moon Joseph is deeply ambiguous, a characteristic which his brothers and the narrator later describe as *tâm*:

Er war ›tâm‹, die Brüder einigten sich auf diese Kennzeichnung. Er war zweideutig, doppelgesichtig und ein Mann des Zugleich, schön und mächtig, ermutigend und beängstigend, gütig und gefährlich. Man wurde nicht klug aus ihm, wie man eben aus der Eigenschaft ›tâm‹ nicht klug wird, in der Ober- und Unterwelt sich begegnen. (V, 1616-17)

The moon is similarly ambiguous. It combines, for instance, male and female elements, because (as Bachofen pointed out) it is female in its relation to the sun (passive, receiving) and male in its relation to the earth (active, fertilizing). It is basically an androgynous symbol and a purely feminine character was only attributed to it when 'patriarchy' super-

seeded 'matriarchy' and adopted the symbol of the sun.⁵⁴ As a planet of the night it stands for both darkness and light, and for a 'feminine' form of *Geist* and consciousness. It also stands for life and for death, since, in mythology, it is the bringer of fertility, but also the place to which dead souls go for a while after death. Like Joseph it is *tâm*, and all of these associations find parallels in Joseph's life as it is presented in the novel. This begins to dawn on him when he is inside the well. That his three nights there are a parallel to the three moonless nights is obvious to him, as it is, indeed, to the Ishmaelites who free him from there: '[er] streckte drei Finger aus, zum Zeichen, daß es drei Tage gewesen, was die Minäer nicht wenig bedeutsam und geistreich anmutete, im Hinblick auf die drei Unterweltstage des Neumondes' (IV, 593). And henceforth there is another parallel between Joseph and the moon. The moon is regarded as the planet which prepares the way for his 'brothers', that is, the other planets. This parallel is one of the 'seeds' which the tetchy angelic guardian of the empty well plants into Ruben's mind: '»Sieh ihn an, wie er schimmernd dahinzieht und den Weg seiner Brüder bahnt! Anspielungen geschehen im Himmel und auf Erden unausgesetzt. Wer nicht begriffsstutzig ist, sondern sie zu lesen weiß, der bleibt in der Erwartung«' (IV, 622). Ruben is not able to 'read' and perceive the allusions, so they remain as seeds in his unconscious. To Joseph, however, such allusions are filled with meaning. From his arrival in Egypt onwards Joseph, too, perceives this as his future function, a function which on a symbolical level also corresponds to his later role of Hermes, both god of travellers but also psychopomp, conductor of souls. Joseph suddenly begins to distinguish between *Sein* and

⁵⁴ 'Patriarchy' and 'matriarchy' are not used as political or sociological concepts, but as psychological terms. Similarly, the use of the terms 'masculine' and 'feminine' is not sex-linked. They are used as symbolic and thus transpersonal terms.

Bedeuten and with this the moon stops being a 'living' symbol for him. Henceforth Joseph uses it increasingly as analogy; he no longer projects his own psychic development onto this planet and the moon is no longer 'Ausdruck einer sonstwie nicht besser zu kennzeichnenden Sache' (GW 6, 896). As Joseph has been born from the well, the moon yielded up its previous inherent meaning, 'sein Sinn [wurde] aus ihm herausgeboren' (GW 6, 896). Thus being and meaning have become separated at the end of the first two volumes.

Joseph's life comes full circle, confirming the leitmotif and central image of the revolving sphere. He leaves his origins and he returns to them: 'in Joseph mündet das Ich aus übermütiger Absolutheit zurück ins Kollektive, Gemeinsame' (XI, 666-67).⁵⁵ Although he does not physically return to his land of origin, in his psychological development his path of life reflects that of the moon in being complete. Joseph's personality eventually expresses wholeness.

The moon was believed to be a mediator between the solar and the sublunar world, between man and the gods. Joseph, too, discovers his true identity in his function as mediator. Like the moon he stands between life and death, when, as the provider, he ensures the survival of his own tribe and many others. Joseph expresses his consciousness of this parallel when he speaks to Pharaoh about the qualities which the yet-unappointed provider should have. He does this by putting his own words into Pharaoh's mouth: 'Ich bin Pharaon! Du sollst sein wie ich und Vollmacht haben von mir in dieser Sache, darin ich dich geprüft, und sollst Mittler sein zwischen mir und den Menschen, gleichwie der Mond Mittler ist zwischen Sonne und Erde' (V, 1443). At this point the moon regains for a moment its importance as a symbol in the Egyptian

⁵⁵ *Ein Vortrag.*

volumes. At the same time it becomes evident that it no longer expresses a psychological development, but only serves as illustration, 'gleichwie', as comparison to a given situation. Most important is, however, the fact that it is no longer the narrator who uses a symbol in this way, but one of the characters.

Although the moon retains its overall importance as a symbol throughout the novel, its physical presence fades somewhat in the Egyptian volumes. This is partly because it is no longer a living symbol to Joseph, whose consciousness is no longer half-illuminated, but fully awakened. It is no longer a passive receiving form of *Geist*, depending entirely on the unconscious for impulse. Instead we perceive a more and more clearly-outlined identity clarified by a fully-developed ego-consciousness, which for a while even deems itself independent and in total control of events. The changing use of symbols in the novel reflects this psychological development, just as, in the words of Neumann, it marks the transference from matriarchal to patriarchal consciousness:

Die Sonnenwelt als das Neue und Überlegene tritt in Gegensatz zur Mondwelt, wie das Patriarchat zum Matriarchat, beide als psychische Stufe verstanden. Erst in späteren Entwicklungszeiten, wenn das Patriarchat sich erfüllt oder ad absurdum geführt und die Verbindung zum Mutterboden verloren hat, kommt es in der Individuation zu einer Umkehrung. Nun findet die Wiedervereinigung des patriarchalen Sonnen-Bewußtseins mit dem Früheren statt, und das dem Urgrund nähere matriarchale Bewußtsein und sein Zentralsymbol, der Mond, steigen, verbunden mit den regenerierenden Kräften der Urwasser, aus der Tiefe, um den alten Hieros Gamos von Mond und Sonne auf neuer erhöhter Ebene, in der menschlichen Psyche, zu feiern. (Neumann II, pp. 98-99)

In the novel, too, the moon returns as an all-important symbol in the last volume of the tetralogy. Significantly, however, it reappears not in the shape of the planet, but has now been transformed and raised to the higher level of the perhaps most human of all gods, Hermes. Mann once

described him as ‘der mondverbundene Hermes’ (Kerényi, p. 98) and the novel too constantly emphasizes Hermes’ lunar links. These consist, for instance, in his close similarity to the Egyptian lunar god Thot, in his role as mediator between heaven and earth, his role as psychopomp, guiding the souls of the dead, and not least in his deeply paradoxical nature.⁵⁶

Before this final development, however, we observe the diminishing use of the symbol of the moon and the increasing importance of the symbol of the sun. The mythical veil has lifted and things have become ‘sonnenklar’.

2. The Sun

Initially, for instance in *Die Geschichten Jaakobs*, the symbol of the sun is only relevant as contrast to the *Mondgrammatik*, usually indicated by the word ‘sonnenklar’. It refers to Apollo’s uncompromising rationality and precision, or to what has been termed patriarchal consciousness, which marks the second phase in the development of consciousness:

Das Männliche ist dem Ich und dem Bewußtsein verhaftet und hat sich willentlich von der Natur- und Schicksalsbezogenheit befreit, in deren Tiefe das matriachale Bewußtsein wurzelt. Aber der patriarchale Akzent auf Ich, Wille und Freiheit steht in Widerspruch zu der Erfahrung des Weiblichen von der Dominanz der Mächte, des Unbewußten und des Schicksals und von der Gebundenheit des Daseins an das Nicht-Ich und an das Du. (Neumann II, p. 90)

This means that in each phase identity is experienced in a markedly different way. These different types of consciousness are linked in the

⁵⁶ cf. also Berger, pp. 274-76.

novel to the two different symbols of the moon and the sun. The ‘grammar’ of the sun demands clear lines, analysis and definition. Qualities as vague and unreliable as perception and intuition cannot be allowed recognition in it and are dismissed as inferior. I will show in detail in Chapter Four how these two forms of *Geist* are represented in Joseph’s psychological development.

In the tetralogy’s second volume, *Der junge Joseph*, the sun has again little function as a symbol and is relevant only as the natural counterpart to the moon: ‘Sonne und Mond waren zwei, wie alles in Welt und Leben und wie Ja und Nein’ (IV, 402). Sun and moon are just another pair of opposites.

In *Joseph in Ägypten*, however, the sun gains growing importance through two central symbolic functions. There is the setting sun, which is linked to Osiris and his transformation from god of the underworld into Re—god of the sun. There is also the blazing, destructive sun, which represents the god Amun and his merciless pursuit of power. The setting sun relates to Joseph’s inner, that is, psychological, development, the blazing sun to the external forces that prove formative for his life. Both reflect Joseph’s life in Egypt, pointing also to his future development, when eventually he will unite the opposites in a union of equal forces.

a) The Night-Sea Crossing and Osiris

It is on the long way to Egypt that the sun first becomes conspicuous as a symbol. Joseph’s journey with the Ishmaelites is marked particularly by the setting sun. Thus we see Joseph bake bread in the sunset (IV,

670). His conversation with his old acquaintance, the ill-tempered angelic guide, who leads the caravan through the desert to the borders of Egypt, also takes place just after the sunset, ‘die Sonne war trübe untergegangen’ (IV, 702), and several more examples could be listed here. The setting sun has two important aspects. On a literal level, it evokes a parallel between the sun’s descent into the underworld and Joseph’s journey there. When Jaakob arrived in the ‘underworld’ of Laban, this arrival was also marked by the setting sun: ‘die Sonne neigte sich hinter ihm in fahlen Dünsten’ (IV, 223). It is an allusion to the sun’s so-called night-sea journey: ‘Abendlich-nächtlich im Westen sterbend, muß sie [die Sonne] die Fahrt durch das Nacht-Meer des Dunkels der Unterwelt und des Todes bestehen, um, gewandelt und wiedergeboren, als neue Sonne im Osten aufzuerstehen’ (Neumann II, p. 106). This is also one of the myths which Joseph will one day read to Potiphar: ‘Joseph las die Unterweltsreise der Sonne mit großem Geschmack’ (V, 925).

The image of the setting, ‘dying’ sun and its underworld journey) *Josephs Reise* refers us to the archetypal journey of the hero, which is so familiar from countless fairy-tales and myths. The prince who leaves his father’s kingdom in search of some golden treasure, the journey of the Argonauts, Jonah and the whale or the quest of the Arthurian knights—they are all related to this myth:

Diese Sonnensymbolik ist das archetypische Vorbild jedes Helden und auch jedes Einweihungsweges, in welchem der Held das zu erreichende Bewußtseinsprinzip vertritt, daß sich im Kampf gegen die Dunkelmächte des Unbewußten zu bewähren hat. Darüber hinaus aber hat der Held den Schatz neuer Inhalte und neuer Lebendigkeit aus der Nachtwelt des Unbewußten im Kampf mit den bewußtseinsfeindlichen Mächten zu befreien, wobei er gewandelt und »neugeboren« aus dieser lebensgefährlichen Auseinandersetzung hervorgeht. [...] In dieser Einweihung wird der Eingeweihte zum Osiris wie der ägyptische König, der in seiner »Osifizierung« ebenfalls der Repräsentant einer

solchen Einweihung ist. (Neumann II, p. 106-7)

This is Joseph's journey, too. His adoption of the name 'Usarsiph' on his entry into Egypt is his form of 'Osirification'. What makes his act so remarkable is the fact that he adopts this name consciously and apparently fully aware of its implications and allusions. He overlooks, however, that Osiris was killed twice by his brother Set.

Joseph's 'death' is clearly patterned on that of Osiris: when his brothers attack him we are told 'sie stellten sich an, als wollten sie ihn in mindestens vierzehn Stücke zerreißen' (IV, 555), that is, like Osiris, who was torn into fourteen pieces. The seventy-two hours Joseph spends inside the well form a numerical parallel to the seventy-two betrayers of Osiris. Joseph is obviously aware of these allusions and therefore, when he learns from the old Ishmaelite that Egypt is to be the destination of their journey, the image of the underworld offers itself as a further allusion to the Osiris-myth:

Joseph senkte den Kopf. Er hatte erfahren, daß er unterwegs ins Totenreich war; denn die Gewohnheit, Ägypten als Unterweltsland und seine Bewohner als Scheolsleute zu betrachten, war mit ihm geboren, und nie hatte er's anders gehört, besonders von Jaakob. (IV, 685)

In Egyptian mythology Osiris was the god of the underworld, but in the final stage of his development he became also amalgamated with Re, the sun-god: 'Re becomes Osiris and Osiris becomes Re. The underworld god is the past form of the sun god out of whom the sun is born again.'⁵⁷ Yet although Joseph recognizes the parallels, the pattern and the myth, he is not yet conscious of all the implications and not able to interpret what these portend to him. He is aware of the solar myth and the sun's night-sea journey that underlies it all. This is evident from his conversations with the old Ishmaelite and his reference to him as frog

⁵⁷ George Hart, *Egyptian Myths* (London: British Museum Publications, 1990), p. 61.

and Hecate: '»Genau einer hockenden Kröte gleich erscheinst du mir unter den Sternen. Denn du warst Heket, die Große Hebamme, da mich der Brunnen gebar, und hobst mich aus der Mutter«' (IV, 690). In Egyptian mythology Hecate is one of the midwives who assists every morning at the birth of the sun. The old Ishmaelite, however, rejects Joseph's rather presumptuous allusion: '»Ach, Schwätzer du! Das ist keine große Amme, die dir ans Licht half. Heket, die Fröschin, heißt groß, weil sie Helferin war bei des Zerrissenen zweiter Geburt und Wiedererstehung«' (IV, 690). Joseph in his youthful, cheerful conceit fails to register the myth in its whole dimension and all its implications. He merely seizes on the idea of death's transformative power and this is what he tries to indicate by adopting the name 'Usarsiph'. He has not heard the words which the guardian of the empty well planted as a germ in Ruben's mind when he returned to rescue Joseph:

»Ich sah einen Jüngling ins Grab steigen in Kranz und Feierkleid [...]. Danach, wie er emporstieg, war er göttlich und hatte das Leben gewonnen — wenigstens auf einige Zeit, dann mußte er wieder zu Grabe gehen, denn das Leben des Menschen läuft mehrmals um und bringt wieder Grab und Geburt: Mehrmals muß er werden, bis er geworden ist.« (IV, 621)

Yet it is precisely Hecate who will assist at Joseph's second 'birth'. Mut-em-enet in her deepest degradation will be her human representative. What is more, in the chapter *Die Hündin*, the lunar triple goddess appears herself, accepting the sacrifice, which contains among other ingredients Joseph's hair, a traditional symbol of spiritual forces.⁵⁸

After the crossing of the desert, when Joseph and the caravan arrive at the border of Egypt, at the fort of Zel, the sun is once again setting, reinforcing the image of the underworld that is constantly evoked in these chapters: 'das Totenreich selbst hatte seinen Eingang "gegen

⁵⁸ J. E. Cirlot, *A Dictionary of Symbols*, trans. by Jack Sage, 2nd edn, (London: Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1983), p.134.

Sonnenuntergang in der Wüste” (Berger, p. 122, note 122). The setting sun comes to symbolize Joseph during his night-sea crossing. This journey through the underworld takes him thirteen years and it takes up the whole of the volume *Joseph in Ägypten* and the first section of *Joseph der Ernährer*. The trials he has to pass during this time are to withstand Mut-em-enet’s attempts to seduce him, which means retaining his consciousness and not yielding to the overpowering forces of the unconscious, particularly to his own sexuality, however great the bliss promised by them.

The novel demonstrates through Joseph that a rational and enlightened attitude alone—which he adopts towards Mut, and which ignores the existence of the unconscious part of himself—is inadequate to deal with these forces. While Joseph’s identity is still firmly centred in his own ego-consciousness, he is unable to resist the flattering experience of Mut’s rapture, in which he perceives his own reflection and in which he glories in the most narcissistic manner. More and more deeply does he get involved with her, and like the sun he has to journey to the darkest point of the night. Yet this nadir is also the turning point. When his body is already succumbing, his spirit, however humbled and humiliated, triumphs and makes him turn away. At this moment he begins to transcend the limitations of his own ego-consciousness and its isolation.

Henceforth the sun begins its journey upwards again until it emerges newly out of the sea, rising in the east. Again it is Joseph himself who sees this parallel and points it out to Cha’ma’t, his guard on his journey into the prison of Zawi-Rê:

»Aber ist denn das Hinabgehen ohne Ehre und Feierlichkeit, und kommt dir dies Ochsenboot nicht vor wie Usirs Barke, wenn er niederfährt, den Unteren Schafstall zu erleuchten und die Bewohner der Höhlen zu grüßen auf seiner nächtlichen Fahrt? Mir

kommt es auffallend so vor, das wisse! Wenn du meinst, ich scheide vom Land der Lebendigen, so magst du recht haben. Aber wer sagt, daß meine Nase nicht das Lebenskraut riechen wird und ich nicht morgen über den Weltenrand steigen werde?« (V, 1301)

For Joseph this moment will come when he is taken to Pharaoh. This will be the moment of his rebirth and therefore also the time when he sheds his name of death. Hence also the importance of the number thirteen, which in cabbalistic writing is the number of death and rebirth (Cirlot, p. 234). Joseph spends altogether thirteen years in the underworld: seven years mark his time of growth in Potiphar's house, followed by three years of crucial testing there; the last three years he spends in prison, yet at this time his final transformation is almost completed.

Joseph's journey with the Ishmaelites was a westward journey, taking him from Dotan, where the merchants found him inside the well, to the fortress of Zel, which is the 'gate' to Egypt. Throughout this journey only the setting sun is mentioned; we never see the blazing sunlight, not even during the crossing of the desert. The journey, we are told, took six months, from the time of the summer solstice to the caravan's entry into Egypt at the time of the winter solstice: 'denn dermaßen saumselig war die Reise der Ismaeliter gewesen hier herab, daß, seitdem Joseph in die Grube gefahren, um Sommersonnenwende, ein halber Jahreslauf hingegangen war' (IV, 729). The narrative section which opens with Joseph's entry into Egypt has the title *Der Eintritt in Scheol*, confirming once more the symbolism of the night-sea crossing upon which Joseph is about to embark.

b) Atum-Re, Amun-Re, and the Concept of Trinity

Inside Egypt the caravan travels in the blazing sunlight. They stop for a while in the ancient city of On, which the novel describes as a golden triangular city placed in the triangle of the Nile delta. It is dedicated to the worship of Atum. It is here that Joseph encounters for the first time the Egyptian sun-god Atum-Rê-Horachte. The priests of On explain at great length and with corresponding patience the characteristics of this older god, who in contrast to his ambitious younger competitor Amun is liberal, tolerant and open-minded. At the time of Joseph's arrival in On, the priests there have just pronounced the dogma of 'living repetition'. The idea underlying this dogma expresses something closely akin to Joseph's blessing and eventual development. It also echoes the concept of time, the *nunc stans*, and development as it was put to us in *Höllenfahrt*:

So hatten, gerade um die Zeit, als Joseph nach Ägypten kam, die Priester von On, der Stadt Atum-Rê-Horachte's, des Sonnenherrn, das Verhältnis ihres heiligen Stieres Merwer zu dem Horizontbewohner dogmatisch als ›lebende Wiederholung‹ bestimmt, — eine Formel, in der die Gedanken des Nebeneinander und der Einheit gleichermaßen zu ihrem Rechte kamen, weshalb sie auch ganz Ägypten lebhaft beschäftigte und selbst bei Hofe großen Eindruck gemacht hatte. (IV, 731)

The theme which centres on Joseph's blessing appears here in a guise foreign to Joseph and the readers: it is the concept of two separate entities coming together and forming a unity while still maintaining their separate identities. Eventually we will witness the same development in Joseph's consciousness and personality: not only does he strike a perfect balance between unconscious and conscious forces, with neither force being in a dominant or suppressed position, but he also unites them in his own centre, that is, his Self: 'Osiris and Re embrace one an-

other to become the “Twin Souls”.⁵⁹

More importantly at this point, however, the priests also explain the difference between their sun-god Atum-Rê and his powerful opponent Amun-Rê, who becomes Joseph’s chief opponent in the third part of the tetralogy. Unlike Atum-Rê, Amun’s linkage with Rê, the sun, did not take place in the spirit of tolerance and reconciliation, uniting two separate entities, but was like a conquest and devouring act. The priests explain:

Amun, der Rinderreiche, zum Beispiel, zu Theben in Oberägypten, habe sich durch seine Propheten dem Rê gleichsetzen lassen und wolle nun Amun-Rê genannt sein in seiner Kapelle — gut, aber es geschehe nicht im Geiste des Dreiecks und der Versöhnung, es geschehe vielmehr in dem Sinn, als ob Amun den Rê besiegt und verzehrt und sich einverleibt habe, als ob Rê, sozusagen, ihm seinen Namen habe nennen müssen. (IV, 736)

This motif of revealing one’s name and thus delivering oneself into the hands of one’s opponent is important in the first part of the Egyptian volumes. It recurs in Joseph’s dream of the sphinx, who tries to lure him with the words: ‘Tu dich zu mir und nenne mir deinen Namen’ (IV, 746); and crucially again when Mut-em-enet asks him to reveal his name to her (V, 1175). Amun-Rê is here presented as a destructive force, light-devouring rather than enlightened. The characters in the novel who are linked to him, Mut-em-enet, Dûdu and Becknechons, reflect these characteristics. They will be considered separately in Chapter Three.

Atum-Rê, on the other hand, who dominates the novel’s last volume, bears considerable resemblance to Joseph’s God. Thus both are linked to the setting sun. The old Ishmaelite mentions this in his farewell blessing to Joseph: ‘Dein Gott Adôn, welcher, soviel ich weiß,

⁵⁹ George Hart, *Egyptian Gods and Goddesses* (London and New York: Routledge, 1990), p. 158 (= Hart, *Gods*).

der untergehenden Sonne gleichkommt, behüte und bewahre deine Schritte, daß sie nicht straucheln' (IV, 815). It is again mentioned by Potiphar when he sits in judgment over Joseph (V, 1273). Of Atum-Rê we are told that he is 'Chepre am Morgen [...], Rê an seinem Mittag und Atum am Abend, der die Augen öffnet, und es entsteht das Licht, der die Augen schließt, und es entsteht das Dunkel' (IV, 732). In this way Atum-Rê reconciles and comprises the idea of trinity, but also of monotheism. This forms a link not only to Joseph's God, but also points forward to the future development in Christianity.

The allusions to Osiris and Atum-Rê, which combine the sun's night-sea journey and the bark of Osiris until the moment of rebirth, are also an early anticipation of the *hieros gamos* motif mentioned earlier; they reflect the fulfilment and particular condition of Joseph's soul, 'seiner intelligenten und träumerischen Seele, in welcher sozusagen, wie das vorkommt, Sonne und Mond zugleich am Himmel stehen' (IV, 817). The simultaneous visibility of sun and moon is a phenomenon which stands symbolically for the union of opposites and the overcoming of darkness. The Jewish Midrash relates how at the beginning of creation sun and moon were of equal size. The moon, being dissatisfied with this situation, pointed out to God that of all the pairs of opposites one was always dominant:

Siehe, du schufest zwei Welten, ein Jenseits und ein Diesseits; das Jenseits ist groß, das Diesseits ist klein; du schufst einen Himmel und schufst eine Erde; der Himmel ist größer als die Erde; du schufst das Feuer und schufst das Wasser, und das Wasser verlöscht das Feuer. Nun schufst du Sonne und Mond; muß da nicht das eine größer sein, als das andere?⁶⁰

God recognizes, of course, what treacherous thoughts underlie the moon's seemingly innocent question, and as a punishment the moon is

⁶⁰ Micha Josef bin Gorion, *Sagen der Juden*, trans. by Rahel bin Gorion (Frankfurt am Main: Insel, 1980), p.15.

reduced in size. Yet together with this severe punishment God also makes a promise for the future: 'Dereinst wirst du wieder wie die Sonne groß sein; ›und des Mondes Schein wird sein wie der Sonne Schein‹' (Gorion, p. 15). This collection of Jewish myths was one of the sources used by Mann for the *Joseph* tetralogy. The promise made here by God to the moon seems to find at least symbolic fulfilment in the novel, through Joseph when he begins to live his blessing.

ii) DARKNESS AND LIGHT

The promise this anecdote about predominance carries is that of Joseph's blessing. The corresponding motifs are those of darkness and light. They, too, form an opposition which can only be resolved in the concept of *hieros gamos*, which is

the union of heaven and earth, sun and moon, gold and silver, sulphur and mercury; and—according to Jung—they also signify the spiritual 'conjunction' that takes place when the process of individuation is complete, with the harmonious union of the unconscious and consciousness. (Cirlot, p. 168)

The second pair of opposites, darkness and light, was first introduced in the *Roman der Seele*. There we were told that the essence of humankind was 'ein Jünglingswesen aus reinem Licht, geschaffen vor Weltbeginn als Urbild und Inbegriff der Menschheit' (IV, 39). In polarity to this figure of light we find matter and the 'Finsternis der irdisch-leiblichen Existenz' (IV, 39). It is the function of *Geist*, 'ihn [den Lichtmenschen] aus der Verstrickung ins Finstere wieder zu befreien und heimzuführen' (IV, 40). *Geist* is here the pure representative of light, as matter is of darkness. The 'fallen' soul, however, partakes of both of

them and is caught between the two. In the novel this theme is touched upon continually through the motif of light and darkness.

1. The Dialectic of Darkness

Darkness in the novel falls into two categories. In its positive sense, it stands for the darkness of the womb and fertility in general. It is the representative of 'Mother Earth'. Linked to this aspect are the motifs of the buried harvest-god Tammuz or, indeed, of the torn Osiris, in his role as lord and superior judge of the underworld. The underworld, like everything else in the novel, also has two distinctive sides: it provides gold and fertility, but it also brings death and chaos: 'Es war der Ort des Kotes und der Exkreme, aber auch des Geldes und Reichtums; der Schoß, in den man das Samenkorn bettete und aus dem es als nährendes Getreide emporsproßte, das Land des Schwarzmundes, des Winters und verkohlten Sommers' (IV, 93-4). Reluctantly and full of spiritual qualms, Jaakob will eventually move to the underworld, 'das Land der Schwärze', to ensure the survival of his family and tribe, to keep them from starvation. He knows that sacrifices will be demanded and that unknown dangers lurk in the underworld. The underworld has its price and Charon demands his obol for conveying his passengers in his boat across the Styx to Hades. The darkness of matter represents fertility and nourishment, but also chaos. When Joseph tells Pharaoh the story of Adam and Eve and how deeply frightened they were when the first night fell, he explains the meaning of light and darkness: '»Denn es ist das Licht, das die Dinge sondert und ein jedes an seinen Ort stellt — Raum schafft es und Zeit, aber die Nacht bringt die Unordnung wieder

herbei, das Durcheinander und das Tohuwabohu«' (V, 1455). Darkness here somewhat evokes the image of Schopenhauer's *will*, 'bloßer blinder Drang zum Daseyn, ohne Zweck und Ziel' (WWV I, 209). It is an existence which is marked by a total lack of consciousness. For the human mind it means being helplessly exposed to the forces of nature. Neumann, in his book on the origin of consciousness, explains the separation of light and darkness as a crucial turning point in the development of virtually all human cultures. It is interesting that he makes his point using very similar terms to Joseph's above:

Vom Standpunkt der bewußtseinsgeordneten Licht- und Tageswelt aus ist das vor ihm Bestehende nur Dunkel, Nacht, Chaos und Tohu-Wawohu. Nicht nur die äußere, auch die innere Kulturentwicklung der Menschheit setzt mit dem Aufgehen des Lichts und der Trennung der Ureltern ein. Tag und Nacht, vorn und hinten, oben und unten, innen und außen, ich und du, männlich und weiblich werden in dieser Gegensatzentwicklung deutlich und differenzieren sich aus der ursprünglichen Vermischtheit, und auch die Gegensätze von heilig und profan, von gut und böse, bekommen jetzt ihren Weltort.⁶¹

Yet the intrusion of light does not always create clarity. The novel depicts some characters who have heard the message of light and yet are unable to understand it properly. They are chthonic figures from Bachofen's matriarchal world of darkness. Consequently, for them light is not the separating power; instead it throws them into confusion. The most obvious examples here are Laban and above all Huij and Tuij.

Huij and Tuij, who are brother and sister, are the parents of Potiphar. They were born in a time when, based on the mythological precedent of Isis and Osiris, a marriage between brother and sister, particularly twins, was not only socially acceptable but almost sacred. Unfortunately, however, they also witnessed during their life-time the end of an aeon and it became one of their primary concerns in life to be recon-

⁶¹ Erich Neumann, *Ursprungsgeschichte des Bewußtseins* (Munich: Kindler, 1980), pp. 95-6 (= Neumann I).

ciled to the new era and its 'spirit'. As Huij explains to his wife, 'Der Skrupel oberster, das ist die Sorge um den Äon und die Tagesordnung und um das versöhnende Zugeständnis' (IV, 868). Their sacrifice to the light is, however, not guided by the illumination of the spirit but belongs to darkness. Like Laban, who sacrificed his new-born son to ensure a blessing on his house, they also sacrifice their baby son, Potiphar, by castrating him and dedicating him to the service of Pharaoh, who as the incarnation of Re, the sun, is the representative of light. Their misguided act is marked by unthinking cruelty and blindness. Unlike Abraham they are unable to perceive that the demand for sacrifice can be understood other than literally. They cannot see the ram in the bushes, which will symbolically stand in for the son. Although they have perceived the beginning of a new era and even the opposition of light and darkness: 'herrlich ist das Licht, nämlich männlich, und verhaßt ist ihm das Gebrodel des Mutterdunkels' (IV, 866) Huij tells his sister-wife, the light has not penetrated the swamp of primeval darkness in which they exist.

Huij and Tuij live deeply embedded in Bachofen's matriarchal world. The diction of the chapter makes this quite explicit. Huij and Tuij address each other, for instance, as 'Dotterblümchen', 'Sumpfbiber', or 'Blindmäuschen'. Berger has shown that all of these words derive directly from Bachofen: 'In dem Romankapitel ist das ganze Ensemble von Bachofens Sumpfsymbolen versammelt' (p. 206). The whole chapter is filled with such references which function within the pattern of light and darkness.

2. Light and the Changing Concept of Sacredness

Huij and Tuij, as before them Laban, also stand as an example of the failure to keep up with new developments and insights. Joseph in his assessment of the conversation between them, which he has overheard, sees it all clearly:

Auch ihnen war Weisung geworden vom Vatergeist, in Gestalt eines unsicher umgehenden und selber noch gar sehr im Dunkelreich wesenden Seelengerüchtes, daß es hinauswolle mit uns übers Alt-Heilige und über Brauch und Stufe ins Lichtere, und sie hatten die Opfer-Zumutung vernommen. Aber wie sehr, wie labansmäßig waren sie im Alten verharret, gerade indem sie dem Weltneuen ein Zugeständnis zu machen versuchten! (IV, 875)

They cannot keep up with the religious evolution; it is beyond their grasp. The amalgamation of Osiris and Re, which is the embrace between darkness and light, is thematically related to God's development as it was explained to the reader in *Die Geschichten Jaakobs*. There we were told about the wild desert god Jahu, 'ein schwer zu behandelnder Kobold mit mehr dämonischen als göttlichen Zügen, tückisch, tyrannisch und unberechenbar', who gradually developed into Jahwe, 'das durch den Geist des Menschen nach Verwirklichung trachtende Gotteswesen' (IV, 131), a development which again points forward to greater consciousness.

At the other end of the light-scale we find Pharaoh. In the chapter *Von Licht und Schwärze* we are told about Pharaoh's deeply problematic relationship to the fertile and nourishing realm of darkness. Thus it causes him sickness and nausea when he has to wear a jackal's tail as part of his ceremonial costume, 'dies tierische Attribut, das aus irgendwelchen vergessenen, aber im Dunkel aufbewahrten und heiliggehaltenen Ur-Gründen zum allerstrengsten Ornat des Königs gehörte' (V, 1375). Nobody remembers the reason for this animal attribute which

causes the young Pharaoh such revulsion and which seems to be a last reminder of mankind's dark origins. Pharaoh, the son of Re, is dedicated to the light and his interests are almost entirely spiritual. This makes his relationship to his people, who expect him to care for their nourishment and welfare, problematic, and he is aware of it: 'Er hatte kein Verhältnis zur unteren Schwärze, sondern liebte einzig das obere Licht. Ging's aber nicht glatt und gut mit der nahrhaften Schwärze, so war's um seine Autorität geschehen als Lehrer des Lichtes' (V, 1385). His religious and spiritual devotion also results in a considerable lack of vitality and further increases the distance between the king and his people. Nevertheless, due to his intelligence and awareness, Pharaoh immediately senses the importance of his two dreams, and even before they have been correctly interpreted, he realizes their implication and also where they come from: 'Dem Lichte drohte Gefahr von Seiten der Schwärze, dem Geistig-Gewichtlosen drohte solche vom Stofflichen her, das stand über allem Zweifel' (V, 1392).

Light represents truth and *Geist*, order versus chaos. Metaphors of light and darkness play an important part in the theme of religious evolution, which is often expressed in the motif of changing sacrifice, or of formerly-sacred customs becoming profane and even despised. It is a theme which is constantly touched upon in the novel. For instance, old customs like burying Pharaoh together with his widow and his entire court are suddenly no longer observed:

Offenbar paßte sie [die Sitte] nicht mehr in das Licht des Tages, nenne man diesen nun spät oder früh, — und das ist sehr merkwürdig. Viele mögen in dem Alt-Schönen selbst, dem Lebendigit-Einmauern, das Merkwürdige sehen. Allein viel merkwürdiger ist, daß es eines Tages nach allgemeiner, stillschweigender und sogar gedankenloser Übereinkunft schlechthin nicht mehr in Betracht kam. — (V, 1363)

The line separating sacred ritual and barbaric custom appears to be a very fine one, and it is constantly modified by the spirit, which is ‘das Licht des Tages’. It is the spirit that defines ethical values and forces them upon our consciousness. The two opposites of light and darkness represent the virtues and shortcomings of both spirit and matter. Yet, by contrasting such figures as Huij and Tuij on the one hand and Pharaoh on the other, the novel makes it quite clear that something truly benevolent and positive can result only from their interplay.⁶² This we will eventually observe in Joseph’s development, where both the upper world and the underworld find acknowledgement. Like the moon as mediator between sun and earth, it shows how an interplay between the two is possible.

Metaphors of light and darkness pervade the novel. They are again particularly in evidence in the conversation between Potiphar and Mut-em-enet, where they serve similar functions as in the examples of Huij and Tuij and Pharaoh. Yet in Mut, unlike Huij and Tuij, darkness expresses something closely akin to the sacred, for she falls prey to ‘das tiefe, dunkle und schweigende Gewissen des Fleisches’ (V, 1087).

The metaphors are not always as weighty as the examples above may suggest. Often they are used loosely, almost flippantly. For instance Mut finds it painful to deceive Joseph: ‘Es hatte sie geschmerzt, das wissen wir wohl, ihn hinters Licht zu führen’ (V, 1216). The treacherous dwarf Dûdu goes to Potiphar, ‘um ihm ein Licht aufzustecken’ (V, 1181). The narrator at times even seems to mock the motif. Thus when he talks about the mistaken Egyptian scientific theory about the flooding of the Nile, he expresses regret, ‘daß niemand von uns damals zur Stelle war, um das Dunkel ihres Geistes zu lichten und ihnen [...] er-

⁶² This evokes Hermann Kurzke’s analysis of the tetralogy (Kurzke II) when he comments: ‘Die vital schwache Aufklärung wird mit dem Mark des Mythos gekräftigt’ (p. 253).

leuchtete Auskunft zu geben' (V, 1577-78). Yet even in these examples light and darkness basically represent always the same pair of opposites, be it spirit and matter, awareness and unawareness, or consciousness and the unconscious. And while the tetralogy often demonstrates them as separate forces and emphasizes the need for such separation, because only thus can differentiation be achieved, it also emphasizes the ultimate importance of a constant interplay between the two.

iii) *GEIST AND SEELE*

In the *Roman der Seele* we were told that humankind was the result of the soul's 'fall', 'die Menschen, welche unter Gottes eigener schöpferischer Beihilfe aus der Erkenntnis der Materie durch die Seele entstanden waren' (IV, 45). 'Erkenntnis' is the knowledge after which the soul passionately strives—no matter at what cost or pain. The knowledge sought after and found by the soul is different from that which the spirit tries to convey: it is firmly rooted in life. The task of the spirit is to guide the soul on its dangerous journey, and foremost, to persuade it to return to its origins:

Seine [des Geistes] Sendung besteht darin, der selbstvergessen in Form und Tod verstrickten Seele das Gedächtnis ihrer höheren Herkunft zu wecken; sie zu überzeugen, daß es ein Fehler war, sich mit der Materie einzulassen und so die Welt hervorzurufen; endlich ihr das Heimweh bis zu dem Grade zu verstärken, daß sie sich eines Tages völlig aus Weh und Wollust löst und nach Hause schwebt — womit ohne weiteres das Ende der Welt erreicht, der Materie ihre alte Freiheit zurückgegeben und der Tod aus der Welt geschafft wäre. (IV, 43)

The spirit is free, Joseph says to Pharaoh (V, 1422). Although it is bound

by its task, unlike the soul, it is not entangled and bound by the patterns of depth and darkness, by any involvement with matter. Its task, however, contains a paradox which proves problematic. On the one hand it is to remove death from the world by returning the soul to its origins. To this extent it is the principle of life, reversing the 'fall' and bringing the fruit from the tree of life. On the other hand, however, it cannot escape the dialectic of this world of forms. Thus the spirit becomes itself 'das tödliche Prinzip' (IV, 43) and this poses a problem: 'Es unterliegt keinem Zweifel, daß seine Rolle als Vernichter und Totengräber der Welt den Geist auf die Länge des Spieles schwer zu genieren beginnt' (IV, 43). The soul, which created life through its fall and is devoted to it, therefore accuses the spirit of being the principle of death, an accusation which the spirit returns by pointing out that death only came into existence through its 'fall'. The narrator, reflecting on the dilemma, comments:

Wo hier das Leben ist und wo der Tod, bleibt strittig; denn beide Teile, die naturverflochtene Seele und der außerweltliche Geist, das Prinzip der Vergangenheit und das der Zukunft, nehmen, jedes nach seinem Sinn, in Anspruch, das Wasser des Lebens zu sein, und jedes beschuldigt das andere, es mit dem Tod zu halten: keiner mit Unrecht, da Natur ohne Geist sowohl als Geist ohne Natur wohl schwerlich Leben genannt werden kann. (IV, 48)

Searching for an answer to this inherent dilemma, the narrator goes on to tell us that God's hope lies perhaps in a union of the two,

nämlich in dem echten Eingehen des Geistes in die Welt der Seele, in der wechselseitigen Durchdringung der beiden Prinzipien und der Heiligung des einen durch das andere zur Gegenwart eine Menschentums, das gesegnet wäre mit Segen oben vom Himmel herab und mit Segen von der Tiefe, die unten liegt. (IV, 48-9)

Such are the narrator's reflections at the end of the *Roman der Seele*. They contain the first allusion not only to Joseph's particular blessing,

but also to the novel's conciliatory approach, which aims at the *hieros gamos*, and not the overpowering of one principle by another.

1. Geist and the Tree of Life

In one of the early chapters of the novel Joseph explains to Jaakob the specifics and significance of his own horoscope. He tells him that the sun in its zenith signifies the paternal blessing in his chart: 'Denn meines Vaters Segen, das war die Geburtssonne im Zenit' (IV, 109). This male element is, however, balanced by an equally powerful maternal blessing: 'Aber es erkenne mein Herr, wie mächtig auch der mütterliche war und der Mondsegen, an den starken Stellungen von Sin und Ishtar!' (IV, 110). To illustrate the difference between these two aspects, and the meaning of each, he reminds Jaakob of the two different trees that stood in the garden of Eden and what each of them signified:

»Weiß nicht mein Herr von den zwei Bäumen im Garten der Welt? Von dem einen kommt her das Öl, womit man die Könige der Erde salbt, auf daß sie leben. Von dem anderen kommt her die Feige, grün und rosig und voll süßer Granatkerne, und wer davon ißt, der wird des Todes sterben.« (IV, 111)

Joseph elaborates further. First he explains what the tree of life symbolizes and from our reading of *Höllenfahrt* it becomes quite clear that it belongs to the *Geist* pole:

»Öl und Wein sind der Sonne heilig, und wohl dem, dessen Stirn vom Öle trieft und dessen Augen trunken schimmern vom roten Wein! Denn seine Worte werden helle sein und ein Lachen und Trost den Völkern, und wird ihnen ersehen den Widder in der Hecke zum Opfer für den Herrn statt der Erstgeburt, so daß sie genesen von Qual und Angst.« (IV, 111)

Again we can perceive the motif of sacrifice and the issue of sacred ritual and barbaric custom. Joseph's words imply a process of evolution

which is the result of reason and growing consciousness, that is, of the independent function of the spirit. This induces human self-awareness and provides the strongest separation between humanity and the animal kingdom. While maintaining the important symbolic function of sacred ritual, its task and achievement are to make it increasingly humane.

Geist is the principle of restlessness, of continuous questioning and the search for new answers. We are told that it is God's instrument for self-realization, 'das durch den Geist des Menschen nach Verwirklichung trachtende Gotteswesen' (IV, 131). The spirit, in its constant attempt to convey truth, is the warning voice of admonition. Sin and the awareness of sin are products of the spirit. When Joseph considers his seven reasons for not yielding to Mut-em-enet, the narrator reflects on this link between sin and spirit: 'Muß man sich aber nicht auf die Sünde verstehen, um sündigen zu können? Zum Sündigen gehört Geist; ja, recht betrachtet, ist aller Geist nichts anderes als Sinn für die Sünde' (V, 1142). He repeats this idea again in connection with Juda. The difference between Joseph and Juda, however, is that Joseph with his awareness of sinning can, however narrowly, avoid it. Juda, on the other hand, is a sinner and he is conscious of it. This induces a strong feeling of guilt in him: 'Denn Schuld schafft Geist — und schon umgekehrt: ohne Geist gibt es gar keine Schuld' (V, 1678). We have seen that it is Joseph's *Geist* which prevents at the last moment his seduction by Mut, in bringing forth the image of the father. In Juda other forces are stronger and he seems to confirm the narrator's general observation: 'Die Wahrheit jedoch, bitter wie sie sei, verlangt das Eingeständnis, daß alles Geistig-Gedankliche nur schlecht, nur mühsam und kaum je auf die Dauer aufkommt gegen das Ewig-Natürliche' (V, 1087). This is the conflict which Juda is unable to resolve. It is the conflict between the spirit

and the ‘fallen’ self-indulgent soul.

2. The Soul, the Tree of Knowledge, and the Well

The soul and its ‘fall’ are linked to the second tree, the significance of which Joseph also explains to Jaakob:

»Aber die süße Feigenfrucht ist dem Monde heilig, und wohl ihm, den das Mütterchen speist aus der Nacht mit ihrem Fleische. Denn er wird wachsen wie an einer Quelle und seine Seele Wurzeln haben, woher die Quellen kommen, und wird sein Wort leibhaftig sein und lustig wie der Erdenleib, und bei ihm wird sein der Geist der Weissagung ...« (IV, 111-12)

The fig-tree belongs to the realm of the soul, which has its roots in the world of the unconscious. Its promise is a knowledge that goes beyond that of the spirit and appears to be outside rational deduction and reasoning. The text indicates this by giving ‘the spirit of prophecy’ as an example and leaving the paragraph open-ended. Eating the fruit of the fig-tree gives knowledge which transcends reason, like the art of prophecy: if the future can be foreseen, it follows that it is predetermined. This, however, is a concept which defeats reason, because it eliminates freedom of choice and with it responsibility for our actions. The knowledge of the fig-tree is further the knowledge of experience, particularly that of emotion and feeling, much of which gets buried in the unconscious—collective or individual.

Joseph talks about the roots of the soul. These roots, like the roots of a tree (which is an important simile in the tetralogy) are buried in mud and darkness and cannot be seen. Joseph uses this simile to defend the continuation of ancient ritual and customs about which Jaakob has grown doubtful: ‘Seine Wipfel regen sich funkelnd im Win-

de, da seine Wurzeln im Stein und Staube haften des Erdreichs, tief im Dunkeln. Weiß wohl auch der heitere Wipfel viel von der kotigen Wurzel?' (IV, 475). These roots are simultaneously a reference to the origins of human life and consciousness, but also to the nourishing source of life. They are further an allusion to the binding patterns of darkness. For instance, when Ishmael suggests patricide to Esau, the latter first tries to dismiss this as 'wurzellooses Gefasel' (IV, 215), although deep down he knows, 'daß das sehr wohl ein Vorschlag mit Wurzeln war' (IV, 215).

While *Geist* is the saviour and ultimately the protector, the soul is the nourisher and mother of life, that is, life as we know it—the world of phenomena, which came into existence through the soul's fall. The fig-tree, or tree of knowledge, is the tree of the soul, because the eating of its fatal fruit marks the beginning of the soul's journey and adventure into matter and life. It is thus a symbol of the beginning of human life. The journey into knowledge, both spiritual and sexual, is a dimly-lit journey which, like Gilgamesh's journey in search of eternal life, leads from utter darkness into the light, that is, towards understanding. In the novel, significantly, both the tree of life and the tree of knowledge are among the mythological motifs embroidered onto Rahel's *Ketônet*, which eventually becomes Joseph's coat of many colours.

Another symbol that marks the journey into the 'underworld' in the novel and is closely linked to the soul is the well. As we have seen, the novel opens with this motif, when, together with the narrator, we embark on our journey into time. Jaakob is worried when he sees Joseph sitting at the well, because for him it symbolizes the entrance into *scheol*. The well marked also Jaakob's entry into the underworld—his first meeting with Rahel, 'seiner befreiten Ishtar' (IV, 159) together

with whom he eventually broke ‘die Riegel der Unterwelt’ (IV, 159). How central a role the well plays in the life of Jaakob’s tribe is shrewdly picked up and pointed out by the old Ishmaelite, after he has listened to Juda for a while: ‘Wenn ich dir lausche und höre dich künden von eurem Geschlecht und seinen Geschichten, so scheint mir, daß in diesen der Brunnen eine ebenso denkwürdige und hervorstechende Rolle spielt wie die Erfahrung im Ziehen und Wandern’ (IV, 605).

The well is an important symbol in Joseph’s journey, too. Twice he has to pass through this entrance of the underworld—once literally and once symbolically. When we first see the seventeen-year-old Joseph, sitting at his father’s well, we are told that the steps leading up to it are broken ‘schadhaft’ (IV, 62). The same image recurs when his brothers drag him to the dry well, the empty pit, ‘wo hinab einige steile und schadhafte Stufen führten’ (IV, 565). Broken steps can suggest a well-worn path, but also the opposite: they have gone into decline, because they are not used and consequently not looked after. In both cases, however, they symbolize the path that leads to the depths and the unknown. The steps that lead to Joseph’s pit provide a further difficulty, because the shoots of young fig-trees have established themselves in the cracks: ‘[die] schlechten, von Feigenschößlingen versperrten Stufen ins Brunnenhaus’ (IV, 616). In this inconspicuous way the fig-tree appears at the beginning of Joseph’s journey into the underworld and the unknown.

The novel’s use of pairs of opposites underlines and supports its theme of *Sein* and *Bedeutend* and of reconciliation in the spirit of Joseph’s blessing. Eventually the different symbols and motifs become united in the mediating figure of Joseph. Following his development, we see him move from intuitive, unconscious knowledge to intellectual

independence, which lacks insight, however. It is only in the final volume of the tetralogy, at first in his encounter with the baker and the butler in prison, and in its full dimension when he stands before Pharaoh, that he displays a different form of knowledge and consciousness: wisdom. Jung, in his book *Mysterium Coniunctionis*, writes about wisdom:

Die Enttäuschung nun, als ein Schock für das Gefühl, ist nicht nur die Mutter der Bitterkeit, sondern auch die mächtigste Triebfeder der Gefühlsdifferenzierung. Das Versagen eines Lieblingsplanes, das der Erwartung nicht entsprechende Benehmen einer geliebten Person usw. bildet den Anstoß entweder zu einem mehr oder weniger brutalen Affektausbruch oder zu einer Modifikation und Anpassung des Gefühls und damit zu einer höheren Entwicklung desselben. Diese gipfelt in der Weisheit und zwar dann, wenn sich zum Gefühl auch die Nachdenklichkeit und die verstandesmäßige Erkenntnis gesellt. Weisheit ist nie gewalttätig und darum tut in ihr das eine dem anderen auch keine Gewalt an. (GW 14, 328)

In this description of the gradual development of wisdom, particularly its causes, we can recognize Joseph's development easily enough. At the same time, Jung's description of wisdom, where there is no conflict between thinking and feeling, evokes Joseph's particular blessing 'from above and below'. Joseph has to experience considerable failure and disappointment before he achieves wisdom. The novel does not use the term wisdom, but uses instead a word deriving from the same etymological source: *Witz*. The narrator explains the qualities of wit to us:

Sinn für den Tod allein schafft Starre und Düsternis; Sinn für das Leben allein schafft platte Gewöhnlichkeit, die auch keinen Witz hat. Witz eben und Sympathie entstehen nur da, wo Frömmigkeit zum Tod getönt und durchwärmt ist von Freundlichkeit zum Leben, diese aber vertieft und aufgewertet von jener. So war Josephs Fall; so waren sein Witz und seine Freundlichkeit. Der doppelte Segen, mit dem er gesegnet war, von oben herab und von der Tiefe, die unten liegt. (V, 1508)

Joseph has the disposition of the artist—not the artist we know from Mann’s early work, who lives in conflict with himself and his environment, but the artist we find alluded to at the end of *Tonio Kröger*. He has become reconciled to his social environment and uses his individuality as a means of conscious integration. He perceives it no longer as a painful separating force. This enables him to act as a mediator, for it is the gift of the artist and genius to have direct access to the rich resources and images of the unconscious.⁶³ It is the particular achievement of the artist to modulate them in such a way that they become accessible to others. Jung formulated this mediating and compensatory function of the artist clearly:

Darin liegt die soziale Bedeutsamkeit der Kunst: sie arbeitet stets an der Erziehung des Zeitgeistes, denn sie führt jene Gestalten herauf, die dem Zeitgeist am meisten mangelten. Aus der Unbefriedigung der Gegenwart zieht sich die Sehnsucht des Künstlers zurück, bis sie jenes Urbild im Unbewußten erreicht hat, welches geeignet ist, die Mangelhaftigkeit und Einseitigkeit des Zeitgeistes am wirksamsten zu kompensieren. Dieses Bild ergreift sie, und indem sie es aus tiefster Unbewußtheit emporzieht und dem Bewußtsein annähert, verändert es auch seine Gestalt, bis es vom Menschen der Gegenwart nach seinem Fassungsvermögen aufgenommen werden kann. (GW 13, 130)

This is the final achievement of Joseph, who finds fulfilment in his service to society, a service which is marked by wisdom and deep sympathy. Opposing forces become reconciled in the sacred union of *Geist* and *Seele*.

⁶³ Mann speaks about this particular aspect in *Freud und die Zukunft*, referring to Goethe and how his artistic development may influence the lives of other writers from the unconscious, ‘ich sage: aus dem Unbewußten, obgleich im Künstler das Unbewußte jeden Augenblick ins lächelnd Bewußte und kindlich-tief Aufmerksame hinüberspielt’ (IX, 499).

CHAPTER TWO: MOTIFS AND METAPHORS

(i) *DIE ROLLENDE SPHÄRE*

Dein Lied ist drehend wie das Sterngewölbe,
 Anfang und Ende immerfort dasselbe,
 Und, was die Mitte bringt, ist offenbar
 Das, was zu Ende bleibt und anfangs war.

Thomas Mann quotes these verses from Goethe's *West-östlicher Divan* in his *Schopenhauer* essay (IX, 557) to illustrate the *nunc stans*. One feels that they were perhaps also an important influence on the tetralogy's leitmotif—and concept—of the revolving sphere. It has been shown that Mann evolved the concept from two main sources, Alfred Jeremias's *Handbuch der Alt-Orientalischen Geisteskultur* and Julius Braun's *Naturgeschichte der Sage* (cf. Berger, pp. 42 and 45), which combined pan-Babylonian theories with something attempting to be a 'key to all mythologies'. Although both were highly controversial books, they allowed Mann to develop for his tetralogy a fitting concept of the world (Weltbild), which crystallized in the leitmotif and image of the revolving sphere. This leitmotif not only provided a perfect reflection of Joseph's blessing but also of his life; it is filled with allusions and evocative images. Erich Heller saw in the tetralogy a culmination and perfection in the use of the leitmotif:

Seit den Buddenbrooks hatte die literarische Methode des Leitmotivs im Werk Thomas Manns stetig an Bedeutung und Eloquenz zugenommen; erst in der *Joseph-Tetralogie* aber verschmilzt sie völlig mit der Idee, in deren Dienst sie steht: die Struktur des Romans spiegelt vollkommen die Struktur der Welt, die es nicht nur darstellt, sondern lächelnd lobt [...]. Was aber in der Welt ist, ist auch im Werk; weshalb denn das Leitmotiv erst hier seinen vollendeten Sinn erhält. (pp. 283-85)

The earliest direct allusion to this leitmotif occurs in the *Roman der Seele*. There we hear about the soul's descent, 'daß jenes aus dem

väterlichen Urgrunde hervorgegangene Licht-Menschenwesen durch die sieben Planetensphären herabgestiegen sei und von jedem der Sphärenherrscher Anteil an dessen Natur erhalten habe!' (IV, 39-40). This description alludes to Gnostic teachings and the theory of the origin of the seven deadly sins taught by the early Christians. It also contains a reference to the 'seven hells' to which Tammuz and Ishtar journeyed and thus to Joseph's own descent. The image of the sphere, and the circle, is perhaps the most ancient, certainly most elementary, of all symbols. It expresses wholeness and is found at the very beginning of human development. It is reflected in the sacred places of the Stone Age, prehistoric stone circles like Stonehenge, or in images and representations of the sun disc, the planets, the idea of the cosmic egg, the wheel of time, of fortune or of the zodiac. Schopenhauer uses the image of the endlessly-revolving sphere (or circle) to explain his concept of time:

Wir können die Zeit einem endlos drehenden Kreise vergleichen: die stets sinkende Hälfte wäre die Vergangenheit, die stets steigende die Zukunft; oben aber der untheilbare Punkt, der die Tangente berührt, wäre die ausdehnungslose Gegenwart: wie die Tangente nicht mit fortrollt, so auch nicht die Gegenwart, der Berührungspunkt des Objekts, dessen Form die Zeit ist, mit dem Subjekt, das keine Form hat, weil es nicht zum Erkennbaren gehört, sondern Bedingung alles Erkennbaren ist. (WWVI, 353)

1. Spheric and Linear Concepts

The leitmotif of the revolving sphere consists of a union of opposites. The complexity of the concept is first conveyed by the narrator, who goes to great length to explain its *mystery*:

Die Strecke hat kein Geheimnis. Das Geheimnis ist in der Sphäre. Diese aber besteht in Ergänzung und Entsprechung, sie ist ein doppelt Halbes, das sich zu Einem schließt, sie setzt sich zusammen aus einer oberen und einer unteren, einer himmlischen und einer irdischen Halbsphäre, welche einander auf eine Weise zum Ganzen entsprechen, daß, was oben ist, auch unten ist, was aber im Irdischen vorgehen mag, sich im Himmlischen wiederholt, dieses in jenem sich wiederfindet. Diese Wechselentsprechung nun zweier Hälften, die zusammen das Ganze bilden und sich zur Kugelrundheit schließen, kommt einem wirklichen Wechsel gleich, nämlich der Drehung. Die Sphäre rollt: das liegt in der Natur der Sphäre. Oben ist bald Unten, und Unten Oben, wenn man von Unten und Oben bei solcher Sachlage überall sprechen mag. Nicht allein daß Himmlisches und Irdisches sich ineinander wiedererkennen, sondern es wandelt sich auch, kraft der sphärischen Drehung, das Himmlische ins Irdische, das Irdische ins Himmlische, und daraus erhellt, daraus ergibt sich die Wahrheit, daß Götter Menschen, Menschen dagegen wieder Götter werden können. (IV, 189-90)

The meaning and mystery of the sphere is set against any linear concept. The cyclic alternation described in the passage above evokes the ancient Chinese emblem of *yang* and *yin*, symbol of the circular conjunction of male and female and all opposites, whereby each contains part of the other at its heart and centre.

The leitmotif of the revolving sphere and its circular concept are also used to symbolize different states of consciousness. In the section on the moon and lunar grammar we have seen how the world of Jaakob, its psychological structure, is dominated by matriarchal consciousness. Its thought-patterns are non-linear, and life is not experienced as progression. Consequently age and individuality are relative matters. Past, present, and future do not appear as a progressive series of events, but seem to be layers and parts which reciprocally relate to each other, which are 'Ergänzung und Entsprechung' (IV, 189). This is what Jaakob feels when, at Isaak's burial, old memories suddenly come alive again:

alle Geschichten standen vor ihm auf und wurden Gegenwart in seinem Geist, wie sie einst wieder Gegenwart geworden waren im Fleisch nach geprägtem Urbild, und ihm war, als wandelte er auf durchsichtigem Grunde, der aus unendlich vielen, ins Unergründliche hinabführenden Kristallschichten bestand, durchhellt von Lampen, die zwischen ihnen brannten. Er aber wandelte oben in seines Fleisches Geschichten, Jaakob der Gegenwärtige. (IV, 188)

This is the secret of the sphere. In Jaakob's world there is no clearly-outlined sense of time. 'History' is much more alive and vivid to these people than it could ever be to a modern mind. Past events, we are told, do not so much repeat themselves as become present again. The difference between a 'spheric' and a linear concept or understanding corresponds to the difference between 'lunar' and 'solar' grammar, between matriarchal and patriarchal consciousness. The concept of time is not that of a tunnel, or indeed a well, but of layers.⁶⁴

2. The Ouroboros

In *Timaeus* Plato describes the circular form of the sphere or globe as 'the most perfect and the most like itself of all figures'.⁶⁵ The concept of the sphere as circle, without beginning and without end, without above and below, without before and after, transcends the concepts of time

⁶⁴ Hohmeyer quite correctly describes the movement of time (and events) in the novel as a spiral: 'Im Leben der Romanfiguren durchdringen sich die Zeitformen der Wiederkehr und des geradlinigen Fortschritts. Die daraus entstehende Bewegung zu beschreiben, reicht die zweidimensionale Figur des Kreises nicht mehr aus. Addiert man aber zur Kreisbewegung eine senkrecht dazu verlaufende geradlinige Bewegung, so ergibt sich eine Spirale' (p. 118). Hohmeyer's simple equation of circle and sphere is, however, insufficient. The novel's leitmotif is the sphere, which, unlike the circle, is three-dimensional and thus can contain the spiral form and its union of circular and linear movements

⁶⁵ Plato, 'Timaeus', trans. by Benjamin Jowett, in *The Collected Dialogues of Plato Including the Letters*, ed. by Edith Hamilton and Huntington Cairns (New York: Bollingen, 1964), pp. 1151-1211 (p. 1164, 33b).

and space. Thus it marks the beginning and paradise, the state that preceded the fall of the soul in *Höllenfahrt*. In psychological terms this process would be described as a pre-conscious state, followed by the awakening of consciousness, which is equal to the intrusion of light. This initial state is a world of total oneness—a world in which *Sein* and *Bedeutung* have not yet been separated. Duality and separation only come into existence through consciousness: ‘All dies kann erst mit der Entstehung des Lichts, des Bewußtseins, auftreten, das hier noch nicht vorhanden ist; hier herrscht noch die nicht aus sich herausgetretene Gottheit, deren Symbol deswegen der Kreis ist’ (Neumann I, p. 20).

In the section on light and darkness in the previous chapter we have seen how with the first glimmer of light, shed by an awakening consciousness, separation and the basic duality of all things enter the world. The previous state of perfect oneness is now perceived by this new consciousness as a state of darkness, chaos and tohuwabohu. The novel describes this moment as that of creation:

Wie ungeheuer! Er [Gott] war es, der Tiamat zerschmissen, den Chaosdrachen gespalten hatte; [...] Er hatte dem greulichen Meere, dem Reste der Urflut, der Wohnung Leviathans, seine Grenzen gewiesen, die es mit wütendstem Anprall nicht zu überschreiten vermochte. Er ließ die Sonne zeugerisch aufgehen, zum Höhepunkt steigen und abendlich ihre Höllenfahrt antreten, den Mond in immer gleichem Wechsel seiner Zustände die Zeit messen. Er führte die Sterne herauf, hatte sie zu festen Bildern vereinigt und regelte das Leben von Tieren und Menschen, indem er sie nährte nach Maßgabe der Jahreszeiten. (IV, 429-30)

It is the moment when chaos is turned into order, and this moment is inseparably linked to an awakened consciousness, which can perceive the order in what previously appeared to be nothing but chaos.

Along with increasing consciousness comes an increasing sense of separation and separateness, which appears to culminate in the loneli-

ness and alienation felt by modern man. Yet the perfection of the circle, which was a valid symbol for the beginning, reappears at the end of the development as an equally valid symbol: it now symbolizes the overcoming of opposites in a new and different union:

Das Runde ist das Ei, das philosophische Welt-Ei, die Anfangs- und Keimstelle, aus der, wie die Menschheit überall lehrt, die Welt entsteht [...], es ist aber auch das Vollkommene, das die Gegensätze in sich enthält, als Anfang, weil diese Gegensätze noch nicht auseinandergetreten sind, die Welt noch nicht begonnen hat, als Ende, weil diese Gegensätze in ihm wieder zur Synthese zusammengetreten sind, die Welt in ihm wieder zur Ruhe gekommen ist. (Neumann I, p. 20)

The ancient symbol of the ouroboros, the self-devouring serpent, has become important in modern psychology because of its comprehensiveness and continuing validity in the development of the human psyche, both on a collective and individual level. The ouroboros is a perfect expression of undifferentiated consciousness, in mankind or in the young child, and equally of the state of a highly-developed and completely-integrated consciousness, which marks the completed process of individuation. It appears in the dreams of modern individuals as mandala, symbolizing the new centre of consciousness, which has shifted from the ego to the Self:

Dieselbe uroborische Symbolik, die am Anfang vor der Ichentwicklung des Individuums steht, taucht dann an ihrem Ende wieder auf, wenn die Ich-Entwicklung von der Selbst-Entwicklung, der Individuation, abgelöst wird. Überall da, wo nicht mehr das Gegensatzprinzip der Welt dominiert, und das die Welt Fressen ebenso wie das von ihr Gefressenwerden nicht mehr das Bedeutsamste ist, erscheint das Uroboros-Symbol als Mandala in der Psychologie des erwachsenen Menschen. (Neumann I, pp. 40-41)⁶⁶

In the novel this state is, however, also described in religious language.

⁶⁶ cf. also Hamburger I (pp. 156-57, note 29), who draws attention to the gnostic importance of the symbol of the ouroboros.

The perception of the union of opposites, of their oneness, is here expressed through the oneness of God. This insight is the achievement of Abraham:

Allein, wie ein Mann, der einen Feind erschlägt, wohl durch den Sieg dessen Eigenschaften den seinen hinzufügt, so hatte Gott, wie es schien, indem er das Chaosungeheuer spaltete, dessen Wesen sich einverleibt und war vielleicht erst dadurch *ganz und vollkommen geworden*, erst dadurch zur vollen Majestät seiner Lebendigkeit erwachsen. [...] hieß er der Herr der Seuchen, so darum, weil er zugleich ihr Sender war und ihr Arzt. Er war nicht das Gute, sondern das Ganze. (IV, 430 [my italics])

In terms of individual psychology this achievement could be described as a process of consciousness, which leads to a recognition and acknowledgement of the (personal) shadow and which in turn makes some control of it possible.

3. Leitmotif and Narrative Structure

The reader shares Jaakob's experience at Isaak's funeral to a considerable extent, due to the narrative structure of the patriarchal volumes. They are mostly retrospection and thus for us, too, the past in this narrative order consists of transparent layers, rather than sequences. Furthermore, the events are not told in their chronological order. For instance, Jaakob's encounter with Esau's son, Eliphaz, soon after Jaakob's flight from his father's home, is told in detail long before we learn of the actual cause of this flight: the fact that Jaakob cheated Esau, the first-born, out of the blessing of Abraham. Similarly, the story of Dina, Jaakob's only daughter, which chronologically takes place after Jaakob's flight from Laban, in the novel precedes his arrival at Laban's. This order re-

flects in part how human memory works, and despite many interpolations by the narrator, the reader often has the impression of listening to Jaakob reminiscing. Often the stories are told from his perspective and interspersed with his feelings. Yet this order also reflects a psychology in which individuality is not a central experience, or at least not of central importance. The events which are most crucial to the collective, that is, Jaakob's family and tribe, are told first. Thus in his encounter with Eliphaz, it is emphasized that cowardice is not the reason for Jaakob's readiness to humiliate himself beyond all respectable limits. It is the future of the tribe: 'Er mußte, wenn er leben wollte — und das wollte er um jeden Preis, nicht aus gewöhnlicher Feigheit, wie ernstlich erinnert werden soll, sondern weil er geweiht war, weil auf ihm die von Abraham kommende Verheißung lag' (IV, 137).

Similarly, when his sons, led by Schimeon and Levi, destroy the town of Schekem and cause a terrible blood-bath to revenge the rape of their sister Dina, they put the whole tribe at risk. It is for this reason that Schimeon and Levi forfeit any possible chance ever to obtain the blessing, and Jaakob reproaches them bitterly:

»Wenn sie sich nun versammeln über uns zur Rache, was dann? Wir sind ein geringer Haufe. Sie werden uns schlagen und vertilgen, mich und mein Haus samt Abrahams Segen, den ihr solltet weitertragen in die Zeitläufte, und wird zerbrochen sein das Gegründete! Blödgesichtige! Sie gehen dahin und würgen die Wunden und machen uns schwer für den Augenblick und sind zu arm im Kopfe, um zu gedenken der Zukunft, des Bundes und der Verheißung!« (IV, 182-83)

In the matriarchal world of the novel's first two volumes it is the fate of the collective that matters and nothing else. All events and actions are interpreted and assessed in terms of the collective. The individual exists only as part of the whole, never apart from it. Therefore the world we

observe in these two volumes is not one of individuals but of types. Unlike the individual, the type remains outside the mechanisms of time and is independent of them. Death and time are only a threat to the individual, never to the type. While the sphere keeps revolving, while the collective continues to exist, the type will forever re-emerge. Thus towards the end of the novel we learn that after Eliezer's death he has been replaced by his oldest son Damasek, who is now called Eliezer (V, 1610).

The order of the patriarchal volumes reflects the leitmotif of the revolving sphere also in another way. The narrative opens with the moon-lit scene of Joseph and Jaakob at the well. It then turns to retrospection, telling of Jaakob's life up to this point. This retrospection continues even into the first three sections of *Der junge Joseph*. The narrative only returns to the present at the point when Joseph receives the fateful gift of the Ketônet, which, being the catalyst to the further events that follow rapidly, marks the beginning of his awakening consciousness. The narrative circle of the patriarchal volumes has been completed and henceforth the order in which events are told is predominantly linear.

The revolving sphere, however, continues as a leitmotif. It now reflects Joseph's psychological development. The upper and the lower half of the sphere represent consciousness and the unconscious and the movement and development that take place there. The image of the revolving sphere further reflects Joseph's life, which eventually comes full circle when he becomes reintegrated into the collective. Most of all, however, it stands as a symbol of Joseph's particular blessing, of his mediation between the world above and the world below, between con-

sciousness and the unconscious, the world of *Geist* and the world of matter, with the soul as the agent that brings together these two worlds. This is the novel's conciliatory, deeply humane and life-affirming answer to Schopenhauer's pessimism—one in which the dignity of mental and spiritual questing does not have to be bought at the price of forfeiting abundant, immediate living. The novel clearly rejects the path of asceticism.

(ii) *GESCHICHTE* AS A CENTRAL METAPHOR

The narrator opened the novel with the image of the journey—the journey into the past, as he calls it, on which we become his travelling companions. A journey is one of the oldest metaphors for life itself and often it implies a movement towards consciousness; in *Joseph und seine Brüder* we can actually measure the degree of consciousness by the amount of travelling a character does. It is, however, the term *Geschichte*, and the concept of the telling of a story, which becomes one of the chief metaphors in the novel, and it expresses the growing consciousness of the central character.

It is a comprehensive metaphor, very similar to that of the journey. The beginning of a story is also a departure, its climax(es) are like the trials and adventures the traveller faces, and the end of the story is matched by the arrival or return in the journey. *Geschichte* is one of the most often-recurring nouns in the novel, whether merely hinted at, punned upon or used in its literal meaning. It is contained in the title of

the first volume, *Die Geschichten Jaakobs*, and even here the term has a much wider meaning than usual. When at the end of the novel Joseph talks to Jaakob about ‘die Würde deiner Geschichtenschwere’ (V, 1749), it is evident that *Geschichte* here means life itself. The ‘stories’ of Abraham and Isaak (cf. IV, 125) belong to this same category, as do all those told by Eliezer. ‘Individual’ lives are the stories of the tribe and form its history. These stories come continually into existence through the revolving movement of the sphere:

Die Sphäre rollt, und nie wird ausgemacht werden, wo eine Geschichte ursprünglich zu Hause ist: am Himmel oder auf Erden. Der Wahrheit dient, wer erklärt, daß alle entsprechungsweise und zugleich hier und dort sich abspielen und nur unserm Auge es so erscheint, als ob sie herunterkämen und wieder emporstiegen. Die Geschichten kommen herab, so, wie ein Gott Mensch wird, werden irdisch und verbürgerlichen sozusagen. (IV, 422)

These reflections by the narrator point us to the archetypal nature of so many myths and stories, including the one we are concerned with here. Joseph’s story bears the marks of several myths and his figure is an anticipation of Christ. The novel never fails to allude to this. As a story about individuation, it outlines this process not in theoretical terms but, like myth, by using archetypal images.

An important and much-emphasized factor is the total absence of any ‘stories’ about God. It forms an important part of Joseph’s religious education: ‘Vieles noch wußte Urvater von Gott zu lehren, aber er wußte nichts von Gott zu *erzählen* — nicht in dem Sinn, wie andere zu erzählen wußten von ihren Göttern. Es gab von Gott keine Geschichten’ (IV, 432). Elohim, the god of Abraham, is essentially an abstract idea and, while he finds expression in the world of phenomena, he is not a product of it and remains outside it: ‘Er war im Feuer, aber nicht das Feuer — weshalb es höchst fehlerhaft gewesen wäre, dieses anzu-

beten' (IV, 431). God's involvement with the world forms a direct parallel to that of the soul with matter. Yet God is wholeness and separation does not exist in God. This means, however, that he also contains all opposites, including good and evil: 'Er war nicht das Gute, sondern das Ganze. Und er war heilig! Heilig nicht vor Güte, sondern vor Lebendigkeit und Überlebendigkeit, heilig vor Majestät und Schrecklichkeit, unheimlich, gefährlich und tödlich' (IV, 430-31). Because God unites all opposites, God must, of necessity, be alone—without wife or children. In this lies the reason for the absence of any stories about God, or so we are told at least:

Aber wie das Alleinsein des weib- und kinderlosen Gottes beitragen mochte zur Erklärung seiner großen Eifersucht auf seinen Bund mit dem Menschen, so hing damit jedenfalls seine Geschichtenlosigkeit zusammen und daß es nichts von ihm zu erzählen gab. (IV, 432)

And yet, after all these reflections and considerations, we are told that God does have a story, or rather that one day in the distant future God will have one. The story of God is still evolving—parallel to the evolution of mankind and parallel to the growing consciousness of mankind. Abraham discovered God through his ever-increasing consciousness. In his unceasing search for God he became more and more aware of the limitations of traditional gods or sacred objects. It was thus that Abraham became the father and creator of God:

Denn gewissermaßen war Abraham Gottes Vater. Er hatte ihn erschaut und hervorgedacht, die mächtigen Eigenschaften, die er ihm zuschrieb, waren wohl Gottes ursprüngliches Eigentum, Abram war nicht ihr Erzeuger. Aber er war es dennoch in einem gewissen Sinne, indem er sie erkannte, sie lehrte und denkend verwirklichte. (IV, 428)

Earlier we were told that God seeks self-realization in and through mankind. Therefore, while mankind evolves, God's 'story' does as well.

It will only be concluded when the world finally comes to an end: 'Es kam ein Tag, der der späteste und letzte war, und erst er würde die Erfüllung Gottes bringen' (IV, 433). The tense here reflects the thematic content of this statement. It is the concept of history that has yet to happen.

The parallel between the evolution of God and mankind also emerges in connection with Joseph, whose story is ultimately the story of the soul. The concept of 'future history' and the ambiguity inherent in the German word *Geschichte* are constantly played upon. The guardian of the empty well explains it to Ruben, who has returned to free his brother Joseph: 'Es könnte sein, daß diese Grube nur ein Grab wäre, von kleinerem Umlauf herangebracht, und euer Bruder wäre noch sehr im Werden und keineswegs schon geworden, wie diese ganze Geschichte im Werden ist und nicht schon geworden' (IV, 622). In addition to the ambiguity of the term *Geschichte* the narrator points out yet another meaning and extra dimension of the word. He uses it to describe the mythical consciousness of Jaakob:

Geschichte ist das Geschehene und was fort und fort geschieht in der Zeit. Aber so ist sie auch das Geschichtete und das Geschicht, das unter dem Boden ist, auf dem wir wandeln, und je tiefer die Wurzeln unseres Seins hinabreichen ins unergründliche Geschichte dessen, was außer- und unterhalb liegt der fleischlichen Grenzen unseres Ich, es aber doch bestimmt und ernährt, so daß wir in minder genauen Stunden in der ersten Person davon sprechen mögen und als gehöre es unserem Fleische zu, — desto sinnig-schwerer ist unser Leben und desto würdiger unseres Fleisches Seele. (IV, 185)

Thus the metaphor *Geschichte* also incorporates the concept of layers which we encountered earlier in the image of the revolving sphere. The novel itself, the *Geschichte* in front of us, reflects this not only in its structure but also in its imagery. It is filled with allusions which, if fol-

lowed through, reveal layer upon layer upon layer—layers of meaning and of event, of both cognition and being. The Tammuz-Osiris-Hermes-Christ figure Joseph is an obvious example.

(iii) THE VEIL

Deception, misguided beliefs and delusion are key issues in the novel. When Joseph tells his brothers that they had to act as the evil ones so that ‘history’ could be fulfilled, he alludes to the old metaphor of the world as a stage, in which people, like actors, have to act their parts. Changes of cast and redistribution of roles take place through the revolving movement of the sphere—‘gods become men and men become gods’:

Dies nämlich ist ein Teil des sphärischen Geheimnisses, daß vermöge der Drehung die Ein- und Einerleiheit der Person Hand in Hand zu gehen vermag mit dem Wechsel der Charakterrolle. Man ist Typhon, solange man in mordbrütender Anwärterchaft verharret; nach der Tat aber ist man König, in der klaren Majestät des Erfolges, und Gepräge und Rolle des Typhon fallen einem anderen zu. (IV, 191-92)

Actors on a stage wear costumes to aid and sustain the illusion and this becomes an important motif in the novel, too. Here it is above all linked to the symbol of the veil—the Ketônnet.

Berger showed that an essay by Jeremias on the veil became a main source for this symbol in the novel. He gives a brief summary of its main points:

Innerhalb des großen Mythos des periodischen Weltumlaufs, so Jeremias, stellen Entschleierung und Verschleierung symbolische

Akte dar, die an den “kritischen” Punkten des äonischen Geschehens das “Tod-Leben-Mysterium” charakterisieren: Zeugen, Geburt, Tod und Auferstehung. “Entschleierung ist Sterben, Verschleierung Leben — oder umgekehrt im Gegensinn.” (Berger, p. 137)

Berger (p. 119) also points to the link between the seven veils of Ishtar, which she has to surrender during her descent into the underworld, and Joseph’s ‘Etana-Henoch-dream’, in which Joseph is carried by an eagle to the seventh pillar of heaven before God. The parallel to the soul’s descent through the seven spheres in *Höllenfahrt* is obvious. The connections with the Ishtar myth are by no means an invention of the novel but are in fact ancient: ‘The seven veils in Salome’s dance, or in the myth of Ishtar, correspond to the seven planetary spheres and their respective influences’ (Cirlot, pp. 379-80). This is the symbolism underlying the number seven, as it keeps recurring in the novel—be it the twice seven years of Jaakob’s service to Laban, Joseph’s seven reasons for chastity or, as it appears in Pharaoh’s dreams, the seven fat and the seven lean years.

1. Illusion and Deception—the Veil of Maya

Initially the motif of veiling and revealing is linked to the young bride. When Eliezer brings Rebekka to Isaak, she veils her face so that he can perform the important symbolic act of lifting her veil (IV, 486). The Ketônet, which plays such an important part in the lives of Jaakob and Joseph, was originally bought by Laban from a passing traveller as a bridal veil for his daughter, ‘»ein Schleier, daß sich die Braut verschleierte und sich der Ishtar heilige und sei eine Geweihte, du aber

hebst ihr den Schleier«' (IV, 294). The Ketônet is woven from the most delicately-spun materials, 'so fein gesponnen, als sei es ein Hauch der Luft, ein Nebel und Nichts' (IV, 297). It is heavily embroidered with numerous ancient symbols, for instance, pentagrams, and mythological figures and motifs: the figure of Ishtar-Mami appears many times, often in her characteristic breast-offering pose, but also in other representations. Grouped around her are figures who are connected with her myth. There are former lovers whom she has transformed into various animals, Ischallanu, the gardener Tammuz, and Gilgamesh are especially mentioned. The fire-breathing bull of heaven, sent by Ishtar in rage against Gilgamesh for resisting her, is also present. While the Ishtar-myth dominates the imagery of the veil, there also appears the biblical motif of the first human couple, the serpent, the tree of knowledge and the tree of life. Two bearded angels perform the task of fertilizing the tree's different blossoms, the task which Joseph will perform one day in Potiphar's garden. Above the tree of life, however, surrounded by sun, moon and stars, hovers the female emblem.

Non-biblical motifs, focusing on the great mother-goddess, dominate the images of the Ketônet. We are told, however, that the pentagrams, the five-pointed stars, mean 'God' (IV, 297). Yet it is most interesting that it is not this sign nor any other abstract symbol of the great Patriarchal God that presides over the universe and the tree of life, but the female emblem. Spinning and weaving are ancient female occupations. Plutarch attributed its invention to Isis and her sister Nephthys; the ancient Greeks considered Athena as the superior mistress of this art. Almost all the great goddesses were also weavers—weaving together life and fate. In India it is Maya who creates the web of illusion—the veil of Maya—which constitutes the world of phenomena

and of matter: ‘The veil, as an elemental form of weaving and clothing, is symbolic of ‘wrapping’, that is, of matter’ (Cirlot, p. 379).

The Ketônet, too, creates above all illusion and deception.⁶⁷ Twice Jaakob is deceived by it, and the most shattering experiences in his life are, in different ways, both caused by this veil. Laban bought it for the occasion of Jaakob’s wedding. He uses it to deceive Jaakob, who fails to recognize that the Ketônet veils the wrong bride. When he discovers the truth on the following morning, he begins to be seized by a feeling of horror which he has never experienced before:

»Ei, dachte er, während es ihm doch schon zu grausen begann um Herz und Magen; ei siehe, ei sieh! Spöttischer Morgentrug, possierliches Blendwerk. [...] Sehen wir nun also besser hin!«

Aber er sah noch nicht hin, denn er fürchtete sich, und was er bei sich redete, war nur Geschwätz des Grausens. (IV, 309)

Jaakob’s ‘awakening’ is terrible and he can never forget it. The moment of realization and the horror he felt remain forever vivid in his memory and even in his hour of death he evokes it for a last time, when he addresses Ruben, the son begotten in this night:

»im Wahne zeugte ich dich und gab ihr die Blüte, denn es war Vertauschung, vertauscht war der Schleier, und mir zeigte der Tag, daß ich nur gezeugt hatte, wo ich zu lieben währte, — da kehrte sich Herz und Magen mir um, und ich verzweifelte an meiner Seele.« (V, 1793)

Horror and despair mark his discovery. When his mind desperately searches for a ‘rational’, that is, an acceptable, explanation of what his eyes see, he tries to persuade himself that the truth—as revealed by the light of day—must be deception, rather than admit that deception is the

⁶⁷ cf. Clayton Koelb, ‘Thomas Mann’s “Coat of Many Colors”’, *The German Quarterly*, 49 (1976), 472-484. Koelb identifies the Ketônet virtually as the leitmotif, tracing it through all four volumes. He also points out the connection with Maya (p. 474) and reinforces this link by showing the connection (even if in name only) between Maia, mother of Hermes in Greek mythology, and Maya, mother of Buddha (p. 474).

truth. What Jaakob experiences at this moment is the metaphysical horror described by Schopenhauer. For Schopenhauer the *principium individuationis* is the illusion that creates the world of phenomena, the intricately-woven veil of Maya. As long as the reality of this world is not called into question, human beings will go through life ‘befangen im *principio individuationis*, getäuscht durch den Schleier der Maja’ (WWVI, 439). The illusion created is that of separation, separation of time, space, and matter:

Die unbegrenzte Welt, voll Leiden überall, in unendlicher Vergangenheit, in unendlicher Zukunft, ist ihm [dem Menschen] fremd, ja ist ihm ein Märchen: seine verschwindende Person, seine ausdehnungslose Gegenwart, sein augenblickliches Behagen, dies allein hat Wirklichkeit für ihn: und dies zu erhalten, thut er Alles, solange nicht eine bessere Erkenntniß ihm die Augen öffnet. (ibid.)

Schopenhauer then goes on to describe what happens to those who suddenly perceive the illusory nature of this ‘reality’, or are forced into doubt about it; they are seized by horror and experience ‘jenes so unvertilgbare und allen Menschen (ja vielleicht selbst den klügeren Thieren) gemeinsame G r a u s e n, das sie plötzlich ergreift, wenn sie, durch irgend einen Zufall, irre werden am *principio individuationis*’ (WWVI, 439). This is the horror which seizes Jaakob when he recognizes his delusion. Jaakob’s horror does not arise because he slept with Lea—he will do so many more times over the years. He is seized by horror, because he is forced to recognize that his greatest happiness was only illusion, which to him, however, was utterly real. Many years later, when he gives the Ketônnet to Joseph, he is able to express this: ‘so daß ich nur meiner Meinung nach glücklich war, nicht aber in Wahrheit, — wer sollte nicht irre werden im Haupte, wenn er dahinein sich verliert, darum übergeh’ ich’s’ (IV, 479). What Jaakob is confronted with here is once

again the distinction between *Sein* and *Bedeuten*, which the narrator puts in simple words: ‘Die eine war’s wirklich, aber die andere der Meinung nach, und was heißt da wirklich?’ (IV, 316).

2. The Motif of Dressing and Undressing—the Tearing of the Veil

The Ketônnet is a complex symbol and its transformation from the bridal veil into Joseph’s coat of many colours enriches it even further. The symbols and motifs embroidered onto it somehow all relate to Joseph. It is no coincidence that Ischallanu the gardener, Tammuz the young harvest-god, and Gilgamesh, who refuses to succumb to Ishtar, are especially mentioned. They are all different roles Joseph plays in his different ‘lives’; the fire-breathing bull of heaven becomes a threatening symbol during Joseph’s refusal to succumb to Mut. In *Höllenfahrt* myth was described as being only ‘das Kleid des Geheimnisses’ (IV, 54). It is the veil of the truth, the form in which the truth is *re-vealed* to those who are not sages. Schopenhauer describes this as the purpose of all religions, ‘indem sie sämtlich Einkleidungen der dem rohen Menschensinn unzugänglichen Wahrheit sind’ (WWV I, 443). The word revelation derives from Latin *revelatio*, which means ‘to draw back the veil’.⁶⁸ When Joseph looks at the Ketônnet for the first time, he reads out the words that are embroidered onto it: ‘>Ausgezogen — hab’ ich — mein Kleid, soll ich’s — wieder anzieh’n?< (IV, 482). These words, which are from the Song of Solomon (5, 3), contain the motif of undressing, rather than dressing. Jung, who refers to the same passage

⁶⁸ cf. Barbara G. Walker, *The Woman’s Dictionary of Symbols and Sacred Objects* (San Francisco: Harper & Row, 1988), p. 161.

in the Song of Songs, writes that the motif of undressing symbolizes the extraction of the soul: 'Die Entkleidung stellt die *extractio animae* dar' (GW 14/I, note 63). His view is linked to that of Jeremias quoted in the previous section, 'Entschleierung ist Sterben, Verschleierung Leben' (cf. Berger, p. 137). When Eliezer sees Joseph wrapped in the Ketônê, he, too, echoes this thought,

»denn im Schleier ist Leben und Tod, aber der Tod ist im Leben und das Leben im Tode, — wer es weiß, ist eingeweiht. Es mußte die schwesterliche Mutter-Gattin sich entschleiern und entblößen am siebenten Höllentor und im Tode; da sie aber zurückkehrte ins Licht, verschleierte sie sich wieder, zum Zeichen des Lebens.« (IV, 486)

Joseph's response to Eliezer's dark reflections is typical and youthfully flippant. Yet his reply also reveals that he understands the function of myth: 'Eindrucksvoll redest du alles durcheinander, von Schleier, Sichel und Saatkorn, und zwar mit Recht, denn die Dinge hängen zusammen und sind eins in Gott, vor uns aber sind sie gestickt auf den Schleier der Vielfalt' (IV, 487). Quite unconsciously he expresses the difference between *Sein* and *Bedeutend*: variety exists only in the world of phenomena, and the 'Schleier der Vielfalt' is the veil of Maya.

The motif of dressing and undressing is in Joseph's life linked to a symbolic death and rebirth, just as Eliezer expressed it. It is reinforced when he is inside the pit, and the veil that covered his eyes has been torn, together with the Ketônê: 'In seinem Geist wohnten die Gedanken ›Entschleierung‹ und ›Tod‹ nahe beisammen' (IV, 582). Twice Joseph has to descend into the pit—once literally, the second time metaphorically, which is, however, just as painful and shameful an experience. Both times his torn garment becomes a misleading piece of evidence and the motif of undressing indicates a symbolic death. Both

times he reaches a new level of consciousness and *Erkenntnis*, and on his way to Pharaoh's prison Zawi-Rê, he knows it only too well: 'die Stunde der Entschleierung und des Ablegens der Schmuckstücke war da, die Stunde der Höllenfahrt' (V, 1294). When he wraps himself in the Ketônet for the first time, trying to persuade Jaakob to leave it to him, he wittily reverses the words from Solomon's Song and says: 'Ich habe mein Kleid angezogen, — soll ich's wieder ausziehen?' (IV, 483). This adaptation reflects Joseph's ability to adopt a role, an identity, as if it was an actor's costume. Both times, however, his dress is torn to bits, and he is denuded of his 'costume' by forces over which he has no control.

When Jaakob is eventually reunited with Joseph, he also uses this motif, when he tells Joseph why he cannot be the receiver of Abraham's blessing:

»Gott aber hat dir das Kleid zerrissen und meine Liebe zurechtgewiesen mit mächtiger Hand, gegen die kein Löcken ist. Er hat dich gesondert und dich abgetrennt von meinem Hause; das Reis hat Er vom Stamm genommen und es ist in die Welt verpflanzt — da bleibt nur Gehorsam.« (V, 1744)

It is perhaps here that the full paradox contained in the symbol of the veil and the motif of dressing and undressing becomes most apparent. At the moment of their reunion, Jaakob acknowledges their final separation. At the moment of Joseph's return to the collective, Jaakob tells him that he will forever be separated from it. When everything appears to be pointing at reunion, Jaakob insists that the truth is separation. Yet we know from Schopenhauer, but also from Joseph and the narrator, that separation is but illusion, that the veil as a symbol of the *principium individuationis* is but the veil of Maya, which creates this illusion: 'Denn mit dem Ganzen der Welt und ihrer Einheit hat der Mensch es

immer und an jedem Punkte zu tun, ob er es weiß oder nicht' (V, 1378). The veil has been torn for Joseph, but it is this fact which now 'separates' him from the others, because they continue to be swathed in it. This is why Joseph has to explain the pattern of the past events to his brothers at the very end of the novel, which he tries to do through the metaphor of *Geschichte*. Joseph's story is that of the hero and it is thus archetypal, setting a precedent for all of mankind, whilst simultaneously repeating an ancient pattern. The hero, however, stands apart from the collective. Therefore he remains separate from it, even when he has been reintegrated. Once again we find the truth clad in paradox.

The symbol of the veil contains many paradoxes. We have seen how in the novel it incorporates death and life. It is the bridal veil of the virgin, but also the traditional garment of the harlot, the *ketônet pas-pasim*, which helps Tamar to deceive and seduce the unwilling Juda. It conceals both the truth and the untruth—Lea as the true bride and the untruth of Joseph's death. On a metaphysical and philosophical level it conceals *the* truth, while, simultaneously, trying to convey it to human understanding veiled in myths, which contain truth, but are not true. Like the Ketônet it is so delicately spun and woven 'als sei es ein Hauch der Luft, ein Nebel und Nichts' (IV, 297). As a woven fabric, however, the veil also symbolizes the blending of two elements, the union of opposites, through the warp and the woof, the conjunction of passive and active. In this way it is finally also a symbol of Joseph's blessing.

In the dialectic of disclosure and concealment, revelation and dissimulation it expresses the flux of *Bedeutung*, of the process through which experience discloses itself, discloses its sense of purpose to hu-

mankind. And the veil, as one of the oldest erotic properties of all, also appeals to the senses, the core of being.

CHAPTER THREE: PSYCHOLOGY OF CHARACTERS

INTRODUCTION

Joseph is separated from his family not only by circumstance but also by his psychological development and his increasing consciousness. He leaves the family collective by stepping out of the mythical consciousness, thus releasing himself from the *participation mystique*. I will consider his development separately in the next chapter.

With reference to the *Joseph* tetralogy, Mann stated how with increasing age his artistic interest shifted away from the individual and particular towards the typical:

In den Vordergrund des Interesses tritt dafür das Typische, Immer-Menschliche, Immer-Wiederkehrende, Zeitlose, kurz: das Mythische. Denn das Typische ist ja das Mythische schon, insofern es Ur-Norm und Ur-Form des Lebens ist, zeitloses Schema und von je gegebene Formel, in die das Leben eingeht, indem es aus dem Unbewußten seine Züge reproduziert. (XI, 656)⁶⁹

Mann was fully aware that such a development was in fact a reversal of human development, 'denn im Leben der Menschheit stellt das Mythische zwar eine frühe und primitive Form dar, im Leben des einzelnen aber eine späte und reife' (ibid.).

I have explained the concept of *participation mystique* in my general introduction. Briefly, it can be summarized as the non-differentiation between subject and object. The line of separation which appears so clear-cut and absolute to the modern individual is blurred, to say the least, for most characters in the novel; sometimes it seems not to exist at all. Modern consciousness tends to centre in the ego and, separated from the rest of the world through the *principium individuationis*, we perceive ourselves entirely as individuals. Thus our ego-consciousness is often also our sole source and centre of identity, and often enough it

⁶⁹ *Ein Vortrag.*

is mistaken for the whole, while the unconscious parts of the personality are suppressed, ignored or even denied. Most of the characters in the novel, however, derive their sense of identity from a different source. It is a type of consciousness which has been described as mythical, because often these people derive their identity by identifying with and imitating what the modern mind would describe as mythical characters. With this type of consciousness space and time are irrelevant. Joseph, for example, knows that at least twenty generations lie between Abraham and himself. Yet he tends to think of Abraham as his great-grandfather. Similarly Eliezer, who is Jaakob's first servant and Joseph's teacher, often tells Joseph the story of how he courted Rebekka for Isaak. He tells the story in the first person, although he and everybody else 'know' that in its correct form it should be told in the third person. The reason for this is that the ego-consciousness of these people is as yet little developed, and has certainly not established itself as a centre of identity. Therefore they participate in other characters, roles and even objects:

Die Erfahrung des »Anders-Seins«, welche die Ur-Tatsache der Ich-Bewußtwerdung darstellt und die im Lichtwerden der Unterscheidung statthat, teilt die Welt in den Gegensatz von Subjekt und Objekt; die Orientierung in Raum und Zeit löst das im Urdämmer der Vorgeschichte irgendwo existierende Sein der Menschheit ab und konstituiert die Frühgeschichte. (Neumann I, p. 96)

Amorphous as an identity like Eliezer's may appear to us, he himself perceives it as clear-cut. Furthermore his mythical identity provides him with a firm role-model. In *Ein Vortrag* Mann described the characters in the novel as

Menschen, die so recht nicht wußten, wer sie waren, oder die es auf eine frömmere, tiefer-genaue Art wußten als das moderne Individuum: deren Identität nach hinten offenstand und Vergangenes mitaufnahm, dem sie sich gleichsetzten, in dessen Spuren sie

gingen und das in ihnen wieder gegenwärtig wurde. (XI, 659-60)

In the characterization and psychology as depicted in the novel, the central issue is the interplay of the personal and the transpersonal, between the individual and the type, that is, the established role or model. Some of the characters, and to varying degrees, are aware of the constant interplay of what they are and what 'textually' is available to them. The narrative account constantly reminds us that being is embedded in networks of signification. These networks become truly operative when they are incarnated in the characters' lived experience.

(i) MYTHICAL CONSCIOUSNESS, IDENTIFICATION, AND IMITATION IN THE WORLD OF JAAKOB

1. Jaakob and Esau

One crucial element in the structure of mythical consciousness is repetition. In the chapter *Wer Jaakob war* the narrator, investigating the source of Abraham's wealth, tells us about Abraham's sojourn in Egypt. It is the story from Genesis, in which Abraham, worried about his own safety because of his wife Sarah's great beauty, passes her off as his sister. Pharaoh, hearing about this foreign beauty, soon makes her one of his wives, giving Abraham rich gifts in exchange. In a dream the true relationship between Abraham and Sarah is, however, conveyed to Pharaoh, who thereupon, with understandable indignation, asks them to leave the country. Abraham is, however, allowed to keep his rich

gifts and thus leaves as a very wealthy man. The same story is told once more in Genesis, although this time Sarah is not given to Pharaoh but to Abimelek, king of the Philistines. The events repeat themselves.

Looking for an explanation, the narrator concludes that this repetition is a stylistic reinforcement of the report's truthfulness: 'Die Wiederholung eines Berichtes als Mittel zu dem Zweck, seine Wahrhaftigkeit zu betonen, ist ungewöhnlich, ohne sehr aufzufallen' (IV, 126). What troubles the narrator, however, is the fact that the story is repeated a third time, with Isaak and Rebekka instead of Abraham and Sarah, but again with Abimelek, king of the Philistines. It bothers the narrator, because it raises doubts about Jaakob's origins, that is, his identity: 'Aber nicht auf des Abimelek Person kommt es uns an, sondern auf Isaaks, auf die Frage seines Verhältnisses zu der Frauengeschichte, und auch sie beunruhigt uns, genaugenommen, nur mittelbar, um der weiteren Frage willen, *wer Jaakob war*' (IV, 127). The narrator can perceive only two 'rational' explanations for this third repetition of the story. One is that Isaak had indeed the same experience as his father, and that it is a case of unconscious identity prevailing:

In diesem Falle liegt eine Erscheinung vor, die wir als Imitation oder Nachfolge bezeichnen möchten, eine Lebensauffassung nämlich, die die Aufgabe des individuellen Daseins darin erblickt, gegebene Formen, ein mythisches Schema, das von den Vätern gegründet wurde, mit Gegenwart auszufüllen und wieder Fleisch werden zu lassen. (IV, 127)

The other possible explanation he offers is that it is a case of open identity, like Eliezer's failure to distinguish between the first and the third person when he tells his stories. It is 'die Erscheinung offener Identität, mit einem Wort, die derjenigen der Imitation oder Nachfolge an die Seite tritt und in Verschränkung mit ihr das Selbstgefühl bestimmt' (IV, 128).

Thus, the main characteristics of mythical consciousness are imitation and life determined by mythical or other patterns, as well as the absence of a fully-developed ego. This condition is encouraged by the fact that names are inherited and thus make the adoption of a certain 'mythical' role almost natural. In this way people feel bound by their roles and in turn by the archetypal patterns which form part of these.

This concept of life becomes particularly evident in the case of Jaakob and Esau when they prepare to receive the blessing. The narrator makes it quite clear that fraud did not really enter into it: 'In Wahrheit, niemand wurde betrogen, auch Esau nicht' (IV, 201). Both know their character roles, for although they have no perception of themselves as individuals, they nevertheless know exactly what type they represent and what their mythical identity is. Life is a fulfilling of known patterns and not something that can be actively shaped by the individual. Even Esau knows, 'daß alles Geschehen ein Sicherfüllen ist und daß das Geschehene geschehen war, weil es zu geschehen gehabt hatte nach geprägtem Urbild' (IV, 201). As a result they seem to follow a ritual in their actions and responses. When Esau is called before Isaak, his response seems rehearsed: 'Er murmelte die Formel des Gehorsams: »Hier bin ich.« In seiner Seele aber dachte er: »Jetzt geht es an!« Und diese Seele war voll von Stolz und feierlichem Herzeleid' (IV, 202). Esau has clearly recognized his cue and his emotional response is similar to that of somebody experiencing the power of sacred ritual, for instance in a mass. Jaakob's response is a mirror-image of Esau's. He too recites a well-known formula: 'Da sah Jaakob sie an und antwortete nach längerer Pause sehr leise: »Hier bin ich.« Während der Pause aber hatte er in seiner Seele gedacht: »Jetzt geht es an!« Und seine Seele war voller Stolz, Grauen und Feierlichkeit' (IV, 204). Both Jaakob and Esau

are completely bound by the pattern from which they derive their character roles. Yet while Jaakob develops in the course of his life and identifies with different mythical characters as the situation demands, Esau remains throughout in one role, that of Typhon-Set, the red hunter, of Cain the jealous brother, and of Edom. He knows his role from the beginning and the curse he receives from Isaak is only a final confirmation of it. His early association with the people of Edom shows 'daß sein Charakter, das heißt seine Rolle auf Erden, von langer Hand her festgelegt und er sich ebendieser Charakterrolle von jeher vollkommen bewußt gewesen war' (IV, 135). The narrator's use of the word 'bewußt' here makes it quite clear that, albeit in his own mythical way, Esau is actually conscious of his role and not just blindly acting it out. His consciousness is, however, undifferentiated. Therefore neither it nor his acceptance of his role can diminish the emotional problems that arise from it. He feels bound by his role, feels that his life is subject to external forces which he cannot control. Unlike Esau the narrator is able to explain the situation, to tell us how this role consciousness actually works:

Stammvater Edoms also war der gegenwärtige Esau genaunommen nicht; und wenn es gesangsweise mit Nachdruck von ihm heißt: »Er ist der Edom«, nicht aber etwa: »Er *war* der Edom«, so ist die Gegenwartsform dieser Aussage nicht zufällig gewählt, sondern sie erklärt sich damit als zeitlose und über-individuelle Zusammenfassung des Typus. (IV, 189)

Esau feels that his life is defined and dictated by his role. Therefore when his son Eliphaz offers to kill Jaakob in revenge for Esau's humiliation, he raises no objections, because he perceives for once a chance of escaping from the rigid pattern which determines his whole life: 'Denn daß der Neffe den Oheim erschlug, bedeutete eine ihm wohltuende Durchbrechung des leidigen Schemas und war eine geschichtli-

che Neugründung, die späteren Elphas-Knaben zum Gleichnis werden mochte, ihn aber von der Kainsrolle wenigstens im letzten entlastete' (IV, 136). Esau and others live life very much as a parable. Their lives are not determined by what or who they are, but who they are like.

2. Lea's Sons: Collective Action and Individual Responsibility

Jaakob's awareness of imitation, and his actively seeking it, are of fatal consequence in the Schekem episode. Twice during this period he identifies with Abraham and derives pleasure from imitating him, from being *like* him. The first occasion is when he signs the contract with the town: 'Er war Abraham, der von Osten kam und von Ephron den Acker, die doppelte Grabstätte kaufte' (IV, 163). The second occasion is when his sons lay down the terms of the contract with Sichem, which they pretend would condone his unsanctioned marriage to their sister Dina. It is Jaakob's pleasure in imitation which allows him to be deceived about the brothers' true intent, with its catastrophic results: 'Was ihn verblendet hatte, war die Freude an Imitation und Nachfolge gewesen. Er hatte Abrahams gedacht' (IV, 179). When the truth begins to dawn on him, he realizes that this was neither imitation nor sacred ritual, but the worst possible abuse of it. The condition laid down by the brothers is that all the men in Sichem submit themselves to circumcision. The intent behind it, however, is not a confirmation of the holy bond between man and God, but to have a severely weakened enemy when they set about the bloody destruction of the town in the name of revenge. Myth and ritual here are clearly not sacred to them but are used

as a means to an end. Despite their cold and seemingly rational approach, however, they still become overwhelmed by the unconscious forces of myth, and the killings become ritualized murder:

wenn es dabei über das bloße Töten hinaus grausam zuring, so ist den Würgern zugute zu halten, daß sie bei ihrem Tun nicht minder in poetischen Vorstellungen befangen waren als jene Unglücklichen; denn sie erblickten darin einen Drachenkampf, den Sieg Mardugs über Tiâmat, den Chaoswurm, und damit hingen die vielen Verstümmelungen zusammen, das Abschneiden ›vorzuweisender‹ Glieder, worin sie sich beim Morden mythisch ergingen. (IV, 181)

Jaakob's sons here mistake the metaphorical for the actual. Their literal interpretation of the images leads to the ritualized slaughter. They fail to recognize that the image, the metaphor, tries to give expression to something which transcends words and literal meaning.

The brothers, like Esau, are very much bound by what they perceive to be their roles and the corresponding patterns. This is true for them as a collective, but also as individuals. Each one of them is basically characterized by an epithet. Often the epithet seems to determine the individual physique and physiognomy, whereas one would expect the process to be the reverse. When they appear in the narrative, they tend to act within these epithets. Ruben, for example, is always described as 'ein dahinschießendes Wasser'. It is used to describe his rapid birth, 'Re'uben schoß gleich daher wie ein Wasser' (IV, 317), or his rash action when he seduces Bilha, one of his father's wives. Even the angelic guardian of the empty pit to which Ruben returns to rescue Joseph makes this comparison: '»Du bist recht ungeduldig«, sagte der Fremde; »und bist, wenn du mir das Gleichnis erlauben willst, ganz wie ein dahinschießend Wasser«' (IV, 618). When in the last volume the ten brothers appear before Joseph the provider, almost each one is described in

terms of his epithet, 'einer ragte hervor, einer hatte ein schwermütig Löwenhaupt, einer war markig und fest, ein anderer wies lange, geläufige Beine auf, zwei weitere verleugneten nicht eine rohe Streitbarkeit [...]' (V, 1599). While these descriptions appear to emphasize individual characteristics, they actually reinforce their roles in life and the types they represent.

In their attack on Joseph the brothers act as a collective and abandon all individual consciousness. Joseph arrives in the valley of Dotan, to which his brothers sulkily retreated, at the worst possible moment. With the exception of Ruben they are psychologically all geared for revenge, particularly after listening to a fragment of an old ballad about the hero Lamech, who killed everybody who he felt had humiliated him (IV, 549):

»Siebenmal gerochen ward Kain,
Doch Lamech siebenundsiebzigmal!«

Years earlier, after the destruction of Shekem, the brothers returned their sister Dina to Jaakob with the words: 'Hier ist Lea's Kind. Es ist siebenundsiebzigmal gerochen' (IV, 182). These words are revealed as a quotation only at this much later stage. Once again we get a very literal example of a metaphor, that is, the acting out of a metaphor. This metaphor was explained by Mann elsewhere, when he spoke about 'das zitathafte Leben':

Das zitathafte Leben, das Leben im Mythos, ist eine Art von Zelebration; insofern es Vergegenwärtigung ist, wird es zur feierlichen Handlung, zum Vollzuge eines Vorgeschiedenen durch einen Zelebranten, zum Begängnis, zum Feste. Ist nicht der Sinn des Festes Wiederkehr als Vergegenwärtigung? (IX, 497)⁷⁰

When we listen to the brothers' sad rendering of the old ballad about Lamech they have moved on from the town of Shekem, both literally

⁷⁰ *Freud und die Zukunft.*

and figuratively. On the literal level they have moved on to the valley of Dotan, where Joseph will come to look for them. More important is, however, their move on a figurative level, that is, a process of increased consciousness has taken place since the events of the Schekem episode, which took place years before. In the discussion that ensues on the singing of the ballad, they bitterly perceive how unlike Lamech they have become: '»daß wir ungleich geworden Lamech«' (IV, 550). Whereas during the sacking of Schekem they were able to act blindly and without thinking, overwhelmed by unconscious forces, they now find themselves, to their own dismay, unable to do so. Only Ruben tries to justify this:

»Ich will dir sagen, was aus des Mannes Hand nimmt seine Rache und macht, daß wir ungleich geworden Lamech, dem Helden. Es ist zweierlei: Babels Satzung und Gottes Eifer die sprechen beide: Die Rache ist mein. Denn die Rache muß von dem Manne genommen sein, sonst zeugt sie wild weiter, geil wie der Sumpf, und die Welt wird voll Blutes.« (IV, 550)

His brothers, however, perceive this new consciousness negatively and experience it as an emasculation. They know the reason for it too and unknowingly trace it back to the socio-economic change from a society of hunters to one of animal farmers, the change which in the novel is symbolized in the two contrasting figures of Esau the hunter and Jaakob the shepherd. Hand in hand with this change goes an increasing ability to reflect and contemplate, that is, growing consciousness and in their own way the brothers are aware of it:

»Ada ist schuld, das will ich euch sagen. Denn sie gebar Jabal, den Urahn derer, die in Zelten wohnen und Viehzucht treiben, Abrams Ahn, Jizchaks und Jaakobs, unseres sanften Vaters. Da haben wir den Verderb und die Bescherung, das wir keine Männer mehr sind, wie du sagst, Bruder Levi, sondern Klügler und Frömmeler, und sind als wie mit der Sichel verschnitten, daß Gott erbarm'!« (IV, 552).

Years of frustrated anger and years of unrelieved humiliation and jealousy well up in them and contrast negatively with the heroic, though unreflected, bloody deeds of Lamech. Without realizing, they admire and envy Lamech for this lack of reflection, of which they are no longer capable. The brothers experience that conscious insights, once gained, cannot be undone by conscious effort.

Visually the scene presents an archetypal picture: they are sitting in a circle, with a cauldron and dying fire forming the centre, ‘und hockten da in sich gebückt um die Asche wie zehn Bündel Leidwesen’ (IV, 553). At this moment Joseph becomes visible in the distance, wrapped in his Ketônnet, which is glittering in the morning sun, a wreath of flowers on his head—embodying an archetypal image of human sacrifice. They sit as if under a spell: ‘Sie saßen ohne Wort und Regung und stierten, eine unheimlich verzauberte Gruppe’ (IV, 555); and it is at this moment that they seem to become one single unit, ready to act as one. The scream that breaks the silence consequently sounds ‘wie aus *einer* gequälten Kehle’ (IV, 555). They act as a group, and again they are driven by mythological images, abandoning all thought and individual consciousness: ‘es gab kein Halten und kein Besinnen für ihre blutblinde Begierde, sie stellten sich an, als wollten sie ihn in mindestens vierzehn Stücke zerreißen. Ums Reißen, Zerreißen und Abreißen war’s ihnen wirklich vor allem in tiefster Seele zu tun’ (IV, 555). At the same time they also abandon their humanity and when they use even their teeth to tear off Joseph’s coat, they become like animals: ‘Sie gingen unter die Menschheit hinab und erinnerten sich ihrer Zähne, um dem Blutend-Halbohnmächtigen das Mutterkleid vom Leibe zu reißen’ (IV, 556). In this sense they become the wild boar that kills Adonis. Their unconscious responds to mythical images without any control through

consciousness. Only Ruben remains outside the collective action and eventually succeeds in forcing a break, when he demands that the badly-beaten Joseph should be bound. This interruption breaks the collective spell too, and when the brothers step back, faced with the dreadful result of their action, their individual consciousness returns and with it their humanity and conscience. They are no longer able to bring the crime to its logical conclusion, that is, to kill Joseph. Only three of them are in fact still willing to go ahead and perform the killing. Significantly they would perform this act like a ritual slaughter:

Jene [die wilden Zwilling] wollten es mit dem Stabe besorgen [...] nach guter Kainsart [...]. Dieser [der stramme Gad] ersuchte um den Auftrag, ihm rasch mit dem Messer die Kehle zu durchschneiden, wie Jaakob einst mit den Böcklein getan, deren Fell er brauchte zum Segenstausch. (IV, 562)

It is evident that even they only offer to do so because they perceive it as part of their character role. This is confirmed by the narrator:

Und es war wiederum nur folgerecht, daß diejenigen es über die Lippen brachten und sich dafür zur Verfügung stellten, zu deren Rolle auf Erden es am besten paßte und die damit, sozusagen, ihrem Mythos sich gehorsam erwiesen. (IV, 562)

They are also the least reflective of the brothers, and yet they too are greatly relieved when their offer is not taken up (IV, 564). The collective action once broken cannot be resumed, because individual responsibility can no longer be ignored or denied. It is Ruben, the only one to remain outside this collective action, who gropes for the right words to express the difference between unreflecting, spontaneous action and contemplated action. He tries to explain to his brothers the difference between 'geschehen' and 'tun', a difference which reflects that between *Sein* and *Bedeuten*:

Aber das Geschehene sei eben nur ein Geschehen gewesen, kein Tun, so könne man es nicht nennen. Es sei zwar durch sie, die

Brüder, geschehen, aber sie hätten's nicht getan, sondern es sei so mit ihnen dahingefahren. Jetzt aber wollten sie klaren Sinnes und nach ausdrücklichem Beschluß einen Greuel tun und die Hand wider den Knaben erheben, daß sie des Vaters Blut vergössen, während es bisher nur geflossen sei, wenn auch durch sie. Aber fließen und vergießen, das sei ein Unterschied in der Welt wie Geschehen und Tun, und wenn sie das nicht unterschieden, so seien sie am Verstande zu kurz gekommen. (IV, 563)

Yet despite these insights, which they clearly feel and experience as true, even though they are largely unable to consider them in abstract and theoretical terms, only for one of them, Juda, does the event prove to be a catalyst to some psychic development. Juda's participation in the action causes him tremendous suffering and he can never shed his feeling of guilt: 'Dem Juda ging die an Joseph und an dem Vater begangene Tat entsetzlich nahe. Er litt an ihr, denn er war zum Leiden befähigt' (V, 1546). As a result of his suffering, however, he also experiences considerable psychic growth, which eventually enables him to accept and confess his guilt, and with it to acknowledge consciously his individual responsibility. This happens when he stands before Joseph, who by then is Pharaoh's minister. He has risen to defend Rahel's second son, Benjamin. At this moment he acts as an individual, stepping out of his mythical role of Cain, and releasing himself from the shackles of the collective oath which the brothers had sworn many years earlier to bind them together in silence. At the same time he also accepts responsibility for the collective, '»denn ich will sühnen, sühnen für alle. Hier vor dir, Eigentümlicher, fass' ich den Eid, den wir Brüder schworen, den gräßlichen, mit dem wir uns bündelten — mit beiden Händen fass' ich ihn und breche ihn überm Knie entzwei«' (V, 1684). It is then that Juda reveals himself as the true bearer of Abraham's blessing.

The idea of imitation, of being like some mythical predecessor, the concept of identification, dominates the mythical consciousness as it is portrayed in the world of Jaakob. The gradation we perceive between different characters, for example between Jaakob and Esau, or among the brothers as shown above, depends on how far their consciousness is differentiated. Esau identifies with his role, and we were told that he is conscious of his role. Yet, the fact that he identifies with it implies that his imitation is unconscious. He *is* Edom, not *like* Edom. Jaakob, on the other hand, is often aware of his imitation, as we have seen above when he imitates Abraham. Both, however, imitation and identification, one conscious, the other unconscious, are in the world of the Patriarchs also an expression of piety. They provide a reliable framework of action throughout life, and they are part of the ethics of this world, of its moral laws. It is for this reason that Esau is considered to be 'auf seine Art ein ebenso frommer Mann wie Jaakob' (IV, 201). Esau, because he identifies with a character, is bound by one particular role. Jaakob by contrast, whose imitation is often conscious, adopts a certain role according to the situation he faces. Thus he imitates Noah when Ruben has desecrated the sanctity of the marriage bed by seducing his father's wife. That he can badly misinterpret a situation shows his fatal error in the Schekem episode. Despite his conscious imitation, events happen to him and, unlike Joseph, he cannot manipulate them to make them fit his mythical pattern. While he is a willing and often conscious imitator of myths, he is usually too involved in the events to step aside for a moment and consider them with detachment. His identity, too, derives from a mythical consciousness, while his ego-consciousness remains largely undeveloped.

(ii) THE WOMEN IN THE NOVEL

The central women figures in the novel are, despite distinct individual features, all portrayed as *the* woman. Every one of them represents certain aspects of the Great Mother, which, with all their variety, are eternal and unchanging. This is in sharp contrast to the father archetype, which is marked by constant change and development, as we shall see later. When he writes about Tamar, the last of the great women characters in the novel, the narrator confirms these eternal traits of the mother archetype: 'Tamar aber war ein Weib, war das Weib, denn jedes Weib ist das Weib, Mittel des Falles und Schoß des Heils, Astarte und Mutter Gottes' (V, 1557).

There is another link between these women: each of them is denied her 'womanhood', and their actions are determined by their striving for fulfilment. It is the commanding factor in their lives. Rahel is initially denied her womanhood through her father, who for seven years does not allow her to marry, then through God, we are told, because despite her eagerness to bear Jaakob children, she remains infertile for ten years. The childless years in her marriage are deeply humiliating, as they are in stark contrast to Lea's abundant fertility. Out of her despair Rahel arranges for her servant Bilha to become a substitute and bear Jaakob children in her place. Although this is a custom sanctioned by tradition, in her heart Rahel recognizes it as self-deception, and her woman's dignity, rather than being restored and enhanced by this sham motherhood, suffers badly:

Rahels war die Lust gewesen, und einer anderen würden die Schmerzen sein. Das war bequem, aber hohl und abscheulich, ein stiller Greuel, nicht für ihr Denken, das dem Gesetz und der Üblichkeit folgte, aber für ihr redliches und tapferes kleines Herz. Sie lächelte wirr. (IV, 323-24)

In her conscious mind Rahel willingly and eagerly accepts the solution which custom offers to her barrenness. Her own unconscious knows, however, that this is no solution at all, but only a meaningless title, and the constant living of a lie. What Rahel perceives in her heart is that the separation of *Sein* and *Bedeuten* is ultimately an unlivable one, that it has no validity in the reality of human life. Just as unreflecting *Sein* lacks the dignity of humanness, so does *Bedeuten* if it lacks the embodiment of *Sein*, because it is only an empty husk. Like Potiphar she too experiences the truth that assumed titles can only conceal the hollowness, not fill the vacuum.

When Rahel finally gives birth to Joseph, her long suffering and humiliation turn into almost ludicrous elevation through Jaakob, who begins to glorify her: 'so versteifte er sich darauf, in Rahel, der Gebälerin, eine himmlische Jungfrau und Muttergöttin zu sehen, eine Hathor und Eset mit dem Kind an der Brust' (IV, 349). Rahel becomes for him the incarnation of motherhood. The price she has to pay, however, for her fulfilled womanhood is the highest possible, when she dies giving birth to her second child, Benjamin. The melancholic aura that surrounds Rahel's life reappears at the end of the novel, surrounding the figure of Joseph.

The physical and intellectual contrast between Lea and Rahel is reflected in the narrative. Lea remains a random figure even though it is her son who turns out to be the bearer of the blessing. She is at best a pitiful figure, often a despised one, and as a character in the novel, she is purely functional and not further developed. While Rahel's death forms one of the most moving chapters, Lea simply drops out. Due to the narrative structure of the first two volumes, her chronologically last appearance precedes her first encounter with Jaakob, which further re-

inforces her neglect as a character and inconspicuous disappearance. This 'final' description of her aptly summarizes her role in the novel; she is 'Rubens Mutter, die immer mit ihren roten Augen verschmählt im Zelte kauerte' (IV, 84).⁷¹ On the level of consciousness, Lea forms a female parallel to Esau. Her self-perceived role in life is to bear as many children as possible. She performs this role more than adequately. When the process has been completed, however, she disappears, because there is nothing else for her. Like Esau, her life too is determined by unconscious forces and her 'dropping out' of the novel is a reflection of her absorption through the unconscious, her utter lack of ego-consciousness. In a sense, Lea does not exist as a character or personality.

Mut-em-enet, Potiphar's wife, though very different from Rahel, is another woman who is denied her womanhood. She leads a life of imposed virginity as a 'Mondnonne' (IV, 871) and the god's bride, having been dedicated by her parents to the god Amun. Her womanhood remains unfulfilled, and it is only through the episode with Joseph that she discovers it at all. This is why the whole episode, despite the pain and suffering involved and despite the degradation she experiences, remains as a glimmer of light within her soul (V, 1497). Mut is, however, such a complex character in the novel, uniting so many symbolic strands, that I will look at her separately in the next section.

Thamar, who is the third central woman character, differs essentially from Rahel and Mut, because she is wholly successful. She is portrayed as a determined and forceful woman. Rahel is essentially a passive figure. In Mut-em-enet we can see a movement from complete passivity to increasingly active involvement, returning eventually, however, to a life

⁷¹ Mann quite consciously had Lea drop out of the novel. In a letter to Julius Bab, dated 25.3.1934, he wrote: 'Tatsächlich liegt dem Schweigen über Lea eine Art von künstlerischer Absicht zu Grunde; sie soll ganz einfach in Vergessenheit geraten' (*Briefe I*, 354).

of passivity. Tamar, by contrast, is totally active and in this respect the most modern figure of the three.⁷² Listening with dedication to Jaakob's teaching, she begins to share his vision and with grim determination makes herself part of it. She does not shrink from going to extremes in pursuit of her goal, and when, disguised as a *Kedescha*, a temple whore, she seduces Juda, it is the determined and conscious act of an emancipated woman. She is a figure of tremendous stature, and although the section on her forms only a very short, novella-like part in the tetralogy, in the reader's memory she stands out as a very clear-cut und distinct character. She has no time to trust in fate or wait for 'external' forces to determine her life. Unlike any other woman in the novel, she shapes her own life with determined and well-considered action and, in stark contrast to Lea, she does not simply drop out when her story has been told. We are given a last glimpse of her when she stands outside the tent of the dying Jaakob, where the tribe has gathered to await the blessing of his sons, 'eine hagere Matrone in Schwarz, zwischen zwei auffallend breitschultrigen Männern, das graue Haar von einem Schleier bedeckt. Kein Zweifel, es war Tamar, die Entschlossene, mit ihren weidlichen Söhnen' (V, 1791). Although both women, Lea and Tamar, are of equal importance to the future, Lea as Juda's mother, Tamar as the mother of his sons, the contrast between them could not be greater.

There is one other woman who should at least briefly be mentioned here, Asnath, Joseph's wife. Again, she is not developed as a psycho-

⁷² In *Sechzehn Jahre* Mann wrote about her: 'Ich hatte keine Frauengestalt in Vorrat, die der Rahel des ersten und zweiten Romans, der Mut-em-enet des dritten das Gleichgewicht gehalten hätte — und lange dauerte es, bis ich gewahr wurde, daß ich doch eine hatte. Es war Tamar, Juda's Schwiegertochter und Verführerin, die ich zu Jaakobs Schülerin machte, zu einer astartehaften, dabei mit Zügen aus dem ›Buche Ruth‹ ausgestatteten Figur und, im halb komischen Stil des Ganzen, zum Prototyp historischen Ehrgeizes entwickelte' (XI, 678).

logical character but is almost entirely a symbolic figure. She is portrayed as a Kore-Persephone. This is evident not merely from the setting in which we first see her, gathering narcissi, but above all from the marriage contract and the wedding, which is entirely modelled on the myth of Demeter as the mourning mother and Persephone, who has been raped by Hades, the god of the underworld, and who is doomed because she has eaten from the pomegranate. The myth of Kore-Persephone is the female parallel to the Tammuz-Adonis myth—the earth is barren when she resides in the underworld and fertile when she returns to her mourning mother. It thus complements Joseph's initial role of the dying harvest god. Her portrayal as Kore also underlines Joseph's role as Hermes-psychopomp—but also as Hades, that is, the lord of the underworld. Appropriately, given this symbolism, they have their residence in Menfe, the city of the dead.

Thus three of the women figures in the novel are to a varying degree embodiments of the constant interplay of *Sein* and *Bedeutung*. The other two, Lea and Asnath, each represent merely one aspect: Lea is representative of being without meaning, and Asnath, who is almost entirely a symbolic figure, embodies meaning without being.

(iii) THE GREAT MOTHER

1. Mut-em-enet as a Personal Figure

The ten years Joseph spends in Potiphar's house focus on his successful rise and most of all on the central woman character of this third vol-

ume, Mut-em-enet. What makes her so fascinating a figure is the fact that her portrayal works on both a personal and a transpersonal level. On the personal level she is shown as woman in her maturity—‘eine reife Frau war sie immerhin, dem Joseph an Jahren unleugbar voran’ (V, 1017)—who suddenly, and without being prepared for it, discovers her own sexuality. She is overwhelmed by the experience. During Joseph’s early years in Potiphar’s house she is shown as totally accustomed to the purely formal arrangements of her marriage and quite unaware of any lack therein. She was married off to the eunuch Potiphar when still a child and thus adapted naturally to the situation: ‘daß sie an die formelle Natur ihres Eheverhältnisses von jeher gewöhnt war und der Augenblick, der ihr Stoffliches hätte lehren können, etwas daran zu vermissen, in fließendem Dunkel lag’ (V, 1012). Yet she does not live in a paradisiac state of pre-lapsarian innocence, but rather in a state of indifference, of unawakened consciousness. She is compared to a Lotus blossom and the important motif of muddy roots that are covered in darkness is used for her, too: ‘Sie war wie eine Wasserblüte, die auf dem Spiegel schwimmend unter den Küssen der Sonne lächelt, unberührt von dem Wissen, daß ihr langer Stengel im dunklen Schlamme der Tiefe wurzelt’ (V, 1009). Initially she does not even perceive Joseph but looks through him, as she is accustomed to doing with any ordinary slave. It is only through the constant whispers of the dwarf Dûdu, who hates Joseph, that she feels compelled to take notice of him. Thus Joseph enters her field of vision and awareness. He is already well advanced in Potiphar’s house and has spent seven years there, when Mut’s feelings for him are finally kindled. Over this period they have undergone a transformation which has led from indifference to reluctant interest, to increasingly loving adoration. Yet even at this point she

is still quite unconscious of her feelings for him. It is a classically Freudian dream with overt sexual symbolism that finally opens her eyes and ends her self-deception. Under the shattering impact of this dream she makes one half-hearted attempt at resistance, when she tries unsuccessfully to persuade Potiphar to get rid of the foreign slave. Potiphar refuses. From then on, she yields with diminishing restraint to her increasing passion, willingly accepting self-humiliation and in the end utter degradation, when as the last resort to win Joseph she has recourse to black magic.

During this time Mut undergoes a physical and psychological transformation. Her body changes from a maidenly beauty to one that is witchlike, even evocative of a hag: 'Der neue Körper der Mut war ein Hexen-, ein Geschlechts- und Liebeskörper und also von fern auch etwas vettelhaft' (V1159). This physical metamorphosis is paralleled by her psychological development. From the spiritual concept of preserved virginity, of the nun who is the bride of the god (Amun), she turns into the Maenad and Bacchante, frenzied and possessed by the new god. Yet the whole experience also seems to contain a form of catharsis for her. After Joseph's appointment as Pharaoh's minister, the narrative returns for a last time to the unfortunate Mut so as to conclude her history and tidy up any loose ends. We are told that she has returned to her former life, dedicated again to Amun and fully partaking in the god's characteristic narrowness and bigotry. A glimmer has, however, remained within the darkness of her soul and this glimmer is the source of light in her life:

Und doch ruhte auf dem Grunde ihrer Seele ein Schatz [...]. Ein tief versunkener Schatz, der aber immer still heraufleuchtete in den trüben Tagen ihrer Entsagung und, wieviel Niederlage auch darin einschlägig war, ihrem geistlichen, ihrem weltlichen Stolz eine unentbehrliche Ergänzung von menschlichem, von Lebens-

stolz verlieh. (V, 1497)

Ultimately there is no escape for Mut-em-enet from her hollow existence; yet unlike her husband Potiphar, she has at least experienced one brief time when she could feel the very pulse of life, when this hollow existence became filled with the experience of her own being. In this respect her degradation is nevertheless also a form of regeneration.

2. Mut-em-enet as a Transpersonal Figure

Mut's development on a physical and personal level finds an interesting parallel in her development as a transpersonal and symbolic figure. Berger (pp. 195-204) has pointed out in considerable detail how Mut is stylized as mother-goddess, as the Great Mother, and indeed, the traits of Mut-Isis-Hathor contained in her figure cannot escape the attentive reader. The goddess Mut was the wife of Amun and was gradually developed into a mother-prototype. The Greeks identified her with Hera, mother of the gods. She shares many characteristics with Isis, while Hathor was identified with Aphrodite. Mut-em-enet's connection with the female archetype as such is evident not only because of her 'Urmutternamen' (IV, 870) but because she identifies with each of the goddesses at various times, adopting a mythical role. Like the archetype of the Great Mother, she, too, is a deeply ambivalent figure, who is generous and benevolent at one time, luring and seductive at another, turning into the destructive Terrible Mother when she loses control over her son/lover. Then she becomes the revengeful Ishtar, set upon destroying Gilgamesh, when he resists her advances.

In the section on the revolving sphere I referred to the ouroboros as a symbol of wholeness, which embraces both non-differentiated, but also highly-developed human consciousness as it appears at the end of the process of individuation. The archetype of the Great Mother, with its many and ambivalent aspects, is equally comprehensive and a totality that belongs to the sphere of the ouroboros:

So ist die Große Mutter uroborisch; furchtbar und verschlingend und gleichzeitig gut, gebärend; helfend, aber auch verführer-zerstörend; faszinierend-verwirrend und weisheitbringend; Tier und Gottheit, verführende Hure und unberührbare Jungfrau, ural- und ewig jung. (Neumann I, p. 258)

All these characteristics we find present in Mut-em-enet. As far as her public role is concerned, she is virginity personified—somewhat transcending the secular world it seems. Early in her relationship with Joseph her feelings for him consist of ‘mütterlich bewundernde Zärtlichkeit’ (V, 1097), and she often seems to identify with his mother Rahel. Yet she carries her identification with the mother-principle even further when she *becomes* Ishtar and Isis at the height of her passion. Joseph, when he recognizes her intents and considers his seven reasons for chastity (corresponding to the seven veils of Ishtar), perceives also something ancient and wanton in her, which signals danger to him:

Es graute dem Joseph vor dem, was Mut, das ägyptische Weib, in seinen Augen verkörperte und womit sein Blut zu vermischen ein erbstolzes Reinheitsgebot ihn warnte: die Greisheit des Landes, in das er verkauft worden, die Dauer, welche verheißungslos, in wüster Unwandelbarkeit, hinausstarre in eine Zukunft, wild, tot und bar der Gewärtigung, doch Miene machte, die Pranke zu heben und das ratend vor ihr stehende Kind der Verheißung an ihre Brust zu reißen, damit es ihr seinen Namen nenne, von welcher Beschaffenheit sie nun auch war. Denn das verheißungslos Greise, das war das Geile zugleich, nach jungem Blute lüstern. (V, 1139)

Joseph perceives instinctively that the unfortunate Mut embodies a

meaning, is representative of something, which will bring about his own destruction if he yields to it.

The image of the sphinx that is invoked here, and the whole scene, go back to Joseph's dream at the Pyramids, where the sphinx asked for his submission and that he reveal his name.⁷³ Two aspects are central here. The revealing of one's name is a recurring motif in the novel and particularly in the episode of Mut and Joseph. Its mythical origin is explained in detail much later in the novel in connection with the attempted assault on Pharaoh's life while Joseph is in prison (V, 1347). There we are told that Isis, ambitious for her son Horus, tries to discover the last, or true, name of Re the creator and sun god, who had grown extremely old and somewhat decrepit. She poisons him and withholds the antidote until he has revealed his last name, thus yielding all his power to her, and making 'ihre Wissensgewalt über ihn vollkommen' (V, 1349). The motif therefore implies loss of power and total submission. The priests of On allude to it when they describe Amun's usurpation of political power (IV, 736). Joseph's angry brothers use it to threaten him, after he has told them his dream about the sheaves: '»Aber wir werden dich lehren, wie es mit Stehen und Neigen bestellt ist, und werden dir noch die Herren zeigen, daß du uns deinen Namen nennst und es merkst, wie unverschämt du gelogen!«' (IV, 510). In a more specific way, and particularly in psychological terms, the motif further implies submission to the Great Mother, the yielding of consciousness and the surrender of the spirit. Here it is linked to the second aspect of Joseph's

⁷³ It was Mann's intent to present Joseph as an Oedipus figure, and as an act of poetic licence he imposed the image of the Greek sphinx onto the sphinx of Gizeh. In a letter to Wolfgang Schneditz, dated 12.2.1949, he writes: 'Aber der Roman nimmt es ja wissenschaftlich nicht so ganz genau, und ich habe das lagernde Untier tatsächlich aus dem Ägyptischen ins Griechische hinübergespielt, weil mir daran lag, den jungen Joseph als rätselratenden Ödipus vor ihr stehen zu lassen' (*DüD*, p. 332).

dream at the pyramids, that is, the sphinx. Neumann writes about it:

Diese Sphinx ist der uralte Feind und der Drache des Abgrunds, die Macht der Erdmutter in ihrem uroborischen Aspekt. Sie ist die Große Mutter, die die vaterlose Erdwelt und ihr Todesgesetz beherrscht, und mit Untergang alles Menschliche bedroht, das ihre Frage nicht zu beantworten vermag. [...] Seine [i.e., Oedipus'] Heldenantwort, mit der er zum Menschen wird, ist sein Sieg über das Schicksal, als Sieg des Geistes, als Sieg des Männlichen über das Chaos. (Neumann I, pp. 134-35)

Time and again Mut is linked to the sphinx. She is described as 'Löwin' and 'Löwenweib' (V, 1165), and particularly in her increasingly demanding passion she is likened to the sphinx, 'wenn sie schrecklich wurde in ihrem Verlangen und als Löwin die Tatze gegen ihn hob' (V, 1260). When Mut has reached the height of her passion and no longer knows any restraint, she reveals her 'true' identity, that is, she recognizes her mythical role and begins to *celebrate* it. She is the archetype of the Great Mother:

»Mit der Mutter schläft jeder — weißt du das nicht? Das Weib ist die Mutter der Welt; ihr Sohn ist der Mann, und jeder Mann zeugt in der Mutter — muß ich dir das Anfänglichste sagen? Isis bin ich, die große Mutter, und trage die Geierhaube! Mut ist mein Muttername und du sollst mir den deinen nennen, holder Sohn, in süßer, zeugender Weltennacht ...« (V, 1175)

In contrast to the Oedipus myth, Joseph's heroic deed is *not* to give the answer. Yet it is the heroic fight of Oedipus, or even more so of Gilgamesh, who was successful, which we observe in the relationship between Joseph and Mut-em-enet. This is confirmed by the image of the father, which rescues him at the last moment, and which must be understood as a symbol of the spirit and of consciousness.

On the personal level Mut turns into the woman who is consumed by her passion and has lost all reason. In the chapter *Die Hündin* and generally at the height of her passion she is stylized as the Maenad:

Sie war eine Heimgesuchte und tief Berührte, gänzlich aus sich herausgetreten, der Welt der Gesittung nicht mehr gehörig und ihren Maßstäben entfremdet, eine starrblickende Bergläuferin, bereit, ihre Brüste wilden Tieren zu bieten, eine wild bekränzte, keuchend jauchzende Thyrsusschwingerin. (V, 1209)

On a transpersonal level then she is Agave, the frenzied Bacchante and mother of Pentheus, who tears her own son to pieces, not recognizing him in her frenzy. This is the role Mut acts out when she uses her teeth to tear Joseph's clothes—her only booty—to pieces. She reveals herself as the Terrible Mother. This is the second time Joseph has been sacrificed and also the moment of his second birth. The first time he was literally sacrificed when his brothers threw him into the pit. This second time he has been symbolically sacrificed, when his hair was thrown into the fire during the strange black magic ritual as one of the offerings made to Hecate, who, as we remember from Joseph's earlier conversations with the old Ishmaelite, assisted at the second birth of Osiris. We recall the archetypal image of Joseph's brothers sitting in a circle around the cauldron, symbol of cyclic recurrence and rebirth, just before his arrival in the valley of Dotan. The invocation of Hecate by Mut and her slave Tabubu is the exact parallel to this scene.

In both cases Joseph arrives 'um nach dem Rechten zu sehen' (IV, 555 and V, 1251). Both times he wears a wreath of flowers. The second time it is a Lotus wreath: 'Er hatte einen blauen Lotuskranz auf dem Kopf und noch eine Extrablume im Munde' (V, 1256). Berger has shown the sources of this motif,⁷⁴ which occurs in Jaakob's Anubis-dream and again in Mut's enactment of Isis: '»Ich bin die Flur, die nach dir ruft im Durste, mannheitwälzende Flut, Stier deiner Mutter, das du

⁷⁴ 'Das Vergessen des Lotuskranzes "im feuchten Grunde" spielt jedoch noch auf einen anderen Zug der Osiris-Sage an. Gemeint ist der in Jaakobs Anubis-Traum erwähnte "Lotuskranz, den Osiris bei der von ihm befruchteten Nephthys zurückläßt"' (p. 208).

schwellend über sie trittst und dich mir vermählst, ehe du mich verlässest, schöner Gott, und deinen Lotuskranz bei mir vergissegst im feuchten Grunde!«' (V, 1170).

The Lotus-wreath, which reveals to Isis her husband's adultery, is the symbol of Osiris. Thus Joseph wears the adornment of the god when he returns to Mut in the empty house. Yet while she reveals herself as the Terrible Mother, he proves that he does not belong to the long line of those heroes who failed to liberate themselves from this archetype. He is neither Pentheus, nor Osiris, Adonis or Tammuz. Joseph is the successful hero and it is the spirit, the image of the father, which rescues him.

3. Beknechons and Dûdu: The Terrible Father

Mut's symbolic function as Great Mother is further confirmed by her association with the god Amun, whose main representatives in the third volume are Beknechons and the dwarf Dûdu. Amun's religion in the novel is shown as deeply conservative, sometimes even bordering on the archaic. Beknechons' priestly costume reflects both aspects. With beautiful irony it is anachronistically described as 'altfränkisch' (V, 947), while the tiger-skin which forms part of it, 'das Ur-Kleid der Menschen, das heilige Tierfell' (V, 948), clearly alludes to the archaic. The expression of Beknechons' face is a further reflection of what Amun stands for:

[sein Gesicht] hatte eine Art, über Menschen und Dinge hinwegzublicken, die mehr als hochmütig war, denn sie kam der Ablehnung alles gegenwärtigen Weltwesens gleich, einer Verneinung und Verurteilung des gesamten Lebensfortganges seit Jahrhun-

derthen oder auch Jahrtausenden. (V, 947)

Amun displays not only an insatiable lust for power, but also a deep-rooted resentment of all new influences, of everything different or foreign. Politically Amun's religion stands for reactionary attitudes, combining intolerance with overt racism and nationalism: 'Er war starr und streng, ein verbotender Feind jeder ins Allgemeine ausschauenden Spekulation, unhold dem Ausland und unbeweglich beim nicht zu erörternden Völkerbrauch, beim heilig Angestammten verharrend' (V, 942). The sophisticated Beknechons is the educated, upper-class representative of these attitudes. In Dûdu, who is rather a Rumpelstilzkin figure, they find a more primitive expression in his obtuse and unshakable narrow-mindedness. For instance, he insists on Joseph's eating separately from the Egyptian servants; when the other Egyptians become somewhat relaxed about these religious rules, he puts on an act of indignation, fully revealing his own primitive level:

so rückte er amunfromm-kundgebungsstreng weitab von dem Greuel, spie auch wohl nach den vier Himmelsgegenden und führte im Kreise um sich herum allerlei exorzisierende und die Besudelung absühnende Zaubereien aus, welchen die Beflissenheit, den Joseph zu kränken, überdeutlich abzumerken war. (V, 944)

On a personal level we recognize in Beknechons and Dûdu familiar types whose totalitarian and dictatorial attitudes reveal them as representatives of Fascism.

On a transpersonal psychological level they represent two different aspects of the Terrible Father. In mythology the Terrible Father is the negative male aspect, which must be defeated by the hero if he is to succeed. Beknechons represents the spiritual, the *Geist* element of this. Neumann describes this aspect and the appearance it usually takes:

Dieser furchtbare Vater ist aber wieder transpersonal. Er wirkt als ein Geist-System, das gewissermaßen von der anderen Seite her, von oben, das Bewußtsein des Sohnes gefangensetzt und umbringt. Dies Geist-System tritt auf als übermächtiges altes Gesetz, als alte Religionsform, alte Moral, alte Gesellschaft, altes Gewissen, Konvention, Tradition oder irgendeine andere geistige Gegebenheit, die den Sohn festhält und sein Neues und Zukünftiges verhindert. (Neumann I, p. 154)

This is precisely what Beknechons stands for in the novel. In his first discussion with Mut he emphasizes his belief in the old order both on a political but also on a moral and social level. The positive elements of the new order, 'das Reich und der Reichtum' (V, 957), are in his opinion merely the just deserts of the old, not an achievement of the new. The absolute preservation of the old order is imperative for him:

Herr werden muß das Alte im Neuen und gesetzt werden das Nervig-Volkszüchtige über das Reich, daß es der Lockerung steuere und nicht um den Lohn komme, der sein ist. Denn nicht den Söhnen des Neuen, sondern den Söhnen des Alten gebührt das Reich. (V, 957)

That political power together with unquestioning obedience and submission takes priority over the demands of old morality is evident from Beknechons' attitude when he hears about the rejection of Mut's advances by Joseph. He suspends his moral disapproval entirely in the face of what he perceives as dangerous rebellion. He regards it as a rejection of Amun and therefore perceives in it the seeds of revolution, the coming of a new order. Joseph's submission therefore becomes imperative and Beknechons requests Mut to break Joseph's stubborn reluctance; he demands 'den Störrigen zur Unterwerfung zu bringen' (V, 1226), if need be by applying force: 'nötigenfalls sei der Säumige auf dem Wege zwanglicher Vorführung zur Willfähigkeit anzuhalten' (V, 1226).

Dûdu represents a different aspect of the Terrible Father. His sexual

potency and fertility, which set him apart from his own race, are the dominating factor and source of pride in his life. He never tires of mentioning this fact to the eunuch Potiphar, who deeply resents his tactlessness. When Joseph first speaks before Potiphar during their 'chance' encounter in the garden, he very cleverly argues the case of spiritual fertility, which he considers more important than sexual fertility. With his clever arguments he wins Potiphar's heart, but also Dûdu's hatred, 'weil er sich durch sie in seinem Vollwerte und in Vorzügen beeinträchtigt fand, die den Stolz und das Gediegenheitsbewußtsein seines unterwüchsigen Lebens ausmachten' (V, 943). Twice Dûdu offers to carry out punishment of Joseph, and on both occasions he suggests castration as appropriate. While Beknechons wants Joseph's spiritual emasculation, Dûdu demands his physical castration. The phallic dwarf belongs to the chthonic, tellurian element and it is this other aspect of the Terrible Father which he represents on a transpersonal level:

Der furchtbare Erdvater der chthonischen Kräfte gehört psychologisch gesehen zum Bezirk der Großen Mutter. Er ist am häufigsten die überwältigende Aggression als Triebphallus oder als zerstörerisch aggressives Monstrum. Aber auch in der Überwältigung des Ich durch den männlichen Sexual-Aggressions-Machttrieb oder durch irgendeine Triebform überhaupt ist die Dominanz der Großen Mutter sichtbar. Denn sie ist die Triebherrin des Unbewußten, die Herrin der Tiere, der phallisch furchtbare Vater ist nur ihr Trabant, nicht ein ihr gleichgewichtiges männliches Prinzip. (Neumann I, p. 153)

The Terrible Father thus turns out to be an instrument of destruction in the hands of matriarchy. The emasculation of the son, whether spiritual or physical, prevents his victory and keeps him dependent. This was the symbolic gesture which Huij and Tuij made when they sacrificed their son Potiphar to the new spirit of the father, which they perceived but failed to understand. They continued to cling to the old, and the

sacrifice of their son is in the spirit of the old, the matriarchal order. By castrating him they actually made their sacrifice to the Great Mother. Potiphar, when he sits in judgment, acts differently and more wisely. Dûdu, as the true culprit, receives the severer punishment in place of Joseph. Yet Potiphar spares Dûdu's masculinity and instead resorts to symbolic castration by ordering that half his tongue be cut out. Joseph, on the other hand, is given the mildest punishment which is possible in his case and his second descent into the pit is thus purely symbolic.

Dûdu, Beknechons and Mut-em-enet are all figures belonging to the archetype of the Great Mother in its different, and both male and female, aspects. The fact that they play an important role on a personal and transpersonal level highlights the novel's extraordinary mediation between events and their significance. The sexual drama we observe with Mut turns out to be of spiritual significance, that is, it partakes of the manifold processes of Joseph's struggle and development.

With Dûdu and Beknechons we observe first of all a socio-political drama, whereby ancient political rivalries and power struggles are related to Western European politics in the 1930's. At the same time, however, these events go far beyond their political significance in that they are also the prefiguration of an archetype. Who shall say where an event (as fact) stops and its meaning (as archetype and symbol) starts? By its nature it is a constant interplay.

CHAPTER FOUR: JOSEPH AND THE PROCESS OF
INDIVIDUATION

INTRODUCTION

In my general introduction I briefly touched on the novel's apparent determinism, which I linked to the question of identity (the Self) and Schopenhauer's philosophy of fate and destiny. Reflecting on destiny in the life of the individual, he comments that, with hindsight, the course of events often appears to have been predetermined and unavoidable: 'Wenn wir manche Scenen unserer Vergangenheit genau durchdenken, erscheint uns Alles darin so wohl abgekartet, wie in einem recht planmäßig angelegten Roman' (*Parerga I*, p. 225, note). He reinforces this thought further when he describes how other people are perceived: 'die auftretenden Menschen erscheinen ihm wie bloße Schauspieler' (*Parerga I*, p. 225). Schopenhauer calls this concept *transcendent fatalism*, and far from dismissing it as irrational, he seeks an explanation, which he finds not in external forces, however, but within ourselves:

Weder unser *Thun*, noch unser *Lebenslauf ist unser Werk*; wohl aber Das, was Keiner dafür hält: *unser Wesen und Daseyn*. Denn auf Grundlage dieses und der in strenger Kausalverknüpfung eintretenden Umstände und äußern Begebenheiten geht unser Thun und Lebenslauf mit vollkommener Nothwendigkeit vor sich. Demnach ist schon bei der Geburt des Menschen sein ganzer Lebenslauf, bis ins Einzelne, unwiderruflich bestimmt; so daß eine Somnambule in höchster Potenz ihn genau vorhersagen könnte. (*Parerga I*, p. 225, note)

Thus Schopenhauer sees our very essence and existence as the determining factor of our lives and its causality therefore as inevitable.

His concept appears to correspond very closely to Jung's concept of the *Self*. The *Self*, Jung writes, is present from the beginning: 'Wie das Unbewußte, so ist das Selbst das a priori Vorhandene, aus dem das

Ich hervorgeht. Es präformiert sozusagen das Ich. *Nicht ich schaffe mich selbst, ich geschehe vielmehr mir selber* (GW 11, 391). The Self, which is present, wholly and completely, from the beginning, contains also the whole, detailed blueprint of our life: ‘The total archetypal system—what Jung termed ‘the Self’—has programmed within it the complete scenario for individual life. As the story unfolds, new archetypal motifs emerge, expressing the points which the action has reached’.⁷⁵ The archetypes dominate our lives; they are and determine its pattern. They are the melting pot of ancestral experience, out of which our own life emerges in its own individual shape. Jung writes:

Diese Archetypen, deren innerstes Wesen der Erfahrung unzugänglich ist, stellen den Niederschlag des psychischen Funktionierens der Ahnenreihe dar, d.h. die durch millionenfache Wiederholung aufgehäuften und zu Typen verdichteten Erfahrungen des organischen Daseins überhaupt. In diesen Archetypen sind daher alle Erfahrungen vertreten, welche seit Urzeit auf diesem Planeten vorgekommen sind. Sie sind im Archetypus um so deutlicher, je häufiger und je intensiver sie waren. Der Archetypus wäre, um mit KANT zu reden, etwa das Noumenon des Bildes, welches die Intuition wahrnimmt und im Wahrnehmen erzeugt. (GW 6, 729)

This concept of archetypes corresponds very closely to the novel’s binding patterns of depth, which seem to determine the individual lives of the characters we observe. They re-enact these patterns, and because most of them do this quite unconsciously, these people appear to us as types, rather than individuals. This is because unconsciously they identify with a certain role which fits a perceived pattern. The individual consciousness remains undifferentiated, however. Ego-consciousness, if we take the example of Esau or Lea, remains undeveloped to the point of non-existence.

⁷⁵ Anthony Stevens, *Archetype: A Natural History of the Self* (London: Routledge, 1990), p. 76.

In the section on Joseph as narrator, we shall see how he gradually perceives his own life in terms of a story or play, and increasingly plays his part consciously, shaping it actively, in contrast to other characters, whose consciousness is mythical and for whom life is a fulfilling of patterns, which without consciousness can neither be manipulated nor broken. What Joseph tries to explain to his aged brothers at the end of the novel is ultimately an understanding of individual life which corresponds closely to Schopenhauer's concept of *transcendent fatalism*: like the actors in a play, we are bound by our roles, however much we may dislike it. Joseph, parallel to his growing consciousness, perceives himself as a character in a story or play. This play is, however, still in the making, and he cannot be sure how it is going to develop or end:

Das weiß der Mensch nicht im voraus, wie er sich halten wird in seiner Geschichte, sondern wenn's da ist, so zeigt es sich, und er wird sich bekannt. Ich bin neugierig auf mich selbst und darauf, wie ich zu ihnen sprechen werde, denn ich habe keine Idee davon. (V, 1592).

Individual life is the discovery and exploration of one's Self and, as the Self has an *a priori* existence, it defines and sets the boundaries in which the life of the individual can develop. The novel reinforces this point, not only through the binding patterns of depth, but also through the fact that Joseph's life, for instance, is predetermined. Shortly before he is born, Laban and his wife take the pregnant Rahel to a priest and seer. He correctly predicts the future for both Rahel and her unborn child. The words and imagery he uses seem quite obscure at the time, even to the seer himself: 'Das Kind werde in die Grube fahren und dennoch leben, es werde sein wie das Korn, das nicht Frucht trägt, es stürbe denn' (IV, 341). He also predicts Joseph's rise, which he describes as his 'Erhebung des Hauptes aus dem Tode' (ibid.). It is not a

highly-detailed prediction, but nevertheless it gives a recognizable outline of Joseph's life, although at the time even the seer himself is unable to interpret his vision: 'Recht verständlich sei es nicht, hatte der Seher gesagt, er selber verstehe es nicht' (IV, 341). His language is metaphorical and although he can perceive the image, he is not able to endow it with meaning. Yet, as the Oedipus myth shows perhaps most drastically, knowledge without meaning, that is, without correct interpretation, is useless. Oedipus leaves his (foster) parents to avoid his fate as predicted by the oracle. In doing so he unwittingly creates the preconditions necessary to fulfil the prophecy. In this sense life is a *fait accompli*, because our actions can only bring about the predetermined events, never prevent them. Joseph seems to have considerable choice. Yet in crucial situations which will determine the further course of his life, he always acts in accordance with the prophecy. As a result he experiences also a very powerful sense of destiny.

The process of individuation is always one of differentiation. It is the unfolding of archetypal patterns, of life itself and the development of an individuated personality, that is, a consciousness which perceives itself as separate from the collective. It is a process of increasing consciousness and conscious perception of the patterns which are the determining factors of individual life. Individuation means ultimately becoming oneself, achieving wholeness. The Self and ego-consciousness as the tool of Self-perception then form an integrated totality. The interplay between them functions fully, and their union represents wholeness. It is also the union of *Sein* and *Bedeuten*. The individual's search for meaning throughout life is a constant striving for consciousness, for the interlocking of *Sein* and *Bedeuten*. Although being may house an indwelling meaning, the meaning can only be made conscious if sepa-

rated, that is through differentiation. No synthesis is possible without previous analysis. Through a process of analysis and interpretation—of our actions, dreams, fantasies, feelings, to mention only some—we can achieve a level of consciousness which enables us increasingly to recognize and actualize our Self. Jung defines individuation as follows:

Individuation bedeutet: zum Einzelwesen werden, und, insofern wir unter Individualität unsere innerste, letzte und unvergleichbare Einzigartigkeit verstehen, zum *eigenen Selbst werden*. Man könnte «Individuation» darum auch als «Verselbstung» oder als «Selbstverwirklichung» übersetzen. (GW 7, 266)

This process of individuation and of developing consciousness consists of a movement from the collective towards separation, towards wholeness and a return to the collective:

Individualismus ist ein absichtliches Hervorheben und Betonen der vermeintlichen Eigenart im Gegensatz zu kollektiven Rücksichten und Verpflichtungen. Individuation aber bedeutet geradezu eine bessere und völliger Erfüllung der kollektiven Bestimmungen des Menschen, indem eine genügende Berücksichtigung der Eigenart des Individuums eine bessere soziale Leistung erhoffen läßt, als wenn die Eigenart vernachlässigt oder gar unterdrückt wird. (GW 7, 267)

We can observe this development in the figure of Joseph. He emerges out of the collective, from which he becomes separated, physically by being sold as a slave into Egypt, psychologically by developing a rather inflated ego-consciousness which reinforces his apparent individualism. Eventually, however, he becomes reintegrated into the collective, yet without losing his clearly-defined identity. On a physical level this happens when he is reunited with his family; on a figurative and psychological level it finds expression in his social commitment.

(i) THE PUBERTY OF EGO-CONSCIOUSNESS

1. Identity, Individuality, and Persona

a) Psychology

Joseph is born into a world where people derive their identity from identification, usually with mythical predecessors. They play the roles which, as they perceive it, fit best the patterns of their lives and their own inclinations. This is one of the central aspects of the *Joseph* novels and Mann never tired of elaborating this pivotal point of the novel:

Infantilismus — welch eine Rolle spielt dies echt psychoanalytische Element im Leben von uns allen, einen wie starken Anteil hat er an der Lebensgestaltung des Menschen! Leben heißt: in Spuren gehen, Nachleben, Identifikation mit einem sichtbarlichen oder überlieferten, mythischen Vorbild! Die Vaterbindung, Vaternachahmung, das Vaterspiel und seine Übertragung auf Vaterersatzbilder höherer, göttlicher Art — wie bestimmend wirken diese »Infantilismen« auf das individuelle Leben ein! Alles Leben ist Wiederkehr und Wiederholung, und der sogenannte »Charakter« des Individuums eine mythische Rolle, die in der Illusion origineller Einmaligkeit gespielt wird. (XIII, 164-65)⁷⁶

‘Individuality’ which derives from imitation cannot be restricted to the characters in the ‘mythical’ world of the novel, or to a historical past—Mann’s words above clearly suggest otherwise. He perceived the same process in the modern ‘individual’. Given that individual human life and development depend crucially on imitation and the recognition of patterns, this insight is not altogether startling and appears, instead, as a natural consequence. Yet human beings are not just part of the collective. A sense of separateness, of individuality, is felt by most and it finds many different forms of expression, although often enough such individuality may turn out to be largely illusory.

Jung uses the term *persona* to describe one type of so-called indi-

⁷⁶ [On Myself].

viduality. Originally this term described the actor's mask, characterizing the role he played. The *persona*, therefore, conveys *what*, rather than *who* somebody is. In other words, *persona* is but the mask of individuality. Jung writes:

Nur vermöge des Umstandes, daß die Persona ein mehr oder weniger zufälliger oder willkürlicher Ausschnitt aus der Kollektivpsyche ist, können wir dem Irrtum verfallen, sie auch in toto für etwas »Individuelles« zu halten; sie ist aber, wie ihr Name sagt, nur eine Maske der Kollektivpsyche, *eine Maske, die Individualität vortäuscht*, die andere und einen selber glauben macht, man sei individuell, während es doch nur eine gespielte Rolle ist, in der die Kollektivpsyche spricht. (GW 7, 245)

True individuality and purely individual characteristics are part of the Self and not of the collective psyche. This means that, like the Self, individuality exists *a priori*, but it can emerge only through a process of consciousness; in other words, it must be differentiated from the object—from the role. As long as one projects one's own individual features onto others and thus externalizes them, the *persona* or object of projection appears to have an autonomous power which determines the life of the individual. This power can only be broken through a process of differentiation.

In the figure of Joseph we can very clearly observe the power and make-up of the *persona*. He adopts and acts out many roles, before he really becomes himself. Each role is, however, not just arbitrarily chosen, but forms an integral and necessary part of his process of individuation.

Erich Neumann, in his book on the origins of consciousness, shows that the development of consciousness, both collectively and individually, characteristically follows an archetypal sequence. In his introduction he writes:

Es ist zu zeigen, daß und wie eine Reihe von Archetypen einen wesentlichen Bestandteil der Mythologie bilden, gesetzmäßig

zusammenhängen und im Nacheinander ihrer Stadien die Entwicklung des Bewußtseins bedingen. In der ontogenetischen Entwicklung hat das Ichbewußtsein des Einzelnen die gleichen archetypischen Stadien zu durchschreiten, welche innerhalb der Menschheit die Entwicklung des Bewußtseins bestimmt haben. Der Einzelne hat in seinem Leben die Spur nachzugehen, welche die Menschheit vor ihm gegangen ist. (Neumann I, p. 7)

The symbol of the *ouroboros*, the self-devouring serpent, marks the beginning as a symbol of oneness and wholeness. This is the state of undifferentiated consciousness, the state in which ego-consciousness is still firmly embedded within the Self. It is a paradisial state, a world into which separation and duality have not yet entered. The roundness of the *ouroboros*, makes it also a symbol of the maternal womb. Yet it is not a female symbol, as it unites within itself male and female qualities:

Der Uroboros tritt auf als das Runde, das enthält, d.h. als mütterlicher Urschoß und Uterus, aber auch als die Einheit des mannweiblichen Gegensatzes, als die Ureltern, als Vater und Mutter, die in dauernder Kohabitation miteinander verbunden sind. (ibid. p. 23)

This primal state is dissolved with the awakening of consciousness. Light begins to penetrate the darkness. The world is divided into opposites and ego-consciousness begins to emerge, gradually growing into a separate entity. The archetype that dominates this phase of beginning ego-consciousness is that of the Great Mother, with its characteristic duality of the good and nourishing Mother on the one hand, and the terrible, devouring and destructive Mother on the other. In mythology this phase is expressed in the many myths of the young harvest-god who is both son and lover of the Mother (or goddess) and who is confined within an endless cycle of being loved, killed and reborn:

Die Gestalt des Sohn-Geliebten folgt dem Stadium des Embryo und des Kindes. Im Erstarren seiner vom Unbewußten sich unterscheidenden Art, seines männlichen Anders-Seins wird er beinahe zum Partner des mütterlichen Unbewußten, ist Sohn, aber

auch Geliebter. Aber er ist diesem Mütterlich-Weiblichen noch nicht gewachsen, erliegt ihm sterbend, kehrt zu ihm zurück und wird von ihm eingeschluckt. (Neumann I, p. 49)

Neumann points out (*ibid.*, p. 51-52) that these young men have virtually no *individual* features, but share common characteristics. Their physical beauty and appearance, for instance, always receives much emphasis. They are not heroic, masculine figures of strength and character. Instead they are puerile figures of almost feminine beauty who tend to wither as rapidly as the spring flowers to which they are often enough compared or linked. Their sexuality does not appear clearly defined.⁷⁷ Another common feature is their egotism and narcissistic self-consciousness: ‘Es sind in jedem Sinne gefällige Knaben, deren narzißtische Selbstbezogenheit deutlich ist. Sie ist, wie es am klarsten der Narzissus-Mythos ausspricht, eine Bezogenheit auf den eigenen Körper’ (*ibid.*, p. 51).

b) ‘Ich und die Mutter sind eins’

Without difficulty we recognize in these descriptions Joseph as he ap-

⁷⁷ Murdaugh (p. 88, note), commenting on Joseph’s androgyny, points out that there is a parallel between him and Ishmael: ‘It is interesting to note that Ishmael shares these same characteristics with Joseph, namely, a wild desert beauty and ambiguous sexuality. Yet Ishmael is cursed while Joseph is blessed. Joseph’s bisexuality, however, is purely symbolic, while Ishmael actually attempts to engage in homosexuality, which in the rigid patriarchal society of the novel is so abhorrent as to be considered equal to Father-Castration (IV, p. 194).’ Murdaugh ignores Ishmael’s motivation. He tries to engage Isaac in homosexual activities as an action against their father Abraham. On a symbolic level, he becomes thus an agent of the Great Mother, not unlike Dûdu and Beknechons, for castration in whatever form is the ultimate yielding to the Great Mother. The ‘rigid patriarchal society’ abhors homosexuality as ‘Father-Castration’ because it results in a failure to procreate. This failure is precisely Ishmael’s underlying motivation. This is stated in the passage Murdaugh refers to: ‘er war im Begriffe, den Isaak zu unterweltlicher Liebe zu verleiten, und wenn Isaak nicht gezeugt hätte in des Weibes Schoß, so wären nicht Jaakob gekommen und seine Zwölfe’ (IV, 194).

pears at first in the novel. From the very beginning, when he sits at his father's well at night, projecting his own characteristics onto the moon, his narcissism is given considerable emphasis (IV, 79). The chapter *Der Adonishain*, where he explains the myth of Adonis to his younger brother Benjamin, reveals clearly his identification with the young harvest-god, largely unconscious though it may be. In the grove of Adonis he regularly collects the supply of twigs from which he makes the myrtle wreaths which he loves to wear. Traditionally the myrtle wreath is worn by the young bride and its older links to Adonis or Tammuz reveal it as a symbol of the sacrificial victim. Joseph is fully aware of these links, yet he is as adamant in refusing to reveal them to Benjamin, as he is in his refusal to make such a myrtle wreath for his younger brother to wear, and he tells him: 'Was soll dir die Myrte? Sie paßt nicht zu dir. Man muß achtgeben, womit man sich schmückt, und seine Wahl treffen' (IV, 444). His words show that the choice of the myrtle wreath for himself is a conscious act.

Joseph tells Benjamin about the origin of Adonis, that his mother had an incestuous relationship with her father and how, after she found herself pregnant and fled from home, she was transformed into a tree. The girl's name was Myrrha, and it is from this tree, named after her, that Adonis was born. Although Joseph tells Benjamin this myth, he refuses to give the name of the girl and its tree. Benjamin's inquiry receives a surprisingly curt answer from him: 'Willst du hören, so höre und wirf mir nicht unreife Fragen gleich Steinen ins Gehege!' (IV, 455). When Benjamin, at the end of the chapter, tries once more, Joseph again evades the answer. It is clear that he tries to conceal his identification with the dying young god, whose symbol, the myrtle, is sacred to Aphrodite, and which he has adopted and reserved for himself. He de-

scribes Adonis as 'Sohn einer Lieblichen' (IV, 455), which throughout the novel is his own epithet, too. Most important, however, is the fact that he perceives the hermaphroditic qualities of Adonis or Tammuz. Indeed, he recognizes the god as part of the mother goddess herself:

»Viele nennen den Tammuz nicht Herrscher, sondern Herrscherin. Sie meinen dann Nana, die Göttin, zugleich aber den Gott, der mit ihr ist, oder ihn statt ihrer, denn ist auch wohl Ischtar ein Weib? Ich sah Bilder von ihr, und sie war bärtig. Also, warum sage ich nicht: Ich sah Bilder von ›ihm‹?« (IV, 457)

In the previous chapter we have seen that the archetype of the Great Mother, with its many ambivalent aspects, belongs to the sphere of the *ouroboros*. The image of the bearded goddess, the *barbata*, which Joseph mentions here, unites, like the *ouroboros*, male and female qualities:

Der uroborische Charakter der Großen Mutter schimmert überall da durch, wo sie androgyn [...], als bärtige Göttin verehrt wird. Die Frau mit dem Bart, ebenso wie die mit dem Phallus, zeigt ihren uroborischen Charakter durch das Ungeschiedensein von Männlichem und Weiblichem. (Neumann I, p. 48)

Joseph will encounter the image of the *barbata* a second time, when Mut-em-enet reveals herself as the bearded goddess, and he recognizes in her 'Ischtar im Barte' (V, 1133). At this early stage, however, the image occurs at the beginning of the separation between mother goddess and son-lover, between the unconscious, symbolized by the *ouroboros*, and the emerging ego-consciousness. It is also an indicator that this separation is not yet genuine and lasting. The young ego, as yet, is too weak not to succumb eventually to the unconscious. Thus Joseph's identification with the role of Tammuz is an unconscious expression of his psychological development up to this point—a projection.

Neumann sees this whole archetypal pattern as the expression of a conflict which is unavoidable, and which must be successfully resolved and overcome before further development can take place. It repeats itself in every individual life: 'Die Beziehung des Sohngeliebten zur Großen Mutter ist eine archetypisch wirksame Situation, deren Überwindung auch heute noch die Voraussetzung ist für eine Weiterentwicklung des Ich und des Bewußtseins' (Neumann I, p. 52).

Joseph expresses his unconscious knowledge of these developments also in another way, when he tries to explain to Benjamin that an image or metaphor conveys only in an incomplete and thus insufficient way the essence or *idea* to which it tries to give expression and meaning. He concludes: 'Ohne Zweifel ist es das klügste, sich kein Bild zu machen. Aber wir müssen sprechen, und die linkischen Wahlfälle unserer Rede genügen der Wahrheit nicht' (IV, 457). Having made this proviso, he then goes on to tell Benjamin how it is Rahel whom Jaakob loves through him, Joseph. 'Ich und die Mutter sind eins' (IV, 458), he says to Benjamin. He repeats this same statement once more, when he tries to explain to Ruben why he is the true and legitimate inheritor of the Ketônnet (IV, 500). His use of the definite article, rather than the possessive pronoun or no article at all, signals to us that he is not just talking about the personal mother here.⁷⁸ His ego-consciousness is still embedded in the maternal *ouroboros*, his psyche still closely tied to the collective psyche. Although he makes great efforts to endow himself with seemingly individual characteristics, the fact that they are instantly familiar to everyone shows that they are only the *persona* and the mask of individuality.

⁷⁸ It is perhaps worth noting that these words also evoke those spoken by Jesus (John 10.30), translated by Luther as 'Ich und der Vater sind eines'.

c) The Destruction and Burial of the Harvest-God

Joseph himself, however, is largely unconscious of the identification, or at least of its implications. He approaches his own catastrophe in a single-minded and blind pursuit. Thus when he leaves his angelic guide in the valley of Dotan to meet his brothers, he wraps himself in the Ketônet and asks his guide almost coquettishly: '»Wie gefällt dir's? Bin ich ein bunter Schäfervogel in meinem Rock? Mami's Schleiergewand, wie steht es dem Sohne?!«' (IV, 547). The reference his words make to Tammuz is clear to him, for we remember that in the grove of Adonis he told Benjamin about the mourning cries of the women who come to seek the dead god and who imitate the cries of Ishtar: '»Wo bist du, mein schöner Gott, mein Gatte, mein Sohn, mein bunter Schäfervogel?«' (IV, 448). He also knows very well that 'Mami' is traditionally and first of all the name by which Ishtar, the Great Mother, is addressed. Again we can observe how his words work on a literal level, for he wears Rahel's Ketônet, but have a different and more important meaning on a figurative and symbolic level.

When he meets his brothers, he is dressed like the bride or sacrificial victim, wrapped in the veil and crowned by the myrtle wreath. Yet it is only after the attack, when he has been thrown into the well, that he begins to recognize the true meaning of this image:

Es war der Abgrund, in den der wahrhafte Sohn steigt, er, *der eins mit der Mutter ist* und mit ihr das Gewand trägt im Austausch. Es war der unterirdische Schafstall, Etura, das Reich der Toten, darin der Sohn Herr wird, der Hirte, der Dulder, das Opfer, der zerrissene Gott. (IV, 583 [my italics])

Here we can see clearly how the dominant archetype readily begins to shift, how Tammuz changes into Osiris, the lord of the underworld. Osiris has suffered his first death and his coffin is floating down the

Nile.

At this moment inside the well Joseph also realizes how he himself brought about the events, and how single-minded his pursuit was:

Staunend blickte er in das Rätsel selbstverderberischen Übermuts, das ihm durch sein eigenes vertracktes Benehmen aufgegeben war. Es zu lösen, ging über seinen Verstand, aber es geht über jeden, weil allzuviel Unberechenbares, Widervernünftiges und vielleicht Heiliges darin einschlägig ist. Wie er gezittert hatte, daß Jaakob nur nicht möchte im Tischbeutel die Ketônnet entdecken — gezittert vor seiner Errettung! (IV, 579)

His reflections here prove that, despite Joseph's great familiarity with the myth and despite his conscious imitation of it, the play acted out by him was written and directed entirely by his unconscious. His conscious mind had no control or influence on the course of events. With hindsight he is puzzled by his own actions, and perhaps even more by Jaakob's contribution to his downfall, which he now also recognizes: 'Aber da er nicht vergessen hatte, für sein Verderben zu sorgen — warum hatte Jaakob vergessen, ihm vorzubeugen? Auch hier lag ein Rätsel. [...] Zusammen hatten sie das Lamm in die Grube gebracht' (IV, 579).

Jaakob, too, recognizes his own guilt; yet he is unable to face up to it and keeps it well suppressed instead. When Joseph is already on his way to Egypt, Jaakob mourns his favourite with profuse emotional display. In a state of mental confusion he identifies even with Ishtar, the mother goddess, and seriously considers descending, like her, into the underworld to rescue the beloved. He believes that Joseph, like Tammuz, has been destroyed, torn to pieces by a wild boar. He has his suspicions about this 'boar' and thinks he knows 'wer der verdammte Eber gewesen sei, der Joseph zerrissen hatte!' (IV, 642). Yet he prefers not to pursue these suspicions; indeed, he actively suppresses them.

The narrator tells us why: 'Zuzugeben, daß er selber das Hauptschwein gewesen, das mit seiner gefühlsstolzen Narrenliebe den Joseph zur Strecke gebracht, das hieß er heimlich zuviel verlangt und wollte nichts davon wissen im bitteren Schmerz' (IV, 642).

In psychological terms Jaakob's identification with Ishtar, like the description of him as 'Hauptschwein', moves him into the sphere of the Great Mother. He is, in fact, her tool. The destructive side of the Great Mother is often experienced as a masculine force. One aspect of this we have seen in the previous chapter, when I examined the respective roles of Beknechons and Dûdu. This destructive masculine aspect is again reflected in mythology. For instance, it is Set, the brother of Isis, who destroys Osiris, Abel is killed by Cain, and many other examples could be found:

Mythologisch tritt diese [destruktive] Seite auf als männlich tödende Dunkelmacht, als verderbliches Tier, besonders als Eber, welcher der Sau, dem Symbol der Großen Mutter, zugeordnet ist, später als ihr männlich kriegerischer Begleiter oder als tödend-kastrierender Priester. (Neumann I, p. 148)

Thus in Joseph's first fall it is Jaakob who plays the destructive role, the assistant of the Great Mother, which in Joseph's second fall is played by Dûdu and Beknechons.

The narrative itself also reflects Joseph's psychological development. In the tetralogy's first two volumes we see him firmly embedded in the collective. His consciousness is mythical and non-differentiated. Trying to find an identity means looking for a suitable and adoptable role: the young, narcissistic harvest-god. Joseph is forcefully and violently separated from the collective, and this separation is paralleled by a rather sudden awakening of consciousness. It is then that he perceives himself for the first time apart from the collective psyche, as an

individual, a separate being and person saying 'I'. This consciousness can only develop through separation:

Ichbildung kann nur geschehen als Unterscheidung vom Nicht-ich, Bewußtsein nur auftreten, wo es sich von einem Unbewußten löst, trennt, abhebt und frei macht, und das Individuum kommt nur da zur Individuation, wo es sich vom unbewußten Kollektive trennt. (Neumann I, p. 106)

This is Joseph's development up to the point inside the pit and the end of the second volume. His physical separation from his home and his family symbolize the beginning emancipation of his ego-consciousness. *Sein* and *Bedeuten* have been separated and he now begins a conscious act of interpretation, of seeking and giving meaning to his own existence and actions. This becomes evident even while he is still in the pit, when he tries to distinguish what is *actually* happening:

Er hatte achtgegeben vom ersten Augenblick an. Man möge es glauben oder nicht, aber im verstörtesten Trubel der Überrumpelung, im schlimmsten Drange der Angst und Todesnot hatte er geistig die Augen aufgemacht, um zu sehen, was ›eigentlich‹ geschah. Nicht als ob Angst und Not darum geringer geworden wären; aber auch eine Art von Freude, ja von Gelächter war ihnen dadurch zugekommen, und eine verstandesmäßige Heiterkeit hatte das Entsetzen der Seele durchleuchtet. (IV, 582)

2. The Active Fight of the Hero

Joseph Campbell in his book about hero myths and their common features worldwide divides the development of the hero into three basic stages: '*separation or departure [...]; the trials and victories of initiation [...]; the return and reintegration with society*' (p. 36). When Joseph is sold to Potiphar, he begins the second stage of his *heroic*

journey. This stage is eventually concluded with his second fall at the end of the third volume. Psychologically this is the phase of the growth of ego-consciousness to the point where it perceives itself as an independent entity, vastly over-estimating its own power and thus bringing about its own fall.

The aggressive force of his brothers brought about Joseph's sudden awakening of consciousness. During the seventy-two hours inside the empty pit, he becomes conscious of his own imitation of the Tammuz-myth. He also begins to perceive the difference between being and meaning, that is, the actual experience teaches him that the language of the image is but metaphorical and not actual; it depends crucially on interpretation. He is intelligent enough to recognize, with hindsight at least, the parallels between image and reality:

Keine Not des Fleisches und der Seele konnte die Aufmerksamkeit seines Geistes ertönen auf die sich häufenden Anspielungen, mit denen das Geschehen sich als höhere Wirklichkeit, als durchsichtig und urgeprägt, als Gegenwart im Umschwung, kurz als gestirnhafte zu erkennen gab. (IV, 582)

In the section on the night-sea crossing (Chapter One) I have shown how Joseph moulds his new role after that of Osiris, lord of the underworld. Unlike his earlier Tammuz-role, he adopts this role quite consciously. What is more, because of his recognition of the archetypal patterns that dominate people's lives, he is able to manipulate other people by the simple device of alluding to their archetypal needs and expectations. The narrator is critical of this attitude, which he describes as 'Josephs Neigung, aus der allgemeinen Denkeinrichtung Nutzen zu ziehen und auf dem Wege bewußter Selbstbeeinflussung die Leute damit zu blenden' (IV, 582).

Joseph's manipulation of other people is gifted and intuitive. His

first conversation with Potiphar under the trees, whose different types of blossom he has to fertilize, demonstrates its scale and subtlety. Berger (pp. 151-52) has shown how Joseph's work as gardener is linked to the motif of the saviour. Joseph is well aware of this link and he exploits it unscrupulously to his own advantage, but also for the benefit of Potiphar, who has never before encountered such an irresistible mixture of intelligence and sensitivity. From his familiarity with countless myths, Joseph knows exactly how to present himself as a saviour-figure and in this first meeting with Potiphar he makes, merely by allusion, all the primary characteristics his own. Skillfully he talks about his 'virgin birth', about his 'death' and 'rebirth', and he even manages to apply the archetypal situation of the hero, of exposure and danger after birth, to his own history. Thus he tells Potiphar the old legend of Sargon:⁷⁹

Ich weiß von einem Kinde, das sie aussetzten in einem Schilfkorb-
be, aber der Strom trug ihn zu Akki, dem Wasserschöpfer, der
lehrte den Knaben die feine Kunst des Gartens, und Scharuk-inu,
dem Gärtner, gab Ishtar ihre Liebe und gab ihm das Reich. (IV,
886)

Only a little later, during the same conversation, do we hear him address Potiphar as 'Akki, großer Wasserschöpfer' (IV, 891). He leaves nothing to chance and he is wholly successful. The narrative reflects his saviour-role, by presenting Joseph in the pose of the child Jesus teaching in the temple (Luke 2.46): 'Nicht anders stand er da im dämmern-
den Säulenbau dieses Baumgartens als im Tempel ein begeistertes Kind,
in dem Gott sich verherrlicht und ihm die Zunge löst, daß es kündet und
lehrt zum Staunen der Lehrer' (IV, 894).

Henceforth Joseph's growth and success in Potiphar's house are as-

⁷⁹ cf. Berger, pp.150-52. He dedicates a whole section to this legend.

sured and his ego-consciousness develops in parallel. From the humble servant he quickly rises to a more elevated position as Potiphar's cup-bearer and reader. At the same time Mont-kaw, the overseer of Potiphar's estate, singles him out and grooms him to become eventually his own natural successor. He is allowed to grow into Mont-kaw's position over a long period of seven years, and when at the end of this time Mont-kaw dies, he is given the whole responsibility and control over the affairs of the house, despite his young age of only twenty-four years.

Psychologically Joseph experiences a similar feeling of power and control. When still in his father's home, he told Benjamin one of his dreams. The dream contains the main features of the story of the hero Etana, which Joseph knew from his lessons with Eliezer. Etana was carried by an eagle in a soaring flight towards heaven. Seeing the country below dwindling more and more, he was, however, seized by fear and fell to his death. Joseph's dream varies significantly from Etana's story in one respect. Unlike Etana Joseph is not overcome by fear and he does not suffer destruction but is brought before the face of God. Thus unconsciously he knows that he will be successful. What the dream does not tell him, however, is how narrowly he escapes the fate of Etana.

Neumann interprets the Etana-myth as destruction through the spirit:

Die »Vernichtung durch den Geist« ist das Motiv schon im babylonischen Etana-Mythos, in dem der vom Adler zum Himmel entführte Held abstürzend zerschellt (dabei gehört hier der höchste unerreichbare Himmel der Muttergöttin Ishtar an, die noch uroborisch Erde und Himmel zugleich ist). [...] Der Held muß, gerade weil er gottgezeugt ist, »fromm« sein und ein volles Bewußtsein dessen haben, was er tut. Handelt er aber aus dem Übermut des Ichwahns, den die Griechen Hybris nennen, und ehrfürchtet

nicht das Numinose, gegen das er kämpft, dann mißglückt die Tat. (Neumann I, pp. 154-55)

Joseph, in his relationship with Mut, escapes destruction. It is, however, a very narrow escape. In his dream the eagle carried him to 'Araboths Höhen und den siebenten Söller' (IV, 464). This number corresponds to the seven years of growth which he spends in Potiphar's house. When he first becomes aware that Mut takes an interest in him, he is flattered and it is a considerable boost to his undiminished egotism. His friend, the dwarf Gottlieb, warns him not to meet with her, but he dismisses these warnings with considerable hubris and self-assurance: 'Willst du's des Menschen Sohn nicht gönnen, daß er sich seines freien Willens freue' (V, 1080). He does not realize that his belief in his own 'free will' is the precondition for his second fall. His inflated ego-consciousness, which considers itself to be independent, thus giving him the illusion that he is in control of his own actions and even of other people, for instance, Mut-em-enet, leads him to over-estimate his own power grossly.

The inflation of ego-consciousness is necessarily accompanied by a corresponding deflation of the unconscious. Psychologically this development is again a necessary part of a natural cycle, because the strengthening of ego-consciousness is an indispensable requirement if individuation is eventually to take place:

Die Emanzipation des Ich und des Bewußtseins von der Übermacht des Unbewußten führt wie jede Emanzipation zunächst zu einer Übertreibung der Eigenposition und des Eigenwertes. Diese »Pubertät des Ichbewußtseins« ist begleitet von einer Entwertung der Herkunftsstätte, des Unbewußten. [...] Die Bedeutung aller dieser Prozesse liegt in einer Stärkung des Ichbewußtseinsprinzips. Die Gefahr dieser Entwicklungsrichtung führt zur Selbstüberschätzung, zum Größenwahnsinn eines sich unabhängig wahnenden Ichbewußtseins, das zuerst das Unbewußte entwertet und verdrängt und es schließlich sogar leugnet. (Neumann I, p. 106)

Joseph is not aware of the muddy roots in which his ego-consciousness is grounded—he feels superior. Instead of avoiding the danger of which the dwarf Gottlieb emphatically warns him, he begins to meet Mut on an increasingly regular basis. The pretext he uses to himself and to the ever-anxious Gottlieb is that he is trying to cure Mut of her misjudged feeling. He plans to guide her back onto the right path, as it were, and perceives himself in the role of the pedagogue—‘Jung-Joseph gefiel sich in des Erziehers Rolle’ (V, 1107)—thinking that he can control the course of events. The more confident he feels, however, the more vulnerable he becomes. He perceives the danger as entirely external and does not recognize that the danger within himself is much greater. For the second time he fails to see how he brings about his own ‘fall’. The first fall was caused by his unconscious actions; the second fall, by contrast, is brought about by his total trust in his conscious actions. The narrator explains this: ‘Denn wer mit Recht gewohnt war, auf seinen Verstand zu vertrauen, dem wird, wenn dieser sich trübt, das gewohnte Vertrauen zu einer großen Gefahr’ (V, 1108).

Apart from the general validity of the Osiris-myth, Joseph’s second fall is patterned on the myth of Gilgamesh and to some extent on that of Bata. The story of Bata is really a secondary, personalized version of the conflict between Osiris and Set. The wife of Bata’s older brother falls in love with Bata and attempts to seduce him. He rejects her, and she, thereupon, makes false allegations about him to her husband. Bata, to prove his innocence, somewhat draconically, cuts off his own sexual organ. It is this first part of the Bata-myth which is relevant to Joseph’s story as it contains the same motif of attempted and failed seduction. Joseph knows the Bata story, which he has often read to Potiphar (V, 1313), and even copied out for him in black and red ink.

Neumann distinguishes between different phases in the relationship between the Great Mother and her son-lover. The first one is, as the example of Tammuz shows very clearly, that of the dying vegetation god, of the young man who is overcome by his fate and yields without resistance. The transition to the next phase is represented by those young gods who put up resistance, but who can only maintain this resistance by self-emasculatation:

Bei ihnen ist die Angst vor der Großen Mutter das erste Symptom sich verstärkender Zentroverson, Selbstgestaltung und werdender Ichfestigkeit. Die Angst des Jünglingssohnes führt zur Flucht und Abwehr unter verschiedenen Formen. Der erste noch ganz im Bann der Großen Mutter stehende Ausdruck der Flucht ist die Selbstentmannung, die wir wiederholt, z.B. bei Attis, Esmun und Bata finden, und der Selbstmord. Hier führt die Trotzhaltung des Nichtliebenwollens doch zu dem, was die furchtbare Mutter fordert, nämlich zur Darbringung des Phallus, wenn auch mit negativem Vorzeichen. Die in Angst und Wahnsinn vor der Liebesforderung der Großen Mutter Fliehenden [...] bringen ihn ihr dar, wenn auch bereits mit verneinendem Bewußtsein und protestierendem Ich.⁸⁰ (Neumann I, pp. 80-81)

When Mut's infatuation has already become an open demand, Joseph mentions the story of Bata to her and says that he has considered following Bata's course of action. Yet he adds that he knows this to be wrong: 'Aber nicht so darf ich's halten; die Sünde wäre ebenso groß, als wenn ich erläge, und ich taugte dann auch für Gott nichts mehr. Sondern er will, daß ich bestehe heil und komplett' (V, 1205). Thus Joseph clearly perceives the task he has to master, and he knows that

⁸⁰ To avoid confusion, I add Neumann's clarifying note on the subject of castration: 'Um Mißverständnissen vorzubeugen, sei hier ein für allemal betont, daß überall, wo wir in unseren Ausführungen von Kastration sprechen, das Symbol der Kastration gemeint ist, niemals ein personalistischer, d.h. durch eine Drohung in der individuellen Kindheit erworbener Kastrationskomplex der sich konkretistisch auf das männliche Genitale bezieht. [...] Die negative Kastrationssymbolik ist typisch für die feindliche Aktivität des Unbewußten dem Ich und dem Bewußtsein gegenüber, steht aber in engem Zusammenhang mit dem positiven Opfersymbol, dessen Inhalt eine aktive Darbringung des Ich an das Unbewußte darstellt. Beide Symbole, das der Kastration wie das des Opfers, sind verbunden im Archetyp der Hingabe, der aktiv und passiv, positiv und negativ sein kann und die Beziehung des Ich zum Selbst in den verschiedenen Entwicklungsstadien beherrscht' (Neumann I, p. 54, note*).

self-mutilation as an apparent escape equals failure and destruction. His physical 'wholeness' is the requirement for achieving psychological wholeness too. The task before Joseph is to acknowledge his own shadow and not to externalize it through projection. Only in this way can he learn to exert some control over it. Remaining virtuous by removing all possibility for sinning is no achievement because it must result in a hollow existence, as can be seen from Potiphar's case.

The motif of castration and self-castration is central to the third volume. There is Potiphar himself, the eunuch. There are furthermore Dûdu's repeated demands for Joseph's castration, which I have mentioned in the previous chapter. When Mut as the Maenad makes her sacrifices to Hecate, the hag-like moon-goddess, some clippings of Joseph's hair are an essential ingredient of the sacrificial meal that is prepared for the goddess. The sacrificing of hair is again a symbol of emasculation:

Das Haaropfer der Männer ist ein altes Priesterzeichen, von der Kahlköpfigkeit der ägyptischen Priester bis zur Tonsur der katholischen Geistlichen und buddhistischen Mönche. Immer ist das Haaropfer trotz verschiedenster Gottesauffassung und Religion verbunden mit Sexualverzicht und Zölibat, d.h. mit einer symbolischen Selbstkastration. (Neumann I, p. 58)

In the novel the hair-sacrifice is presented as having a compelling power over Joseph. Mut firmly believes that it will force him to return to the empty house where she is waiting for him; she knows 'die Herrin-Hündin wird ihn ›herbeiquälen‹' (V, 1253). Thus in the narrative action it is Tabubu's black magic that ensures Joseph's early return. Yet this black magic and its compelling power are not entirely presented as external forces, and the reflective and interpreting voice of the narrator clearly suggests otherwise:

›Es treibt mich‹, sagt wohl der Mensch; aber was ist das für ein

›es‹, daß es von sich selbst unterscheide und schiebe die Verantwortung für sein Handeln auf etwas, was nicht er selbst ist? Sehr wohl ist es er selbst! — und ›es‹, das ist nur er, zusammen mit seinem Verlangen. Ist es etwa zweierlei, zu sagen : ›Ich will‹ oder zu sagen: ›In mir will's‹? (V, 1253)

While Mut is convinced that only black magic can bring Joseph to her, and while Joseph himself may feel driven by some sort of ‘magic’ power, experiencing it as a force separate from him, the narrator gives this view a different perspective and makes its apparent truth relative. Joseph, he suggests, has his own ‘reasons’ for returning—reasons of which he may not be conscious but which nevertheless are his own. It is not black magic, but his own unconscious, which exerts power over him. The association of the unconscious with darkness corresponds then to the symbol of the black magic and its ritual. Because Joseph’s ego-consciousness has become dissociated from its origin, that is, the unconscious, it experiences these forces as separate from itself. His ego-consciousness says ‘I’, and it believes itself to be the sole master of the house. The use of the neuter pronoun ‘it’ stands in contrast to the ‘I’. Joseph’s view of himself as the master of his own free will (V, 1080), which we saw earlier, is contradicted by the narrator, who suggests almost the reverse: he is not its master but its slave:

Muß man überhaupt sagen: ›Ich will‹, um zu tun? Kommt das Tun aus dem Willen, oder zeigt sich nicht vielmehr erst das Wollen im Tun? Joseph wird kommen, und daran, daß er kommt, wird er erkennen, daß und warum er hat kommen wollen. (V, 1253-54)

Schopenhauer’s influence is much in evidence here. Only through a process of analysis, of consciously examining his own actions and their motivation, can Joseph discover the true reasons and thus recognize his ‘will’. After his eventual rise, Joseph knows this and can even formulate it: ‘Das weiß der Mensch nicht im voraus, wie er sich halten wird in

seiner Geschichte, sondern wenn's da ist, so zeigt es sich, und er wird sich bekannt' (V, 1592).

When Joseph returns before all the other servants to the empty house and Mut-em-enet, he deceives himself entirely about his reasons. As he is not conscious of the truth, his conscious mind is free to manufacture any number of reasons for his early return. He invents all sorts of maxims which he attaches to his position as overseer, and he even persuades himself that they are old proverbs and popular wisdom. Thus he mutters to himself, '›Pfleget noch das Volk der Rast — trägt schon der Herr die Last‹' or '›Hohe Würde — Goldene Bürde‹' (V, 1251). His inspiration flows in profusion and the banality of these sayings makes them sound like genuine sayings.

As before his first fall, when he went to visit his brothers in the valley of Dotan, his appearance, as he returns to the empty house, is a symbolic expression of the situation: 'Er hatte einen blauen Lotuskranz auf dem Kopf und noch eine Extrablume im Munde' (V, 1256). He has exchanged the myrtle wreath, the symbol of Tammuz, for the Lotus wreath, the symbol of Osiris, who in the confusion of darkness makes love to the wrong woman (cf. previous chapter, note 74).

Joseph is deceived about almost everything regarding his relationship with Mut. Only when it is too late, does he recognize the failure of his pedagogical efforts, their disastrous consequences and how misplaced they were. When he eventually begins to recognize the extent and power of her passion, he is, however, still not willing to acknowledge the full scale of the danger or remove himself from it. He knows the causes of his first fall, and we saw how crucial this phase was for his further development. His second fall forms an equally important part of

the next stage of the same process. It is a test he has to pass if he wants to progress further, and for this reason he must seek the final encounter:

Der aktive Inzest aber, das willentliche bewußte Eingehen in das gefahrbringende Weibliche, und die Überwindung der Angst des Männlichen vor dem Weiblichen kennzeichnet den Helden. Die Überwindung der Angst vor der Kastration ist die Überwindung der Mutterherrschaft, die mit der Kastrationsgefahr für das Männliche verbunden ist. (Neumann I, p. 130)

In psychological terms, Joseph fights for the emancipation of his ego and consciousness; he fights to overcome the devouring embrace of the unconscious and for the separation from the maternal ouroboros. 'Das willentlich bewußte Eingehen in das gefahrbringende Weibliche' is also reflected in the language of this moment in the novel. After some conversational exchange between rooms, Joseph passes both a psychological and physical threshold and enters the room where Mut awaits him: 'Und Joseph ging über die Schwelle zu ihr hinein' (V, 1258).

(ii) THE FATHER

1. The Son of the Father

When Joseph resists Mut, he becomes like the hero Gilgamesh resisting Ishtar. The Gilgamesh-motif, like the Bata-motif, is central to the Mut episode. It is often alluded to through the image of the 'Fiery Bull of Heaven', sent by Ishtar in revenge of her humiliation. It is the dwarf Gottlieb who uses the image again and again to warn Joseph of the danger he incurs. But as a hero Joseph has to face trials and adven-

tures, and he succeeds. In mythical language he slays the dragon, just as Gilgamesh, together with his friend Enkidu, slew the Bull of Heaven. Joseph escapes only narrowly and while he still finds many reasons for saying 'No' to Mut, his body yields visibly, contradicting his words and revealing their hollowness. Gilgamesh needed the support of his friend Enkidu to be victorious over the Bull of Heaven. Joseph can only overcome the Great Mother with the help of the spirit, which produces the image of 'the father'. This image is the counterpart to the archetype of the Great Mother, represented by Mut. The plurality of the image reveals it as transpersonal: 'Jaakob's Züge vermischten sich darin mit Potiphars Vaterzügen, Mont-kaw, dem bescheiden Verstorbenen, ähnelte es in einem damit, und viel gewaltigere Züge noch trug es alles in allem und über diese Ähnlichkeiten hinaus' (V, 1259). It is the father archetype which confronts and rescues Joseph. We have seen before the negative side of this archetype, the Terrible Father, who is set upon the destruction of the son. In the novel this side is represented by Dûdu and Beknechons, and with regard to Joseph's first fall, even by Jaakob himself. It is the Terrible Father who exposes the son to danger, sending him out to fight and slay the dragon:

Zwei Vater- und zwei Muttergestalten sind zu berücksichtigen. »Der böse König« oder die persönliche Vaterfigur als Vertreter des alten Herrschaftssystems schickt den Helden in den Kampf gegen die Ungeheuer, seien diese Sphinx, Hexen, Riesen, Tiere usw., d.h. in den Kampf mit dem Drachen, von dem sie glauben, daß er der Untergang des Helden sei. [...] Es gelingt aber dem Helden, mit Hilfe des Gott-Vaters das Ungeheuer zu überwinden. (Neumann I, p. 146)

In the Gilgamesh epic this aspect is also reflected, in that the Bull of Heaven, at the request of Ishtar, is sent by her father Anu, the lord of heaven, to destroy the hero. In the novel it is Dûdu who, as the dwarf

Gottlieb discerns from the first moment, sets free the ‘fire-breathing Bull of Heaven’. Joseph, when he is taken to the fortress, perceives also the meaning and relevance of the myth to his own situation: ‘Er kannte seine Tränen. Gilgamesch hatte sie geweint, als er Ischtars Verlangen verschmäht und sie ihm ›Weinen bereitet‹ hatte’ (V, 1296). And he recites the verses of the epic to himself and ponders their meaning.

The hero, as the bringer of the new, must of necessity become also the destroyer of the old, represented by the Terrible Father. The new order is also always associated with a new God, and Joseph, like Beknechons, perceives his own struggle as one for his own God JHWH, and against Amun. He feels very strongly ‘daß dies eine Sache und Kraftprobe sei zwischen Amuns Großmacht und Gott dem Herrn, und daß auf keinen Fall und um keinen Preis [...], der Herr, sein Gott, den kürzeren dabei ziehen dürfe’ (V, 1227).

We have seen how the image of the father, that is, the father archetype, is the factor which decides his struggle and allows Joseph to win it, when it already looks like a lost cause. From the beginning the motif of the father dominates Joseph’s resistance to Mut and Amun, Egypt’s rigid god. It occurs first when Joseph stands before the sphinx, ‘Aug in Auge mit dem Verpönten, spürt man, wes Geistes Kind man ist, und hält’s mit dem Vater’ (IV, 745-46). It is also central to his seven reasons of chastity, which he lists and formulates to convince and reassure himself, as to why he must resist the temptation through Mut. He knows, ‘daß er im Letzten sich nicht gemein machen dürfe mit dem Verpönten, wohl spürend, kam es aufs Letzte, wes Geistes Kind er war und welchen Vaters Sohn’ (V, 1139). He perceives the danger to which he is exposed, and yielding is to him equal to ‘Vaterentblößung’ (V, 1145),

which alludes to the motif linked to Ruben and Noah's sons in the first two volumes. We remember how, before his first fall, he professed openly and provocatively, 'Ich und die Mutter sind eins' (IV, 458 and 500). Now his former self-perception is changed almost to the point of being reversed into its opposite. Now he puts the emphasis on the father-link. Dismissing Mut's open identification with Isis, her promise of power to him, if he yields, and rejecting her open proposition, he declares:

»Der Vater der Welt ist kein Muttersohn, und nicht von einer Herrin wegen ist er der Herr. Ihm gehöre und vor ihm wandle ich, ein Vatersohn, und ein für allemal sage ich dir: ich will nicht dergestalt sündigen wider Gott, den Herrn, dem ich gehöre, daß ich den Vater schände und morde und mit der Mutter ein Paar mache als schamloses Flußpferd.« (V, 1176)

Far from being one with the mother, he now perceives himself as the son of *the father*, and in the father he now seeks and finds guidance.

We have seen how the Terrible Father, as he appears, for instance, in the figure of Beknechons, expresses overpowering ancient law, morality, convention, rigid tradition, etc. The positive side of the archetype also represents rules and law, the achievement of culture and civilization. Yet unlike its old form, which must be overcome, it is not yet petrified in tradition; it does not cling to the old order because of its once valid virtues, or for the mere sake of it. A new and different, further-developed consciousness necessitates the abolition of the old. The tetralogy's theme of changing sacrifice and religious rituals, of the sudden transition from the sacred to the profane, best reflects and clarifies this issue. Whereas the image, or archetype, of the Great Mother, with all its variety and ambivalence, is essentially eternal, the father archetype always reflects cultural changes and developments:

»Die Väter« sind die Vertreter der Gesetze und Ordnungen, von den Tabugesetzen der Frühzeit bis zur Rechtsprechung der Moderne, sie übermitteln die höchsten Güter der Zivilisation und

Kultur im Gegensatz zu den Müttern, welche die höchsten, d.h. tiefsten Werte der Natur und des Lebens verwalten. So ist die Väterwelt die Welt der Kollektivwerte, sie ist historisch und bezogen auf den relativen Stand der Bewußtseins- und Kulturentwicklung der Gruppe. [...]

Die Vertretung des durch die Väter vermittelten und in der Erziehung durchgesetzten Wertkanons innerhalb der seelischen Einzelstruktur ist das, was im Individuum als Gewissen auftritt. (Neumann I, p. 143)

What Joseph perceives as the rescuing father image, 'ein Denk- und Mahnbild war es' (V, 1259), is, in terms of individual psychology, a visual image of his conscience. The representative of the collective super-ego, on the other hand, is Potiphar, who sits in judgment over him. This symbolic function of Potiphar corresponds also to Mut's earlier willingness, indeed, eagerness, to murder him. She is convinced that with the removal of Potiphar, Joseph's scruples will also be removed: '»Aber eben darum muß du doch einsehen, daß man ihn kaltmachen muß und ihn aus der Welt schaffen, damit das Bedenken behoben ist und wir ihm nichts mehr antun mit unsrer Umarmung!«' (V, 1174).

When Potiphar sits in judgment over Joseph, he opens the proceedings with an invocation to Thoth: 'Dich rufe ich an, Ibisköpfiger, der du das Gesetz der Menschen schriebst, weißer Affe du neben der Waage' (V, 1270). It is the Ibis-headed god who is always present when judgment is passed on the souls of the dead in the underworld and who weighs the heart of the deceased in the scales of truth. Through this invocation Joseph's judgment is symbolically portrayed as his (second) death. Justice is done and the truth becomes known, for it is Dûdu, the real culprit, who suffers, at least symbolically, the punishment which he hoped to bring on Joseph. This is also echoed in a gruesome pun about Joseph's preoccupation during his time in Potiphar's house, that is, 'die Leute ›stutzen‹ zu machen' (V, 1239). Potiphar orders Dûdu's confine-

ment in the kennel during the night, '»bis man im morgen die Zunge stutzt«' (V, 1274). Potiphar's judgment over Joseph does not follow the traditional recommendations of punishment. It is humane and reveals wisdom.

Thus Joseph, who is sent to the fortress of Zawi-Rê, has suffered his second symbolic death, but only to be reborn a second and final time: 'Also ging es hinab mit Joseph in die Grube und ins Gefängnis zum anderen Mal' (V, 1275). He has avoided the ultimate crime against the Father—his betrayal—but he is punished for his lack of foresight, 'weil er zwar nicht so närrisch gewesen, Gott zu verraten und es gänzlich mit ihm zu verderben, es aber an Vorsicht doch sträflich hatte fehlen lassen' (V, 1297).

2. The Symbolism of the New Year and the Djed-Column

Joseph's second fall takes place on the day of the Egyptian New Year celebrations. This is the day when the Egyptians celebrate the official day at which the Nile begins to rise again. The narrator is at pains to point out that the official and the actual events do not coincide. He tells us, however, that it is at least the time of sowing. Thus the symbolism of the seed which must be buried for new life to spring from it is once again evoked. When Joseph returns from the island fortress Zawi-Rê, his second pit, it is precisely three years later, and he therefore returns on the day of his fall, when the New Year is celebrated once again:

Als Joseph anlangte in der Stadt des Blinzelns, der tausendjährigen, war wieder Saatzeit und Zeit der Bestattung des Gottes, wie

damals, als er seinen zweiten Fall getan in die Grube, und war drei große Tage darin gewesen unter leidlichen Umständen, beim ruhigen Hauptmann Mai-Sachme. Mit rechten Dingen ging's zu: genau drei Jahre waren herum, am selben Punkte des Kreislaufs hielt man, wie damals, und eben hatten wieder die Kinder Ägyptens das Fest der Erd-Aufreißung und der Errichtung des göttlichen Rückgrats gefeiert. (V, 1404)

The setting-up of the Djed-column—‘des göttlichen Rückgrats’—signifies the reconstitution of the torn god Osiris. The hieroglyph of the column, the word ‘Djed’, means ‘stability’ or ‘continuity of power’ (Hart, *Gods*, p. 160). By uniting the reconstitution of the god with the concept of stability, the column also signifies the end of the cycle of the torn, buried and reborn vegetation god. The resuscitation of Osiris, symbolized through the setting-up of the Djed-column, is therefore different from the return of the vegetation god, because it is lasting.

The ritual of the New Year celebrations contained also a crowning scene, in which the head of the god was placed upon the backbone, symbolizing the union of spirit and body and thus becoming a symbol of wholeness. Neumann interprets the rise and reconstitution of Osiris as the mythological projection of a psychological transformation:

Aufstieg und Auferstehung des Osiris entsprechen einer seelischen Wandlung, die mythologisch projiziert als Vereinigung des unteren irdischen Osiris mit dem oberen auftritt, als Vereinigung des körperlichen, im Tode zerstückelten und wiedervereinigten Osiris mit der oberen Geistseele und dem Geistleib. Diese Selbstwandlung, Auferstehung und Erhöhung, die gleichzeitig eine Selbstvereinigung ist, spielt sich ab als das, was beschrieben wird als Verbindung der Unterweltgottheit Osiris mit der Sonnengottheit Ra. (Neumann I, p. 188)

We can recognize without difficulty the parallels and relevance of the symbolism, which Neumann explains, to Joseph's development. There are not only the echoes of Joseph's particular blessing but also of his earlier dreams about ‘>Entrückung<’ and ‘>Erhöhung<’ (IV, 722).

Joseph's return on the day of the New Year celebrations is therefore no coincidence. It is again seed-time, but its combination with the erection of the Djed-column signifies reconstitution and continuity. Joseph's past development, expressed in his roles of Tammuz and Osiris of the underworld, is now united with a third and final transformation in the symbolism of these celebrations, where the opposites, Osiris of the underworld and Ra the sun-god, embrace each other and form a new union.

3. Osarsiph and Adôn: the Living 'God' Replaces the Dying 'God'

Joseph returns as a different person and the transformation he has undergone, is, as after his first fall, indicated by a change of name. When he arrives at Pharaoh's court, the official asks him for his name: '»Du hießest also —?«' (V, 1410). Joseph, not without a sense of irony, turns the subjunctive of the question into the simple past in his answer: '»Osarsiph hieß ich«, antwortete der Befragte' (V, 1410). The 'irreal' is becoming a thing of the past.

It was through the example of the baker and the butler that Joseph suddenly understood and learnt that names express conditions, that *nomen est omen*. His gaoler Mai-Sachme puts much emphasis on the difference between the metaphorical and the literal. Nevertheless, he is aware of the fact that the two may come together, for instance, if the name expresses a condition; and he tells Joseph:

»Ich glaubte«, erwiderte er, »du wüßtest, daß man nicht notwendig heißen muß, wie man sich nennt oder zeitweise genannt wird. Die Umstände formen den Namen. Rê selbst wechselt den seinen nach seinen Zuständen. [...]«

Joseph überlegte schnell. Er gedachte der drehenden Sphäre, des Oben, das wiederkommt und wieder aufsteigt im Umschwunge, des Austausches des Gesetzten mit dem Entgegengesetzten, gedachte der Umkehrung. (V, 1334)

When Pharaoh queries his ‘Totennamen’ Osarsiph (V, 1450), Joseph explains to him that it was appropriate at the time. His explanation reveals how he has absorbed his earlier insight, where he connected name and meaning with the image of the revolving sphere. He has now deepened it further to a wider concept of the world, rather than just linking it to a purely personal situation. Joseph explains first that he adopted the name Osarsiph as a vow of silence, the silence he had to maintain towards Jaakob:

»Schweigen muß ich ihm«, antwortete Joseph, » und heiligte mich dem Schweigen mit meinem Namen. Wer da heilig und aufgespart ist, der ist es den Unteren. Du kannst vom Heiligen und Geweihten nicht das Untere trennen, — ihm gehört es, — und eben darum liegt auf ihm der Schein, der von oben ist. Jedes Opfer bringt man den Unteren, aber es ist das Geheimnis, daß man es eben damit recht erst den Oberen bringt. Denn Gott ist das Ganze.« (V, 1450-51)

The name ‘Osarsiph’ now signifies the past and can no longer express the present. Pharaoh confers a multitude of titles and names onto Joseph, yet the name that is given to him by the people, ‘Adôn’, is the one by which eventually the whole of Egypt knows him: ‘Es sei hier gleich hinzugefügt, daß dieser Name ihm, unter allen seinen Titeln, besonders anhaften sollte, und daß er in ganz Ägyptenland zeit seines Lebens ›Adôn‹ genannt wurde, sowohl wenn man von ihm, als auch wenn man zu ihm sprach’ (V, 1486). ‘Gott ist das Ganze’, Joseph says to Pharaoh (V, 1451). Joseph’s new name is also the name by which the God of Abraham is traditionally addressed, ‘Adon, Adonai’. This new name of Joseph is therefore also an indicator of the wholeness he has

achieved. It is important to note that it is not a name chosen by him, but one that becomes almost naturally conferred on him. It is an expression of something people perceive in him and which finds further reflection in his role as Hermes.

His role as Hermes is, unlike his earlier roles, not one Joseph consciously or even unconsciously chooses and tries to project. It is almost the reverse situation, that is, it is projected onto him, because people recognize certain traits, an essential ambivalence in him, which they rightly associate with the Greek god. Like his blessing, his person too now evokes the ancient hermetic principle, 'As above so below'. This is evident from the moment of his arrival. For instance, the official who first receives him, even after a brief conversation, perceives and identifies certain hermetic characteristics in Joseph:

»Du scheinst mir eine Art von Schalksnarr und Spaßmacher zu sein«, sagte er, »so ein Schelm und Rinderdieb, über dessen Streiche man lachen muß. Ich nehme an, daß dein Sehen und Deuten auch nur Schelmerei ist und eines Quacksalbers Marktgeschrei?«
(V, 1408)

Joseph's hermeneutic task, as interpreter of Pharaoh's dreams, further reinforces his association with the god. Most of all, however, the god is evoked by the essential duality of Joseph's nature, the light and dark sides that form a harmonious union within it. People perceive in him no longer merely the saviour, the pure figure of light, but also a darker, yet deeply human side. Hermes, the god of thieves and frauds, is also a god of revelation and a conductor of souls—a guide to be trusted. He combines physical and spiritual qualities: 'Er ist der Prozeß der Wandlung des Unteren, Physischen in das Obere, Geistige, und vice versa' (GW 13, 284).

It is these essentially hermetic qualities which we now perceive in

Joseph and which for Mann were the essence of the artistic nature and disposition. He described Joseph, the politician and economist, as an artist:

es ist der Zauber der Sinnlichkeit, die Geist wird, und des Geistes, der sich verleiblicht; Begabung ist es aus mütterlichem Lebensgrunde, aus der Sphäre des Instinkts, des Gefühls, des Traumes, der Leidenschaft — und Begabung aus der väterlichen Lichtsphäre des Geistes, der Vernunft, des Verstandes, des ordnenden Urteils. Eben damit ist die Kunst das Paradigma und Vorbild der Menschlichkeit überhaupt, denn es gibt kein wahres Menschentum ohne jenen doppelten Segen, ohne daß das Vitale und das Geistige, Kraft und Sittlichkeit einander die Waage halten und sich zu der Ganzheit durchdringen, die wir Kultur nennen. (XIII, 205)⁸¹

The contrasting figure of Pharaoh serves as a foil to Joseph, enhancing the interplay of contrasting values, of life-giving sources which nourish and sustain the spiritual forces, which we can observe more and more clearly in Joseph. It is this interplay which allows the tree to reach out for the sky, while its roots remain deeply grounded in the murky darkness which sustains it. Pharaoh has become disconnected from such roots. Although he perceives them as origins, he considers them almost as an early, primitive level which must be overcome and severed. His love and longing are entirely directed to the spirit and its values; its immateriality represents to him a final state and achievement; it is what he ultimately strives for: '»Goldener Geist ist das Licht, Vatergeist, und zu Ihm ringt die Kraft sich empor aus Muttertiefen, daß sie sich läutere in seiner Flamme und Geist werde im Vater«' (V, 1469). His evident lack of vitality is the price he has to pay. While Joseph once declared his identity with the Mother, 'Ich und die Mutter sind eins', Pharaoh represents the other extreme by identifying entirely with the Father: '»so wie ich und der Vater eins sind«' (V, 1469). Joseph, by contrast, has developed

⁸¹ *Vom Buch der Bücher und Joseph.*

beyond either stage and has found a new centre between the opposites, thus uniting them in his own Self.

(iii) 'ICH BIN'S': MYTHICAL FORMULA AND SELF-RECOGNITION

When Joseph arrives at the fortress of Zawi-Rê and Mai-Sachme, the governor of the prison, asks for confirmation of his identity as Potiphar's former steward, Joseph replies with the simple answer, '»Ich bin's«' (V, 1308). Mai-Sachme is a little confused, even embarrassed (V, 1309), by this reply because, as the narrator explains to us, it is the mythical formula used by divinity to reveal its true identity. When Joseph uses this formula to identify himself, it is improper, not least of all because of the prominent position of the 'I', but also through the suggestive link between the 'I' and the 'it': 'darüber hinaus aber spielte das ›Ich‹ eine alarmierende Rolle darin — im Zusammenhang mit dem ›Es‹' (V, 1308). This simple answer therefore appears to imply more than a confirmation of Joseph's role as steward in Potiphar's house.

Given the nature of Joseph's misdemeanour, the formula triggers a whole train of association in Mai-Sachme's mind. It seems to culminate in his reflection on the Bata-myth, including Bata's metamorphosis into Chapi, the sacred bull of the Nile, the nourisher of Egypt. This association is induced, however, not merely by Joseph's answer, but at least as much by the way in which Joseph is brought before him: 'Aber am Seile geführt wurde er nun wie Chapi, die lebende Wiederholung des

Ptach, in seinem Tempelhofe zu Menfe' (V, 1305). Mai-Sachme is a man who sharply condemns the confusion of metaphor and reality, 'Redensart und Wirklichkeit' (V, 1329). This condemnation is however due to the fact that he himself is quite liable to this sort of confusion: 'daß er selbst in dieser Verwechslung stark befangen war und, wenn er nicht sehr scharf achtgab, zwischen dem Metaphorischen und Eigentlichen schlecht unterschied' (V, 1329). Furthermore, he is very susceptible to allusion and he soon recognizes in the figure of Joseph an allusion to the divine: 'Um diese Gestalt aber, von der Joseph Andeutungen zeigte, webt der Nimbus des Göttlichen [...] Wo das Göttliche ist, da ist Gott (V, 1329). Joseph, however, knows this difference through Abraham's insight that God is in the fire, and yet is not the fire (IV, 431). To people like Mai-Sachme, however, this abstract distinction is not nearly as clear, and Joseph does very little to dispel such confusion.

Joseph's use of the mythical formula, given all the associations it triggers, appears thus to be a continuation of his former ambition, to take people aback by suggesting another, a mythical identity, to them. Yet the narrator's explanations about the formula relate entirely to Mai-Sachme's response and do not mention Joseph's intentions, only his negligence to counter such suggestibility. Joseph's motivation for the use of the formula, its actual words, might be an expression of a new and different psychological insight, particularly if we remember the narrator's earlier reflections on the meaning and perception of 'it', just before Joseph's second fall:

›Es treibt mich‹, sagt wohl der Mensch; aber was ist das für ein ›es‹, daß er es von sich selbst unterscheide und schiebe die Verantwortung für sein Handeln auf etwas, was nicht er selbst ist? Sehr wohl ist es er selbst! — und ›es‹, das ist nur er, zusammen mit seinem Verlangen. (V, 1253)

In the light of these reflections, and given Joseph's great ability to learn and understand, his answer, 'Ich bin's', acquires particular implications. With it he acknowledges a part of himself which he formerly experienced entirely as an external force, something other than himself, which nevertheless compelled him to act in a certain way. His answer, 'Ich bin es', can also suggest that he now recognizes that this 'it' is part of him, albeit an unknown part—an acknowledgment which requires a considerable degree of consciousness. By implication it is also an act of accepting responsibility even for that part of himself which is unknown to him, that is, his own unconscious, and which he only discovers through his own actions. At this point, life becomes a journey of self-discovery in which ego-consciousness acts as the navigator. Joseph's centre of identity is no longer restricted to his ego-consciousness, but has shifted to the Self.

The interplay between consciousness and the unconscious, and the perfect balance between them, is expressed and reflected in the mythical formula, 'ich bin es'. Its allusion to the unknown god revealing himself is an allusion to the numinosity of the Self, to the Self as a reflection of God and a centre of the personality. Jung writes about the Self:

Ich habe diesen Mittelpunkt als das *Selbst* bezeichnet. Intellektuell ist das Selbst nichts als ein psychologischer Begriff, eine Konstruktion, welche eine uns unerkennbare Wesenheit ausdrücken soll, die wir als solche nicht erfassen können, denn sie übersteigt unser Fassungsvermögen, wie schon aus ihrer Definition hervorgeht. Sie könnte ebensowohl als »der Gott in uns« bezeichnet werden. (GW 7, 399)

Only through his own Self could Abraham discover God. We were told 'daß Abram die Eigenschaften Gottes mit Hilfe der eigenen Seelengröße ausmachte' (IV, 431). In the same way Abraham recognized that God

was not just benevolent and merciful, but also comprised the opposite qualities: 'Er war nicht das Gute, sondern das Ganze' (IV, 430). The angels who discuss Joseph's second fall with considerable glee at the opening of the last volume also recognize this, yet are unable to understand it. They comment on the implications of God creating man in his own image: 'War das nicht ein Witz zum Kichern? Genau das Geschöpf, welches, wenn man wollte, dem Schöpfer am allerähnlichsten war, brachte das Böse mit sich' (V, 1282). When they speculate why God, even in his greatest anger, never actually destroyed the whole of mankind, they suspect that it has to do with man's function of serving as a mirror to God:

vielleicht endlich, weil ein Spiegel ein Mittel zur Selbsterkenntnis ist und weil Ihm in einem Menschensohn, einem gewissen Abirâm oder Abraham, das Bewußtsein jenes zweideutigen Geschöpfes entgegenkommen sollte, ein Mittel zur Selbsterkenntnis Gottes zu sein. (V, 1282-83)

Abraham, and with him mankind, is God's means of self-perception and self-recognition. Yet although God is within him, Abraham still remains outside God. They are two clearly separate entities:

Makom hieß er, der Raum, weil er der Raum der Welt war, aber die Welt nicht sein Raum. Er war auch in Abraham, der Ihn kraft Seiner erkannte. Aber ebendies verstärkte und erfüllte Urvaters Ich-Aussage, und keineswegs war dieses sein gottvoll mutiges Ich gesonnen, in Gott zu verschwinden, mit Ihm eins zu werden und nicht mehr Abraham zu sein, sondern hielt sich sehr wacker und klar Ihm gegenüber aufrecht. (IV, 431)

This relationship between Abraham and God finds an exact parallel in the relationship between ego-consciousness and the Self. Abraham does not become absorbed in God, disappearing as a separate, recognizable entity. In the same way the ego, that in us which says 'I', while recognizing that it is part of the Self, also remains a clearly-outlined en-

tity in itself. Abraham's covenant with God is a parallel to the union between ego and the Self, in which neither loses its intrinsic qualities. The ego can only adequately perform its task of self-perception and self-discovery if it fulfils and maintains this condition. The task is gradual and seemingly endless. Jung writes:

Therefore we are always discovering something new about ourselves. Almost every year something new turns up which we did not know before. We always think we are now at the end of our discoveries. We never are. We go on discovering that we are this, that, or other things, and sometimes we have astounding experiences. That shows there is always a part of our personality which is still unconscious, which is still becoming; we are unfinished; we are growing and changing. Yet that future personality which we are to be in a year's time is already here, only it is still in the shadow. The ego is like the moving frame on a film. The future personality is not yet visible, but we are moving along, and presently we come to view the future being. These potentialities naturally belong to the dark side of the ego. We are well aware of what we have been, but we are not aware of what we are going to be.⁸²

Again the parallel to Abraham's God, who is 'ein harrender Gott der Zukunft' (IV, 435), continues. Joseph echoes this same thought when he tells Mai-Sachme that he does not know himself and how he will act in the future, 'sondern wenn's da ist, so zeigt es sich, und er [der Mensch] wird sich bekannt' (V, 1592).

The chapter in which Joseph reveals his true identity to his brothers has as its title again the mythical formula. Joseph uses it to reveal himself, yet there is no allusion to any higher agency presenting itself through him when he says: 'Kinder, ich bin's ja. Ich bin ja euer Bruder Joseph' (V, 1685). This time it is not (suggested) greatness masked in modesty, but greatness masking modesty. It was this mask that confused Benjamin when he recognized familiar traits in Pharaoh's first

⁸² C. G. Jung, 'Tavistock Lectures', in *Collected Works*, 18, revised by R. F. C. Hull (London and Henley: Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1977), p. 38.

minister. The narrator explained it: ‘Wohlgemerkt: der Verkleidete ist nicht der, in den er sich verkleidet und aus dem er hervorblickt. Sie bleiben zweierlei. Den einen im anderen erkennen, heißt nicht, einen machen aus zweien und sich die Brust mit dem Schrei entlasten: »Er ist es!«’ (V, 1665). Again the motif of dressing and undressing, the veil which separates us from the truth, is of central importance. When the brothers recover from the first shattering impact of the revelation, one of them expresses some disappointment: ‘»Dann war’s also nur ein Scherz und hast nur so getan wie ein Fürst«, fragte Issakhar, »bist aber eigentlich bloß unser Bruder Joseph?«’ (V, 1687). Joseph’s answer is revealing and returns to the paradox of being one *and* the other: ‘»Bloß?« antwortete er. »Das ist ja wohl das meiste, was ich bin! Aber ihr müßt es recht verstehen: ich bin beides; [...] Joseph bin ich, überkleidet mit der Herrlichkeit dieser Welt«’ (V, 1687). Joseph here fully acknowledges his own identity. He knows who he is and what he is, and no longer mistakes his *persona* for his real self. First and most of all he is Joseph, and whatever masks or roles he adopts, voluntarily or by virtue of his office, they are but an actor’s costume as the word ‘überkleidet’ indicates.

The mythical formula occurs a last time in connection with Juda. It is Joseph who first uses it: ‘Juda, du bist’s, den ich einlade. Kommst du mit mir?’ (V, 1746). Although these words are plausible enough in the context, given their echo of the mythical formula, one cannot help feeling that they imply more than a mere invitation for a ride in Joseph’s coach. Joseph singles out Juda because it is clear to him that he is the true bearer of Abraham’s blessing. When he invites him to come along, it is not just on a literal level, one suspects, but also in recognition of his own Hermes-role as guide, psychopomp and mediator between differ-

ent worlds. When Jaakob, on his death-bed, finally passes on the blessing of Abraham, he too singles out Juda with the very same words— ‘Juda, du bist’s!’ (V, 1798). Although he has anticipated the events, Juda still needs a moment of reflection before the truth finally sinks in. He has confessed his sins and his guilt and he is only too aware of them. His confession is, however, also an acknowledgement of his Self, and when eventually he says, ‘Gott gnade mir, aber ich bin’s!’ (V, 1798), he accepts himself for what he is and also his future role as the bearer of the blessing.

When Joseph is reunited with his brothers, the description he gives of himself shows that he has not only recognized, but also accepted, his role in life. He sees himself as the provider, as a political economist even, but at the same time he states quite clearly that he is only a tool in God’s hands and nothing more, ‘Denn euer Bruder ist kein Gottesheld und kein Bote geistlichen Heils, sondern ist nur ein Volkswirt’ (V, 1686-87). Joseph is neither a prophet nor a messiah. He is a hero in worldly terms, because his psychological development makes him an archetypal predecessor of every individual. At the end of this development, when he *reveals* himself to his brothers, he no longer identifies with archetypal roles, and his constant striving to allude to the divine, his effort to suggest that he is more than he appears to be, has disappeared together with his inflated ego. After a long process of differentiation, of growing consciousness and isolation, he now has achieved wholeness. He has reconciled the opposites within himself and accepted himself for what he is, including the unknown and unknowable part of himself. He is the individual called Joseph and thus he fulfils his own distinct blessing. This inner development is reflected in his reconciliation with his family: he is reunited with the collective, whose benefactor and saviour he has

turned out to be, at least in mundane terms. Individuation is also the return to the collective: 'in Joseph mündet das Ich aus übermütiger Absolutheit zurück ins Kollektive, Gemeinsame' (XI, 666-67).⁸³ Joseph's individuation does not lead to singularity. Instead, through this process he can overcome the earlier separation, both in real and actual terms, when he is reunited with his family and finds fulfilment in his service to the collective.

⁸³ *Ein Vortrag.*

CHAPTER FIVE: THE NARRATOR AND
NARRATIVE ASPECTS

INTRODUCTION

The narrative technique and the narrative presence and voice in the Joseph novels are so insistently placed in the foreground that no reader is likely to overlook them. From the beginning the narrator establishes himself as our contemporary and a learned guide on our journey into the past. In *Höllenfahrt* he addresses his readers as listeners, ‘unsere Zuhörer’ (IV, 20), and correspondingly, a somewhat chatty style marks this introduction to the novel; thus he starts a sentence with a turn of phrase such as, ‘Nun denn, [...]’ (IV, 19), which is normally only found in spoken language. In this prelude we see the narrator as we will only see him again in the last volume of the tetralogy, when the revolving sphere has completed its circle, whereas, in the major part of the novel, we can observe how the narrator develops—often parallel to the consciousness of the characters portrayed. He has been described as a narrator ‘im Werden’ (Cunningham, p. 184), a phrase which is used about God in the novel (IV, 52) and which from the beginning draws a parallel between God and the role of the narrator. As the novel unfolds, the narrator’s personality crystallizes more and more distinctly, as does Joseph’s, the novel’s central character.

Yet, despite this distinct personality of the narrator, critics’ views about him diverge and can be quite conflicting. Hermann Kurzke for instance describes him as follows:

Thomas Mann bedient sich eines auktorialen Erzählers Wielandscher Prägung, der die alte Geschichte mit modernem Bewußtsein erzählt, sie „wissenschaftlich“ kommentiert, sie mit tausenderlei Details spielerisch plausibel macht und sie ironisch zurechtrückt, wo sie gar zu wunderbar und unglaubwürdig erscheint. Dieser Erzähler bietet die einheitliche Perspektive. Es ist zweifellos keine irrational mythisierende, sondern eine aufgeklärte Perspektive. [...] Kraft dieses Erzählers *ist* der Roman, was er beschreibt: befreiend vom Drucke, heiter, appoli-

nisch. (Kurzke II, pp. 254-55)

While Kurzke acknowledges the narrator's 'enlightened' standpoint, in which a rational humanism explains and interprets the events, Cunningham's view of this same narrator is almost diametrically opposed:

at first sight, the narrator appears to be 'above' the events he describes, able to comment on them from a modern and wiser (if not omniscient) perspective. On closer examination, however, it becomes clear that his implicit claim to scientific detachment is spurious: the narrator's comments amount to no more than speculation, and speculation that is often trapped within the psychology of the characters depicted, or of the era — so that, for example, he appears to share the prevailing belief in the demonic cause and nature of disease (see V, 1324). (p. 184)

Cunningham thus disagrees entirely with Kurzke's view of the 'enlightened' and detached narrator, who tells an old story with modern consciousness. He further notes that the narrator tries to suggest divine intervention when the nature and causality of events is actually quite plausible, and vice versa, that he looks for a rational explanation where the supernatural seems to be the more obvious cause (cf. Cunningham, p. 185). Cunningham does not, however, examine the effect which this particular narrative method has on the reader. It is in this effect that we can also find a possible reconciliation of the conflicting views put forward by Kurzke and Cunningham, with the enlightened narrator on the one hand, and the narrator who shares and participates in the irrational beliefs of the characters on the other. If the narrator introduces the idea of divine intervention where the causality of the course of events is actually evident and quite natural, the reader is made to observe a process of *mythologizing*. If then he gives a rational explanation where the course of events appears 'unnatural', he *demythologizes* the process. The effect this must have on the reader is 'aufklärerisch' without doubt, for the reader is shown in both cases the power of perspective

and the relative easiness of manipulation. The aim is to make the reader conscious of this. In this sense both Kurzke and Cunningham are correct in their assessments of the narrator.

If we recall the events that follow Tabubu's and Mut's black magic ritual, the sacrifice to Hecate and her 'promise' to bring Joseph to Mut, we get a very clear example of the narrator's technique. The character in question, Mut-em-enet, is absolutely convinced that Joseph will come to her because he is under the spell of black magic. The narrator seems to support her in this attitude: 'Nicht nur, daß ihr Verlangen sich ermächtigt weiß von höchster geistlicher Stelle, im Schutze steht von Amuns Ehre und Sonnenmacht, so ist ihm auch Erfüllung verbürgt von unten her, kraft scheußlichen Höllenzwanges' (V, 1252-53). Immediately afterwards, however, the narrator, very subtly, undermines and dismisses the 'guarantee' which Mut believes to have obtained through the power of black magic. When he turns to Joseph, he suggests very clearly, as I have tried to show in the previous chapter, that it is no supernatural force which is at work here, but Joseph's own unconscious which makes him return home before the other servants of the house.

The many paradoxes which confront the reader in the novel, be it the paradoxical nature of the central theme or of its symbols and motifs, are also contained and reflected in the nature and method of its narrator. Jürgen Hohmeyer, whose book on the novel concentrates mostly on narrative aspects, attributes the reasons for this largely to the constant intertwining of a first- and third-person narrative (p. 65), and he talks at some length about 'die Paradoxie der gemischten Erzählsituation' (p. 79). Hohmeyer quotes a long passage, where we are presented entirely with an inside view of a character (Ruben). This long inside view is brought to a sudden end when the narrator asks the readers to

consider what they have just read. Hohmeyer compares the effect of this to the sudden awakening from a dream. He writes:

Das Orientierungszentrum liegt in der Romanfigur, in sie hinein soll der Leser sich versetzen, um das Erzählte als gegenwärtig und wirklich mitzuerleben. [...] Dann jedoch [...], tritt plötzlich die Erzählschicht ins Blickfeld: der Erzähler fordert den Leser auf, das Dargestellte zu *verstehen*. Die Wirkung ist wie das Erwachen aus einem Traum: das Orientierungszentrum wird ruckhaft aus der erzählten Schicht in die Erzählschicht verlagert, der Leser aus seiner Einfühlung in das Bewußtsein Rubens herausgerissen und in seine eigene ihm wohlbekanntere Rolle zurückgenötigt. (p. 74)

If the fictional level of the narrative is compared to a dream, it follows that the narrator, although he is an inseparable part of the narrative as a whole, acts as the interpreting consciousness. The reader on the other hand, if one continues the analogy of the dream, is the awakening consciousness.

It seems to me that the paradoxes contained in the narrative situation express and reflect again a constant interplay of depiction and contemplation. The seemingly conflicting views of Kurzke and Cunningham can be explained technically with the intertwining of a first- and third-person narrative, which pervades the novel. Ultimately, however, we will find both views reconciled—and only their co-presence can give us an adequate and valid picture—by the fact that narrator and narrative are again an incarnation of the novel's central theme of the constant interplay between *Sein* and *Bedeutend*.

Perhaps the key point to register about this quicksilver shifting from one narrative mode and assertion of causality to another is that thereby Mann asks us to *notice* and to *reflect* on the whole issue of the narrative mediation of human experience. In other words, the narrative perspective is not a stable, reliable vantage point through which we per-

ceive events— it is something that is variable, something that is held up for our scrutiny and reflection. Thereby Mann countermands simple notions of linear, chronological and historical progression. He also countermands the notion that later ages know better than earlier ones. They may indeed know differently and often better, but not always and forever. There *is* a linear argument to the Joseph novels—Joseph’s development out of mythical, largely undifferentiated living into consciousness and self-consciousness—but Mann is also concerned to explore the notions of circularity, recurrence, the non-linear. In this sense, ‘older’ experience is not ‘over and done with’; myth is not made to succumb to demythologization. Instead the narrative mediates between then and now, ancient and modern, myth and secular self-consciousness. Hence it moves back and forth along a sliding scale of modes of possible consciousness.

(i) NARRATIVE PERSPECTIVE AND STYLE

The stylistic difference between the Patriarchal and Egyptian volumes reflects the protagonist’s move from the ‘mythical’ world into one in which his awakened consciousness perceives and analyses the empirical and rational factors which influence and determine the course of events. The circular world of patterns changes into one of linear sequence, which yet is linked to the older forms of cognition and experience. The narrative structure reflects this through the use of retrospection in the first and second volumes, up to the point of Joseph’s pend-

ing fall, which forms a complete narrative circle. The changing use of symbols, particularly of the moon, further contributes to the stylistic change. The most important factor in this respect, however, is the narrative voice and the changing role and increasingly self-conscious presence of the narrator. It is in these terms that, in Kurzke's sense, he provides the novel's unifying perspective.

1. The Initial Role of the Narrator

The narrative voice, particularly in the first two volumes, very often reflects the cognitive state of the character in question, particularly the central character of Jaakob in the first two volumes, and Joseph. In *Die Geschichten Jaakobs* the narrator's interpolations often echo Jaakob's contemplative, deeply serious attitudes, his dignity and *gravitas*. On the one hand the narrative voice partakes of and assents to Jaakob's mythical and non-ratiocinative thought-process; yet on the other hand it also balances Jaakob's essentially intuitive nature with discursive comments and reflections. The narrator is the interpretative and elucidating force particularly in the earlier volumes. For instance, when he first introduces Jaakob, he explains the latter's inclination to associative thought and how this characteristic contributed to his grave dignity:

Es war der Hang zur Gedankenverbindung, welcher sein Innenleben in dem Grade beherrschte, daß er geradezu seine Form ausmachte und sein Denken fast schlechthin aufging in solchen Assoziationen. Auf Schritt und Tritt wurde seine Seele durch Anklänge und Entsprechungen betroffen gemacht, abgelenkt und ins Weitläufige entführt, die Vergangenes und Verkündetes in den Augenblick mischten und den Blick eben dergestalt verschwimmen und sich brechen ließen, wie es beim Grübeln ge-

schieht. Das war beinahe ein Leiden, aber nicht ihm allein zuzuschreiben, sondern sehr weit verbreitet, wenn auch in verschiedenem Grade, so daß sich sagen ließe, in Jaakobs Welt habe geistige Würde und ›Bedeutung‹ — das Wort nach seinem eigentlichsten Sinne genommen — sich nach dem Reichtum an mythischen Ideenverbindungen und nach der Kraft bestimmt, mit der sie den Augenblick durchdrangen. (IV, 93)

Instead of giving us a theoretical and abstract explanation about mythical consciousness (as he does elsewhere), the narrator here gives a very clear illustration of it, by interpreting the nature of Jaakob's personality and considering how his thought-patterns come about. He makes explicit Jaakob's eager response to and recognition of allusions, his strongly associative nature. The reader is made to realize how easily the dividing line between history and prophecy can become blurred in a mind which is concerned with patterns rather than empirical facts. Jaakob's foremost concern is not so much the occurrence of an event, as its recurrence. Its nature therefore determines his actions in response to it.

In the quotation above the narrator remains anonymous in the third-person narrative. Very often, however, his comments are marked by the present tense and the personal pronouns 'wir' or 'man', particularly if he makes observations of a more general nature, be they philosophical or other. Thus he comments at one point on the necessary, even predestined course of events. He opens with a rhetorical question, whether there could not have been peace in Jaakob's household and among the brothers, only to dismiss immediately such a suggestion:

Leider nicht, wenn geschehen sollte, was geschah, und wenn die Tatsache, daß es geschah, auch zugleich der Beweis dafür ist, daß es geschehen sollte und mußte. Das Geschehen der Welt ist groß, und da wir nicht wünschen können, es möchte lieber friedlich unterbleiben, dürfen wir auch die Leidenschaften nicht verwünschen, die es bewerkstelligen; denn ohne Schuld und Leidenschaft ginge nichts voran. (IV, 336)

While, with the exception of Joseph, the characters in the novel are for the most part exposed to events which they feel they cannot control, the narrator makes it his task to interpret these events, to endow them with meaning. With his commentaries, his fondness for philosophical, moral and psychological reflections, he establishes himself very much as the reader's learned guide. He explains to us not only the meanings of events, but also of the actions of characters or their personality. While the characters live close to experience, he has the distance and detachment to be able to interpret it. From the beginning he adopts the posture of omniscience, and nothing escapes his penetrating glance. He gives us an inside view, knowing the feelings of his characters, for instance, of Joseph: 'Gefühle der Frömmigkeit, deren Quelle der Tod ist, hatten sich in seiner Brust vermischt mit der Sympathie, die der Anblick der bevölkerten Stadt ihm einflöbte' (IV, 78). The reader is made witness of scenes and events, and the narrator ensures that we are aware of this and consciously adopt the position of the observer. He does this, for instance, by calling on the reader to pay attention: 'Geben wir acht, hier war alles sehr kennzeichnend' (IV, 99). Often he first offers his own interpretation before he allows us to witness the actual scene itself. In this way he gives the reader the illusion of forming his or her own judgment, whereas by advancing his interpretation first, he makes sure that the reader perceives the scene in exactly the way he wishes. Once he has planted certain seeds in the reader's mind, he often withdraws completely and allows the events to 'relate' themselves. His own role is then merely to verify these, confirming their authenticity. In this way he demonstrates the difference between 'erzählen' and 'geschehen', a difference on which he puts much emphasis throughout the novel. 'Erzählen' is the secondary process that has been filtered through an

observing consciousness, whereas 'geschehen' is the primary process, with all its immediacy, that is the event itself.

Very often the events are told from a character's perspective; sometimes they even appear to be the character's own version of what occurred. Clearly, the story of how Abraham discovered God is told by Eliezer. This is evident not just because Joseph's response is interpolated throughout this story; in fact, we listen to the story as it filters through to Joseph, and it is given in reported speech. Furthermore, the style is spoken, rather than written, language, and it is marked by a naïve quality, which we immediately associate with Eliezer and certainly not our narrator:

Die Entdeckung war auf sehr mühsamem, ja qualvollem Wege vor sich gegangen; Urvater hatte sich nicht wenig gegrämt. Und zwar war sein Mühen und Trachten von einer gerade ihm eigentümlichen Vorstellung bestimmt und getrieben gewesen: der Vorstellung, daß es höchst wichtig sei, wem oder welchem Dinge der Mensch diene. [...] Urvater hatte die Frage unbedingt wichtig genommen, wem der Mensch dienen solle [...] Der Mann hätte mögen zu sich selber sagen: »Was bin und taue ich weiter und in mir der Mensch! [...]« So hätte er es bequemer gehabt. (IV, 425)

On many occasions the narrative voice itself adopts the style of a character. When the narrator ponders different perceptions of time and its passing, his style reflects Jaakob's contemplative attitude. It is a very long, in part philosophical, passage, which opens as follows:

der Erzähler [...] sollte] nicht wännen, er könne mit dem Sätzchen ›Sieben Jahre vergingen‹ die Zeit verschlafen und überspringen. Es ist wohl Erzählerart, leichthin so auszusagen, und doch sollte keinem der Zauberspruch, wenn er denn schon gesprochen werden muß, anders als schwer von Sinn und zögernd vor Lebens-ehrfurcht von den Lippen gehen, so daß er auch dem Lauschenden schwer und sinnig wird und er sich wundert, wie sie doch vergehen mochten, die unabsehbaren oder doch nur mit dem Verstande, nicht aber mit der Seele absehbaren sieben Jahre — und zwar als wären's einzelne Tage gewesen. (IV, 267-68)

‘Schwer und sinnig’, ‘zögernd vor Lebensfurcht’, these are the familiar attributes of Jaakob. The length of the central sentence in the quotation above embodies just these qualities. The reflections that follow focus on traditional images and concepts of time and, although they clearly are made by the narrator, they reflect very much Jaakob’s manner of thought. When in the Egyptian volumes the narrator is again concerned with the same problem, the stylistic contrast could not be greater and it reveals a very different spirit: ‘Wir müssen das Wartejahr nicht ausbaden in allen seinen Täglichen, wie Jaakob tun mußte mit den sieben in Mesopotamien. Erzählenden Mundes dürfen wir einfach sagen: Ein Jahr verging — und siehe, da ist es herum, und Jaakob ist mürbe’ (V, 1638). There is not a trace left of Jaakob’s heavy thoughtfulness. We are now in the world of Joseph with his self-conscious, playful and manipulative approach to life.

The narrative voice and technique change parallel to Joseph’s development in the Egyptian volumes; yet there are also intimations of continuity. Thus the narrator continues to make general philosophical or psychological observations and comments which serve not only to explain and sometimes defend the actions, words or thoughts of a character, but which also claim general validity. While his discursive and explanatory role continues with characters whose consciousness is less developed, for instance Mut-em-enet, it diminishes more and more with regard to Joseph, until it ceases completely in the last volume. When Joseph deceives himself about his relationship with Mut-em-enet, and his own motivation in the affair, the narrator explains this to the reader: ‘Denn wer mit Recht gewohnt war, auf seinen Verstand zu vertrauen, dem wird, wenn dieser sich trübt, das gewohnte Vertrauen zu einer großen Gefahr’ (V, 1108). As long as Joseph deludes himself, thinking

that he is in full control and that he knows the right course of action, the narrator continues to be the commenting observer:

Man sieht, welchen Anfechtungen seine denn doch auch nicht mehr ganz klare Vernunft ausgesetzt war. Gut und Böse waren im vollen Begriff, ihm durcheinanderzugeraten; es gab Augenblicke, wo er versucht war, dem Bösen die Deutung des Guten zu geben. (V, 1155-56)

In the last volume, however, such narrative comments about Joseph disappear, because they are no longer necessary. As Joseph acquires the ability to look at his own life and actions with some detachment, as he begins to perceive the patterns in his own life, regarding it in terms of a story, he also begins to make his own observations and the reader increasingly listens to Joseph's voice.

2. Joseph as Narrator

That Joseph suddenly begins to comprehend his own life in terms of a story is one of the most remarkable things about it. It happens first when the relationship with Mut-em-enet moves towards its climax. During a highly dramatic exchange with Mut, Joseph suddenly seems to reach a point of consciousness which allows him to step for a moment outside the present situation and regard its events like a critical onlooker and as a story. At this moment he is able to detach himself almost completely and the idea that their action may not go unobserved seizes him and influences his behaviour. He becomes conscious of it as an archetypal situation and he implores Mut to act consciously, too: '»Denn alles, was geschieht, kann zur Geschichte werden und zum Schönen Gespräch, und leicht kann es sein, daß wir in einer Geschichte

sind«' (V, 1172). And with a sudden new awareness of how important every word he says is, he then quotes his own words as they are rendered in Luther's translation: '*Wie sollte ich denn nun ein solch großes Übel tun und wider Gott sündigen?*' (V, 1172). The concept of the 'zitathafte Leben' (IX, 497) is once again applied quite literally.

Joseph has always been a teller of stories. One of his outstanding gifts from very early on has been his ability to recognize patterns. Thus it seems only natural that with a certain degree of consciousness he begins to perceive not only the patterns in his own life, but his life itself as a *Geschichte*, in which he takes part creatively and which he shapes himself. In the prelude to the fourth volume, which forms a structural counterpart to *Höllenfahrt*, the narrator, reflecting on the romance of the soul, writes about the 'Urmenschenseele, die, wie die ungestaltete Materie, eines der anfänglich gesetzten Prinzipien war, und deren ›Sündenfall‹ die bedingende Grundlage für alles erzählbare Geschehen schuf' (V, 1286). It is the soul who with the help of God created the world of phenomena, 'die erzählbare Welt des Geschehens, die Welt der Formen und des Todes' (V, 1287). It is the world of space, time and causality, of different dimensions and variety, which form the preconditions for stories and history. The difference between life and a story appears to be merely one of perspective. Whether something happens to me, or whether I make it happen, that is the difference between the story and the narrator and, as we can see from Joseph's example, it is a question of consciousness.

It is only after Joseph's second fall that he becomes his own narrator. When Joseph is in prison, his gaoler is Mai-Sachme, who is another person with a story and who attempts to write it down, that is, tries to

become the narrator of his story. He is concerned with the theory of story-telling and he pays much attention to metaphors and the distinction between the literal and figurative. He appears to contribute further to Joseph's growing detachment and consciousness regarding his own life. It is therefore no coincidence that Joseph, after he has been elevated by Pharaoh, makes Mai-Sachme part of his life as his housekeeper, and thus takes him 'into his story'. Welcoming him on his new estate, Joseph says to Mai-Sachme:

Groß ist das Schrifttum! Aber größer noch ist es freilich, wenn das Leben selbst, das man lebt, eine Geschichte ist, und daß wir in einer Geschichte sind, einer vorzüglichen, davon überzeuge ich mich je länger, je mehr. Du bist aber mit darin, weil ich dich hineinnahm zu mir in die Geschichte. (V, 1511)

Henceforth Joseph is entirely in charge of his own story, that is, his life, and he gives painstaking attention even to the minutest detail. He has become his own narrator, but still his 'story' has a dynamic of its own, a 'Geist der Erzählung', as it were, and he now knows from experience that he can never be quite sure which way it will evolve, just as a writer can never be quite certain what the final shape of his story will be: '»Ich weiß es nicht, Mai, was für ein Mann ich bin. Das weiß der Mensch nicht im voraus, wie er sich halten wird in seiner Geschichte, sondern wenn's da ist, so zeigt es sich, und er wird sich bekannt«' (V, 1592). Here we clearly recognize Schopenhauer's voice and his reflections on individual character or identity: character is an unchangeable entity, yet it unfolds only gradually and *a posteriori*, and therefore appears to be subject to change.

Joseph also explains to his householder Mai-Sachme how his brothers' former action against him must be viewed: 'Ehe denn das Ergebnis vorhanden, ist nur die Tat und mag übel scheinen. Ist aber jenes da, muß

man die Tat nach dem Ergebnis beurteilen' (V,1589). Joseph here makes the same point which the narrator made in the first volume, when he commented on the bad relationship between the brothers: 'Das Geschehen der Welt ist groß, und da wir nicht wünschen können, es möchte lieber friedlich unterbleiben, dürfen wir auch die Leidenschaften nicht verwünschen, die es bewerkstelligen' (IV, 336). Jaakob, despite his pensive disposition, is never able to look at an issue that is of deep concern to him in a similar manner as Joseph does above. Therefore this task falls to the narrator, who acts as detached commentator. The view Joseph voices here evokes again the motif of the revolving sphere with its concept of reversal—be it that people 'act' different roles during their lives, both good and bad, or the transformation of evil actions into beneficial ones.

It is at the time of his brothers' first arrival in Egypt that Joseph displays this level of consciousness. His actions are all carefully considered, for he knows that the 'Feststunde der Geschichte' is approaching—an event that, in Joseph's words, deserves and demands decoration and adornment: 'Denn die Begegnung von Tat und Ergebnis ist ein Fest sondergleichen, das gefeiert und ausgeschmückt sein will mit allerlei Zierrat und heiligem Schabernack' (V, 1594). When he first speaks to his brothers, without having revealed his true identity, his speech is filled with allusions and verbal echoes. His technique is very similar to that of the narrator. His brothers, in response, are deeply puzzled, but they cannot help connecting their present 'bad luck' with their old, well-repressed guilt. His manipulation of their unconscious feeling is successful. Joseph meanwhile prepares the last act of the drama and he now perceives himself entirely as its poet. He delights in the 'telling' of his story:

»Ach, Mai, als ob ich's nicht alles längst bedacht und verordnet hätte und hätte beim Dichten irgend die Sorgfalt gespart! Das wird sich abspielen, als ob's schon geschrieben stände und spielte sich eben nur ab nach der Schrift. Überraschungen gibt es da nicht, sondern nur die Ergriffenheit davon, daß Gegenwart gewinnt das Vertraute.« (V, 1645)

The climax in this 'story' is therefore carefully arranged and staged by him. He is both director and producer, and even his servants and employees are given parts in this play, 'da er Komparsen brauchte' (V, 1677).

His brothers, on the other hand, are never able to follow his concept. At the end of the novel, after Jaakob's funeral, they feel suddenly unprotected, and old fears, stemming from the old guilty deed, arise again. They send Benjamin to Joseph, to ask him in the name of Jaakob not to take revenge now that Jaakob can no longer protect them. The novel has reached its final station and the circular journey has been completed. We are back in the world of the Patriarchs and find ourselves once again in a moonlit night and a sky covered with stars, when Joseph tries to explain to his brothers what it was all about:

Und er trat hinaus unters Sterngeflimmer und ins Weben des Mondes [...]

»Aber Brüder, ihr alten Brüder! [...] Geht ihr mich um Vergebung an, so scheint's, daß ihr die ganze Geschichte nicht recht verstanden habt, in der wir sind. Ich schelte euch nicht darum. Man kann sehr wohl in einer Geschichte sein, ohne sie zu verstehen. Vielleicht soll es so sein, und es war sträflich, daß ich immer viel zu gut wußte, was da gespielt wurde. [...] Aber wenn es um Verzeihung geht unter uns Menschen, so bin ich's, der euch darum bitten muß, denn ihr müßtet die Bösen spielen, damit alles so käme.« (V, 1821-22)

His brothers' level of consciousness never allows them a similar detachment from their own lives. They are rather like Stoppard's Rosencrantz and Guildenstern: they know and act their parts, but without under-

standing what is going on around them, what the play is about, or indeed, that they are in a *play*.

3. The Continuing Role of the Narrator

The foremost, the continuous role of the narrator is that of the thoughtful, sophisticated and conscientious chronicler who, as Kurzke observed, retells an old story with modern consciousness. While, with regard to Joseph, his role changes more and more from commentator to chronicler, he continues throughout to insist on his objective, scientific attitude and his eye-witness status. Right to the end he maintains his stance of putting things right, of correcting historical accounts and establishing the truth once and for all, for instance, about Joseph's economic and political measures: 'Eine zuverlässige Klarstellung von Josephs Verwaltungstätigkeit findet hier ihren Platz, damit dem halbunterrichteten Gerede, das allezeit darüber im Umlauf war und oft in Schimpf und Unglimpf ausartete, ein für allmal der Boden entzogen sei (V, 1757). It is evident from this quotation that the narrator remains close to his characters, defending them when necessary. He continues throughout to be deeply sympathetic to them, yet without ever losing his critical distance; he worries about them, and he judges and criticizes them, but never condemns them. Often enough he identifies with them:

Nein, uneingedenk des erstarrten Alten daheim war Joseph nicht; sein Schweigen, das Schweigen so vieler Jahre, darf keinen Augenblick zu so vorwurfsvoller Meinung verführen — am wenigsten zu dem Zeitpunkt, an dem wir halten und von dem wir mit Empfindungen erzählen, die aufs Haar seinen eigenen gleichen, — es sind die seinen. (IV, 818)

Yet sometimes the narrator also clearly distances himself from a character's actions, expressing his disapproval: 'Man muß das tadeln' (IV, 327). He never tires of asserting his own competence and objectivity, or the absolute integrity and reliability of his sources and observations. There are numerous phrases such as 'es steht fest' (IV, 130), 'und das beweist' (IV, 135), 'das wissen wir mit Bestimmtheit' (IV, 720), and others in the same spirit. He always remains the knowing commentator. In order to reinforce his conscientiousness as a chronicler further, the narrator admits occasionally, and when it is quite irrelevant, his own uncertainty: 'offen gesteht der Erzähler hier seine Unsicherheit, da es nicht seine Art ist, Wissen vorzuspiegeln, wo er nicht wirklich genau Bescheid weiß' (V, 1530). How effectively his method works, particularly on an innocent reader, is revealed by the anecdote Mann told about his typist in Munich, who returned the manuscript of the first volume, remarking, '»Nun weiß man doch, wie sich das alles in Wirklichkeit zuge- tragen hat!«' (XI, 655).⁸⁴

Much, if not all, of the novel's considerable humour is created through this technique by the narrator, a fact which Mann acknowledged and commented on:

Die Genauigkeit, die Realisation sind Täuschung, ein Spiel, ein Kunstschein, eine mit allen Mitteln der Sprache, der Psychologie, der Darstellung und dazu noch der kommentierenden Untersuchung erzwungene Verwirklichung und Vergegenwärtigung, deren Seele, bei allem menschlichen Ernst, der Humor ist. Humoristisch im besonderen ist alles essayistisch Erörternde in dem Buch, das Kommentatorische, Kritische, Wissenschaftliche, das so gut wie das Erzählende und szenisch Darstellende ein Mittel zur Erzwingung von Wirklichkeit ist. (ibid.)

It is also a source of irony, for often enough it makes a mockery of precisely this enlightened attitude which it claims to celebrate. This arises

⁸⁴ *Ein Vortrag.*

for instance from the narrator's serious consideration of what is obviously metaphorical or mythical language. He mentions the old myth about the new-born babe Abraham, who, persecuted by the king, was hidden away in a cave, where he was sustained by 'sucking milk and honey from an angel's fingers'. The narrator comments earnestly: 'das ist wissenschaftlich überhaupt nicht auszumachen' (IV, 420). In such a comment he undermines and mocks the 'enlightened' attitude which, carried to the extreme, tries to explain everything in rational terms, taking even the figurative literally. Such attempts at rational demythologization can be absurd—particularly when the belief in reason reaches the point of idolatry and thus becomes an irrational factor itself.

(ii) NARRATIVE SELF-CONSCIOUSNESS

In *Höllenfahrt* the narrator establishes for himself the image of the conscientious chronicler, the detached observer and the experienced guide, who is able to explain everything to the time-traveller, that is, the reader. It is in this opening that we also get his first reflection on his own craft and function, his self-perception:

Wer erzählt, erwandert unter Abenteuern manche Station; aber nur zeltender Weise verharrt er dort, weiterer Wegweisung gewärtig, und bald fühlt er sein Herz klopfen, teils vor Lust, teils auch vor Furcht und Fleischesbängen, aber zum Zeichen jedenfalls, daß es schon weitergeht, in neue, genau zu durchlebende Abenteuer, mit unabsehbaren Einzelheiten, nach dem Willen des unruhigen Geistes. (IV, 52)

The narrator here draws a distinct parallel between his own situation and that of the character he has just described, Jaakob. It is also a paral-

lel with life in general, and the diction makes clear reference to the fall of the soul and its infatuation with life and matter. The narrator eliminates the line separating past, present and future by giving new life to past events and thus making them present again. He observes, 'Denn das Wesen des Lebens ist Gegenwart, und nur mythischer Weise stellt sein Geheimnis sich in den Zeitformen der Vergangenheit und der Zukunft dar' (IV, 53). Initially we find this level of narrative self-consciousness only in *Höllenfahrt*, while in the first two volumes of the novel it remains largely the exception. There it more often reflects the general level of consciousness of the characters it describes, and observations about the art and nature of narrating tend to be made indirectly and not explicitly as above. Parallels arise, for instance, quite naturally between the narrator and the figure of Eliezer, who is also a teller of stories. He tells his stories mainly for the purpose of Joseph's general and ethical education. We are told that Eliezer's 'I' merged into that of others, usually historical figures (IV, 122). He tells his stories, which are part of the tribe's history, in the first person and presents himself as an eye-witness, describing everything with minute detail and thus giving it authenticity:

So zum Beispiel hatte er dem Joseph mehr als einmal die Geschichte, wie er, Eliezer, bei des Hauses Verwandten in Mesopotamien Rebekka, die Tochter Bethuels und Labans Schwester, für Jizchak gefreit hatte, haargenau bis auf die kleinen Monde und Mondsicheln, die an den Hälsen seiner zehn Dromedare geklingelt, bis auf den präzisen Schekelwert der Nasenringe, Armspannen, Festkleider und Gewürze [...] als seine eigene Geschichte und Lebenserinnerung erzählt. (IV, 122)

This particular narrative style, it is made clear to us, is part of the mythical consciousness, which is so characteristic of the figures in the first two volumes. Yet this merging of identities, the eye-witness status, the absolute knowledge which can describe even the innermost feelings of

a character, apply also to our narrator, as they do perhaps to any narrator who does not remain outside the story he tells, particularly not outside the characters he describes. The definition the narrator gives of the characters, of their concept of life, applies also to his own function. Reflecting on some of the novel's key issues, imitation and succession, he describes the prevailing attitude as: 'eine Lebensauffassung nämlich, die die Aufgabe des individuellen Daseins darin erblickt, gegebene Formen, ein mythisches Schema, das von den Vätern gegründet wurde, mit Gegenwart auszufüllen und wieder Fleisch werden zu lassen' (IV, 127). Whilst for Jaakob and his world this is a concept of life, for our narrator it is a precise reflection of his own undertaking. He, too, has taken up a mythical frame and endows it with life, thus making it present again. He says about Eliezer, 'Die Leute sprachen in der Gegenwart, meinten aber die Vergangenheit und übertrugen diese auf jene' (IV, 419). Yet our narrator is just as involved in his stories as Eliezer. He feels with his characters: 'Man hat fast den Mut nicht, mit Jaakobs Seele zu fühlen an dieser Stelle' (IV, 376), or he worries about them, as if he did not know the outcome: 'Das Gefährliche aber, und was uns im voraus ängstigt, war' (IV, 376). Unlike Eliezer, he does not confuse the first and third persons but is aware of the grammatical difference. Yet his involvement is so strong and active that this difference is only of marginal importance. Although the narrator makes his presence felt from the beginning through the editorial 'wir' or 'man', and thus differentiates himself to some extent from the characters he describes, his actual concern seems to be to distance himself from earlier reports, that is, from other, earlier narrators.

As the tetralogy unfolds, the narrative mode gradually acquires self-consciousness. In *Die Geschichten Jaakobs* this happens in the form of

more or less incidental remarks, such as, ‘bis zum Eintritt in diese Erzählung’ (IV, 128), or by reflecting, ‘Wir geben uns keiner Täuschung hin über die Schwierigkeit, von Leuten zu erzählen, die nicht recht wissen, wer sie sind’ (IV, 128). Occasionally this narrative self-commentary even becomes reflection on how a story, that is, an episode of life, develops and has its different stages. However, this remains initially on a fairly general level:

Denn die Geschichten sind nicht auf einmal da, sie geschehen Punkt für Punkt, sie haben ihre Entwicklungsabschnitte, und es wäre falsch, sie überall kläglich zu nennen, weil ihr Ende kläglich ist. Geschichten kläglichen Ausgangs haben auch ihre Ehrenstunden und -stadien, und es ist recht, daß diese nicht vom Ende gesehen werden, sondern in ihrem eigenen Licht; denn ihre Gegenwart steht an Kraft nicht im mindesten nach der Gegenwart des Endes. (IV, 203)

The story referred to is that of Esau and how he was cheated out of his blessing. Although the remarks could also apply to the story told by our narrator, at this early stage this is not expressly stated and occurs only as a thought and parallel that might suggest itself to the reader. The narrative consciousness is not yet differentiated from the story it tells, but still appears to identify with it to a considerable extent. In *Die Geschichten Jaakobs* narrative self-consciousness comes to the fore when the narrator refers to himself for the first time as ‘Erzähler’: ‘Das tat er [Jaakob], und das sollte auch der Erzähler tun [...]. Es ist wohl Erzählerart [...]’ (IV, 267). At this point the narrator adopts for the first time a clearly-differentiated identity, which the pronouns ‘wir’ and ‘man’ never suggested to a similar extent. They always seemed to include either the reader, or often even one of the characters. The ‘Erzähler’, by contrast, is a separate being with a clearly-defined position.

The narrator in *Der junge Joseph* continues largely to parallel the

character in focus, and reflections about himself or his craft remain the exception. It is only after Joseph's 'fall' that we can see the emergence of a more overt self-consciousness:

Wer es erzählt, dem muß daran liegen, daß man sich's recht vorstelle und mit Schauern sich ausmale [...]. Höchlich ist es uns darum zu tun, jedermann zur lebendig-wirklichen Einbildung so umfassender Unannehmlichkeiten anzuhalten. Und doch ist es auch wieder unsere Sache, abzuwiegen und, eben um des Lebens und der Wirklichkeit willen, dafür zu sorgen, daß sich die Einbildungskraft nicht übernehme und nicht ins Leer-Gefühlvolle sich verliere. (IV, 576)

Parallel to the development of Joseph, who at this point is beginning to regard his past actions and life with some detachment, realizing how he brought about his own fall, the narrator, too, begins at this point to detach himself to some extent from his story. He too considers his own actions (or function) with some reflectivity and from a theoretical point of view by speculating about its effect on the reader. Here the reader can actually anticipate, for the first time, the whole new dimension which the narrative self-consciousness will gain in the Egyptian volumes.

In the previous chapter I considered Joseph's psychological development during his years in Potiphar's house, the growth of his ego-consciousness to the point of total inflation, which brought about his second fall, but which was also a crucial part of his process of individuation. The narrator undergoes a similar development of growing consciousness about himself and his role. Despite his continuing involvement with both the characters and the story, he also emerges more and more clearly as a separate person, who is perceived to have an existence outside the story, too. Consequently his reflections on his own role are given more prominence and greater length. He reflects on his role and he explores it from different angles in search of meaning and in

an attempt to define it. He asks, for instance, ‘Sollte der Erzähler anders vorhanden sein denn als anonyme Quelle der erzählten oder eigentlich sich selber erzählenden Geschichte, in welcher alles durch sich selbst ist, so und nicht anders, zweifellos und sicher?’ (IV, 821). The distinction between being and meaning on the narrative level is brought to the foreground here and he queries whether this distinction is valid and also desirable. His immediate answer is clear enough: ‘Der Erzähler, wird man finden, soll in der Geschichte sein, eins mit ihr und nicht außer ihr, sie errechnend und beweisend’ (IV, 821). Yet no sooner has he given this firm answer than he seems to become conscious of ‘Geschichte’ as a metaphor and he is suddenly struck by the parallel between his own role and relationship to the ‘story’ and that of God in relation to the world and human existence:

Wie aber ist es mit Gott, den Abram hervordachte und erkannte? Er ist im Feuer, aber er ist nicht das Feuer. Er ist also zugleich in ihm und außer ihm. Es ist freilich zweierlei: ein Ding sein und es betrachten. Und doch gibt es Ebenen und Sphären, wo beides auf einmal statthat: der Erzähler ist zwar in der Geschichte, aber er ist nicht die Geschichte; er ist ihr Raum, aber sie nicht der seine, sondern er ist auch außer ihr, und durch eine Wendung seines Wesens setzt er sich in die Lage sie zu erörtern. (IV, 821)

The metaphor of God and the fire is not new. It was evoked once before, when we were told the details about Abraham’s discovery of God (IV, 431), and the concept of space and presence is also first mentioned in this context: ‘Makom hieß er, der Raum, weil er der Raum der Welt war, aber die Welt nicht sein Raum’ (IV, 431). Thus it becomes evident that the narrator clearly perceives his own role as ‘godlike’. The analogy he makes is that human life is like a story and while the former is created and controlled by God, the latter is created and controlled by the narrator. This is by no means a new concept, yet in the context of the

novel, particularly that of its central theme, it gains a further dimension. In the novel we are told that God needs man as an instrument of self-recognition (V, 1290), and man is able to serve this purpose, because he is created after God's own image—man is *like* God. In the same way the 'story' and its characters become an instrument of self-recognition for the narrator, because they are his creation and thus an externalized part of himself. His identification with certain characters, his absolute knowledge of their innermost feelings, the trepidation he feels occasionally about them, can also be considered under this particular aspect. For the narrator, too, the telling of his story is a journey of self-discovery. It is the experience which Joseph, when he has become the narrator of his own 'story', acknowledges and is able to express in words: '»Das weiß der Mensch nicht im voraus, wie er sich halten wird in seiner Geschichte, sondern wenn's da ist, so zeigt es sich, und er wird sich bekannt«' (V, 1592). The narrator's observation about being part of something while simultaneously remaining outside it reinforces the need for the observing and interpreting consciousness. It finally reveals the whole scale of the parallel: that between God and man, the narrator and his story, between the Self (which includes ego-consciousness) and the life of the individual, and ultimately between being and meaning.

Henceforth the narrator, not unlike Joseph, glories in his new-found consciousness, which makes him feel superior to the characters, who, as it were, are enmeshed in their story, that is, who are caught up in their lives and lack the detachment and thus the ability to reflect on their own actions and motivations. He comments: 'Dem Betrachter, der die Geschichte kennt in allen ihren Stunden, sei es verziehen, wenn er bei der Unwissenheit derer, die in der Geschichte sind und nicht auch außer ihr, einen Augenblick mit Kopfschütteln verweilt' (IV, 826). He also

grows more concerned about his reputation and talks about putting his 'Erzähleransehen' (V, 1012) at stake. In the same vein he also refuses certain detailed descriptions, which are simply below his dignity: 'Den Alkovenspähler zu machen ist unter der Würde dieses Erzählers' (V, 1566). This growing self-consciousness and self-assertion appear in narrative comments and in the narrative itself. The reader is, for instance, reminded much more often that he is reading a story and the term 'Geschichte' runs like a thread through the rest of the Egyptian volumes, reverberating in countless echoes and highlighting multiple layers of meaning.

The narrator defends his undertaking against the (alleged) criticism that the original text cannot be surpassed, making the distinction between commentary and original text:

Seit wann aber, darf man fragen, nimmt ein Kommentar den Wettstreit mit seinem Texte auf? Und dann: Kommt nicht der Erörterung des ›Wie‹ soviel Lebenswürde und -wichtigkeit zu wie der Überlieferung des ›Daß‹? Ja, erfüllt sich das Leben nicht recht erst im ›Wie‹? (V, 1004-5)

As he becomes aware of his own creative act and increasingly delights in it, his initial defensiveness occasionally even turns into open criticism of the original. He accuses it of 'lapidarer Kargheit' (V, 1210), or comments, 'Der Lakonismus des bisher davon Überlieferten geht bis zu ehrwürdiger Unwahrscheinlichkeit' (V, 1482).

He also begins to handle his material much more freely. His changed style and approach become increasingly more playful. Sometimes he reveals to the reader his technique. When the brothers on their first journey home from Egypt break off for the night, he describes the location in some detail and then adds: 'Da er [der Ort] in der Geschichte auch noch fernerhin eine Rolle spielt, kennzeichnen wir ihn durch Palmbaum,

Brunnen und Baude' (V, 1628). When the brothers, on their second return from Egypt, break off at the same location again, the narrator remembers the marker he put up some forty pages earlier and simply writes: 'Man braucht nur Palmbaum, Brunnen und Baude zu nennen, um den Ort zu kennzeichnen und ihn dem Hörer so klar vor die Seele zu rufen' (V, 1669). He also begins to take considerable stylistic liberties now, experimenting with different narrative forms and conventions. At one point he seems to produce his own 'Tempeltheater' (V, 1252), with the exchange between Mut and Joseph written in dialogue form, where the name of the character precedes each speech (V, 1166-71), thus highlighting the drama that is taking place, as well as the fact that both are playing roles. He plays with epic conventions, concluding the third volume with the promise, 'das bilde den Gegenstand künftiger Gesänge' (V, 1275), or by directly invoking the Muse: 'zu deren genauer und würdiger Schilderung die Muse uns stärken möge' (V, 1323). He stretches the conventions of oral narration, which in varying degrees he has maintained throughout, to their limits when towards the end of the novel he is seriously concerned about losing his audience:

Wer jetzt nach Hause geht, der möge nachher die anderen fragen, die zu Ende hörten, ob es aufregend war oder nicht. Dann mag die Reue ihn ankommen, und all seiner Lebtag wird er sich im Nachteil fühlen, weil er nicht dabei war [...]. »Wir wissen's eh schon!« Das ist ganz töricht gesprochen. Die Geschichte kennen kann jeder. Dabei gewesen zu sein, das ist's. — Aber es scheint, die Einschärfung war unnötig, denn keiner rührt sich vom Fleck. (V, 1691)

Just as Joseph as 'schelmischer Diener' (V, 1757) overrides all political and economic conventions, the narrator acts in the same playful manner, overriding all narrative conventions.

As the narrator evolves, so does his relationship to the reader. In the

last volume of the tetralogy a real sense of intimacy and familiarity begins to develop. Having explored his own role in conventional and unconventional ways, he has freed himself to a considerable extent from role-expectations. As a result he acts more and more independently, discarding rules and breaking taboos. He feels free to express his personal feelings and even act quite emotively. Thus he refuses to list the names of Pharaoh's daughters, because he just does not feel like it: 'aber indem wir eine leichte Verstimmung über die weibliche Einförmigkeit teilen, mit der sie sich aufreichten, haben wir keine Lust, sie herzusagen' (V, 1532). The tone generally becomes more conversational and chatty, sometimes evoking dialect: 'Ist man ein Vieh, so kann man nicht sündigen und spürt von keiner Hölle nichts' (V, 1548). He also feels free to use images and expressions which are in stark contrast to the Egyptian world he evokes, for instance, when the baker dreams of producing 'Waffeln und Brezeln' (V, 1358), or when Tabubu calls her mistress 'eine verschmähte Urschel' (V, 1233). Anachronisms also flourish, particularly in the Egyptian court language. Thus Pharaoh, after 'Lunch' (V, 1409), enjoys Joseph's 'barocke Geschichten' (V, 1431). Pharaoh's butler mentions his former 'ennui' (V, 1402) and the narrator comments, 'so drückte er sich mit einem abschwächenden Lehnwort aus' (V, 1402). This comment shows that he is quite conscious of what he is doing and he anticipates and dismisses possible criticism with his customary superiority. He acknowledges his own narrative act and no longer feels the need to defend it.

The need for comparison is no longer so pressing. On the narrative level the comparison to the modern world, or to the modern use of language, appears to have become redundant. The narrative act thus reflects the mythical formula, 'Ich bin's', which is a manifestation of iden-

tity which no longer depends on comparison and likeness.⁸⁵ The anachronisms signal to the reader that they had their equivalents in this ancient world. They further suggest a certain type of society, particularly that of a society which is past its cultural prime. They also contribute considerably to the humour in the novel and the atmosphere of joy and laughter which the narrator tries to create in preparation for the final 'Feststunde der Erzählung', which will come when the reconciliation and reunion between Joseph and his brothers takes place. The anachronisms are also a perfect expression of the leitmotif of the revolving sphere, with its constant change and interplay of past and present. This leitmotif embodies the union of circular and linear movements, a union for which the three-dimensional spiral is perhaps the most adequate symbol, because it can simultaneously express repetition and progress.

(iii) THE CONCEPT OF *FEST* AND CELEBRATION

In a letter of 1939 to Karl Kerényi Mann describes the concept of *Fest* as being virtually the tetralogy's 'Grund-Motiv'.⁸⁶ Some years earlier, in his address *Freud und die Zukunft* (IX, 478-501), Mann reflected at greater length on this concept. He refers particularly to mythical consciousness and the imitation of a mythical figure as a natural or adopted way of life which he calls 'das zitathafte Leben' (IX, 497). He calls this

⁸⁵ Cf. *Freud und die Zukunft*, where Mann comments on Napoleon's bold statement, '»Ich bin Karl der Große.« Wohl gemerkt — nicht etwa: »Ich erinnere an ihn«; nicht: »Meine Stellung ist der seinen ähnlich.« Auch nicht: »Ich bin wie er«; sondern einfach: »Ich bin's«. Das ist die Formel des Mythos' (IX, 496).

⁸⁶ Mann writes: 'Das Fest im Sinne der mythischen Zeremonie und der heiter-ernsten Wiederholung eines Urgeschehens ist ja beinahe *das* Grund-Motiv meines Romans, und sein Held heißt einmal geradezu »Joseph em Heb«, »Joseph im Feste.« (Kerényi, p. 87).

way of life a form of celebration, and he explains the particular meaning which the term 'Fest' implies for him:

Ist nicht der Sinn des Festes Wiederkehr als Vergegenwärtigung? Jede Weihnacht wieder wird das welterrettende Wiegenkind zur Erde geboren, das bestimmt ist, zu leiden, zu sterben und aufzufahren: Das Fest ist die Aufhebung der Zeit, ein Vorgang, eine feierliche Handlung, die sich abspielt nach geprägtem Urbild; was darin geschieht, geschieht nicht zum ersten Male, sondern zereemoniellerweise und nach dem Muster; es gewinnt Gegenwart und kehrt wieder, wie eben Feste wiederkehren in der Zeit und wie ihre Phasen und Stunden einander folgen in der Zeit nach dem Urgeschehen. (IX, 497)

In the metaphor of 'Fest' the novel's concept of time, as it is presented through the leitmotif of the revolving sphere, and its concept of reality are united. As the sphere revolves, past events or characters become present again and with them the reality of their lives. It is therefore not surprising that the metaphor of 'Fest' is first applied to the narrative act itself, which gives past events reality, turning the 'there and then' to the 'here and now'. Consequently, at the end of *Höllenfahrt*, the narrator anticipates the actual narrative with an invocation of the metaphor of *Fest*:

Fest der Erzählung, du bist des Lebensgeheimnisses Feierkleid, denn du stellst Zeitlosigkeit her für des Volkes Sinne und beschwörst den Mythos, daß er sich abspiele in genauer Gegenwart! Todesfest, Höllenfahrt, bist du wahrlich ein Fest und eine Lustbarkeit der Fleischesseele, welche nicht umsonst dem Vergangenen anhängt, den Gräbern und dem frommen Es war. (IV, 54)

Even at this early stage the metaphor of *Fest* unites parallel strands of the narrative act, of theme and characterization. The metaphor celebrates the act of creation as such, be it that of the narrative, of the fallen soul, or of Joseph. It maintains these parallels throughout the novel, with the narrative act forming 'die regierende Feststunde' (IV, 826), and ourselves 'in der gegenwärtigen Feststunde ganz befangen' (V, 1154).

Also in *Höllenfahrt* the narrator contrasts myth and *Fest* as the ordinary and festive clothes of the secret (IV, 54), and reflects further:

aber des Geheimnisses Feierkleid ist das Fest, das wiederkehrende, das die Zeitfälle überspannt und das Gewesene und Zukünftige seiend macht für die Sinne des Volks. Was Wunder, daß im Feste immer das Menschliche aufgärte und unter Zustimmung der Sitte unzüchtig ausartete, da darin Tod und Leben einander erkennen? (IV, 54)

An illustration of such festive 'excess' is the events in *Der große Jokus*, when Jaakob and Esau knowingly fulfill their archetypal patterns and the metaphor of the festival is used again. The event is stylized as a 'mythische Festfarce' (IX, 498), that is, Esau the 'simpleton' and unattractive character is cheated and tricked, much to the roaring laughter and enjoyment of the people who form the audience of this 'primitive' drama. The episode is presented like an ancient festive ritual, in which audience and performers know the plot to the last detail. None of the witnesses feels pity, or senses the crude tragedy surrounding the figure of Esau. They can only see cause for laughter. His role is a public one and the collective shadow is projected onto him. Therefore the event is one of general relief, which brings about great joy and laughter, and is anything but a cause for self-conscious reflection (IV 213-14).

When Joseph has been rescued from the pit by the Ishmaelites, it is the guardian of the empty well who has the function of the 'knowing' audience. He tries to explain this situation to Ruben:

Ich möchte, wenn du erlaubst, den Gedankensamen in deinen Verstand senken, daß diese Geschichte hier bloß ein Spiel und Fest ist, wie die des berieselten Jünglings, ein Ansatz nur und ein Versuch der Erfüllung und eine Gegenwart, die nicht ganz ernst zu nehmen, sondern nur ein Scherz und eine Anspielung ist, so daß wir blinzeln und lachend einander anstoßen mögen dabei. (IV, 622)

Unlike Ruben, the guardian knows that however serious the situation appears to be, it is just play and festive celebration. Ruben, however, is far too involved to be able to recognize and understand this. The guardian clearly has a different consciousness and awareness of the events from those who play an active role in it, but are not 'in the know'. In contrast to the audience of *Der große Jokus*, he is not human and thus has no shadow to project. Therefore he is able to theorize about the events with total detachment. He tries to explain to Ruben the meaning of it all. In *Der große Jokus* it was narrative comment which, with the concept of the festival, explained the nature of the event to the reader. Comment and story were one. Here the task falls to the angelic guardian, who plays an assigned part in the story but who essentially remains outside it, and thus functions as the observing and interpretative consciousness. His comment echoes Joseph's own observations and consciousness when he was inside the pit.

In *Joseph in Ägypten* the narrator regularly evokes this concept of the festival and does not tire of repeating it or alluding to it. Impatiently, and in the knowledge of how good a story it is, he often anticipates these festive moments. He has a clear concept of the meaning of 'Fest', and often a climax in the story is described as a 'Feststunde der Erzählung' (IV, 777). Often they are the moments when an *Urbild*, an archetype, is fulfilled, for instance, in *Der große Jokus*, when Esau is cheated of his blessing and cursed instead, or in *Der junge Joseph*, when Joseph is thrown into the pit by his jealous brothers. In *Joseph in Ägypten* Joseph's final encounter with Mut-em-enet, which celebrates the triumph of virtue over wantonness, is described as 'eine Haupt-Feststunde und ein Wendepunkt der Geschichte, feststehend, seit sie in die Welt kam und zuerst sich selber erzählte' (V, 1238).

Similarly Potiphar's return to the house, which is in an uproar, is his 'peinlichste Feststunde' (V, 1265). It is the moment he has anticipated all his life, unconsciously recognizing his own archetype.

After his second fall Joseph's perception of the pattern that governed it gives his dark despair the glimmer of hope. He knows that the sphere revolves and that his downfall implies also his future rise. The glimmer he perceives is the same which the guardian of the empty well tried to implant in Ruben's mind. Joseph's perception meets with some slight disapproval by the narrator, 'weil sie [die Hoffnung] die Würde des heiligen Augenblicks schmälert und Feststunden des Umlaufs vorwegnimmt, die noch nicht da sind' (V, 1296). In a way the narrator's disapproval here echoes that of Jaakob much earlier in the novel, when Joseph advised him on the advantages of belonging to a later generation:

»Das ist aber der Vorteil der späten Tage, daß wir die Kreisläufe schon kennen, in denen die Welt abrollt, und die Geschichten in denen sie sich zuträgt und die die Väter begründeten. Du hättest mögen auf die Stimme und auf den Widder vertrauen.« (IV, 106)

In both cases Joseph's knowing insight meets with disapproval, because it appears as a mild form of cheating—cheating God, life or fate. When Joseph, after Jaakob's death, in his final speech to his brothers tries to explain to them the nature of life, using the metaphor of a story, he too expresses some misgivings about his own awareness: 'Man kann sehr wohl in einer Geschichte sein, ohne sie zu verstehen. Vielleicht soll es so sein, und es war sträflich, daß ich immer viel zu gut wußte, was da gespielt wurde' (V, 1821). Yet this is Joseph's particular gift and part of his blessing, and like the narrator, he too knowingly anticipates future climaxes as the story of his life unravels. For him the most important *Feststunde* is the moment when he reveals his true iden-

tity to his brothers and is finally reconciled with his family. It is now Joseph who explains to his householder Mai-Sachme that he fully understands the concept of *Fest*—he *is* the narrator: '»Denn die Begegnung von Tat und Ergebnis ist ein Fest sondergleichen, das gefeiert und ausgeschmückt sein will mit allerlei Zierrat und heiligem Schabernack, damit die Welt unter Tränen zu lachen habe länger als fünftausend Jahre lang«' (IV, 1594). Joseph here consciously casts the world in the role of the audience, and our tears and laughter are not unlike those of the people who were in the know when Esau was acting out the cheated simpleton. Together with Mai-Sachme Joseph *stages* his own *Feststunde* like a director, and he gives attention to the smallest detail. What the narrator anticipated at the first encounter of Mai-Sachme and Joseph is now literally fulfilled: 'er [sollte] noch lange Zeit neben ihm stehen an seiner Seite und teilhaben an der Fest-Regie heiterer und großer Ereignisse' (V, 1323). And it is now Joseph who is able to give the glimmer of hope to others, for instance to Benjamin, when, still unrecognized, he tries to console him over his brother's supposed death. As the angelic guardian of the empty pit did years earlier with Ruben, Joseph now tries to indicate the pattern to Benjamin:

»Was wäre denn das für ein Bruchstück und für eine Halbheit von Festgeschichte, die nur bis zur Grube reichte, und dann wüßt' sie nicht weiter? Nein, die Welt ist nicht halb, sondern ganz, und ein Ganzes das Fest, und Getrostheit, unverbrüchliche, ist in dem Ganzen. Darum laß dich's nicht weiter anfechten, was ich von deines Bruders Grab sagte, sondern sei getrost!« (V, 1662)

The metaphor of the *Fest* embraces the beginning and end of the novel and it demonstrates the psychological development we observe in the tetralogy. Initially the festival is a celebration with a definite, almost ritualistic, pattern which everybody knows. The function and

meaning of this festival remain, however, unconscious to the participants.

The guardian of the empty pit is the first observer who, despite his (incidental) involvement, also has an interpreting consciousness. However, he is not human. Most of all it is the narrator who, in his role as the detached and knowing observer, gives meaning to the ritual of the festival, by explaining its central elements of repetition and reality, its notion of 'Wiederkehr als Vergegenwärtigung' (IX, 497),⁸⁷ that past events become present again. The narrator is in the story, but also outside it.

The final development, then, shows somebody who is entirely human and is also a character entirely in the story. It is now Joseph's reflective consciousness which enables him to become the observer in his own life, and to produce and direct its *Feststunden* consciously and deliberately. Joseph, at this point, reunites being and meaning, yet with both remaining two distinct entities. It is also the point in the novel at which we can most clearly perceive and observe how narrator and protagonist overlap in extensive and knowing and affectionate collusion.

⁸⁷ *Freud und die Zukunft.*

CONCLUSION

THE NOVEL'S CONCEPT OF REALITY:
METAPHOR VERSUS FACT

Niemals sind wir darauf ausgegangen, die Täuschung zu erwecken, wir seien der Urquell der Geschichte Josephs. Bevor man sie erzählen konnte, geschah sie; sie quoll aus demselben Born, aus dem alles Geschehen quillt, und erzählte geschehend sich selbst. (IV, 821)

Throughout the novel we are presented with two levels of reality. There is the reality of life and fact, which evolves and becomes apparent as it is experienced by the human agent—the reality of palpable experience. Yet there is also the reality of the narrative, which makes past events present again. In telling a story, one is removed from the event factually, because it has happened in the past. Yet it is the power of the narrative to make these events actual in the mind of the reader or listener, and they gain such ‘reality’ that they are able to move, to frighten, to horrify, provoke tears and more. Although the story is *only* told, its impact is real. It has the reality not of accuracy, but of felt truthfulness—we recognize and even experience its meaning. It is thus a reconstruction of experience. The difference between these two kinds of reality is the same as that between ‘Sache’ and ‘Bild’ (IV, 834). What the narrator writes about the mythical consciousness in Jaakob’s world, ‘Worte für Wirklichkeit und Wirklichkeit halb nur für ein Wort zu nehmen’ (IV, 129), applies in its own way also to the reader.

Wirklichkeit is a key word in the novel, and here we return to the Platonic concept of eternal ideas. In terms of the novel the relationship between the actual event, that is, when the momentum of life told the story, ‘als die Geschichte geschah’, and the narrative is the same as that of the Platonic idea and life with its apparent reality. The *idea* is the unchanging *Urbild*, while life, like a story, is forever changing, developing and in the process of becoming—it is in flux, until death brings it finally to a halt. For the reader, who is neither a witness nor a participant in the

actual event, the latter still gains reality through the medium of the narrative. In terms of the novel, life is the actual event, whereas the narrative is both the acknowledgment of actuality and its recognition in terms of the *Urbild*. It is a fulfilling of the *Urbild*. It is the instrument and form of mediation. We remember what Mann, in his *Schopenhauer* essay, wrote about the Platonic concept:

Die Dinge dieser Welt, lehrte der griechische Denker, haben kein wahres Sein: sie werden immer, sind aber nie. [...] Sie sind Schatten. Das allein wahrhaft Seiende, das immer ist und nie wird und vergeht, sind die realen Urbilder jener Schattenbilder, die ewigen *Ideen*, die Urformen aller Dinge. [...] Die Realität des Wirklichen — nur eine Leihgabe des Geistigen! (IX, 531-32; 533)

What is perceived as reality has diminished existence, because it is subject to constant change and variety. Thus the ‘reality’ of life is like the ‘reality’ of a story. In a story the characters are bound by its structure and components and have to move within it. Similarly, individual life, as I have tried to show in Chapter Four in particular, is structured and restricted by the components of the Self, and it can only develop within the boundaries of the Self. In this sense the Self is like a prophecy in respect of individual life, and what the narrator writes about the truth of prophecy can also serve as an illustration of the relationship between the Self and individual life: ‘Selbstverständlich ist das Leben an die Weissagung gebunden; aber innerhalb der Gebundenheit bewegt es sich frei’ (V, 1483). The Self ‘predetermines’ the life of the individual. Ego-consciousness, not unlike the narrator in the novel, has the role of the more or less detached observer, constantly searching for meaning. It is the interpreting force of life. The Self is real in the Platonic sense, because it is of an unchangeable nature—it *is*. Life, on the other hand, is a fulfilling of this *Urbild* which the Self represents. Life is thus a continu-

ous process of becoming, as its archetypes are being fulfilled. It is this process which forms the reality of life and, in a parallel way, it also shapes the novel. In the novel we are told that the fall of the soul brought about ‘die bedingende Grundlage für alles erzählbare Geschehen’ (V, 1286). Death, which puts an end to this world, is therefore described as ‘das Gegenteil alles erzählbaren Geschehens’ (V, 1769), which alone assures ‘Bewahrung und Stillstand’ (V, 1769). It puts an end to the constant flow of life and the constant process of becoming.

Joseph’s process of becoming is a process of developing consciousness—of detecting, through differentiation, the meaning that is inherent in the events: ‘Denn nur durch Vergleichung unterscheidet man sich und erfährt, was man ist, um ganz zu werden, der man sein soll’ (V, 1142). Comparison and the notion of likeness, metaphor and simile are necessary to convey or understand the nature of something or someone. They are an attempt to get as close to the essence as possible.

The search for meaning, in an overwhelming desire to understand, is a fundamental human need. The power of meaning, or the lack thereof, can both sustain or prematurely end the life of an individual. The need and constant quest for meaning is the mark of the post-lapsarian world, the mark of consciousness. Whereas meaning, in a state of non-differentiation, is inherent, an increasingly highly-developed consciousness feels that meaning must be made and given anew. It is therefore perceived as a secondary process:

Der Sinn scheint uns zwar immer das jüngere der Ereignisse zu sein, weil wir mit einem gewissen Recht annehmen, daß wir ihn selber geben, und weil wir ebenfalls wohl zu Recht glauben, daß die große Welt bestehen kann ohne gedeutet zu sein. (GW 9/I, 67)

A child can only experience the meaning of the term ‘mother’ when it

perceives the mother as a separate person, that is, when he or she differentiates between himself or herself and the mother. Although meaning is inherent, it can only be consciously experienced after a process of differentiation and separation. It is the separation of *Sein* and *Bedeutung*, with pure being on the one hand, and being in conjunction with meaning on the other. Jung explains how we derive meaning, how it is actually given: ‘Die Sinnggebung bedient sich gewisser sprachlicher Matrizen, die ihrerseits wieder von urtümlichen Bildern abstammen. Wir können diese Frage anfassen, wo wir wollen, überall geraten wir in die Sprach- und Motivgeschichte, die immer stracks in die primitive Wunderwelt zurückführt’ (GW 9/I, 68). In other words, meaning is essentially linked to language and expression, which, however, do not have an independent existence, but go back to archetypal or primordial images. These form the matrix of our thinking and define its limitations. Jung illustrates his assertion with examples of the terms *idea* and *energy*, and he concludes with the following observation:

Es genügt, zu wissen, daß es nicht *eine* wesentliche Idee oder Anschauung gibt, die nicht historische Antezedentien besäße. Allen liegen in letzter Linie archetypische Urformen zugrunde, deren Anschaulichkeit in einer Zeit entstanden ist, wo das Bewußtsein nicht *dachte*, sondern *wahrnahm*. (GW 9/I, 69)

*Die ...
...
...*

Jung’s comment also evokes the tetralogy’s opening chapter *Höllenfahrt* and our vain search for *the* beginning, or *the* original—of the voyager’s hopeless attempt to reach the horizon. The distinction Jung makes between *thinking* and *perceiving* is also expressed by Mann, although in slightly different words, ‘denn die mythische Erkenntnis hat hier ihren Ort nur im Anschauenden, nicht auch im Angeschauten’ (IX, 494),⁸⁸ that is, without the distinction between subject and object.

⁸⁸ *Freud und die Zukunft*.

These words immediately evoke the development of consciousness as we observe it in the novel, from mythical consciousness and *participation mystique* to a fully-developed ego-consciousness with its capacity for abstract thought and for conceptualizing meaning. In the world of Jaakob we can observe most clearly the process of perception. Life in this world is a fulfilling of primordial images; it is the 'endowing of a mythical framework with life'. Both Jaakob and Esau know exactly their roles in life, yet this knowledge does not derive from thought and analysis; much rather is it the reverse movement: they complete and fulfil patterns or primordial images—they do not take them apart. It is not a conscious process, yet even the unsophisticated Esau knows exactly what he has to do:

Aber er tat das alles, weil es eben so in seiner Charakterrolle lag, und wußte fromm und genau, daß alles Geschehen ein Sicherefüllen ist und daß das Geschehene geschehen war, weil es zu geschehen gehabt hatte *nach geprägtem Urbild*: Das heißt, es war nicht zum ersten Male, es war zeremoniellerweise und nach dem Muster geschehen, es hatte Gegenwart gewonnen *gleichwie* im Fest und war wiedergekehrt, *wie* Feste wiederkehren. (IV, 201 [my italics])

Jaakob perceives his life in precisely the same way. When he has buried his father Isaak, he looks back on his own life, remembering the different episodes:

alle Geschichten standen vor ihm auf und wurden Gegenwart in seinem Geist, *wie* sie einst wieder Gegenwart geworden waren im Fleisch nach geprägtem Urbild, und ihm war, *als* wandelte er auf durchsichtigem Grunde, der aus unendlich vielen, ins Unergründliche hinabführenden Kristallschichten bestand, durchhellt von Lampen die zwischen ihnen brannten. (IV, 188 [my italics])

The narrative voice never tires of commenting on this fulfilling of *Urbilder* by both characters and situations. The narrator comments, explains, and delights in observing and pointing out likeness. There is no

event that has not been before, and what appears to be new inevitably turns out to be merely the old in new guise. The notion of likeness is constantly evoked and sometimes openly discussed, even by the characters. Thus Eliezer tells Jaakob, ‘es ist nichts zweimal, und ist alles hier nur sich selber gleich für immer’ (IV, 651). Although patterns and types repeat themselves in endless succession, the individual is unique and can only be repeated to the point of likeness, but not of sameness.

When Joseph first lives in Potiphar’s house, he recognizes that despite all the difference in appearance, Jaakob’s pattern is repeated in his own life—he has ‘become’ Jaakob: ‘Er war Jaakob, der Vater, eingetreten ins Labanreich [...] er war es, das litt keinen Zweifel, mochte das Leben auch mit immer neuen Formen des Gleichen spielen’ (IV, 819). The narrator confirms Joseph’s perception, and he illustrates his notion of difference and likeness with the simile of the kaleidoscope: ‘Denn Wiederkehr ist Abwandlung, und wie im Guckrohr ein immer gleicher Bestand an farbigen Splittern in immer wechselnde Schauordnungen fällt, so bringt das spielende Leben aus dem Selben und Gleichen das immer Neue hervor’ (IV, 827-8). Although every life is dominated by the same archetypes, they have a different dimension in each life, because every individual is unique.

Both the notion of likeness and unlikeness, that is, the recognition of opposites, both the act of comparison and distinction enable us to become conscious of what we are like, and thus ultimately of what we are. We can only achieve this, however, through the dialectical separation of *Sein* and *Bedeutend*. We can only come to a knowledge and understanding of ourselves through this separation, yet we can only truly become ourselves and reach wholeness if there is a constant, function-

ing interplay of *Sein* and *Bedeutend*. The truth appears once again to be contained in a paradox. Only the recognition that the two opposites together form the whole can resolve the apparent paradox. In the novel this is one of Joseph's insights: 'Joseph wußte wohl, daß das nicht zu unterscheiden war. Sache und Bild, das Eigentliche und Uneigentliche, bildeten eine untrennbare verschränkte Einerleiheit' (IV, 834).

The *Joseph* novels are not just of their own time and the particular historical background against which they were written. They address some of our contemporary concerns. Of late much literary and critical theory has been at pains to insist that human experience is powerfully made of discourses, of symbolizations, mediations and textualities—and not of primary facts, not of authentic (that is, immediate) experiential origins, presences and first causes. Frank Kermode⁸⁹ in his *Genesis of Secrecy* draws attention to a particular narrative hermeneutic which he sees as common to both secular and sacred texts—one that is sustained by the dynamics of both textual explanation and textual mystification, of revelation and concealment.

By its nature, every concept of likeness has another crucial implication and aspect: that of mediacy and with it of distortion. The philosopher Ernst Cassirer, in the first chapter of his book *Sprache und Mythos*,⁹⁰ discusses the concept 'jenes naiven Realismus, für den die Wirklichkeit der Dinge etwas schlechthin und eindeutig Gegebenes ist, das sich geradezu mit den Händen [...] greifen läßt' (p. 5). He writes:

Faßt man das Wirkliche in diesem Sinne, dann wandelt sich notwendig alles, was nicht diese handfeste Realität besitzt, in Trug und Schein. Dieser Schein mag noch so fein gesponnen sein und er mag uns mit noch so bunten und reizvollen Bildern umgaukeln: — so bleibt es doch dabei, daß das Bild kei-

⁸⁹ Frank Kermode, *The Genesis of Secrecy: On the Interpretation of Narrative* (Cambridge, Massachusetts and London, England: Harvard University Press, 1979).

⁹⁰ Ernst Cassirer, *Sprache und Mythos* (Leipzig/Berlin: Teubner, 1925).

nen selbständigen Gehalt, keine ihm eigene immanente Bedeutung besitzt. Es spiegelt sich in ihm ein Wirkliches — aber ein Wirkliches, dem es in keiner Weise gewachsen ist, das es niemals adäquat wiederzugeben vermag. So wird unter diesem Gesichtspunkt betrachtet auch alles künstlerische Gestalten zur Nachbildung, die hinter dem Original immer und notwendig zurückbleibt. (ibid.)

Every representation of an object is inevitably also a distortion of its objective reality, because it cannot do without the use of symbols, whatever form they may take:

[die Prozesse geistiger Formung] erfassen niemals das Wirkliche selbst, sondern sie müssen, um es darzustellen, um es in irgendeiner Weise festhalten zu können, zum Zeichen, zum Symbol ihre Zuflucht nehmen. An allem Zeichen aber haftet der Fluch der Mittelbarkeit: es muß verhüllen, wo es offenbaren möchte. (ibid.)

Like the veil of Maya and the veil symbolism in the tetralogy, the underlying principle, which Cassirer laments here, is that the act of revealing is also always one of re-veiling.

The *Joseph* novels acknowledge and make a theme of the mediacy inherent in all symbolism and any form of representation of objective fact. In the tetralogy, however, this is not considered as a curse, but, because of the theme's close link to the mediating figure of Joseph, it is considered virtually as a blessing. Joseph's blessing is his gift of mediation. The theme is further explored in narrative terms and in relation to the role of the narrator. It also finds expression in the motif of sacrifice. It is perhaps here that, apart from the figure of Joseph, it is most firmly established and acknowledged as a blessing and not as a curse. The motif of sacrifice, its evolution from the tangible object to the symbolic offering and its link to the evolution of God, which runs parallel, are central to the novel.

On a most general level, one tends to think of the function of sacri-

fice as an appeal to God or the gods, pleading either for reconciliation or for divine support. This was the underlying motive when Agamemnon sacrificed Iphigenia at Aulis and, on a less elevated level, we can observe the same function in the tetralogy, for instance, when Laban sacrifices his baby son, or when Huij and Tuij dedicate theirs to the new god.

Yet this appears to be already a distortion of the original function of sacrifice. Freud, in *Totem und Tabu*, explains it instead as follows: ‘Das Opfer war nachweisbar zuerst nichts anderes als »an act of social fellowship between the deity and his worshippers«, ein Akt der Geselligkeit, eine Kommunion der Gläubigen mit ihrem Gotte’.⁹¹ This union with one’s God, which symbolizes oneness with God and the other participants in the sacrificial meal, has continued to this day. Thus it is central to the Eucharist or Holy Communion of the Christian Churches. Freud writes further that the offering of sacrifice is always a celebratory act:

Opfer und Festlichkeit fallen bei allen Völkern zusammen, jedes Opfer bringt ein Fest mit sich und kein Fest kann ohne Opfer gefeiert werden. Das Opferfest war eine Gelegenheit der freudigen Erhebung über die eigenen Interessen, der Betonung der Zusammengehörigkeit untereinander und mit der Gottheit. [...] Teilte man die Mahlzeit mit seinem Gotte, so drückte es die Überzeugung aus, daß man von einem Stoff mit ihm sei, und wen man als Fremden erkannte, mit dem teilte man keine Mahlzeit. (pp. 138-39)

In Freud’s interpretation the origin of the sacrificial meal goes back to the killing of the father by his sons. By eating their father’s flesh, they not only shared their guilt, but also acquired their father’s power and his admired traits: ‘Der gewalttätige Urvater war gewiß das beneidete und gefürchtete Vorbild eines jeden aus der Brüderschar gewesen. Nun

⁹¹ Sigmund Freud, *Totem und Tabu* (Frankfurt am Main: Fischer, 1974), p.138. The source for the English quotations is given as: W. Robertson Smith, *The Religion of the Semites*, Second Edition (London, 1907).

setzten sie im Akte des Verzehens die Identifizierung mit ihm durch, eigneten sich ein jeder ein Stück seiner Stärke an' (p. 146).

The motifs of communion and the sharing of guilt, together with the acquisition of the victim's power, all appear in the novel. The communion and sharing of guilt are apparent after Joseph's sale to the Ishmaelites. Although it is clearly a social convention to celebrate a successful commercial transaction, the brothers' slaughtering of a lamb and its sharing out in a communal meal is also a highly symbolic act:

und die Brüder schlachteten ein Lamm der Herde unter den Bäumen zu Ehren der Gäste [...], damit man die Hände erhöhe und miteinander äße, zum Begängnis und zur Bestätigung, wobei auch Joseph vom alten Minäer, seinem Herrn, ein wenig bekam. [...] und er aß von dem Lamm, dessen Blut für das seine stehen sollte. (IV, 612-13)

Joseph, the victim of the brothers' attack, is only symbolically sacrificed. Human sacrifice has long since become offensive to the God of Abraham and thus to humankind. Animal sacrifice has taken its place. When God forbade Abraham to sacrifice his son Isaak, a new law became established and a new level of consciousness had been reached. Joseph explains it to Jaakob at one point and to do so he puts the following words into God's mouth: 'was ich befahl, habe ich nicht befohlen, auf daß du es tuest, sondern auf daß du erfahrest, daß du es nicht tun sollst, weil es schlechthin ein Greuel ist vor meinem Angesicht, und hier hast du übrigens einen Widder' (IV, 107).

The brothers are too pious to break or ignore God's command, and therefore the blood of the sacrificial lamb is used to represent that of Joseph. The communal union and the representative function of sacrifice are perceived and clearly formulated by the old Ishmaelite when he instructs Joseph in preparation for his new Egyptian home:

Frömmer ist offenbar nichts als die Einheit von Gott, Mensch

und Tier im Opfer. Rechne hin und her zwischen diesen dreien in bezug auf das Opfer, und sie heben sich auf darin. Im Opfer sind alle drei und vertritt jedes des andern Stelle. (IV, 689)

The sharing of the meal, and Joseph's participation in it, confirm the union between sacrifice and those who bring the sacrifice. The allusions of this scene to Christ, the Last Supper and to the Eucharist cannot be missed. The future evolution from animal to vegetal sacrifice, in which the wafer will represent the flesh and wine will represent blood, can already be anticipated. It finds a parallel in the evolution of God as it is asserted in the novel, in which the desert demon Jahu has evolved into the purely spiritual God whose obscure name JHWH means 'I am who I am'.

The development of human life, of man, as it is shown in the novel contains a movement from literal interpretation to figurative understanding, from the tangible object to the symbol. The act of mediacy that is involved in this movement is shown to be a blessing, not a curse—fulfilment rather than deprivation. The novel tells us that the symbol can adequately signify the real object, the symbolic act can adequately signify the real action. To Jaakob the lamb's blood on the torn Ketônnet is that of Joseph:

Daß aber Jaakob das Blut des Tieres notwendig und un widersprechlich für Joseph's Blut halten mußte, wirkte auch auf Joseph zurück und hob in seinen Augen den Unterschied zwischen dem ›Dies ist mein Blut‹ und dem ›Dies bedeutet mein Blut‹ praktisch auf. (IV, 669)

In *Höllenfahrt* the narrator refers to the same distinction and, more particularly, to the doctrine based on this distinction, which led to a profound division between Catholic and Protestant theology:

Zeiten, in denen man darüber streiten konnte, ob die Oblate der Leib des Opfers ›sei‹ oder ihn nur ›bedeute‹, sollten erst

dreitausend Jahre später sich einstellen; aber auch diese höchst müßigen Erörterungen haben nichts daran zu ändern vermocht, daß das Wesen des Geheimnisses zeitlose Gegenwart ist und bleibt. (IV, 32)

The narrator here refers to the mystery of the Eucharist and his words suggest that this mystery transcends the debate over being and meaning and remains untouched by it. In either case the mystery remains and while it can be experienced, it cannot be explained. Jung, writing on the mystery of the mass and on Transsubstantiation and the Real Presence during its celebration, not only confirms but seems to echo the narrator's words above. He writes:

In diesem Augenblick ist Christus gegenwärtig in Zeit und Raum. Aber seine Gegenwart ist nicht ein Wiedererscheinen, und darum ist sinngemäß die Consecratio keine Wiederholung eines historisch-einmaligen Aktes, sondern vielmehr das Sichtbarwerden einer in Ewigkeit bestehenden Tatsache, eine Zerreiung des Vorhanges von zeitlicher und räumlicher Bedingtheit, welcher den menschlichen Geist von der Schau des Ewigen trennt. Dieses Geschehen ist notwendigerweise ein Mysterium, indem es jenseits menschlicher Erfassungs- und Darstellungskraft liegt. (GW 11, 307)

All our attempts to understand or convey the mystery must inevitably return to the concept of *nunc stans*. Mystery and the nouminous remain outside our intellectual grasp and thus remain forever unexplained. Symbolism, which, as we have seen, is inevitably linked to mediacy, is one attempt to reveal and explain what we cannot understand. Likeness and unlikeness, comparison and differentiation enable us to come closer to understanding. At the same time, however, they form that separating barrier which cannot be removed. This is what the novel tells us and it is the limitation which it is itself subject to, as ultimately any form of interpretation is. In the end the feeling remains that the act of uncovering is bound to obscure what it seeks to reveal. Our

constant search for meaning, our profound need to interpret will always be a *Höllenfahrt* just *like* that of the narrator at the opening of the tetralogy, when he sets off in search of *the* beginning:

Zutreffend aber heißt es hier ›wieder und weiter‹; denn mit unserer Forscherangelegenheitlichkeit treibt das Unerforschliche eine Art von foppendem Spiel: es bietet ihr Scheinhalte und Wegesziele, hinter denen, wenn sie erreicht sind, neue Vergangenheitsstrecken sich auftun, wie es dem Küstengänger ergeht, der des Wanderns kein Ende findet, weil hinter jeder lehmigen Dünenkulisse, die er erstrebte, neue Weiten zu neuen Vorgebirgen vorwärtslocken. (IV, 9)

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This bibliography is not intended to be a comprehensive work of reference on the subject. However, it covers all published works referred to and anything that substantially influenced my thinking on the subject.

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