INFORMATION TO USERS

This manuscript has been reproduced from the microfilm master. UMI films the text directly from the original or copy submitted. Thus, some thesis and dissertation copies are in typewriter face, while others may be from any type of computer printer.

The quality of this reproduction is dependent upon the quality of the copy submitted. Broken or indistinct print, colored or poor quality illustrations and photographs, print bleedthrough, substandard margins, and improper alignment can adversely affect reproduction.

In the unlikely event that the author did not send UMI a complete manuscript and there are missing pages, these will be noted. Also, if unauthorized copyright material had to be removed, a note will indicate the deletion.

Oversize materials (e.g., maps, drawings, charts) are reproduced by sectioning the original, beginning at the upper left-hand corner and continuing from left to right in equal sections with small overlaps. Each original is also photographed in one exposure and is included in reduced form at the back of the book.

Photographs included in the original manuscript have been reproduced xerographically in this copy. Higher quality 6" x 9" black and white photographic prints are available for any photographs or illustrations appearing in this copy for an additional charge. Contact UMI directly to order.

UMI

University Microfilms International
A Bell & Howell Information Company
300 North Zeeb Road, Ann Arbor, MI 48106-1346 USA
313-761-4700 - 800-521-0500
Responsible citizenship: The works of Heinrich Mann in the Weimar Republic

Limburg, David James, Ph.D.

The Ohio State University, 1992

Copyright ©1992 by Limburg, David James. All rights reserved.
RESPONSIBLE CITIZENSHIP: THE WORKS OF HEINRICH MANN
IN THE WEIMAR REPUBLIC
DISSERTATION

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

By

David James Limburg, B.A., M.A.

* * * * *

The Ohio State University
1992

Dissertation Committee:  
Barbara Becker-Cantarino
Mark Roche
Alan Beyerchen

Approved by

Advisor
Department of German
VITA

December 28, 1961 . . . . . . . . . Born, Richmond, Virginia

1984 . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . B.A., Augustana College,
Sioux Falls, South Dakota

1987 . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . M.A., The Ohio State
University, Columbus, Ohio

FIELD OF STUDY

Major Field: German
TABLE OF CONTENTS

VITA ........................................................ ii
ABBREVIATIONS FOR REFERENCES TO PRIMARY WORKS ........ vi
INTRODUCTION ................................................ 1
   A. Heinrich Mann, the Weimar Republic, and the
      Ethic of Responsibility ............................. 1
   B. The Current Picture .................................. 4
   C. Uncovering and Illuminating the Ethic of
      Responsibility in Mann's Works ..................... 12
   D. Hans Jonas and the Imperative of
      Responsibility ......................................... 14

PART 1: POWER AND RESPONSIBILITY, 1918-1925

CHAPTER I: The Reality of Power in the Weimar
           Republic ............................................ 26
   A. "Macht und Mensch": Abstract Concepts of
      Power and Individual Responsibility in
      Mann's Pre-Weimar Writings ......................... 26
   B. Contemporary Discussions of Responsibility
      and Political Leadership ............................. 40
      1. Kurt Hiller and the Activists: The
         Intellectual Elite and the Utopian
         Ideal ............................................. 40
      2. Max Weber: The "Verantwortungsethiker" .... 46
      3. Ernst Toller: Individual Guilt and
         Collective Responsibility ......................... 53
   C. The Concept of Glück and the Utopia of the
      Republic ............................................. 60

iii
D. Illusion and Reality: Politics as Theater and Business .............. 67
E. Responsibility and Modern Industry .................. 75

CHAPTER II: Stories of Leadership ..................... 82
A. Der Kopf: The Problem of Responsible Leadership .............. 82
   1. The "Marsch der Geister": Terra and Mangolf ................. 88
   2. The Political Stage ..................................... 93
   3. The Carousel and the "Schwindelagentur" .................... 104
   4. Violence and Power ........................................ 112
      a. The "Blutspur" ........................................ 112
      b. Industry ............................................. 121
   5. The Retreat and the Cross ............................... 127
   6. The Two Dangers and the Red Shoes .................. 138
B. "Kobes": A Heuristic of Fear ................. 152

PART 2: RESPONSIBLE CITIZENSHIP, 1925-1932

CHAPTER III: Preventing Catastrophe .................. 166
A. Democracy and Fascism .................................. 167
B. "Wir sind jung" .......................................... 179
C. The Importance of the Past ............................. 188
D. The Next War .............................................. 197

CHAPTER IV: Stories of Citizenship .................. 204
A. Mutter Marie: Turning to Responsible Citizenship .......... 205
   1. The Reception ......................................... 205
   2. A Misunderstood Theme .................................. 207
3. The Ethic of Responsibility in Mutter Marie ......................... 210
   a. The "Urbild der Verantwortung" ........ 210
   b. Below the Surface ..................... 215
   c. The Past as Living Conscience ........ 225
   d. The Beichte ............................ 238

4. The Object of Responsibility ............. 244

B. The Completion of the Moral Trilogy ...... 257
   2. Die große Sache: In Pursuit of Destruction ..................... 274

CONCLUSION ............................................. 293

BIBLIOGRAPHY ............................... 297
# ABBREVIATIONS FOR REFERENCES TO PRIMARY WORKS

## Novels

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Abbreviation</th>
<th>Title</th>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Publisher</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>U</strong></td>
<td>Der Untertan</td>
<td>1918</td>
<td>München: dtv, 1987</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>MM, GS</strong></td>
<td>Mutter Marie. Die große Sache</td>
<td>1927</td>
<td>1930</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>E</strong></td>
<td>Eugénie oder Die Bürgerzeit</td>
<td>1928</td>
<td>Afterword Ralph-Rainer Wuthenow</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

## Novellas

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Abbreviation</th>
<th>Title</th>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Publisher</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>KO</strong></td>
<td>Kobes. Mit 10 Lithographien von George Grosz</td>
<td>Berlin: Propyläen, 1925</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>NOV</strong></td>
<td>Novellen. Vol. 10 of Werkauswahl in 10 Bänden</td>
<td>Düsseldorf: Claassen, 1976</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>NOV 2</strong></td>
<td>Das Gute im Menschen. Novellen 2</td>
<td>Düsseldorf: claassen, 1982</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

## Essays

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Abbreviation</th>
<th>Title</th>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Publisher</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>MuM</strong></td>
<td>Macht und Mensch</td>
<td>München: Wolff, 1919</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>ÖL</strong></td>
<td>Das öffentliche Leben</td>
<td>Berlin, Wien, Leipzig: Zsolnay, 1932</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
H Der Haß: Deutsche Zeitgeschichte.  1933.

Z Ein Zeitalter wird besichtigt.  1945.

Vol. 11 of Ausgewählte Werke in Einzelaußgaben.

Vol. 12 of Ausgewählte Werke in Einzelaußgaben.

"Der Krieg muß diskreditiert werden [...] Es ist eine schwierige, langwierige Arbeit. Wir müssen uns ihr unterziehen."

Heinrich Mann, in an interview about "Zeitprobleme," 1927

INTRODUCTION

A. Heinrich Mann, the Weimar Republic, and the Ethic of Responsibility

Heinrich Mann's works of the Weimar Republic have been a problem for many Mann scholars. Although the Weimar years were some of Mann's most productive ones, coming at the height of his career as a writer, the scholarly interest in this literature has been relatively low. In 1979 Siegfried Sudhof, the founder of the Arbeitskreis Heinrich Mann, wrote to Helmut Koopmann concerning the theme of the upcoming Heinrich Mann symposium in 1981: "Mir schwebt dabei das Werk Heinrich Manns in der Zeit von 1918 bis 1933 vor. Diese Zeit ist in der Heinrich-Mann-Forschung fast ein weißer Fleck" (Koopmann 2). A little over a decade later, this period of Mann's work is still far from being adequately discussed.
Though there have been thematic studies of Mann's literature that include works from the Weimar era, there has not yet been a thematic study focusing specifically on this clearly unique period of Mann's engagement as a socially aware author. Politics and ethics were the dominant areas of concern for Mann during the period of Germany's first democratic system of government. A consistent theme in Mann's Weimar essays and fiction addresses both of these realms: responsibility. Scholars have noticed the prevalence of the term Verantwortung in Mann's writings, but the significance of the concept has been missed; if the concept is mentioned it is most often considered an element of Mann's stock moral terminology, or grouped together with other key words that permeate Mann's works, such as Geist.

However, responsibility was of great concern for Mann, as well as for many of his contemporaries, and it remains an equally relevant issue today. The complexity of the concept is in its openness to a wide variety of interpretations. Mann's own idea of responsibility changed along with the changes in his society and the development of his political thinking. But his concentration on the problem remained constant, from his first major essayistic works in 1910 up to and beyond the last days of the republic. Mann's writings of the later years of the republic reflect an insightful ethic of responsibility that sets him apart from other authors concerned with politics and ethics.
Mann's ethic of responsibility developed not only alongside the political changes in Germany, but also in conjunction with his insights into the realities of modern power. Before the first world war, Mann was one of Germany's earliest "prophets of democracy" (Doerfel 93-111), envisioning a future republic as a utopia of reason and justice, in which the power drive of Wilhelmian Germany would be replaced by humanitarian goals. Mann's pre-Weimar ethic of responsibility was directed toward the individual, manifested positively in his essayistic call to political action among individual representatives of Geist, and negatively in his literary portrayal of the irresponsible individual, the Untertan. However, near the end of the war one can already detect traces of doubt in Mann's writings about the possibility for a radical change in his society, and by the early years of the Weimar Republic Mann began to realize the illusion of his utopian ideal of democracy.

By the time of the inflation, Mann's concentration had shifted from a somewhat abstract denunciation of power to a more concrete analysis of the forces driving his society. He began to focus on the power of big industry and its role in the German empire as well as its increasingly powerful role in the republic. The problem of the Weimar Republic that was becoming clear to Mann was its new dimension of power, on two levels: the continuation of an ideology of power and success combined with the increasing technological and economic power
of industry. These forces, along with society's growing acceptance of violent and extreme solutions to their problems, were in Mann's view propelling Germany toward another war, with the potential for even greater destruction than the last.

Reliance on the power of the intellectual individual to redirect society's ambitions was no longer a realistic solution, as portrayed in Der Kopf (1925) and "Kobes" (1925). Calling for renewed attention to the immediate sphere of traditional morality was also an inadequate response to the magnitude of the problem. The new situation of power demanded a new ethic of responsibility, directed toward preventing war and the destruction of humanity. Mann continued to emphasize the importance of individual responsibility, now on a broader, less intellectual leader-biased level. But the thrust of his ethic became a more far-reaching idea of collective responsibility for the future. After 1925, his works begin to urge a collective awakening of societal conscience in order to comprehend a future-directed idea of responsibility: the responsibility of citizens to work to prevent their society's drive to self-destruction, and to preserve the possibility of a dignified human existence for future citizens.

B. The Current Picture

Though Mann's "Geist und Tat" (1910) and "Zola" (1915) are generally recognized as ground-breaking efforts for the
genre of the essay in German literature, his numerous essayistic, oratory, and journalistic responses to the events of the Weimar Republic are only beginning to be recognized for their artistic and historical merit. As Wilfried Schoeller writes, Mann's essays are still the most undiscovered area of his work (Schoeller, "Zur deutschen Chronik" 56). Waltraud Berle's analysis of Mann's political development in the Weimar Republic stands out as one of the most thorough studies in the last decade of this body of Mann's work, giving special attention to Mann's little-known journalistic contributions. David Gross's study of Mann's "literary politics" also provides a significant contribution to the research on Mann's Weimar essays.

But though Mann's essayistic work of the Weimar era is viewed as a territory that needs more exploration, the critical evaluation of his novels of the period as failures has become nearly canonized. Ulrich Weisstein's comment reflects the general tone of the scholarly reception of Mann's novels after Der Untertan and before Henri Quatre: "In der Forschung herrscht ziemlich einhellig die Meinung, der Zeitabschnitt von 1914 bis 1933 sei für den Romancier Heinrich Mann ästhetisch gesehen von verhältnismäßig geringer Bedeutung gewesen," an evaluation that according to Weisstein, "läßt sich schlecht widersprechen" (Weisstein, "Unsachliche" 222). He refers to Die Armen (1917) and Der Kopf (1925) as "künstlerische Mißgeburten," and writes that each of the four
remaining Weimar novels "haftet irgendein Makel an" (Weisstein, "Unsachliche" 222).

Although the efforts to study these works seriously have been infrequent, they have been significant. In the last decade, there have been several studies analyzing Der Kopf, focusing on the reflection of Nietzschean philosophy in the work, its criticism of the justice system, and its anti-war theme (Emrich, Macht 350-74; Kraske and Lellau 24-52; Müller-Seidel 119-27; Schlichting 621-737; Segelcke 140-52). Jork de la Fontaine's recent work provides an extensive analysis of the novel's intricate motifs and historical references and sources, along with an interpretation of Mann's self-critical reflection on the attempt of the intellectual idealist to translate "Geist" into "Tat."

One of the most significant thematic studies of Der Kopf is found in Elke Emrich's insightful analysis of the concepts of Macht and Geist in Mann's works up to 1925. Both Emrich and Ralf Schlichting analyze the novel's response to the effect of Nietzschean philosophy on the societal consciousness, especially the concept of the "Wille zur Macht" (Emrich, Macht 350-74; Schlichting 621-737). Emrich discusses the novel's criticism of the Nietzschean idea of "progress" toward an ideal of power and the Übermensch, of which she writes, "Das Ergebnis dieses Fortschrittsdenkens sind Imperialismus, Totalitarismus, Faschismus" (Emrich, Macht 370).
Both Schlichting and Emrich end their studies with Der Kopf in 1925. But Mann's concentration on power continues into the later Weimar years as well, with his increased attention to the more anonymous yet more concrete power of industry and technology. The power of industry is also of major importance in Der Kopf, and my analysis will endeavor to show how the novel was speaking more to the current Weimar situation than has previously been interpreted, with its analysis of the two concurrent forces of ideology and industry in the pursuit of power in Germany and in modern society in general. The novel is Mann's first major attempt to persuade his Weimar audience of the need for an ethic of responsibility to counter the catastrophe-oriented dynamic arising from these forces.

The novella "Kobes," which Mann wrote at the height of the inflation, during his work on Der Kopf, is generally regarded as one of Mann's best novellas. But the work has also received surprisingly little serious critical attention. Studies by Emrich and Walter Gontermann stand out. Gontermann provides a detailed analysis of the novella's satirical portrayal of the historical figure Hugo Stinnes. Emrich studies the work as a prophecy of fascism, seeing again a criticism of Nietzschean philosophy; this time in the intellectual figure Sand, who tries to take the Kobes myth to its "logical end," and in so doing exhibits his own will to power (Emrich, "Kobes" 162). But the novella also contains a
message beyond its criticism of the spirit of the times represented by the inflation profiteer and industrial giant Stinnes and the Nietzschean philosophy of power. "Kobes" is not only a vision of a fascist future (Emrich, "Kobes" 157) and a portrait of a "Schreckensutopie" under the rule of industrial leaders (Gontermann 134), but also a projection of the self-destructive end of the "Moloch" of industrial-technological power, a fearful image of a threatened humanity that supports the imperative of responsibility for the future.

The three novels following Der Kopf -- Mutter Marie (1927), Eugénie oder Die Bürgerzeit (1928) and Die große Sache (1930) -- were conceived by Mann as a moral trilogy, grounded on the imperatives "Lernt verantworten, lernt ertragen, lernt euch freuen."¹ Mann's last Weimar novel, Ein ernstes Leben (1932), though not a part of the trilogy, continues his analysis of the republic in the style of these novels. These novels have been criticized or neglected in part because of Mann's intentional turn to a seemingly "lighter" style of writing, in contrast to the satire of Der Untertan or the complex style of Der Kopf. The novels incorporate elements and techniques of popular fiction and film, a method that has generally been seen as a misguided attempt to clothe moral didacticism in an appealing form. The novels have also been

seen as disappointingly fairy tale-like with their optimistic, happy endings.

Several studies, however, have found virtues in Mann's unconventional, or as Berle argues, "experimental" style (Berle 250-59). Some have noted the irony of Mann's "fairy tales" and their more subtle approach to important issues of the time (Eilert 218-19; Harbers 368; Schütz 89-90; Wuthenow 244). Wolfdietrich Rasch's interpretation of Eugénie uncovers the work's use of a historical analogy, rescuing the novel from its prevailing interpretation as a somewhat irrelevant and nostalgic look toward an easier time in the past. Ulrich Weisstein's analysis of Die große Sache reveals elements of Mann's socio-political criticism that had been overlooked, in his identification of the historical figure Hans Luther in the character of Schattich (Weisstein, "Unsachliche" 235-43). Wolfram Schütte's 1971 article remains an essential guide to Mann's use of "Kinotechnik" in the Weimar novels, and Jürgen Haupt's analysis of Mann's "Kunst der Lebensnähe" provides a significant discussion of Mann's conscious use of elements of trivial literature in order to reflect and transcend the attitudes of the time (Schütte 92-102; Haupt, "Moralische" 143-45).

Berle provides the most in-depth look at the political motivations behind Mann's Weimar novels. Her study focuses on Die große Sache and Ein ernstes Leben, novels that according to Berle attempt to provide a "Therapie" for society's ills,
after the two previous literary "Zwischendiagnosen" (Berle 203). One of Berle's most significant contributions is her detection of a subversive political strategy behind these seemingly apolitical works (Berle 247-49, 295). Her questioning of what is "political" is insightful:

Erschöpft sich das 'Politische' an Heinrich Mann in seinen Reaktionen auf tagespolitische Ereignisse -- oder ist nicht vielmehr, gerade beim Ethiker, beim Moralisten Heinrich Mann, die Dimension des Politischen weitaus größer? [...] Was bei einem Arbeitsansatz unter moralische Kategorien fällt (und damit wegfällt), hat für den anderen gerade durch die moralische Dimension höchste politische Bedeutung. (Berle 8)

The issue of Mann's moralism has been the main problem in the reception of the Weimar trilogy. The morals upon which the novels are based have been received as at worst trivial or naive messages and at best individualistic problems of morality that sidetrack the real issues of concern in the Weimar Republic. The prevailing view of Mann's concept of morality is that it concentrates on the individual and is solidly rooted in bourgeois tradition. Hanno König's work has remained the standard analysis of Mann's concept of morality, in which he correctly shows the Kantian foundation of Mann's ethics (König 216-64). But what has not been seen is the new dimension of Mann's ethic of responsibility, for which the present-oriented Kantian framework, though still valid in the individual sphere, is no longer sufficient on the level of

2 See also Gross 167-71, 192-94. For the topic of Mann's moralism, see also Rasch; Eilert; Haupt, "Moralische."
greatest concern in the modern age, the collective societal level. Jürgen Haupt's view of Mann's Weimar novels as a contradictory combination of conventional bourgeois morality and a desire to speak with socially aware "Lebensnähe" (Haupt, "Moralische" 142-43), is representative of the general misinterpretation of Mann's concept of morality. Mann's ethical understanding in the Weimar period has post-conventional dimensions, in its direct response to the new dynamic of power and its potential to create widespread destruction in the modern technological society.

Mann's idea of morality is grounded in his ethic of responsibility. This ethic is reflected in his essays of the period and underlies all three of the works of the Weimar trilogy, as well as Der Kopf and "Kobes." Though Berle sheds new light on the political dimension of Mann's morality, her exclusive attention to Mann's promotion of individual autonomy (Berle 3, 202, 249, 295) sees only one side of his political-moral view, which is insufficient for an understanding of the Weimar novels and their underlying ethic. Mann realized that though individual autonomy and moral improvement remained important goals, an individual idea of responsibility alone was insufficient for preventing the catastrophe to humanity that he anticipated with the continued drive to war. Only within a collective understanding of responsibility for the future could individuals work toward bringing about a change in the spirit and dynamic of the time.
The novel that begins Mann's positive portrayal of such an ethic of responsibility is Mutter Marie, a work that has yet received no serious critical attention. The novel evokes the image of the parent-to-infant relationship to awaken the most natural human feeling of non-reciprocal responsibility, then extends the image symbolically to one of responsibility for future generations. The two novels that follow continue under this ethic of responsibility, focusing on society's speculation with the future, its reliance on chance instead of responsibility, and its pursuit of destruction under an ideological and technological dynamic of power and success. The optimism of these three novels is not in their fairy-tale endings, but in their overall spirit of respect for humanity. But the optimism is also tempered by a warning of the catastrophic consequences of modern power, through an ironic depiction of both the romantic illusions and the real forces fueling society's drive to fascism and war.

C. Uncovering and Illuminating the Ethic of Responsibility in Mann's Works

My analysis of Mann's literary ethic of responsibility will be in the context of two main goals: first, to uncover the essence and development of Mann's ethic and to show its relevance for the Weimar Republic, through analysis of his essays, novels, and novellas; and second, to extend the major
ideas of the ethic of responsibility to the context of the present, with a comparative analysis of the ideas of the current philosopher Hans Jonas on the subject. For the first goal, my approach is to divide Mann's writings of the Weimar period into two chronological sections, each of roughly seven or eight years. The dividing year of 1925 saw the publications of both the novel Mann had worked on since 1918, *Der Kopf*, and the novella "Kobes." The novels after 1925 reflect the new direction in Mann's literary style, and are best analyzed together. Historically, the division in 1925 corresponds to the early stages of Weimar's superficially apparent "era of stability" after the inflation.

In each section, I will look first at Mann's essays and journalistic publications, and then at his fictional work. As Berle points out, there is a typical relationship between Mann's essays and novels, described best in a comment by Kurt Tucholsky after the publication of Mann's first volume of essays in 1919:

*Der mathematische Grundriß zu Heinrich Manns Roman 'Der Untertan' ist erschienen: der Essai-Band 'Macht und Mensch.' Hier ist herausgeschält, was dort unter Fleisch und Muskeln verborgen lag, hier hat einer sauber die Adern herauspräpariert -- und klar und übersichtlich liegt das ganze große Netz vor uns. (Cited in Berle 203)

Similarly, Mann's ethic of responsibility is laid out more directly in the essays, and portrayed artistically in his novels and novellas.

---

3 The novel was written in 1923, see Gontermann 81.
The two sections also reflect the corresponding emphases of Mann's ethic. The first period reflects above all Mann's concern with power and responsibility, his focus on the various levels of leadership in the empire and the republic. The second shows his turn to the citizens in the Weimar democracy, both in his style, with its intention to achieve a broader mass appeal, and in his theme of the collective responsibility of citizens to prevent the destruction of humanity.

For my second goal, I will look to Hans Jonas and his 1979 work *Das Prinzip Verantwortung* for his ground-breaking philosophical discussion of the problem of responsibility in the technological age. Many of the major elements of Jonas's work can be used to illuminate the significance of Mann's insights into the same problem. Both uphold the responsibility of human beings, in the light of their new dimensions of power, to prevent a catastrophe to human existence that is impending as a result of this power.

D. Hans Jonas and the Imperative of Responsibility

The importance of Mann's increasing concentration on the concept of responsibility with his insights into the new dimensions of modern power can be illuminated by looking at the work of the current philosopher and 1987 recipient of the "Friedenspreis des deutschen Buchhandels," Hans Jonas. His
Das Prinzip Verantwortung lays the philosophical foundation for a new ethic of responsibility in the technological age. Jonas's insights into the phenomenon of human power and the corresponding imperative of responsibility can be compared in significant ways to the ethical insights and concerns in Mann's literature of the Weimar period. Jonas argues the imperative of an ethic of "Fernverantwortung," or future-directed responsibility, based on the increasingly self-motivating dynamic of modern technological power since the industrial revolution, and the threat this dynamic poses to human existence. As Jonas writes, "die Macht, ist [...] was Verantwortung ins Zentrum der Moral rückt" (Jonas 233).

Though Jonas focuses primarily on the technological threat to humanity for reasons other than war, concentrating especially on the issues of biotechnology and the environment, the overall issue of concern is the destructive potential of modern power in general. This allows for such summaries of the fundamental principle of Jonas's work as that of Claudia Albert: "Die technologischen Möglichkeiten gegenseitiger Vernichtung sind inzwischen [since World War I] so groß geworden, daß nurmehr eine Ethik der Verantwortung die Menschheit vor ihrer endgültigen Selbstzerstörung retten kann" (Albert 399). In the English edition of his work, Jonas concludes by explaining his position on the parallel fears of environmental destruction and nuclear warfare:

Both must be prevented. Where the greater cause for pessimism is may be moot. For me personally only
the overall drift with its entirely nondiabolic automatism has the traits of an almost inevitable fatum, which the sudden murder of mankind has not. But over that point there need be no quarrel. (Jonas, English ed. 203)

The worst possible scenario would be a combination of the two catastrophes, in which the misery resulting from the ecological exhaustion of the planet would drive one power or another to resort to atomic warfare (Jonas, English ed. 203). The context of Mann's thought was the very early stages of the technological dynamic, and from his pre-World War II, pre-atomic bomb perspective, war and the development of war technology posed the greatest threat to humanity.

A key element in Jonas's argument for future-directed responsibility is the inability, with the increasing complexity of modern power, to predict the consequences of our actions. He writes, "Die Tatsache [...] daß das vorhersagende Wissen hinter dem technischen Wissen, das unserem Handeln die Macht gibt, zurückbleibt, nimmt selbst ethische Bedeutung an. Die Kluft zwischen Kraft des Vorherwissens und Macht des Tuns erzeugt ein neues ethisches Problem" (Jonas 28). Jonas acknowledges that along with the increasing power of technology and scientific knowledge the power of the state over the direction of society has also risen, creating an apparently greater ability of politicians to plan ahead and foresee the future (Jonas 206). But Jonas argues,

Dem steht allerdings die immer unübersichtlicher werdende Komplexität des theoretisch und praktisch zu meisternden Gesellschaftsgeschehens gegenüber [...] die Zahl der Unbekannten steigt zugleich mit
Even if predictions have become safer (and Jonas does not believe they have), along with the greater abilities of knowledge there is a correspondingly wider horizon of future consequences to consider, demanding even greater responsibility (Jonas 207). Responsibility as an imperative then arises out of this "Fernhorizont einzigartig moderner Menschenmacht" (Jonas 216).

The recognition of a new dimension of power is also what brings Mann to a new understanding of responsibility and ethics in modern society. His identification of the threatening new "god" of industry is similar to Jonas's view of the increasingly overpowering dynamic of modern technological progress. As Rudi Thiessen words it in his discussion of Jonas, technology has become a force, which "sich anschickt, zum omnipotenten Subjekt der Geschichte zu werden" (Thiessen 2). Along with the new religious-like reverence for industrial power, Mann identifies two defining elements of modernity, both of which he sees first in industry, and then reflected in the overall spirit of his society: a shortsighted success drive and a spirit of speculation. These elements become symbolic in Mann's works, especially *Der Kopf*, *Eugénie*, and *Die große Sache*, for society's gamble with the future.
When seen on the societal level, gambling with the future, or even simple disregard for the future, denies responsibility, allowing instead the power dynamic to dictate the direction and outcome of our actions. Both Mann and Jonas are aware of the new potential for destructive collective effects of our actions, and in this light, a spirit of speculation and unrestricted progress creates a new level of risk to humanity. As Jonas writes, in the framework of earlier ethics, as well as in the private sphere of action, considerations of the distant future have had no place in moral decision-making; the future has been seen as best left to take care of itself (Jonas 76). However, "In der neuen Handlungsdimension [...] handelt es sich nicht mehr um müßige Phantasien; die Projektion in die Ferne gehört zu ihrem Wesen und ihrer Pflicht, und ihrer Ungewißheit muß daher eine andere Vorschrift begegnen" (Jonas 76). Reflecting on the aspect of the wager in human action, Jonas says the new ethic "verbietet gerade, das Nichts zu riskieren, das heißt seine Möglichkeit im Gewählten zuzulassen -- es verbietet, kurz, in Sachen der Menschheit das Va-banque-Spiel überhaupt" (Jonas 82). Jonas's argument is based on the tenet that humankind has no right to suicide (Jonas 80), an image that is symbolically projected in Mann's "Kobes."

Another shared insight of both Mann and Jonas is the new importance of morality in the political sphere. Mann's pre-Weimar writings reflect a greater concentration on individual
morality, and a fairly abstract concept of power and government. But with the reality of the republic, Mann's moral understanding becomes more like that of Jonas, not denying the validity of his Kantian ethics, but also recognizing a new level of complexity of power and consequences in modern society. As Jonas states, "das veränderte Wesen menschlichen Handelns verändert das Grundwesen der Politik" (Jonas 32). The collective nature and cumulative success of modern technological power has created a new need for morality to enter the sphere of production, and it must do so "in der Form öffentlicher Politik" (Jonas 32). Since human action has changed so drastically, the idea of responsibility, with its new future-oriented outlook, has been thrust into the sphere of political action and political morality (Jonas 221).

Jonas's new formulation of Kant's categorical imperative moves beyond the level of personal development: "Es ist [...] offensichtlich, daß der neue Imperativ sich viel mehr an öffentliche Politik als an privates Verhalten richtet" (Jonas 37). It also transcends the immediate sphere of the Kantian ethic: "Der neue Imperativ ruft eine andere Einstimmigkeit an: nicht die des Aktes mit sich selbst, sondern die seiner schließlichen Wirkungen mit dem Fortbestand menschlicher Aktivité in der Zukunft" (Jonas 37). And

---

4 "Schließe in deine gegenwärtige Wahl die zukünftige Integrität des Menschen als Mit-Gegenstand deines Wollens ein" (Jonas 36).
although traditional ethical considerations in the sphere of daily and direct human interaction are still valid, they have been "überschattet von einem wachsenden Bereich kollektiven Tuns, in dem Täter, Tat und Wirkung nicht mehr dieselben sind wie in der Nahsphäre, und der durch die Enormität seiner Kräfte der Ethik eine neue, nie zuvor erträumte Dimension der Verantwortung aufzwingt" (Jonas 26).

As Karl-Otto Apel explains, Jonas's ethic is a post-conventional one (Apel 185-98, 421-25). Apel highlights a critic's misinterpretation of Jonas's ethic, in order to illustrate the important difference between Jonas's idea of collective responsibility for the future and a "law and order" understanding of individual duty, which, as Apel points out, can also function in an immoral system, such as the Third Reich (Apel 421-24). My study of Mann's writings will endeavor to show how Mann's ethical understanding similarly takes on post-conventional dimensions in his focus on the idea of responsibility. Mann also differentiates his ethic of responsibility from an individual "Pflichtmoral," as is most clearly illustrated in *Mutter Marie*.

Another important characteristic of Jonas's ethic of responsibility is that it is distinctly "anti-utopisch" (Jonas 46). Though the thrust of Jonas's criticism is on Marxist utopianism (and on the "Utopisten par excellence" [Jonas 406], Ernst Bloch), his anti-utopianism is also more generally, as Thiessen puts it, in the context of a "Verzicht auf eine
Eschatologie des universalen Glücks" (Thiessen 2). Jonas argues that modern technological advancement has acquired a kind of utopian dynamic, creating a snowball effect of extreme projects directed toward goals, "die früher das Reservat von Utopien war" (Jonas 54). His criticism of the Marxist utopia is based on its intimate connection with this already "quasi-utopian" dynamic of technology; so his utopian critique is implicitly "eine Kritik der Technologie in der Vorschau ihrer extremen Möglichkeiten" (Jonas 388).

Even though Mann's criticism was not directed toward Marxist utopianism, his critique coincides with Jonas's on the point of the dynamic of industrial-technological power, and he portrays the utopian temptations of this power in both "Kobes" and Die große Sache. The development of Mann's thinking on responsibility is also accompanied by a renunciation of his own utopian ideas, through which his pre-Weimar ideal of the "Pflicht zum Glück" gives way to a more realistic and cautious, but also more urgent concept of responsibility. Mann also remained consistently critical of any system that upheld an ideal of a "war to end all wars," such as revolutionary communism. However, Mann's main focus was on another ideological force, which, though not comparable in substance with Marxism, also upheld its own understanding of a "utopia." Mann's criticism of fascism addresses not only the violence, racism, and rejection of freedom inherent to the Nazi ideology, but also the promises of radical, "utopian"
change in the vision of the Third Reich. To Mann, the greatest threat of the Nazi movement was in its two levels of power: its ideological connections with war and its economic connections with industry.

Both Jonas and Mann identify the problem of collective acceptance of an ethic of responsibility for the future. Jonas writes that in order to understand the imperative of such an ethic, we must first become aware, both cognitively and emotionally, of the threat that modern power poses to our existence. This process can be aided by a "Heuristik der Furcht," or an illustration of the ethical imperative through a projection of fear:

so verhilft auch in unserem Fall einer noch gesuchten Ethik der Fernverantwortung [...] uns erst die vorausgesehene Verzerrung des Menschen zu dem davor zu bewahrenden Begriff des Menschen, und wir brauchen die Bedrohung des Menschenbildes [...] um uns im Erschrecken davor eines wahren Menschenbildes zu versichern. Solange die Gefahr unbekannt ist, weiß man nicht, was es zu schützen gibt und warum. (Jonas 63)

Such a method, I will argue, underlies Mann's novella "Kobes," in its depiction of the industrial Moloch and the symbolic mass suicide, as well as its anticipation of a fascist system.

The topic of religion comes up in both Mann's and Jonas's considerations of an ultimate grounding for an ethic of responsibility for the future. Wolfgang Müller provides a thorough discussion of Jonas's concept of responsibility and his religious understanding, along with Müller's own argument for a theological grounding of Jonas's ethic. Müller
underlines Jonas's opposition to the current concepts of the natural sciences as a basis upon which to found his ethic, since "eine sich selbst überlassene Naturwissenschaft den Prozeß der fortwährenden Dynamik der Technik in Gang hält und damit das menschliche Leben noch weiter zerstört" (Müller 69). As Müller points out, there is a motif through Jonas's work that responsibility can perhaps only be sensibly grounded theologically (Müller 12). Jonas's own personal view of responsibility is based on religious belief (Müller 59-65). However, Jonas asserts, a religious foundation is no longer possible with the current state of thought in philosophy and science (Müller 12, 29, 65, 69; Jonas 57), and consequently he turns to metaphysics to found his ethic (Müller 69).

Interestingly, Mann, whose own attitude toward religion is perhaps best described as ambiguous, took a similar stance on the natural sciences and religion, and their relationship to an ethic of responsibility. This is most clearly reflected in his essay "Die jungen Leute" from 1925, in which Mann writes, "um zu wissen, was Verantworten wirklich heißt, hätte wenigstens der Durchschnitt doch wohl nötig, an Gott zu glauben. Populäre Naturwissenschaft ist für ihn nicht die richtige Voraussetzung" (SJ 214). My study will also analyze the religious motifs in Mann's writings and their relationship to the theme of responsibility, especially in Der Kopf, Mutter Marie, and Die große Sache.

5 See Z 187-96.
As a final point of comparison, Jonas looks to the parent-infant relationship for the archetype of the feeling of responsibility in human nature. He names the child as the "Urgegenstand aller Verantwortung" (Jonas 234). Care for one's offspring, Jonas argues, is the primary example of complete non-reciprocal responsibility (Jonas 85) and the timeless "Urbild aller Verantwortung" (Jonas 234). This instance of responsibility is so spontaneous and natural that he calls it "der elementarmenschliche Urtyp des Zusammenfalls von objektiver Verantwortlichkeit und subjektivem Verantwortungsgefühl [...] durch den uns die Natur für alle, vom Trieb nicht so gesicherten Arten der Verantwortlichkeit vorerzogen und unser Gefühl dafür vorbereitet hat" (Jonas 171). Mann employs this "Urbild" of responsibility tangentially in several of his works, and as the underlying motif of Mutter Marie, whose moral imperative is "lernt verantworten."

For Jonas, the ethic of responsibility requires a new sense of modesty and precaution with which to meet the new dimension of human power:

Wenn denn also die neuartige Natur unseres Handelns eine neue Ethik weittragender Verantwortlichkeit verlangt, kommensurabel mit der Tragweite unserer Macht, dann verlangt sie im Namen eben jener Verantwortlichkeit auch eine neue Art von Demut -- ein Demut nicht wie frühere wegen der Kleinheit, sondern wegen der exzessiven Größe unserer Macht, die ein Exzeß unserer Macht zu tun über unsere Macht vorherzusehen und über unsere Macht zu werten und zu urteilen ist. Angesichts des quasi-eschatologischen Potentials unserer technischen Prozesse wird Unwissen über die letzten Folgen
selber ein Grund für verantwortliche Zurückhaltung — als das zweitbeste nach dem Besitz von Weisheit selbst. (Jonas 55)

What is needed ultimately is a collective self-control over our own power, which is threatening our existence (Jonas 232). Jonas says his ethic falls on the side of "moderation and circumspection, of 'beware!' and 'preserve!'" (Jonas, English ed. 204).

This is also the tone of the increasingly urgent call for responsibility in Mann's essays and novels of the late Weimar period. Especially in the Weimar trilogy, one can see that Mann's ethic of responsibility is one of long-term thinking, precaution, and prevention, an ethic that needs to be both learned and felt by the collective of modern society in order to preserve the future of humanity.

This concludes my outline of some of the points of similarity between Jonas's and Mann's ethic of responsibility in the age of modern power. Throughout my analysis, I will make further references to Jonas's work, using his insights to illuminate the underlying ethic in Mann's writings of the Weimar Republic.
PART 1: POWER AND RESPONSIBILITY, 1918-1925

CHAPTER I: The Reality of Power in the Weimar Republic

A. "Macht und Mensch": Abstract Concepts of Power and Individual Responsibility in Mann's Pre-Weimar Writings

The title of Heinrich Mann's first volume of essays reflects the two major focal points in his literature from 1910 to 1919: power and the individual. Most of the essays in Macht und Mensch (1919) contain denunciations of "die Macht" as well as appeals to individual responsibility. Mann's pre-Weimar concept of power is a relatively abstract one, encompassing all forces in opposition to truth, justice, and humanity, forces which for Mann defined the spirit of Wilhelmian Germany. Mann's idea of individual responsibility is equally abstract; the goal of the responsible individual is to help replace the current system of Macht with a system based on Geist. The decade before the Weimar Republic was not only the beginning stage of Mann's essayistic work, but also the period of his best known novel Der Untertan. Completed two months before the war began in 1914 and published in 1918, the novel was received by many as a prophecy of the downfall
of the German empire. The focus of the satire's criticism is also "die Macht," and its protagonist is the epitome of the irresponsible individual, Diederich Heßling.

In the essay "Geist und Tat" from 1910, Mann puts forth his ideal of the "Mensch des Geistes," also referred to as the "Literat" (E I 12), who has a responsibility to work for justice and democracy, and to work against "die Macht": "Seine Natur: die Definition der Welt, die helle Vollkommenheit des Wortes verpflichtet ihn zur Verachtung der dumpfen, unsauberen Macht" (E I 12). Rejecting a long tradition of aestheticism among German poets, Mann accuses artists in the "ivory tower" of ignoring the political dimensions of their vocation:

Sie haben das Leben des Volkes nur als Symbol genommen für die eigenen hohen Erlebnisse. Sie haben der Welt eine Statistenrolle zugeteilt, ihre schöne Leidenschaft nie in die Kämpfe dort unten eingemischt, haben die Demokratie nicht gekannt und haben sie verachtet. (E I 13)

Holding up as models "die Literaten Frankreichs, die, von Rousseau bis Zola, der bestehenden Macht entgegentratren" (E I 9), Mann appeals to German authors to live up to their calling as representatives of the realm of ideas and insights, by directing their attention to the political realities of their society and working to bring about change, synthesizing "Geist und Tat":

Sie sollten herrschen, der Geist sollte herrschen, dadurch, daß das Volk herrscht [...] Die Zeit verlangt und ihre Ehre will, daß sie endlich, endlich auch in diesem Lande dem Geist die Erfüllung seiner Forderungen sichern, daß sie Agitatoren werden, sich dem Volk verbünden gegen die Macht, daß sie die ganze Kraft des Wortes seinem Kampf
schenken, der auch der Kampf des Geistes ist. (E I 13)

The essay "Voltaire -- Goethe" (originally "Französischer Geist") from the same year, also emphasizes the political role of individual representatives of Geist, suggesting the possibility of bringing about a new dimension of Macht: "Ist es zu denken, daß [...] die Macht eins ist mit dem Geist?" (E I 15). Mann's belief in the responsibility of artists to direct their perceptive and creative skills toward humanitarian action is the idea behind the dichotomy Voltaire -- Goethe. On the one hand is Voltaire: "Wo die Wahrheit gegen den Nutzen aufstand, der Geist gegen die Macht, da schmetterte sein Name" (E I 19). On the other is Goethe:

Goethe inzwischen sieht aus der gespenterhaften Höhe, wo die deutschen Genien einander vielleicht verstehen, unbewegt auf sein unbewegtes Land hinab. Sein Werk, der Gedanke an ihn, sein Name haben in Deutschland nichts verändert, keine Unmenschlichkeit ausgemerzt, keinen Zoll Weges Bahn gebrochen in eine bessere Zeit. (E I 19)

The dichotomy in both of these essays from 1910 is of a French civilization grounded in the ideals of the revolution, an event prepared for, in Mann's perception, by the great French writers, and the German "Kultur," in which the realm of ideas and literature is separate from the action of everyday life, "als ob es Kultur gäbe ohne Menschlichkeit" (E I 20). A progressive ideal of freedom, or "der absolute Mensch" (E I 20), should motivate the the artist's feeling of responsibility to become politically active.
Mann's focus on the responsibility of the Literat reaches its high point in "Zola" (1915). The essay contains a historical analogy of the French empire under Napoleon III and the German empire under Wilhelm II, as well as a projection of Mann in the portrayal of Emile Zola. Mann attributes to Zola a sense of responsibility and mission: "Und aus den heißen Gesichten des Jünglings hernieder senkt sich feierlich in sein Herz das Gewissen einer Verantwortung, die Sendung einer Führerschaft" (E I 162-63). This idea of a "Sendung" is echoed with some ironic detachment in the figure Balrich in Die Armen (1917), and more critically later, as an element of hubris in the character of Terra in Der Kopf (1925).\footnote{See Emrich, Macht 366-67; Werner, Skeptizismus 283; Roberts, Artistic 150-51.}

The denunciation of power, still an abstract concept, is also a main element of "Zola." Within the framework of discussing Zola's criticism of the French empire, Mann's own underlying criticism of Wilhelmian Germany becomes clear:

Ein Reich, das einzig auf Gewalt bestanden hat und nicht auf Freiheit, Gerechtigkeit und Wahrheit, ein Reich, in dem nur befohlen und gehorcht, verdient und ausgebeutet, des Menschen aber nie geachtet ward, kann nicht siegen, und zöge es aus mit übermenschlicher Macht [...] Die Macht ist unnütz und hinfällig, wenn nur für sie gelebt worden ist und nicht für den Geist, der über ihr ist. (E I 198)

Justice and truth are the central issues of the essay, and are repeatedly played off against Macht, as in such examples: "Aber was ist Macht, wenn sie nicht Recht ist, das tiefste
Recht, wurzelnd in dem Bewußtsein erfüllter Pflicht, erkämpfter Ideale, erhöhten Menschentumtes" (E I 198); "Die Wahrheit und die Macht sind Feinde" (E I 205).

For Mann, Zola's action in the Dreyfus affair becomes symbolic for the responsible "Tat" of the Literat, in the pursuit of truth and justice. In the section "Tat," in which the Dreyfus affair is discussed, Mann once again brings in the synthesis of "Geist und Tat," of literature and politics, now as an insight of Zola: "Literatur und Politik hatten denselben Gegenstand, dasselbe Ziel und mußten einander durchdringen, um nicht beide zu entarten. Geist ist Tat, die für den Menschen geschieht; — und so sei der Politiker Geist, und der Geistige handle!" (E I 209). Zola's individual responsibility is the key to his influential role in bringing about justice in the Dreyfus case: "Er hatte wie je die Gabe der großen Wirkung. Seine Tat, wie ein Werk mit seinem Namen darauf, war millionenfach in den Händen der Welt. Dafür trug er die größte Verantwortung und opferte am meisten" (E I 216).

In essays written near the end of the war, Mann's concentration on power and responsibility is still central. In "Gespräch mit Talleyrand" (1918), Mann's concept of power retains its idealistic level of abstraction. As the voice of Larevellière, Tallyrand's counterpart in a conversation taking place in the aftermath of the French Revolution, Mann writes, "Die Verehrung der ungerechten Macht muß verschwinden, da die Macht selbst von unserer Welt doch endlich verschwinden wird,
es sei denn die Macht der Vernunft" (E I 148). The idea of individual responsibility is emphasized in Mann's appeal to "Das junge Geschlecht" in 1917. Writing about the relationship of the individual to the future state, the republic, Mann envisions a higher level of humanity for the current generation of twenty-year-olds. But the new state will require a higher level of individual responsibility:

Er [der Staat] dient euch nicht weniger als ihr ihm. Um zu wachen über ihn, wacht über euch selbst. Hütet jeder in euch das Bewuβtsein der Gleichberechtigung und der eigenen Verantwortung. Demokratien schaffen die Eigennaturen nicht ab, sie wollen, daß jeder eine sei. (E II 15)

Like Mann's concept of power, the ultimate goal of responsible action is still on an abstract level: "Denn eure Pflicht ist der Geist, die Durchdringung der Welt mit Geist, der Staat als Gebilde der Erkenntnis, das Volk angeschaut mit dem Wissen um die Seele, und das Leben selbst erfüllt mit jener leichten Luft, die durch die schönen Werke des Geistes weht" (E II 16).

Mann's primary fictional accomplishment of the period from 1910 to 1918 is his portrayal of the individual "Machtanbeter" without responsibility, the Untertan. In the essay "Reichstag" from 1911, Mann identifies the character of the Untertan in the bourgeois representatives of the parliament: "dieser widerwörtig interessante Typus des imperialistischen Untertanen, des Chauvinisten ohne Mitverantwortung, des in der Masse verschwindenden Machtanbeters, des Autoritätsgläubigen wider besseres Wissen und politischen Selbstkasteiers" (E II 11).
The novel *Der Untertan*, which Mann completed two months before the war began in 1914, was published first in Russian translation in 1915, then printed privately by Kurt Wolff in 1916. Because of its satirical and political content, the novel was not published in Germany until after the war (Anger, *Werk und Leben* 134-49). Diederich Heßling, a key figure in both the first and second volumes of Mann's *Kaiserreich* trilogy, is Mann's satirical representation of the German Bürger. As the Untertan, Heßling is a figure who gladly sacrifices his individuality to the "higher power," and in turn exercises his own power over those "below" him in the hierarchy of authority. In the novel's central courtroom scene, Wolfgang Buck defines the essence of the Untertan mentality: "Eine romantische Prostration vor einem Herrn, der seinem Untertan von seiner Macht das Nötige leihen soll, um die noch Kleineren niederzuhalten" (U 181). The lack of individual responsibility as a key trait of the Untertan is emphasized in one of the novel's opening scenes, in which the young Diederich forces a Jewish boy to kneel before a cross, and feels a surge of power as his classmates join in on the persecution: "Wie wohl man sich fühlte bei geteilter Verantwortlichkeit und einem Schuldbewußtsein, das kollektiv war!" (U 10).

Heßling's glorification of "die Macht" is revealed in his worship of Wilhelm II, and his attempt to emulate the Kaiser in both his actions and appearance. When he first sees the
Kaiser in person, cheering along with the crowd of admirers, Diederich's loss of individuality reaches a level of ecstatic submission:

Auf dem Pferd dort, unter dem Tor der siegreichen Einmärsche, und mit Zügen steinern und blitzend, ritt die Macht! Die Macht, die über uns hingehnt und deren Hufe wir küssen! [...] Ein Atom sind wir von ihr, ein verschwindendes Molekül von etwas, das sie ausgespuckt hat! Jeder einzelne ein Nichts, steigen wir in gegliederten Massen als Neuteutonen, als Militär, Beamten, Kirche und Wissenschaft, als Wirtschaftsorganisation und Machtverbände kegelförmig hinan, bis dort oben, wo sie selbst steht, steinern und blitzend! (U 47)

Along with Diederich's denial of individuality is a denial of responsibility, in any humanitarian sense of the word. His understanding of responsibility does not extend beyond the level of legal responsibility. This is revealed in Diederich's rejection of his commitment to Agnes. After dismissing Agnes's father, Diederich justifies his stance, thinking, "'Ich wäre ein Narr, wenn ich zu meinem Schaden etwas täte, wozu ich nicht gezwungen werden kann. Mir schenkt auch keiner was'" (U 76). Diederich does however have a strong sense of duty and sacrifice to the higher power, an essential characteristic of the Untertan. He sees his own children primarily as potential soldiers, and his duty to produce them takes priority even over his relationship with his wife. After the difficult birth of his first son, Diederich tells his wife Guste that, given the choice, he would have let her die, explaining, "die Rasse ist wichtiger, und für meine Söhne bin ich dem Kaiser verantwortlich" (U
In his speech at the dedication of the memorial to Wilhelm I, Diederich describes the sense of honor, duty, and submission to power that is in the German soul:

> die Seele deutschen Wesens ist die Verehrung der Macht, der überlieferten und von Gott geweihten Macht, gegen die man nichts machen kann. Darum sollen wir nach wie vor die höchste Pflicht in der Verteidigung des Vaterlandes sehen, die höchste Ehre im Rock des Königs und die höchste Arbeit im Waffenhandwerk! (U 358)

Kurt Tucholsky praised Der Untertan as "das Herbarium des deutschen Mannes" and the "Bibel des Wilhelminischen Zeitalters" (Tucholsky 63, 24). In his essay about the novel, Tucholsky discusses the aspect of individual responsibility that is central to the Untertan character: "Neuteutonen und Soldaten und Juristen und schließlich Deutsche -- es sind alles Kollektivitäten, die den einzelnen von jeder Verantwortung frei machen, und denen anzugehören Ruhm und Ehre einbringt, Achtung erheischt und kein Verdienst beansprucht" (Tucholsky 66). In his essay "Militaria," Tucholsky compares German society to the ordered hierarchy of the military. He describes the military as a command and obey system in which individual responsibility can be denied:

> Bei der Verlogenheit der deutschen Armee war nach außen hin immer alles in Ordnung; jedermann war durch einen Befehl, durch einen Bericht, durch eine Verfügung oder durch eine Allerhöchste Kabinettsorder gedeckt. Jeder wälzte die Verantwortung auf einen andern ab, und zuletzt trug sie keiner. (Tucholsky 265)

He goes on to write that the Germans have adopted this attitude in their society: "Sie brauchen diese Über- und
Unterordnerei, sie brauchen dies KollektivbewuBtsein, das die Verantwortung in allen Fällen so schön verteilt -- sie brauchen das" (Tucholsky 271-72).

The Untertan Diederich Heßling is also a key figure in Mann's second novel of the trilogy, Die Armen, written at the height of the war and published in 1917. The novel's time frame is roughly two decades later than that of the first novel, spanning from 1912 until the beginning days of the war in 1914. In this novel, Heßling has become a wealthy industrialist and weapons manufacturer. But the protagonist of Mann's novel of the proletariat is the worker Karl Balrich.

Klaus Scherpe sees Die Armen as the product of a forced attempt by a bourgeois author to write about the problems of a class with which he had no real experience, in order to fulfill a self-appointed program of "Poesie der Demokratie" (Scherpe 102). Scherpe also criticizes the novel for reducing the historical problem of the class struggle to the level of an individual inner conflict (Scherpe 110). Though these arguments may be justified, the primary focus of the novel is not the depiction of reality from a proletarian viewpoint, but the continued discussion of the problem of "Macht und Mensch" in the context of the first world war.

The concept of power in Die Armen is still abstract, as reflected in Buck's words near the end of the novel:

Die Macht -- das ist mehr als Menschenwerk; das ist uralter Widerstand gegen unser Atmen, Fühlen, Ersehnen. Das ist der Zwang abwärts, das Tier, das wir einst waren. Das ist die Erde selbst, in der
But the novel also reveals a new level of insight into the problem of power that Mann attained through his observations of a society at war. The work reflects Mann's growing awareness of the dimensions of a modern ideology of power and nation that can transcend class differences. The portrayal of Balrich also indicates Mann's realization that an idealized concept of individual action may not be an adequate response to the problem of modern power.

In the novel, Balrich takes upon himself the responsibility of confronting the higher power, Heßling, in order to bring about economic improvement for the other workers in Netzig. When Balrich learns the truth about his uncle's partnership with Heßling's father, and decides to take on the fantastic project of becoming a lawyer and fighting Heßling legally for the workers' ownership of the factory, he feels "überladen zum erstenmal mit Verantwortung" for "Seine Leute, seine Gefährten, die Seinen. Arm mit ihm, und eines Tages durch ihn reich" (A 55). But later, when Balrich thinks about his overwhelming mission as an "Auserwählter" and "Heilbringer" (A 82), a voice that is attributed to God interrupts his thoughts: "Da sagte Gott ihm: 'Nicht allein! -- und keine Sendung, die nicht alle haben. Ihr alle sollt hinaufgelangen in der Vernunft des Menschen, einer gestützt auf den andern, und nicht einer dürfe fehlen'" (A 83).
In the end, Balrich's individual mission of responsibility is shown to be futile, and his sense of fighting for justice becomes overpowered first by his own image of success, and ultimately by the dynamic of the war. By August of 1914 Balrich, along with everyone else, is ready to forget the conflicts of Netzig and join in on the enthusiastic spirit of fighting for the fatherland. The war unites Balrich and Heßling, the proletarian and the upper classes, in a higher mission:

Rußland! das ist der Feind. Frankreich! England! das ist er. Wer fragt noch nach Heßling. An Heßling konnten wir nicht hinan -- mit ihm denn gegen die, die uns überfallen! Dort winkt der Sieg. Krieg muß sein, damit endlich wir Armen das Glück erraffen, das kein Kampf des Lebens uns bringen wollte [...] Was Proletarier, was Bourgeois -- das Vaterland! (A 162)

It is not until he bids farewell to his wife and child, as he leaves with the enthusiastic first troops for the front, that Balrich begins to realize, "Wir planten Kampf, suchten Kampf, lebten Kampf, schon längst bevor wir in diesen Kampf ziehn. Auf Feindschaft waren wir gestellt, und finden nun Feinde. Ich hatte teil an meiner Zeit und büße für sie. Dies ist das Ende" (A 163).

With the end of the war, the abdication of Wilhelm II, and the establishment of the first republic in Germany in 1918, Heinrich Mann was finally faced with the reality of a democratic form of government. In an effort to act on his appeal for "Geist und Tat," Mann became politically involved
immediately after the declaration of the republic as the leader of the Munich chapter of the "Politischer Rat geistiger Arbeiter." Very quickly, however, the problems of establishing a new society and the role of the responsible Literat in the transition toward this ideal surfaced. With the turmoil of the revolution and the counter-revolution, the increasing divisiveness of the ideologies of the left, the growing threat of reaction on the right, and the quickly apparent injustice of the court system, Mann and many others who had been working for democracy in Germany began to realize the illusion of their dream of a new beginning. With the reality of the Weimar Republic, Mann's abstract ideas of power and idealistic goals of individual responsibility began to give way to a more concrete analysis of the complex problem of power and responsibility in the modern society.

Mann's work from 1918 to 1925 takes a critical look at the issue of leadership on the political, economic, and intellectual levels. The theme of leadership is reflected in the titles of Mann's major works of the period: the novel Der Kopf (or the "Roman der Führer"), the essay "Diktatur der Vernunft" (an open letter to Gustav Stresemann), and the novella "Kobes" (a deliberately transparent satire of the industrial leader Hugo Stinnes). Mann's most extensive endeavor during the early years of the republic is the third volume of his Kaiserreich trilogy, Der Kopf, which he began in 1918 and completed in 1925. Der Kopf is not only a historical
novel and a completion of his trilogy depicting the bourgeoisie, the proletariat, and the leadership of the German empire, but also a distinctly Weimar novel, influenced by the changes and problems of the early Weimar Republic. As Walter Müller-Seidel aptly states, the novel is Mann's own "Berg," in comparison with his brother's Zauberberg, published in the same year as Der Kopf (Müller-Seidel 120).

The issue of responsibility remained central throughout Mann's work of the early Weimar period. By 1925, in his essay "Die jungen Leute," Mann was compelled to write, "Überhaupt haben diese Zeiten zwingend erwiesen, daß der Begriff der Verantwortung nicht mehr besteht" (SJ 213). This realization resulted not only from his societal observations, but also from the shattering of some of his own illusions and the acquisition of new insights into the complexity of power in the modern industrial society.

Mann was not alone in his concern for the issues of responsibility and leadership in the early stages of the republic. Before looking at Mann's Weimar essays, a brief discussion of these issues in the writings of some of Mann's contemporaries is warranted.
B. Contemporary Discussions of Responsibility and Political Leadership

1. Kurt Hiller and the Activists: The Intellectual Elite and the Utopian Ideal

Because of his essays "Geist und Tat", "Voltaire--Goethe" and "Zola," Mann became known as a literary "father" figure to many activists and expressionists (Emrich, "Aktivisten" 26). But though many of their platforms and concerns were the same as Mann's, such as their stance against the war and their belief in uniting politics and literature, Mann also stood apart from both of these movements in ways other than just his age difference (Haupt, "Expressionismus" 70-71). One way in which Mann began to differ from these writers was in the development of his concept of responsibility.

Activists such as Ludwig Rubiner and Kurt Hiller, writing in the journal Das Ziel during the war, envisioned a party of "Geistiger" who would assume a leadership role in the future (Emrich, "Aktivisten" 30). Both include a concept of responsibility in their discussions of the goals of the new society, Rubiner emphasizing "nicht Gleichheit aller, sondern Verantwortlichkeit aller," and Hiller writing, "Geist ist: das Streben der Verantwortung, die Andern mitzureißen, sie mitverantwortlich zu machen" (Emrich, "Aktivisten" 30). Though their emphasis on Geist and responsibility sounds
similar to Mann's, their concept of an exclusive responsibility limited to intellectual activists such as themselves was one that Mann increasingly withdrew from.

Though traces of a similar exclusive attitude are present in Mann's writings from 1910 into the first months of the revolution, Mann's experience with the early Weimar Republic led him to criticize an elitist intellectual stance in Der Kopf. And as Emrich points out, Mann's insistence on the idea of human equality, which traces as far back as "Geist und Tat," sets his perception of the role of the intellectual in a different category from Hiller's "elitären Hochschätzung der Geistigen" (Emrich, "Aktivisten" 34).

The elitism of activist intellectuals such as Hiller led them to believe in an ideal of the sole responsibility of the intellectual. Hiller's idea of leadership in the new society was that of a "Herrenhaus," in which the leaders would not be voted but would naturally know who they are: "Niemand hat da ernannt; niemand hat da gewählt; die Befugten traten eines Tages zusammen und sagten: wir sind es" (Cited in Emrich, "Aktivisten" 35). Such anti-democratic thinking was far from Mann's concept of the role of the intellectual even in its most inflated instances. Along with his belief in human equality, Mann also consistently criticized the German tendency to follow its "great men."

---

2 "der Geist ist [...] gleichmacherisch" (E I 14).

3 See Emrich, "Aktivisten" 36.
Emrich identifies in Mann's essay "Das junge Geschlecht," which appeared in Hiller's second Ziel journal in 1918, a criticism of the elitist standpoint of such activists as Hiller and Rudolf Leonhard. The essay points to a younger generation that will be "selbst für sich verantwortlich," an idea that contrasts with Hiller's and Leonhard's belief that normal citizens are incapable of responsibility (Emrich, "Aktivisten" 37). Both Emrich and Berle emphasize that Mann was not a proponent of a logocracy, a concept supported by Hiller and others (Emrich, "Aktivisten" 55; Berle 39, 80). This led to the distancing of Mann's Munich branch of the "Politischer Rat geistiger Arbeiter" from the Berlin branch, headed by Hiller (Berle 77-80).

Another element separating Mann from many of the activists and expressionists is the idea of the utopia. Berle sees a utopian dimension in Mann's image of the republic, with its potential for developing autonomous individuals (Berle 17). This is to a great extent true before the actual foundation of the republic and even into its first months of existence. However, even before the republic Mann's utopian ideas were different from those of most expressionists and activists. Emrich contrasts Mann's thinking with Hiller's concept of a utopian paradise on earth in the distant future and Rubiner's idealization of the present (Emrich, "Aktivisten" 30-31). Mann's idea of the "Vergeistigung" of the people is quite different from Hiller's utopian paradise,
"unter der die Menschheit Geist nicht mehr nötig hat" (Emrich, "Aktivisten" 33).

Mann's dream for a new and better society in Germany had its basis in a historical event, the French Revolution. Before and during the war Mann believed that the re-creation of a spirit such as that of the French Revolution was a realizable goal for Germany. Jürgen Haupt writes that the utopian spirit of the expressionists is "radikaler, wirklich kulturrevolutionär," compared to Mann's utopia, which is "traditioneller, bescheidener und realistischer" (Haupt, "Expressionismus" 69). Haupt points out Mann's interest in concrete changes, such as in state institutions and the economic situation, for which the expressionists showed little interest (Haupt, "Expressionismus" 69). Marian Holona also contrasts the abstractness of the expressionists and activists with Mann's more concrete and realistic ideas for society (Holona 93-97).

The highly idealistic and utopian viewpoints of the activists and expressionists led many of them to resignation or despair in the early Weimar years (Haupt, "Expressionismus" 75). After the failure of movements such as the Rätebewegung, the overall failure of the "Revolution ohne Idee" (MuM 209), and the realization that any true change in Germany was not going to come about with the mere founding of the republic, Mann was forced to admit the illusions of his idealistic goals as well. But his response to this disillusionment is perhaps
explained by the heavier dose of realism in his image of the utopia.

David Gross identifies three responses to the situation of the early Weimar Republic among those of Mann's own literary generation with idealistic pre-conceptions of a democratic society. In the first group he traces the paths of many writers who, after 1919, "entered a stage of withdrawal and disillusionment," naming Georg Kaiser, Carl Sternheim, Alfred Döblin, and René Schickele (Gross 197-98). A second option was to turn to communism and to work against the republic as it was, a step taken by Ludwig Rubiner and Friedrich Wolf (Gross 200). Mann followed a third route, that of defending the republic and trying to work on its improvement, "the most difficult of the three, since it meant a general lowering of expectations and the abandonment of hope for great changes in the near future" (Gross 201).

It is in part true to suggest, as Gross and Berle do, that Mann chose to defend the Republic in order to "deepen continually the spirit of democracy" with his writing (Gross 201), or out of loyalty to democratic principles (Berle 293). However, there is also a more urgent element in Mann's writing of this period, based on his insight into an ethic of responsibility for humanity that would be needed to prevent the recurrence of future catastrophes. Mann soon realized that the Weimar situation would require an ideal of "Geist und Tat" that was both more modest and more realistic than that of
many of his intellectual counterparts. This insight finds its first expression in Mann's concentration on the idea of responsible leadership.

In his memorial speech for Kurt Eisner, given in March 1919, Mann writes,

Die größte Gefahr des Literaten, der in die Politik eingreift, wird eben dadurch bedingt, daß er lange unterdrückt war. Er wird versucht sein, sich zu rächen. Er wird vielleicht in Übereilung nachholen wollen. Die Welt soll ohne längeren Verzug auf die Höhe seiner Idee gebracht werden -- weniger um ihretwillen als zur Ehre der Idee. Die Welt hat nicht zu wollen, noch zu widerstehen, sie ist nur Gegenstand, und auch die Menschen sind nichts weiter.

Ein Geistesart aber, die Menschen den Ideen aufopfert, gedeiht nicht mehr auf den höheren Stufen der gereiften Vernunft. Dort ist man gewohnt und verpflichtet, geduldig daran zu arbeiten, daß die Einsicht der Mehrzahl sich erweitere, und daß die vorwärtsdrängende Minderzahl nicht weniger Weisheit betätige als Kraft. Ein hierauf gerichteter Geist bleibt zeitlebens ein bescheidener Schüler der Menschheit, der er dienen will. (MuM 173)

This passage criticizes a concept of leadership such as that held by Hiller and others, that argues for the supremacy of the idea at the expense of the human being. Mann saw Eisner, on the other hand, as not only a true representative of "Geist und Tat," but as a responsible leader. The dichotomy of leaders in this passage, though it is concerned specifically with literary figures in politics, is similar to the dichotomy of the "Verantwortungsethiker" and the "Gesinnungsethiker" proposed by Max Weber in his speech "Politik als Beruf." Weber's speech was also a response to the revolutionary situation in post-war Germany; he too was concerned with the
concept of responsibility and the problem of leadership in the new republic.

2. Max Weber: The "Verantwortungsethiker"

Max Weber's "Politik als Beruf," originally a speech given in Munich in 1918 (Weber 505), reveals the political ideas of one of Germany's leading sociologists and intellectuals of the time. In this speech, Weber proposes the dichotomy of the "Verantwortungsethiker" and the "Gesinnungsethiker." Responding to the event of the spartacist revolution of immediate post-war Germany, Weber ascribes to the "Gesinnungsethiker" a political ethic of the ends justifying the means, which does not require responsibility for the consequences of one's actions, but only conviction to the truth of one's ultimate goal. The counterpart to this type of politician, the "Verantwortungsethiker," must weigh as much as possible all the consequences of the political decision at hand and act according to these conclusions (Weber 551-60).

Weber argues that an ethic of "absolute ends" does not take into account the ethical irrationality of the real world (Weber 553). Intentions become all-important, outweighing the potential dangers of the means used to achieve desirable goals (Weber 552-53). Weber aligns with the more realistic ethic of responsibility, saying that he is genuinely moved by someone,
"der diese Verantwortung für die Folgen real und mit voller Seele empfindet und verantwortungsethisch handelt" (Weber 559). In his experience with "Gesinnungsethiker," Weber has the impression, "daß ich es in neun von zehn Fällen mit Windbeuteln zu tun habe, die nicht real fühlen, was sie auf sich nehmen, sondern sich an romantischen Sensationen berauschen" (Weber 559). However, Weber does not deny the role of the ideal in political decision-making. He sees as one of the three decisive qualities for a politician a passionate devotion to a cause (Weber 545). Ultimately, the person who has a "calling" for politics has a combination of responsibility and conviction, of perspective and passion (Weber 559).

It is unlikely that Mann did not know of Weber's speech, since he also was a politically engaged intellectual leader living in Munich at the time. But a comparison of the two in their concepts of responsibility does not bring them as close to each other as one might think with a surface look at Weber's dichotomy. Though both were calling for an ethic of responsibility among political leaders instead of an ethic based purely on absolute ideals, there is a substantial difference in the political thinking of the two, mainly under the categories of nation and power.

Mann was a constant critic of nationalism, in the form it had taken since the German unification. Weber, according to Wolfgang J. Mommsen, was critical of the sterile power
politics of the late Pan-Germans (Mommsen 52), but he retained an emphatic nationalist position throughout his life (Mommsen 55). And though Weber was fully aware of the "diabolical" aspects of power and politics (Weber 557), he was convinced that power should be embraced as the means of politics (Mommsen 54), and whoever did not think so should stay out of the game: "Wer das Heil seiner Seele und die Rettung anderer Seelen sucht, der sucht das nicht auf dem Wege der Politik, die ganz andere Aufgaben hat: solche, die nur mit Gewalt zu lösen sind" (Weber 557).

Mommsen points out that Weber first wrote "power-policy" in place of "responsibility-policy" in the draft of his speech "Politik als Beruf" (Mommsen, English ed. 46). His ethic of responsibility was one of power politics over ideological politics, though not a superficial worship of power for its own sake (Mommsen 48). One could only justify pursuing power within a framework of ultimate values (Mommsen 51), which for Weber meant the nation and its success. Weber's "Verantwortungsethik," Mommsen points out, was based on his concept of political power, and therefore linked with assessing the chances for success of any act of policy (Mommsen 49). Weber realized the conflict between political and ethical values in his concept of political power, and he assigned the task of coming to terms with this conflict to the responsible, charismatic leader (Mommsen 50).
Weber's ethic of responsibility differs from that of Mann in that it is based on the power and success of the state as the ultimate value. The ethic that guides the politician should be oriented toward this value, fully accepting the violent nature of politics. The responsible politician will then concretely weigh all the consequences, as well as the chances for success of a political problem before making a decision, and then account for all actions taken. The added element of charisma will enable the politician to carry through political goals. Mann, on the other hand, believed that nationalism and the drive to success, coupled with the undeniable reality of violence, were an integral part of his society's problem.

Mommsen points out that though Weber's concept of nation transcended the empty nationalism of his era, he was nevertheless unable to move beyond thinking within a nationalistic framework (Mommsen 71). Weber "teilte die tragische Überschätzung des Machtgedankens und seine ideelle Verklärung im Begriff der Nation, die der Epoche des Imperialismus zu eigen war und schließlich zur Katastrophe des alten Europa geführt hat" (Mommsen 76). Mann's writings since 1910 show not only a strong criticism of nationalism but also an acute awareness of the limitations and self-deception of state political power. He saw a link between a national success and power ethic and the loss of values necessary to retain not only a moral foundation to society, but also to
secure the society from future catastrophes to humanity that could be potentially even more devastating than the first world war.

The idea of the charismatic leader is another point of conflict between the ideas of Mann and Weber regarding responsibility and political leadership. Weber's political ideas are, as Mommsen puts it, very "leader-biased"; much emphasis is placed on the charismatic leader, democratically elected, but then "expected to act solely in agreement with his own personal convictions," or personal ethic of responsibility (Mommsen, English ed. 422-23). Mommsen sees a danger in this idea, an element of Nietzschean elitism and a conceptual weakness that would make it theoretically difficult to distinguish between fascist leaders and democratic leaders with charisma (Mommsen, English ed. 423). Though Mann also had a high regard for politicians who he considered acted with responsibility, he criticized the traditional public perception of the idea of the great leader. In a little-known article "Bemerkung über Genie," printed in the Frankfurter Zeitung in 1924, Mann criticizes an idea similar to that of the charismatic leader, the idea of "Genie." His article is a response to the editorial question "Kann die Frau Genie haben?" considering the new potential for women in political leadership with emancipation. Mann replies, "Ich glaube nicht an weibliche Genies, weil ich auch an männliche nicht glaube. Der Begriff des Genies [...] ist eine mißbräuchliche Erfindung
neuerer Zeiten" (Mann, "Bemerkung" 1). It is a romantic notion, a "Religion der großen Persönlichkeit," and is "etwas Irrationales, nicht Nachprüfbares, gradezu Übernatürliches, und fordert Glauben, fordert Kult" (Mann, "Bemerkung" 1). To Mann, the concept is a misguided one, and the great political leader is really someone who achieves success from a combination of talent and opportune circumstances, both of which, of course, women can have as well as men (Mann, "Bemerkung" 1). He goes on ironically to compare the current politicians with the "primadonnas" on the acting stage.

Though Weber's idea of charisma cannot be directly equated with Mann's formulation of the current public perception of the "Genie," the article underlines the difference between Mann and Weber in their concept of responsible leadership. Weber holds up the charismatic, responsible individual as the ideal political leader, and Mann sees in the concept of the "great leader" a tendency toward a cult of personality, pointing out the ease with which such leaders can become "actors" on the political stage. (It must be pointed out that Weber also realized the danger of the political "actor": because of the problem of vanity, the politician is "stets in Gefahr, sowohl zum Schauspieler zu werden wie die Verantwortung für die Folgen seines Tuns leicht zu nehmen und nur nach dem 'Eindruck' zu fragen, den er macht" [Weber 547]). Mann looks instead toward a value-oriented ethic to guide political leadership in a democracy. Though
this would seem to be an abstract or ideal concept compared to Weber's more realistic one, Mann's point is that there is a fundamental illusion underlying the traditional, "realistic" concept of political power and nationalism, and that the road to success is often the same road that leads to destruction.

Mommsen also sees a weakness in Weber's political sociology in his unquestioned acceptance of the nation as the ultimate norm, which justifies the exercise of power and gives the political realm its own set of values apart from other ethical considerations (Mommsen 71-73). Mommsen writes, "Ohne die Diskussion der fundamentalen Wertfragen vermag hier eine jede politische Theorie nicht richtungweisend zu sein" (Mommsen 71). He then poses a question asked from the advantage of post-Third Reich historical perspective:

[...]

Weber and Mann had varying viewpoints in their political ideas for the Weimar Republic. Both were concerned with the role of the ideal in politics, the dangers of the political "actor," and the connection of power and responsibility in political leadership. But Mann's ideas of power and nation prevent his ethic of responsibility from being aligned with that of the "Verantwortungsethiker." Before analyzing more
specifically Mann's treatment of these topics in his essays, another view of political responsibility will be considered, that of a one-time student of Max Weber, Ernst Toller.


Ernst Toller's personal contact with Max Weber made a significant impression on him, as noted in Toller's Eine Jugend in Deutschland (Toller, Jugend 57-59). During the war, Toller took part in Weber's "Sonntagsgespräche" as a student in Heidelberg (Haar 246), and Weber stood up in defense of Toller on several occasions, including in his trial for high treason in 1919 (Haar 159, Mommsen 47). Carel ter Haar traces a direct influence of Weber's "Politik als Beruf" on Toller's thinking, a speech that "mit der Darstellung der Kategorien der Gesinnungs- und der Verantwortungsethik nicht nur Tollers Drama Masse Mensch beeinflußt, sondern auch danach eine bleibende Rolle in seinen Überlegungen gespielt hat" (Haar 159). Andreas Lixl also identifies the opposition of the "Verantwortungsethiker" and "Gesinnungsethiker" in Masse Mensch (1919) (Lixl 57). Furthermore, Haar sees in Toller's Eine Jugend in Deutschland (1933) an attempt to refute Weber's assertion that Toller was a "Gesinnungsethiker," noting Toller's argument that he was moved to political leadership

---

4 See also Emrich, Macht 234.
through "die Verantwortung für die führerlosen Massen der Arbeiter" (Haar 52).

Toller's personal sense of responsibility was a part of his constant struggle with the connection of guilt and political action, as portrayed in Masse Mensch. Referring to a letter by Weber, Toller writes,

"Hatte Max Weber mit dem Wort recht, daß, wollten wir dem Übel nirgends mit Gewalt widerstehren, wir so leben müßten wie Franz von Assisi, daß es für die absolute Forderung nur einen absoluten Weg gäbe, den des Heiligen? Muß der Handelnde schuldig werden, immer und immer? Oder wenn er nicht schuldig werden will, untergehen?" (Cited in Haar 52)

Haar writes that Toller's concentration on the motif of guilt arose out of a self-consciousness and doubt that always led him to question his own political action (Haar 55). Like Weber's perception of the unsolvable conflict of politics and ethics, Toller sees such a conflict of guilt and responsibility in the person who acts politically (Haar 56). For a political model demonstrating the possibility of reducing this conflict, Toller looked to Kurt Eisner (Haar 56), just as Mann did.

Few have noticed the parallels between Mann and Toller, and there is no substantial correspondence to suggest any relationship between the two beyond the level of acquaintance. Though twenty-two years apart, and though Toller is

5 Andreas Lixl makes the connection between Mann and Toller in their political thinking of the early Weimar years, although he distances the two ethically, comparing them only in their concept of socialism as "noch uneingelöste Utopie der Vernunft" (Lixl 120).
traditionally identified with the communist branch of socialism (although after the break up of the independent socialists, he, like Mann, did not belong to a political party) and more closely linked with expressionism, there is a connection between the two in their ideas about responsibility.

Both saw in Eisner's politics a responsible combination of "Geist und Tat." In "In Memoriam Kurt Eisner" Toller praises Eisner's "Mut zur Verantwortung, zur politischen Tat, zur sozialistischen Verwirklichung" as well as his commitment to the truth and to the realization of ideas in his politics (Cited in Haar 56). Mann's praise of Eisner's leadership in his memorial speech for Eisner has a similar tone:

Die hundert Tage der Regierung Eisners haben mehr Ideen, mehr Freuden der Vernunft, mehr Belebung der Geister gebracht als die fünfzig Jahre vorher. Sein Glaube an die Kraft des Gedankens, sich in Wirklichkeit zu verwandeln, ergriff selbst Ungläubige. (MuM 170)

The works of both Mann and Toller exhibit a concentration on the concept of responsibility. Elke Emrich sees an influence of Mann's "Das junge Geschlecht" on Toller, an essay published in May 1917 when Toller was studying in Munich. Emrich points to a passage about responsibility to trace this influence. Mann's essay calls on the younger generation to hold onto its "Bewußtsein der Gleichberechtigung und der eigenen Verantwortung" (MuM 144). Later that same year Toller, in his "Leitsätze für einen kulturpolitischen Bund der
Jugend in Deutschland," makes it his task, "in jungen Menschen Verantwortlichkeit zu erwecken" (Cited in Emrich, Macht 234).

The comparison becomes stronger after the war. The idea of responsibility and guilt found in Masse Mensch is also a central theme in Mann's Der Kopf. Rosemarie Altenhofer sees political responsibility as the central aspect of Toller's drama: "Nicht die Anonymität kollektiver Vorgänge und objektiver historischer Prozesse, sondern das Problem politischer Verantwortung, des Schuldigwerdens aus bestem revolutionärem Wollen heraus steht im Mittelpunkt des Dramas" (Altenhofer 60). Mann's Der Kopf is also about the problem of political responsibility. The difference lies in the perspective of the portrayal of this problem: Toller bases his play on the conflict between communism and the pacifist or ethical socialist in the revolution, and Mann's novel shows the conflict between the established political system and the elitist intellectual in the German empire.

Both authors were critical of the violence inherent in the communist revolutionary ideology. In "Kaiserreich und Republik," published the same year as Masse Mensch, Mann writes, "Klassen kämpfen jetzt um die Macht, wie vorher ein Reich um die Weltmacht, und dies soll alles sein. Einander Gewalt antun, heißt ihnen noch, Recht haben" (MuM 209-10). Der Kopf continues the theme of violence, connecting Mann's argument for responsibility with the trace of the "Blutspur" of violence that runs throughout societal and political
action. Toller's drama also makes the connection of violence and irresponsibility. As Altenhofer points out, the protagonist Sonja becomes firmly convinced that

der [...] mit der Fetischisierung allgemeiner Herrschaftsbegriffe arbeitende Aufruf zur Gewalt verantwortungslos ist, weil er die neue Idee der Emanzipation der Massen unter die gleichen mythischen Zwänge des Götzendienstes und des Blutopfers stellt, die von ihren historischen Vorgängern Gott und Staat ausgingen. (Altenhofer 62)

In conjunction with this idea, Altenhofer refers to Toller's passage about the Moloch: "Wer Menschenblut um seinetwillen fordert,/ Ist Moloch:/ Gott war Moloch./ Staat war Moloch./ Masse war Moloch" (Altenhofer 62; Toller, Masse 50). The Moloch image is one that Mann also uses in his 1923 novella "Kobes."

Their concentration on the lack of responsibility in society brings Mann and Toller closer together than has previously been noticed. Andreas Lixl argues that Toller wanted to shock the audience and confront them with their own "unverantwortlichen Einseitigkeit und Selbstzufriedenheit" (Lixl 45). While in prison, Toller's thinking on violence and political action led him to find it necessary, "das sittliche Fundament der Gesellschaft zu politisieren, die Herrschaft des juste milieu zu demaskieren, und in jedem einzelnen das Bewusstsein zur Verantwortung dem Mitmenschen gegenüber zu schärfen" (Lixl 69).

Both Toller and Mann tempered their pre-war tendencies toward utopian ideals of society in the early years of the
Weimar Republic. Toller went from an expressionistic utopian picture of socialism in his 1918 work Die Wandlung to the dark tragicomedy Hinkemann in 1923, which shows, according to Lixl, "den Zusammenbruch eines utopischen Anspruchs auf Humanität und Integrität," and is a "Projekt einer Demaskierung von falschen Idealen und abstrakten sozialistischen Erlösungsideologien" (Lixl 97). Mann's utopian concept of democracy changed with the reality of the republic as well, which comes through most vividly in "'Wirtschaft' 1923" and "Kobes." The turn to a more concrete and skeptical and less utopian and idealistic view of society is an integral part of both Toller's and Mann's political development.

Another point of similarity between Mann and Toller in their concepts of responsibility is their common positions outside of party ideologies, in a political middle ground among communists, socialists, and supporters of the republic from the bourgeois parties. Mann and Toller shared a view of individual responsibility that criticized the disappearance of the individual into the collective mass. But they also recognized the problem of responsibility as one that surpasses the individual level of duty, morality, guilt, or leadership. Both eventually sensed the collective responsibility needed to oppose the concrete dangers of war and fascism. One of Lixl's main points in his analysis of Toller is Toller's desire to unite individuals of different ideologies in a struggle
against the forces of violence from the right (Lixl 13, 48, 60).

What connects Hiller, Weber, Toller, and Mann is their common concern for the problem of political action and responsibility. However, Mann's idea of responsibility differs from Weber's in the aspect of nation and power, and from Hiller's in his concept of the intellectual elite and the utopia. There are similarities between Mann and Toller in their concepts of individual and collective responsibility that have been previously overlooked. However, Mann's works exhibit a much deeper concentration on an ethic of responsibility to the future, based on a more thorough analysis of the illusions and realities of power and the ideal in modern society.

In order to analyze Mann's essayistic insights into the problem of power and responsibility in the Weimar Republic, I will first look more closely at the development of Mann's outlook toward the future, as expressed in the utopian concept of Glück.

C. The Concept of Glück and the Utopia of the Republic

Mann's pre-Weimar ideal for democracy in Germany was based on his conception of the spirit of truth and justice brought out by the French Revolution. In "Geist und Tat" Mann writes that ever since the French Revolution, "Nur noch eins
gilt [...] für die Menschheit: diesem vorweggenommenen und entflogenen Augenblick nachdrängen, ihn wieder einholen" (MuM 2). Four years later, in "Der Bauer in der Touraine," Mann re-emphasizes this idea, applying it wishfully to Germany's future: "Kann sein, daß die hochherzigen Ideen, mit denen vormals Frankreich die Welt erneuert hat, einst von uns dorthin zurückgestrahlt werden sollen" (MuM 34).

Associated with Mann's ideal for democracy and French Revolution-style Geist in Germany is a utopian image of the future that Mann expresses with the concept of Glück. In two essays from 1917, Mann ends with an image of future happiness. In "Das junge Geschlecht," he writes,

Eure Grundempfindung des Lebens, Zwanzigjährige, wird die Gewißheit des Glückes sein. Ihr werdet euch nicht scheuen, es für erreichbar zu halten [...] Denn eure Pflicht ist der Geist, die Durchdringung der Welt mit Geist, der Staat als Gebilde der Erkenntnis, das Volk angeschaut mit dem Wissen um die Seele, and das Leben selbst erfüllt mit jener leichten Luft, die durch die schönen Werke des Geistes weht. Dies aber ist Glück. Eure Pflicht, Zwanzigjährige, wird das Glück sein. (MuM 145)

His essay "Leben -- nicht Zerstörung" ends with the same theme, this time with a reference to the French Revolution as well:

Geschlechter sind denkbar, die in Freundlichkeit von Mensch zu Mensch nicht Schwäche sehen werden und wenigstens in ihrem Durchschnitt das Glück, nur erreichbar durch Menschlichkeit, doch höher schätzen werden als die Macht. Güte und die Annahme einer menschlichen Gleichheit, jene schöne Vorliebe des gereiften achtzehnten Jahrhunderts, warum sollten sie nicht wiederkehren -- und auf festerem Erboden vielleicht, seitdem er so viel Blut getrunken hat?
Demokratie, Erkenntnis, Friede sind Wege. Pflicht ist nur, das Glück zu erleben. (E II 18)

Mann's last major essay containing the theme of the French Revolution is "Gespräch mit Talleyrand," written in July 1918. In it he pits Larevellière, the president of the first French republic, against Talleyrand, Napoleon's foreign minister. Talleyrand comes to visit the ousted Lavellière, arguing that the people are becoming bored with the ideals of the revolution, because they are not true to human nature: "Gott und das Glück sind irgendwo außerhalb der Menschenwelt" (MuM 156). Larevellière defends the ideal, responding,


As the two depart from each other, each says, "Noch sind wir unvollkommen" (MuM 157). These passages suggest that Mann is still clinging to the hope of a radical change in society, for a true revolution to arise out of the catastrophe of the war. The suggestion is that the drive to "Glück" and "Vollkommenheit" that Mann perceived to have accompanied the spirit of the French Revolution is once again possible. As Hanno König writes, the concept of "Glück" in Mann's writings of this time becomes the "Zielbegriff jener 'irdischen Vervollkommnung,' die im Geiste wurzelt" (König 240).
Shortly after "Gespräch mit Talleyrand," Mann wrote a little-known article called "Einst an der Piave," published in the Berliner Tageblatt in August 1918. The article begins as a recollection of a trip Mann took to the small town of Asolo, in the Piave river region outside of Venice. But the point of the essay is the idea of Glück, and in this article Mann takes a step back from the utopianism of his previous writings.

Mann describes the idyllic natural beauty of the small city of Asolo, "die vielleicht eine Erfindung des Lichtes war" (Mann, "Einst" 2). It begins to take on images of being not just a city, but an ideal goal: "Du mußtest hinfahren, wenn du gerade ein leichtes Herz hattest, eine Arbeit vollendet, ein Unglück vergessen, dann fandest du sie" (Mann, "Einst" 2). Then the city is compared to a house, and it becomes an ideal image of a welcoming family community:


Mann is describing his own vision of the ideal society, a peaceful utopian community, still within the real world, but with the elements of human suffering and violence barely present: "Kaum daß hinter Pfeilern und in feuchten Gäßchen einige geheime Winkel übrig blieben zum Weinen und um weh zu
tun" (Mann, "Einst" 2). Corresponding to Mann's view of the goal of happiness in such a society, there is a courtyard atop the city, which is "das Dasein des Glückes": "Wer konnte wohnen in solcher Auflösung der Körper und aller Erdenschwere, in solchem immerwährenden Vergehen, wenn nicht das Glück" (Mann, "Einst" 2).

This "house of happiness" is ironically the walled prison courtyard of Asolo, a structure that seems to be an illusion, but remains after you rub your eyes. Mann goes on to say that this is the place that inspired Robert Browning to write "Pippa passes," a drama that takes place in Asolo, in which the poet, symbolized by the child Pippa, represents ideal humanity.6 Browning, through his poetic vision, was able to perhaps build "das schwelgerische Haus" of ideal happiness with his imagination. But his son "baute es wirklich," and in so doing discovered the truth about the house: "so schön war doch dies Haus nicht, es hatte zu viel versprochen. Am Ende war es eine Dekoration: man trat ein und verließ sie als derselbe. Trauriger höchstens macht solch ein Blendwerk des Glückes!" (Mann, "Einst" 2).

The article indicates a step back from the dream of building a new society, in which an ideal happiness can be attained. It is an early anticipation of the continuity that could occur even with a new republic. The discovery of the "Blendwerk des Glückes" is painful, and Mann wants to avoid

6 See Rivers 138-50.
it, as he urges the reader: "Gehen denn auch wir — bevor wir dies erfahren. Wenn in kommenden Katastrophen sogar noch die Dekorationen des Glückes werden abgebrochen sein, wir sind einst glücklich gewesen" (Mann, "Einst" 2). But the discovery has already been made. The ideal of Glück is only a "decoration" and promises too much for the real world.

Mann continues to refer to Glück in several essays of the post-war revolutionary period. Perhaps this can be explained by arguing, as Berle does, that Mann wrote these essays as a "Mittel zum Zweck" (Berle 111), to motivate action: "Er wirbt für die Revolution, denn der Leser soll hoffen und kämpfen" (Berle 110). In "Wir wollen arbeiten," from January 1919, Mann writes that the people are now for the first time in control of their state, and "das bedeutet, daß der Staat fortan beseelt ist und einen Gedanken verwirklicht, den Gedanken der Gerechtigkeit und des zunehmenden Menschenglückes. Jeder arbeitet künftig für den gemeinsamen Gedanken" (MuM 169).

This image of progress toward happiness through work is clearly motivational in intent, as the title of the essay suggests. However, the focus on working together and taking control of the direction of the new state is not as "naiv und weltfremd" (Berle 111) as it may seem when viewed in the context of a dominant societal mentality of bowing to the will of the powerful leader, such as Mann depicted in Der Untertan. The essay also contains an idea of individual and collective
"Wir haben viele Rücksichten zu nehmen in einem Staat, der uns allen gehört. Dafür aber haben wir die Freude, selbst verantwortlich zu sein, selbst mitzubestimmen" (MuM 168). As Emrich argues, "Ein solches Staatsmodell der Bürgernähe und der gemeinsamen Verantwortung für das Wohl der Gesamtheit der Bevölkerung ist keineswegs so weltfremd, so utopisch-idealistentisch und bar aller gesellschaftspolitischen Einsichten, wie die Forschung uns glauben machen möchte" (Emrich, Macht 249).

"Wir wollen arbeiten" also warns against the utopian outlook of communism, "in dessen Namen zunächst einmal alles drunter und drüber gehen soll, worauf dann vorgeblich das Himmelreich folgt" (MuM 168). The essay is a call for a reasonable spirit of working together instead of extreme solutions or resignation. Mann does not hold up a "Blendwerk des Glückes" as a motivational image, but rather asks his readers to keep their eyes open and not to give up their critical awareness (MuM 168).

The essay "Demokratie," published in the Dresdner Volkszeitung in June 1919, is a section of the larger essay "Kaiserreich und Republik," that was to be published a few weeks later. But the final paragraph is unique to the short essay, and it contains once again the image of Glück at the end. Here the image is a much more subdued one, placed in the context of the gradual and patient work necessary to build a republic. Once again there seems to be a motivational
intention behind the image. But the utopian quality of Glück, if still hinted at in the aspect of an ideal goal to be attained, has been reduced to a more modest level:

Aber das Leben fühlt gerade jetzt, es könne besser werden. Eine Schranke ist befestigt, die uns gebot, zu glauben, das Leben sei böse, und nichts zu hoffen, außer Bändigung, Verzicht und festem Befehl. Ihr seht hinaus, weithin freie Wege, und was heute nicht erreichbar scheint, irgendein Morgen -- wenn wir Geduld haben -- verwirklicht es [...] Immer bezweifelt, nie vergessen, steht am Ende eine verhüllte Gestalt, die vielleicht -- das Glück ist. (Mann, "Demokratie")

By 1923, Mann's utopian Glück ideal has faded. In "'Wirtschaft' 1923," he writes of his own generation in the 1890s, "Sie liebten soziale Gerechtigkeit, Völkerfrieden, das auf Vernunft zu errichtende Menschenglück, und sie glaubten daran. Sie waren Utopisten, die von der Natur und ihrer Bitternis erlernten, es zu sein" (SJ 101). The 1890s were for Mann a time of youthful idealism, and also a less complicated time. He writes in an earlier essay, "Die neunziger Jahre [...] hatten eigentlich eine weichere Luft, sie waren vergleichsweise harmlos und wohlwollend" (MuM 158). But "'Wirtschaft' 1923" is not an essay expressing a longing to return to an easier time, nor does it express the desire to avoid the painful disillusionment of the utopian ideal, as in the last line of "Einst an der Piave." Mann realizes now that the atmosphere of security and constancy of that time was also a "Blendwerk":

Gemäßigte Geister sogar glaubten damals die Zivilisation gesichert, das Leben besänftigt, die Luft zu atmen gut. Sie waren nicht weit entfernt,
The essay is not reminiscent of a better past, but is dedicated to the present, aimed at breaking illusions and looking beyond the "Blendwerk des Glückes," to the new realities and dangers of the future.

D. Illusion and Reality: Politics as Theater and Business

Mann's changing outlook toward the republic with his experience of its reality is a fundamental element of his struggle with the questions of power, leadership, and responsibility. Mann soon began to recognize the distance between even a moderate concept of a working democracy and the reality of the republic, to say nothing of a utopian ideal of Glück. A carry-over of many of the old attitudes and faults of the German empire became apparent, and eventually, Mann became aware of an even greater threat than a mere continuity of old ways: the dangerous application of old ideas to a more modern context of power.

Mann analyzes the history of the German empire and the transition to a republic in his essay "Kaiserreich und Republik," whose publication was postponed from May 1919 until after the ratification of the Versailles Treaty in July. The essay ends with a call for a future-directed ethic of responsibility for the republic. Mann expresses this idea...
repeatedly in the final section "Der Kämpfer," addressed to the citizens of the new republic: "Ein Volk, wie ein Mensch, muß zuerst voll und tief verantwortlich sein, bevor Gerechtigkeit ihm gebührt" (MuM 226); "Beginne, Deutschland! Trage deine Taten, verantworte dein Schicksal!" (MuM 228); "er [Absolutismus] ist fort, wir selbst sind verantwortlich -- sogar für unsere Geschichte, wie viel mehr für unsere Nachwelt" (MuM 229); and finally, "Die Verantwortung jedes einzelnen von uns ist ungeheuer; vergebens würde jemand sie fliehen wollen, weil er zu klein sei, oder sie verschmähen, weil er sich zu groß dünkt" (MuM 238).

In addition to laying the foundation for an ethic of future-directed responsibility, the essay analyzes the irresponsibility of Germany's previous leaders. Mann attacks the power ideology of the Pan-Germans, saying, "Denn Alldeutschbum war eine sinn- und verantwortungslose Demonstration der Kraft [...] Es war alldeutsches Philosophem, in der Politik die Moral 'überwunden' zu haben und grundsätzlich nur zu tun, was abscheulich war" (MuM 188). He also criticizes the "Männer des Hauptquartiers" for denying any sense of responsibility for their actions in war: "Sie fühlen sich keinem Schicksal verantwortlich, nicht Gott und nicht dem Tod: alles war ihnen Maschine, sie sind es wohl selbst" (MuM 207). And now after the war, "Gerade die ärgersten Förderer des Krieges und Nachrichter des Kaiserreiches fühlen sich am wenigsten verantwortlich der Republik, mit Verachtung
entziehen sie der einst gelobhuldeten Nation das Notopfer" (MuM 225).

In "Kaiserreich und Republik," Mann employs two metaphors for the state that together form the basis of his criticism of Germany's irresponsible drive to power that led to the war: the state as "theater" and as "business." These images also occupy a central position in Der Kopf. The two metaphors address the romantic desires of nationalism and the material concerns of the modern industrial state, which can combine to fuel a dangerous dynamic of power and success.

The metaphor of the theater comes from Mann's view that the rise of the German Weltmacht was based on artifice, on an illusion of power:

Diese neue Macht war ruchlos, weil sie zu schnell aufgeschossen, von sich selbst überrascht und in der Tat höchst fragwürdig war [...] 'Künstlich' nannte das Reich sogar sein Schöpfer, eine Treibhaußpflanze war der Untertan; und auf unsolide Art zur Welt gekommen, nahmen sie sich das Recht, auch so zu leben, rechneten, anstatt mit Zeit und Selbstzerziehung, auf jeden Zufall der Gewalt, jede unlautere Nachhilfe, jeden Bluff. (MuM 189-90)

The empire, Mann writes, had a "Fassade [...] die nichts durchließ" (MuM 190). And its leader, Kaiser Wilhelm II, "der Oberste Kriegsherr [des] Theaters," was an actor whose overpowerful image was created more by the people than by himself: "Seine Schuld ist die kleinere, denn seine Rolle auf dem gemeinsamen Theater war durch sie bestimmt" (MuM 192). In total, the empire was a bad theater of imitation: "Nachahmung: die ganze Leere der vierzig Jahre gähnt aus dem Wort. Der
Bürger äffte den Ritter, beide zusammen äfften England und das Reich alle dagewesenen Beispiele 'öder Weltherrschaft'" (MuM 193).

Underneath the illusory "theater" of German power politics was the true driving force of its power, the spirit of business. Mann refers to the empire as a "Geschäftsunternehmen," contrasting it to an image of a society that is "voll und tief verantwortlich" (MuM 226). The violent drive to world power of the Pan-Germans was an example of economic militarism, representing for Mann the "soul of the epoch" (MuM 188). The essence of the empire became "Geschäft auf Grund von Siegen, vergangenen und künftigen!" (MuM 191).

Both the theater and the business metaphor have in common the drive toward power grounded in a crass ethic of success, the illusory success and glitter of the stage and the real economic success of the business arena. The empire saw its highest duty as "reicher werden, härter werden, Weltmacht sein" (MuM 186). The Kaiser was the model and spokesperson for the new ethic: "Erfolg! Erfolg, höchste Bürgertugend! [...] haltlos und unsachlich bis zum Grauen sein, ein Schein sein, eine Bühnenlarve, und dort, wo das Herz sitzt, nichts haben als die Anbetung des Erfolges [...] die unbedingte Anbetung jedes Erfolges, der sich in Geld ausdrückt" (MuM 192). The lesson that the state taught its Untertanen was that "Erfolg sei alles [...] Geschäft ist Geschäft" (MuM 208).

Although the essay ends in a hopeful tone for the
republic, which is just over a half year old at this point, Mann does not fail to notice the signs of continuity of old ways: "Denn Deutschland verhält sich selbst am allerwenigsten, als leiteten die Friedensverhandlungen eine neue Zeit ein. Zu Hause findet es weder Worte noch Taten der Erneuerung. Die Lügen des Kaiserreiches werden übernommen samt seinem Personal" (MuM 224). Mann mentions specifically the union of the Social Democrats with the military in order to put down the revolution, a relationship stemming from the Ebert-Groener agreement of November 9, 1918 (Pinson 389). Germany, Mann writes, is willing now to put past guilt onto the shoulders of its former diplomats, its military, and its Kaiser, "ohne doch auch nur mit diesen wirklich zu brechen" (MuM 226).

Mann's imagery of the "theater" and the "business" sides of the republic accompanies his realization of this continuity from the past. As in Der Untertan, the German Bürger continues to be a main target of criticism. In "Der Bürgerliche Held" from 1921, Mann looks back to Napoleon for a symbol of the good Bürger gone bad, overcome by a drive to power: "auch seine Mittel, vorwärtszukommen, waren parvenuhaft bürgerlich. Ihr einziger Maßstab: der Erfolg. Er ließ sich gleich anfangs von großen Kriegsgewinnern finanzieren" (SJ 29). This success and power ethic led to the "tragic comedy" that his life had become in the end: "Allgegenwärtige Verpflichtung, die eigene Größe darzustellen, ihr emsiges Studium -- Sucht und Nötigung einer wirklichen Größe, die
Maske der Größe zu machen. Wer würde sie ihm sonst glauben von den Zuschauern" (SJ 33).

The image of the political "stage" is repeated in "Bemerkung über Genie" from 1924, in which Mann writes, "Das Theater ähnelt, wie keiner anderen Erscheinung des Lebens, der Politik"; and "Es sind Primadonnen, auch in der Politik" (Mann, "Bemerkung" 1). Mann provides a counterimage to the political "actor" in "Demokratie:"

Ein Volk irreführen und überanstrengen, das tun die großen Machtgenies, die wir -- immer nur zu unserem Schaden -- kennen gelernt haben [...] Eine Demokratie bricht nicht nieder [...] Sie wählt, erkennt und geht geschlossen vor, so weit nur, wie wirklich ihre Kraft reicht. Sie muß nicht prahlen, nicht glänzen. Hier gibt es keine pomphafte Fassade, um derenwillen alles nur besteht [...]. (Mann, "Demokratie")

The metaphor of the state as a business gradually becomes the most threatening image for Mann. In connection with this insight Mann's writings about the reality of modern power and responsibility begin to acquire a greater urgency around 1923. In the six essays from 1923 that were later labeled together "Die Tragödie von 1923," Mann attempts to analyze the underlying motivations and forces of Germany's economic crisis, in the context of what he perceives to be an even greater overall societal crisis. Mann finds one source of society's problems in the business attitude carried over from the empire, which has now become a quasi-religious glorification of "Wirtschaft." Mann is compelled to remind his readers, "Wirtschaft ist nicht Selbstzweck, und sie führt
zu nichts. Man dreht sich mit ihr im Kreise. Sie erlößt von keinem Übel, sondern schafft neue, da der Glaube, sie sei alles, ein ganzes Volk geistig und sittlich abstumpfen kann" (SJ 97).

The business attitude of the empire has led to a strange kind of economic patriotism: "Denn wie dient man dem Vaterland? Mit Geldverdienen" (SJ 108). And business leaders are acquiring a power similar to that of a political dictator. Mann asks, "Gibt es Widerstände, ausgedehntere als es scheint, wenn auch noch verschwiegene, gegen die Diktatur der 'Wirtschaft'? Gegen die Behauptung, sie sei alles und ein 'Wirtschaftsführer' das letzte und wichtigste Ergebnis der menschlichen Geschichte?" (SJ 118). Mann points out to his audience that all of this goes against the Weimar constitution, a document that is based on ideas and meant to turn the new society away from absolutism. He asks, "Hieß das nur, daß er unter anderem Namen sogleich uns wieder einfangen sollte? Statt des Militärabsolutismus die unbeschränkte Kapitalmacht?" (SJ 149).

Looking back on the inflation and its aftereffects in his series "Briefe ins ferne Ausland" from 1925, Mann writes sarcastically of the Germans, who are above all "gute Geschäftsleute": "Die Wirtschaft, der ihr tiefer Respekt galt, blieb mächtig; das war die Hauptsache" (SJ 222-23). By this time, his utopian ideas for democracy are a distant memory,
and the reality of the republic has proven to be an extension of problems of the empire, on another level:


Unter der jetzt glücklich überwundenen Vormundschaft der Monarchen hatte das deutsche Volk möglichenfalls außer der Wirtschaft noch einige andere Gedanken. Als mündiges Volk denkt es einzig und allein noch an die Wirtschaft. (SJ 226)

Mann sees the danger of this situation in the connection between the economic trap that Germany has fallen into and fascism. He talks about the growing conflict between the members of the lower class, who have no money, and the middle class, who pretend to have money. The economic success ethic that has become dominant on all levels of society is setting the stage for a greater acceptance of violent solutions to economic problems: "Man muß die Herkunft des Fascismus nur verstehen. Dann wird es klar, daß er sich nur immer noch mehr ausbreiten kann über Europa" (SJ 242).

E. Responsibility and Modern Industry

Accompanying Mann's foresight of the spread of fascism is his insight into the dangers of modern power, embodied by big industry. Many of Mann's expressions of this insight apply with equal validity today. In "'Wirtschaft' 1923" from May of that year, Mann looks at the rise of industry to its current
position of power in a society that has a religious-like reverence for the modern dynamic of the economy. At the same time nationalism, the old force of the "theater" of the German empire, was again on the rise. The French had occupied the Ruhr a few months earlier, resulting in Germany's policy of passive resistance. Rathenau, who had been involved in the fulfillment policy hated by the nationalists, had been assassinated a year earlier. Hitler's Putsch was only a few months away. The revival of the old demons of anti-semitism and nationalism along with the new economic situation and the power of industry provided the setting for a new, even more destructive form of violent Machtpolitik to arise in the future.

The danger of industry for Mann was primarily in its marriage to war; he saw the war industry as the ultimate combination of power, business, and irresponsibility, resulting in human sacrifice. A fitting symbol for this is the industrial Moloch in "Kobes," written in 1923. Mann traces the "ursprüngliche bürgerliche Erklärung" for the war industry back to a union of patriotism and capitalism in the founding years of the German empire (SJ 108). In the following years, the union became a deadly one:

Das Genie des Bürgertums hat in den Jahrzehnten zwischen den beiden letzten Kriegen sich der Technik des Tözens bemächtigt und ist in sie aufgegangen. Der Kriegsindustrielle Bürger als höchster Ausdruck seiner Klasse hat all die Zeit mit der Eskomptierung künftigen Massensterbens Geld gemacht. (SJ 109)
The next line describes the loss of responsibility in the sense of Mann's ethic: "Verloren gingen ihm Wille und innere Verpflichtung, dem Leben zu dienen, außer seinem eigenen" (SJ 109). He sees the war industry as a major force fueling the German drive to power: "Der kriegsindustrielle Bürger hat den Staat, auch den feudalen Militärstaat, aus dem Hintergrunde gelenkt, hat ihn nach jedem Versuch, auszuweichen, wieder auf das Geleise geschoben, wo's in die Katastrophe ging" (SJ 109). And with an insight that applies just as strongly to the current situation, Mann writes, "Wer den Krieg rüstet, darf nicht aufhören, bis der Krieg da ist: dann kommt erst seine Zeit" (SJ 110).

Mann recognized that modern warfare has become a business venture, while still retaining its romantic nationalist facade. The deadly combination of theater and business is still an apt description for the wars of today's industrialized nations. Mann digs behind the facade of war in Der Kopf, revealing the secret business of arms deals with other countries before and during the war, a situation that is now taken for granted. The question Mann asks of the "enemy" industries who are doing business together is,

Wem waren die beiden verantwortlich? Was wäre einzuwenden gewesen, wenn zwei scheinbar feindliche Kriegsindustrien, über den Umweg dritter Unternehmen, jede an der anderen beteiligt gewesen wären? [...] Was auch geschah, Sieg oder Niederlage, sie mußten verdienen, nur das war Pflicht. (SJ 110)
This business aspect of war is covered over by the ideal of the "fatherland." Humanity becomes "ein Zwischenfall," and "bleibend und allein gültig ist der Vorteil dessen, der die Macht hat" (SJ 111). The concept of responsibility to the future is reflected in Mann's question, "Wen aber werden ihre spärteren Wirkungen [those of nationalist ventures] treffen?" (SJ 113).

Mann's depiction of the visit of the industrialists in a region destroyed by the war can be read as an apocalyptic vision of the future continuation of the "Erwerbstrieb" of the war industry, if the "destroyed region" is taken as the expanded stage of a future ultimate war:

Industrielle beider feindlicher Länder fanden sich, nach vollbrachter Tat, dort zusammen um zu beaugenscheinigen, was sie vollbracht hatten. Ihre Waffen, Geschütze, Sprengstoffe, Giftgase, alle ihre technischen Höchstleistungen hatten hier überwältigend gesiegt. Kein Haus, kein Baum und keine Mauer. Der Mensch nur noch als Skelett vorkommend in dieser Erde, die mehr zerstücktes Eisen als Erde war. (SJ 119)

Mann's explanation of what led to this catastrophe is an apt description of the modern arms race, which, even with the current shakeup in the balance of power, promises to continue, as long as the idea of the "superpower" and the economic goals of the armament industries exist:

Die Feindschaft war in Wahrheit Arbeitsgemeinschaft. Wenn die technischen Errungenschaften, die hier gehaust hatten, zufällig nur die des einen waren, der andere hatte sie dank seinem Wettbewerb mit hochgebracht [...] Er hatte, dem anderen neidvoll verbrüdert, den Krieg herbeigerufen und ihn unvermeidbar gemacht. (SJ 119-20)
The central focus of these essays is not on the past war, but on the future. In "Noch ein Krieg mit Frankreich," Mann calls for an agreement and eventually a union with France in the midst of the French occupation of the Ruhr, a time when feelings against France were at their highest level since the war. To Mann, it is the only solution to avoid another clash between two countries, who "jetzt beide auf den nächsten Krieg hinsteuern" (SJ 136). Industry is a major force behind the current march toward catastrophe: "Es wäre unvermeidlich, daß die beiden Länder sich gegenseitig zerstören, wenn ihre Industriekämpfe fortdauerten. Damit diese aber aufhören, muß zuerst das gedankenlos gierige Geschlecht der Industrieherren seines Einflusses entledigt werden" (SJ 139).

The imperative of checking the power of industry underlies Mann's open letter to Gustav Stresemann, who had just become chancellor. In the letter, originally titled "Diktatur der Vernunft," Mann appeals to Stresemann to take control over the growing power of industry and its partner, the nationalist right, and to oppose their threat of a "Diktatur der Gewalt" with a "Diktatur des Rechtes" (SJ 153). The time frame of the essay is October, 1923, and Stresemann had abandoned the passive resistance strategy a month earlier. Mann commends Stresemann's action for preventing a violent eruption in a situation ripe for war, but warns, "Die Gefahr wird wiederkommen" (SJ 153).
In the form of a "Märchen" that takes place in a country "das nirgends liegt," Mann describes in "Noch ein Krieg mit Frankreich" a situation in which a single successful business leader has taken total control of a country. He is describing Hugo Stinnes, the industrial giant and inflation speculator whom Mann will also use as a symbolic representative of industry in his anti-Märchen "Kobes": "Er kaufte mit geliehenem Geld, das er zurückzahlte, wenn es entwertet war [...] Von selbst, aus Bedrängnis und Ruhelosigkeit, ergab sich das System, das nachher großartig 'vertikal' genannt wurde" (SJ 132). Koppel Pinson writes of Stinnes, "He was the supreme example of the German post-war tycoon who took advantage of any and every opportunity to build up his fortune and his personal power. Many German industrialists and merchants took Stinnes as their model" (Pinson 447). In his fairy-tale land ruled by the embodiment of modern industrial power, Mann identifies the lack of responsibility in both the leader and the followers: "Die Folgen gingen nicht ihn an, er war außer aller Verantwortung, ein Privatmann [...] Unverantwortlichkeit ließ es in jenem Land, das nirgends liegt, zu Vorgängen kommen, wie kein erklärter Despot sie befohlen haben würde" (SJ 133).

Mann saw this lack of responsibility as a crucial ethical problem accompanying the rising power of industry and society's corresponding faith in this power. Of industry he writes in "Anfänge Europas," "Zweifel sind begründet an dem
Verantwortungsgefühl der Personen, die sich heute 'die Wirtschaft' oder 'die Industrie' nennen" (SJ 127). And of society, in "Sie gehen bis zum Verrat" ("Diktatur der Vernunft"), "Denn in diesem Lande ist persönliche Verantwortung bis heute unbekannt. Dieses Volk ist, wie kein anderes, im Sichausreden auf Kollektivitäten befangen [...] Es glaubt an unbegreiflich böse Mächte und immer an die falschen" (SJ 155). Mann goes on to mention the National Socialists for the first time by name, connecting them with the industrialists, their financial backers: "Was sind denn Nationalsozialisten? Leute, die ihre Geldgeber schonen müssen, sonst wären sie nicht nur gegen jüdische Ausbeutung" (SJ 162).

After Der Kopf was published in 1925, Mann responded to critics of the work who he said had ignored the core of his novel. In "Unser gemeinsames Problem," addressing a French audience, Mann explains the central position of his critique of industry in the novel:


There is more to this statement than may be apparent on the surface. Mann's concentration during the first seven years of the Weimar Republic was not strictly on the past and Der Kopf is not merely a work that exposes past guilt for the war. On
the contrary, the core of the novel is responsibility to the future and industry's role in this future, with the catastrophe of the world war as an example of its power and potential for destruction. The next war is on the horizon, and the new power of industry and the old force of nationalism have only grown and become more united. Attention needs to be turned to the future, and a new sense of responsibility needs to accompany this focus:

Siegt aber dennoch der geistige Wille und wird wieder Politik gemacht? Oh! Dann ist sie langfristig und keineswegs ein Geschäft, das sofort realisiert wird. Dann werden Opfer gebracht werden müssen für Zukunft und Kinder. Dann soll aber auch das Verhältnis unserer beiden Länder zu einander auf eine sichere Grundlage gestellt werden. Diese ist die Erkenntnis unserer Schicksalsverbundenheit und das Bewußtsein unserer Verantwortung für die ganze gemeinsame Zukunft unseres Weltteils. (SJ 257)
A. Der Kopf: The Problem of Responsible Leadership

Though Der Kopf received high praise by some at the time of its publication, including Thomas Mann, who called it the high point of the trilogy and said it ranked among the "absolut schönsten und stärksten Leistungen dieses glänzenden, im höchsten Sinn sensationellsten Schriftstellers" (Cited in Kraske and Lellau 24), the critical reception of the novel has been mostly negative. As Jork de la Fontaine puts it, the assessment of the novel as "mißlungen" has essentially been canonized in the western German literary scholarship (La Fontaine 8). Some scholars, however, have recognized the significance of the work.\(^7\) La Fontaine, for example, emphasizes the unconventionality of the novel as one of its strengths (La Fontaine 204-05), and Walter Müller-Seidel sees the novel as "einen der verkanntesten Texte der modernen Literatur in Deutschland" (Müller-Seidel 120).

The time frame in Der Kopf -- the action begins in 1891 and ends in 1917 -- and its identity as the final volume of

\(^7\) See for example Emrich, Macht 350-74; König 133-215; Kraske and Lellau; La Fontaine; Müller-Seidel 119-27; Schlichting 621-737.
Mann's *Kaiserreich* trilogy have led to insufficient readings of the novel. Waltraud Berle, for example, focuses too much on Mann's attention to the past: "Die sieben Anfangsjahre der Republik hindurch arbeitete Heinrich Mann somit an einem Roman, der ihn in die Gedankenwelt der Monarchie zurückversetzte, und der die literarische Verarbeitung der republikanischen Realität behindert hat" (Berle 162). Jürgen Haupt sees the novel as "anspruchsvolle, langwierige, letztlich bemühte und eigentlich gescheiterte Vergangenheitsbewältigung unter dem selbstgesetzten Systemzwang einer 'Trilogie' wilhelminischer Leidenschaften" (Haupt, "Entwertung" 53).

Such interpretations miss the significance of the insights into the Weimar present that are essential to a more complete understanding of the work. Commenting on the present with examples from the past was not a new technique for Mann, as works such as "Zola" and his drama *Madame Legros* (1913) show. *Der Kopf*, which Mann worked on for the first seven years of the republic, is not only an analysis of Germany's recent past and the conditions of society that led to the first world war, but also a distinctly Weimar novel, commenting on the current continuation and amplification of some of the most dangerous attitudes and beliefs of the *Kaiserreich* and pointing toward a new way of thinking for the future.
Without denying the sharpness of the social criticism in Der Untertan, Der Kopf is in one sense the most interesting novel of Mann's trilogy, in that its perspective is the closest to Mann's own perspective on the object of his analysis. Mann is distanced through satire from his bourgeois protagonist Heßling in Der Untertan, and distanced through life experience from his proletarian hero Balrich in Die Armen. But the main characters of Der Kopf, Terra and Mangolf, are representatives of a societal "class" that Mann considered himself a part of, the intellectuals. Mann regarded Der Kopf as the high point of his work to date. In 1925, he wrote to Maximilian Brantl, "Ich habe daran länger gearbeitet, als an jedem anderen Roman [...] So etwas schreibe ich nicht mehr. Es war das Vollständigste und Höchste, das ich zu leisten hatte."  

Der Kopf is a self-reflection of the intellectual as well as an analysis of power, leadership, and responsibility. Schröter misses the self-critical aspect of the novel, when he calls it "eine ungeheure Überschätzung des eigenen persönlichen Erlebnisses als der repräsentativen Erfahrung der Epoche" (Schröter, "Autobiographie" 180). Schröter sees the "Fehlplazierung der Rolle des 'Geistes' als der in Gesellschaft und Geschichte bewegenden Macht" as an element of Mann's "voluntarism" that underlies the novel (Schröter, 8 Letter to Maximilian Brantl, 2 May 1925. Cited in Dietzel 410.
"Autobiographie" 180). On the contrary, this very idea is the object of Mann's criticism, as portrayed by the self-criticism of Terra and Mangolf in the final scene and by their double suicide.

It is also insufficient to suggest that the suicide ending is an indication of the author's resignation, as Renate Werner does (Werner, Skeptizismus 252, 268). The contrary can be attested to on the one hand by Mann's increased publication in the years after 1925: along with numerous essays, several novellas, and a drama, Mann wrote four novels in the last seven years of the Weimar Republic. More importantly, the self-criticism and criticism of the illusions of the intellectual class in the novel lead to a new outlook directed toward the future, not to one of resignation due to regrets and failures of the past.

Mann's criticism of the German intellectuals contains, as Bernd Kraske and Gerhard Lellau point out, an element of reproach, directed mainly to Literaten, for the co-responsibility of intellectuals in bringing about the war. The criticism is that they, more than anyone, should have been able to see through the falseness of the Wilhelmian era, since they are called to criticize, look closely at society, and find truth (Kraske and Lellau 42). Emrich's point is also valid that the novel pursues the question of whether an intellectual with views such as Mann's could have, after
having attained a position of influence and power, changed the system from within, and prevented the war (Emrich, Macht 361).

Though these are elements of Mann's analysis, the focus of the work is not merely retrospective. The essence of the novel is not in the post-war context of "die Frage nach der Schuldverteilung, die Suche nach den Hauptschuldigen am ersten Weltkrieg," as Volker Ebersbach argues (Ebersbach, Heinrich Mann 197), nor is it principally in the self-criticism of the effectiveness of the "denunciation" and "exposure" techniques of the engaged intellectual, as Roberts indicates (Roberts, Artistic 150-54).

On the one hand, Mann is warning of the danger of an elitist intellectual illusion of leadership or control over the direction of a society. As La Fontaine writes, Mann is criticizing "die schlechte Utopie eines zu direkten und gerade darin unrealistischen Umsetzungsversuchs der Postulate des Geistes in Politik, die so allzu leicht in ihr Gegenteil umschlagen können" (La Fontaine 186). The message is that active pursuit of utopian goals at the possible expense of humanity is irresponsible and dangerous. La Fontaine writes, "Das Übel des Elitarismus des Geistes besteht nicht in seinem Verantwortlichkeitsgefühl überhaupt, sondern in seinem totalen und radikalen Selbstdurchsetzungswillen, seiner 'Herrschsucht'" (La Fontaine 197).

On the other hand, Der Kopf is a portrayal of the increasing complexity and dynamic proportions of modern power,
looking to a greater need for a broad-based awareness of responsibility that extends ahead to future generations and looks to prevent coming catastrophes. La Fontaine writes of the effect of the self-perpetuating dynamic of modern industry: "So macht sich den beteiligten, bewuβten Akteuren die zunehmende Unlenkbarkeit der Verhältnisse immer deutlicher fühlbar" (La Fontaine 51). What is missing in the leaders of Mann's "Roman der Führer," and what leads to their downfall, is their lack of insight (or their too late insight) into the modern dynamic of power and the growing "Undurchschaubarkeit der Beziehungen," which is a "Signum der Moderne" (La Fontaine 202). Jonas writes similarly,

Dynamik ist die Signatur der Moderne; sie ist nicht Akzidenz sondern immanente Eigenschaft der Epoche und bis auf weiteres unser Schicksal. Sie besagt, daß wir mit immer Neuem rechnen müssen, ohne es errechnen zu können; daß Veränderung sicher ist, aber nicht, was das Andere sein wird. (Jonas 216-17)

Terra and Mangolf's lack of this insight along with their power and success based ideologies turns them into "'Schlafwandler' in einer selbst mitheraufbeschworenen, doch ihnen selbst unüberschaubar gewordenen Welt" (La Fontaine 105-06).

The unspoken but underlying message of the novel is one of the new dimensions of responsibility in the modern society, a topic that, as Jonas says, has been propelled "ins Zentrum der Moral" with the modern dynamic of power (Jonas 233). Mann's next novel, Mutter Marie, states the message of
responsibility more directly and focuses on citizenship. Der Kopf portrays the problem of responsible leadership in the story of two intellectuals, Claudius Terra and Wolfgang Mangolf.

1. The "Marsch der Geister": Terra and Mangolf

Mann chooses two representatives of Geist, Claudius Terra and Wolfgang Mangolf, as the main characters of his novel. At the beginning of the novel (1891) they are twenty years old, born in the year of Germany's birth as a nation, and the year of Mann's own birth. Much concentration has been focused on "decoding" these two figures, as well as the other main characters in Mann's Schlüsselroman. The identities behind many of the main figures are clear: Lannas is Bülow, Tolleben is Bethmann-Hollweg, Fischer is Tirpitz, Gubitz is Holstein, Knack is Krupp, the poet Hummel represents Hauptmann, and Lea has many traits of Mann's sister Carla. The two main characters are harder to pinpoint. Mann himself said he based Terra mostly on Frank Wedekind and Mangolf on Maximilian Harden (Anger, "Afterword [A, K]" 683). Few, however, fail to see traits of Heinrich Mann in Terra and Thomas Mann in Mangolf (Schröter, "Autobiographie" 176-81). But La Fontaine is correct in arguing that the "decoding" of the figures,

9 For a good summary table of identifications, see Kraske and Lellau 51 (footnote 6). For a more in-depth analysis of the possible inspirations for each figure, see La Fontaine.
whether on the historical or autobiographical level, does not
point the reader to the "telos" of the novel (La Fontaine 63,
126, 109), and he emphasizes the combination of various
influences behind each figure.

At the beginning of the novel is the political discussion
of Terra and Mangolf, in which their standpoints are made
known. The themes of idealism, power, and the political
"stage" all appear in this early conversation. Their words
echo those of Talleyrand and Larevellièrè in "Gespräch mit
Talleyrand" from 1918, with Terra on the side of the idealist
Larevellièrè. Mangolf compares the Kaiser to a bad actor, but
admits, "Wer die Macht hat, dem glaubt man" (K 187-88). Terra
replies, "Dann darf es keine Macht geben!" and Mangolf
responds, "Sie ist aber da. Und jeder will sie mitgenießen"
(K 188). At this point, the narrator says, "Der einmütige
Marsch der Geister brach ab" (K 188), and their conversation
becomes an argument.

The argument leads to each of them predicting the other's
tragic end. Terra tells Mangolf, "Du wirst die Aufsicht
verlieren über deine vergewaltigte Vernunft, wirst dich
verrennen und schlecht enden" (K 189). Mangolf says in turn,
"Mit deiner unbefleckten Vernunft greife nur sogleich zum
Revolver, früher oder später ist er dir sicher" (K 189). They
take leave of each other, each convinced of his own version of
"truth" and ready to fight for it (K 189). But they remain
united in their elitist perceptions of themselves. Terra
says, "Wären wir jetzt einfachere Naturen gewesen, wer weiß, wie dies geendet hätte" (K 189).

From this point on, Mann's novel follows the two opposing paths of the "Marsch der Geister" through twenty-six years of the Wilhelmian empire up until the middle of the first world war. Mann weaves their fates together at various points. They each have a child with Lili, and they each enter a *Vernunfthehe* with industry; Mangolf does this literally when he marries Bella Knack, and Terra figuratively, when he accepts Knack's offer to work for him. These parallels suggest their ultimate inseparability and foreshadow their tragic ending in a double suicide.

Wolfgang Mangolf is an intellectual striving for power and success; the letters of both names seem to suggest the word Erfolg. Terra says at the beginning, "Uns trennt ein einziges Wort, das er anbetet: Erfolg haben" (K 177). Mangolf has a Nietzschean "will to power," and he knows the "verführerische Anziehung des Nichts" (K 188). He pursues power in a political career that takes him to the position of chancellor just before the start of the war in 1914. As La Fontaine points out, his drive to power is not purely opportunistic or based on material success. Rather, he, like Terra, is an idealist with an aristocratic belief in his own destiny for leadership. Both are convinced they are "von Natur aus mit 'Geist' begabt und daher zum Herrschen geboren" (La Fontaine 132-33). Mangolf's egotism and elitism provide
the motivation for his career, but they also lead him to scorn his own careerism:


Mangolf's careerism is based on a doctrine of the ends of a position of power justifying any means of attaining that position, and he sacrifices his relationship with Lea for his career. His idealistic motivation for support of the war is along the same lines; he believes the war will bring about the greater goal of a European "Gesamtstaat" (K 578). But during the war Mangolf comes to the realization that his chain of success is about to end and he sees the illusion of his ideals and the catastrophe that the war will bring to Germany: "Gewalt zeugte ewig nur Gewalt. Der Krieg war zwecklos. Mangolf sah dies fast in demselben Augenblick, da Krieg war. Vorher hatte er es nicht sehen können, erst die Gegenwart des Krieges zog den Vorhang weg" (K 631). It is already too late for the chancellor Mangolf to change anything when he starts to work secretly for peace behind the scenes.

Terra is set up as the moral counterpart to Mangolf, the Kantian intellectual who swears by "Vernunft" and whose goal in the beginning is to remain morally pure (K 188). Near the beginning Mangolf says to Terra, "Wir haben den Trieb, zu herrschen [...] Habe Erfolg!" to which Terra replies, "Ich
The type of pure intellectual Terra represents is defined by Von Praß: "Sie haben nichts, stellen nichts vor und treten an die Dinge mit sittlichen Forderungen hinan. Sie sind genau das, was man jetzt anfängt, einen Intellektuellen zu nennen" (K 236). Kurschmied also explains Terra's motivation, saying he goes through life with an "unstillbaren sittlichen Bedürfnis" (K 220). Later, after the death of Von Praß, Kurschmied's reiteration of this statement foreshadows the danger inherent in Terra's position: "Ihr unstillbares sittliches Bedürfnis schafft Katastrophen, wohin Ihr Fuß tritt" (K 257).

Terra is also convinced he has a "Sendung und Führerschaft" (K 373), and becomes in the end a parallel figure to Mangolf. His end goal of translating his pure ideals into reality will justify any means of achieving it, including working for the arms industrialist Knack and arranging to have Tolleben killed. Mann borrows a line from Wedekind's Der Marquis von Keith (Anger, "Afterword" 685) to use as Terra's eventual motto: "Geschäfte kann man nur mit der bestehenden Gesellschaftsordnung machen" (K 232, and slightly varied 367). Terra's plan is to try to change the system by working against it from within. His actions lead him to a moment of insight similar to Mangolf's. In the scene with the unnamed socialist leader in Paris (patterned after Jean Juarès [Anger, "Afterword" 690]), Terra confesses,
Ich habe ein Leben geführt wie ein Strafling [...] Ich habe, um mich durchzusetzen, lügen müssen. Den Mächtigen die Geschäfte besorgen, damit ich heimlich gegen sie arbeiten konnte [...] Ich bin alles nur um zu verraten [...] Ein ganzes Leben in Lug und Trug! (K 559)

But again, as with Mangolf, it is too late; the event that Terra set in motion (Tolleben's assassination) has taken on its own momentum and cannot be prevented.

Both Terra and Mangolf end up being "actors," trying to force their way on to the political stage, without realizing the illusion of the overestimation of their own Geist until it is too late. The theme of the Komödie runs throughout the novel in connection with both of them. In the beginning, Terra tells Mangolf, "Auch du wirst deine religiöse Komödie spielen -- genau wie dein Kaiser" (K 188). And when Altgott remarks "Sie sind ein Teufel," after hearing of Terra's orchestration of the "scandal" with Tolleben and Lea in order to avenge her with Mangolf, Terra replies, "Nein. Ein Komödienschreiber" (K 343).

The metaphor of the theater will be applied to other leaders of society as well, as Mann raises the curtain on the political stage of the Wilhelmian empire on its road to Weltmacht.

2. The Political Stage

The success drive behind the Machtpolitik of the Wilhelmian empire is shown by Mann to be both an illusion and
a danger in combination with modern power. To get this message across, Mann uses the comparison of the political stage to the acting stage, as he does in his essays. There are frequent references to acting or the illusion of the stage in connection with Mann's portrayal of the political leaders in *Der Kopf*. Paul Michael Lützeler points out Mann's identification of "Schauspielerei" as a major characteristic of the Wilhelmian empire, and Lützeler proposes an appropriate subtitle for *Der Kopf*: "Der Kopf oder die Maskerade" (Lützeler 195-96). Comparing Mann's trilogy to Broch's *Schlafwandler* trilogy (1930-32), Lützeler writes,

> In beiden Werken wissen die Helden häufig nicht mehr zu unterscheiden zwischen gespielter und wirklicher sozialer Rolle. Es verwischen sich ihnen die Grenzen zwischen Fiktion und Realität, zwischen Schauspiel und Tatsächlichkeit, zwischen Imitation und Originalität. (Lützeler 196)

As in *Der Untertan* and "Kaiserreich und Republik," Wilhelm II is the supreme actor, who sets the stage for the empire. Terra and Mangolf comment on this aspect of the Kaiser, as pointed out above, in their beginning conversation. He is an actor playing a role of supreme power and control, and power is something the people want to believe in and take part in: "Und jeder will sie [die Macht] mitgenießen" (K 188). They can do so vicariously, as an audience does in the theater, by following and believing in their leader.

Kaiser Wilhelm II plays a highlighted role in the novel, in the scene in which Terra makes a personal plea to the Kaiser to abolish the death penalty. The scene is
reminiscent, as La Fontaine points out, of Don Carlos, when Posa has an audience with the king (La Fontaine 146). As in Der Untertan, the Kaiser is portrayed here as a grand illusion, whose presence arouses murmurs of "Genie! Persönlichkeit!" (K 450). Shortly before Terra's audience with the Kaiser, Lannas tells Terra of Tolleben's potential for influencing the Kaiser despite his (Tolleben's) lack of intelligence, saying, "Die Maske! Er hat nun einmal die Maske. Das wäre nichts, aber es wirkt auf den Kaiser. Der Kaiser ist historisch beeinflußbar, am meistten durch Geschichte in Form von Maskeraden" (K 433).

When Terra argues for the abolition of the death penalty before the Kaiser, he is playing a role as well. Although he is addressing one of the major justice issues in the novel, he presents the issue not as one based on justice, but as a potential propaganda tool to help propel Germany on its way to becoming a world power. Terra explains to the Kaiser,

Das ist neu, das ist schlagkräftig und modern, das sichert den Erfolg. Soll noch irgend jemand behaupten, Eure Majestät planten Angriff! Selbst der teuflischste Lügner macht der Welt nicht mundgerecht, daß Sie Lust auf allgemeines Völkermorden haben, der Sie nicht einmal Verbrecher hinrichten lassen! (K 450)

The illusion of the scene is on three levels. First the illusion of the idea as Terra presents it, an illusion that the Kaiser is at first ready to accept, saying, "Die Sache hat was für sich" (K 450). Then there is the self-conscious illusion created by Terra the "Komödienschreiber," who
believes that by presenting his justice ideal as a propaganda tool he can "sell" it to the Kaiser, and bring the ideal to reality. Finally, there is an illusion that Terra is as yet unaware of, the illusion of his intellectual mission and his methods to carry out this mission. Believing himself to be a "Komödienschreiber," Terra is becoming more and more a "Komödiant." It is Terra's acting job before the Kaiser that impresses Knack, who calls his performance "meisterhaft" (K 453). When Knack offers Terra a job as a corporate lawyer and member of the directing staff of his armaments industry, Terra accepts, still under the illusion that he will be able to singlehandedly change the system subversively from within.

Lannas, who is chancellor throughout most of the novel, is a realist intellectual who can see through the system but has no intention of denying himself the benefits of personal success that can be achieved within it. He and Terra play off of each other, and their private meetings contain critical passages of the novel. Lannas recognizes the value of Terra's ideals, and agrees with his stance against the war, but he ultimately lets his own success guide his actions. He is a "Seiltänzer," whose political system is a balancing act, or as he calls it, "das schöne Gleichmaß" (K 492-93). The historical Bülow had a similar style. Pinson writes of Bülow, "He had great skill in political maneuvering and was adept at improvisation to avoid conflicts" (Pinson 286). Lannas sees his role as that of a peace-keeper, but wants to remain
realistic, believing in his system as the best way to keep the peace:


Lannas is aware of the relationship between politics and business, Mann's other metaphor for the spirit of the age. When Lannas informs Terra that Terra has been recommended for a seat in the Reichstag, with the free conservative party, he reminds Terra, "Heute wissen Sie, daß gerade der Idealist es besonders notwendig hat, auch Geschäftsmann zu sein" (K 397-98). Looking back on his political career, Lannas admits later, "[...] ich habe mich seit damals bescheiden müssen, fast nur noch Geschäftsmann zu sein. Mein Gott, es ist die Forderung der Epoche" (K 499).

But Lannas also understands the power, the potential for effect, and the success that come with the "actor" in the empire. At Liebwalde, his thoughts reveal that his desire for a greater role on the stage is beginning to outweigh his goal to keep the peace:

Ich selbst aber, der ihm [dem Kaiser] den Frieden erhält, komme in dem Schaustück seines Reiches bei weitem nicht so sehr zur Geltung, wir irgendein kommandierender General. Der Kanzler sogar kann eine erste Rolle nur behaupten als Nachfolger des erfolgreichsten Militäkanzlers. (K 327)
From this point on, he becomes more and more engulfed in the theatrical illusion of the political "stage." The success of the state and his own success become inseparable.

In planning the Kaiser's mission to Morocco, Lannas realizes that above all he needs to create a "bildhafte Wirkung" (K 499), both to assure his own success and that of the Kaiser, or Germany. The reduction of the political actions of a state to the level of the personality, the actor, is taking hold of Lannas, as it has with the entire country. The main issue is not the political negotiations in Morocco, but that Germany, and ultimately that he, Lannas, remains in the limelight. He says of Germany:


When Terra questions Lannas's motives, saying he could cause an international danger, Lannas replies, "Gefahr oder nicht, wichtig ist nur, daß ich bleibe" (K 499). Lannas also misses the significance of Terra's revelation to him that the war industry is doing business with "enemy" countries behind the scenes, thinking more about receiving his title of Fürst (K 496-99). La Fontaine suggests that this scene shows the gradual "Verlust der Grundlagen der Politik, ihre innere

---

10 Historical date 8 April 1904. See La Fontaine 38.
Aushöhlung" (La Fontaine 40), and he contrasts the failure of politics with its own pretentions of control (La Fontaine 41).

The reality of Lannas's motivation is portrayed in the final downfall of his system, when he loses the chancellorship. He reveals the level of overestimation of his own importance, screaming, "Ihr sollt es bezahlen! [...] Ihr alle bereut noch, daß ihr mich verrietet [...] Nach mir kommt nichts. Ich war der letzte, ich trug noch den Bau, ich allein. Jetzt der Zusammenbruch" (K 577). And he thinks, "Tod, was wollte er. Tod, was konnte er. Die Macht nicht mehr haben! Die Macht! Die Macht!" (K 577).

Tolleben, who succeeds Lannas as chancellor, is representative of another aspect of the illusion of political power. He is repeatedly described as looking like Bismarck, and he has an old school perception of leadership and power. He believes his authority comes from his standing as a Junker (a variance from the historical Bethmann-Hollweg, who was not a member of this class [La Fontaine 82]) and from God. He is not portrayed as being on the intellectual level of Lannas. La Fontaine points this out in the contradiction between Tolleben's appearance and his essence: "so dünn seine Stimme im Verhältnis zu seinem Körper ist, so klein ist sein Geist im Verhältnis zu seiner Natur" (K 83). He is called "dumm" and "Der Mann mit der Maske" by Lannas (K 432, 433).

His position at the head of a patriarchal family is also an illusion. Alice, who is, as La Fontaine writes, "an
politischem Verstand ihm haushoch überlegen" (K 84), has married Tolleben only to secure her own success as the wife of a future chancellor. She tells Terra early on, "Ich will, daß mein Vater an die Spitze gelangt, und will es auch für meinen Gatten" (K 294). And the child that Tolleben believes is his is really Mangolf's.

When Tolleben becomes chancellor, Germany is moving toward a war that he personally opposes. His tragedy is similar to that of the historical Bethmann-Hollweg, who, Pinson writes, "was not able to steer his course between the political demands made upon him as a statesman and German patriot on the one hand and the moral revulsion which these very demands aroused in him as an ethical individual" (Pinson 304). Pinson shows that the military and naval forces were really running German foreign policy by the time Bethmann-Hollweg was chancellor (Pinson 305). Mann's Tolleben is under the illusion that he is in control. He responds to Terra's information that a group of industrialists are meeting with high ranking military personnel by saying, "Verantwortliche Politik mache nur ich. Ich lasse die Versammlung aufheben" (K 587). He is not able to grasp that he is actually the one who is being led, by industry and the military on the political level, and by Alice and Terra on the private level.

Tolleben is not motivated by personal success and power like Lannas, but by an equally illusory devotion to the privileged power associated with tradition, nation, and social
standing. His understanding of the necessity to prevent the war reads, "Der Krieg darf nicht kommen. Denn nachher herrschen die Kohlenhändler [...] Kohlenhändler haben nicht zu herrschen, sie sind nicht das historische Preußen" (K 588). Terra urges him to take decisive action and expose the industrialists, threaten the Kaiser, and establish a coal monopoly (K 589). Tolleben's response is one of a willingness to sacrifice himself to his traditional image of the powerful nation, rather than to discover the realities of modern power: "Soll ein Opfer gebracht werden [...] Ich falle lieber für das Vaterland [...] Als daß ich es noch besser kennenlerne" (K 590).

Tolleben's traditional image of power includes a mighty God as well, whom he can call upon to destroy his enemies. He prays, "Vernichte unsere Feinde! Laß England in die Luft gehn! Sonst kommt Krieg [...] Laß Frankreich aussterben!" (K 586). He is also ready to give up responsibility and sacrifice himself to this higher power, as he prays later: "Laß doch nicht meine ganze Politik zusammenbrechen wie ein Kartenhaus! Lieber Gott, verhüte das Äußerste noch! Ich allein kann es nicht mehr, ich lehne die Verantwortung ab. Aber kann dein Knecht dir noch etwas nützen? Brauchst du ein Opfer?" (K 609).

On his way to the Reichstag to make the speech of the war declaration, he is thinking about his responsibility. He realizes he is sending countless people to their deaths and is
wondering if God can forgive him (K 624-25). But Tolleben's sense of responsibility is a personal and private one, connected with his traditional Prussian militaristic sense of honor and duty, an attitude that led him to challenge Mangolf to a duel. It is far from the ethic of responsibility for the future that Mann sees as necessary. Pinson writes that Bethmann-Hollweg showed a troubled conscience when he delivered his speech to the Reichstag, being forced to carry out and speak for a policy that went against his will (Pinson 305). But Pinson goes on to say that the tragedy of his leadership was beyond a personal level of guilt: "It was the tragedy of the entire civilian population of Germany who accepted the final word of the militarist Realpolitiker without murmur or protest" (Pinson 305-06).

Tolleben's death in the car accident arranged by Terra brings Mangolf to power as chancellor. Mann deviates from history with the death of Tolleben before his speech to the Reichstag, giving the final word of the declaration of war to Mangolf. Bethmann-Hollweg's historical guilt-laden speech is replaced by one of naked power politics in Mangolf's words: "er sprach für das Schwert. Nur das Schwert sei auf Erden im Recht" (K 630). Mangolf justifies Germany's actions saying, "Wir sind in ein neutrales Land gebrochen? Niemand hatte es anders von uns erwartet. Wir stehen zu unseren Taten" (K 630). Mangolf is the character much better suited to give a
speech that for Mann represents more truly the war enthusiasm of Wilhelmian Germany.

Mangolf's drive to power and success reaches its climax in this scene: "Der zur Macht drängende Mangolf hatte den Krieg gewollt -- zuerst und vor allem, weil er die Macht wollte. Krieg ward gerechtfertigt, wenn der zur Macht kam, der das Zeitgewollte erschaffen konnte" (K 631). Though his ideal of European unity differs from the crass Machtpolitik of the Pan-Germans, it is nevertheless a position of desire for war to achieve ends that have their basis in power. When he realizes the purposelessness of the war not long after the first victories, he sees the mistake of his ideal projections. And to Mangolf, "Das Unheimlichste war diese Entdeckung, nichts vorhergesehen zu haben" (K 631). Mann's mixture of Tolleben and Mangolf for the historical chancellor's speech declaring the war shows his criticism of irresponsible politics on two levels: on the one hand the illusion of a naive faith in traditional power structures, when blind to the realities behind these structures, and on the other hand, the illusion of the elitist intellectual pursuit of an ideal that bases its attainment on success, power, and destruction.

All of these leaders are shown as political "actors," whose leadership roles mask an irresponsible understanding of power. All have an elitist sense of their own right to authority, based on their class, their intellect, or a divine right. And all have lost control to the new industrial power
behind the scenes. Mann is not only addressing Germany's imperial past, but also the Weimar present. The power of industry has become even greater, and the same success and power drives are being carried over into the new democracy, setting the stage for new actors and new disasters.

Before looking more closely at the reality of power in the novel, two more images of leadership need to be discussed, the satirical allegories of the carousel and the "Generalagentur für das gesamte Leben."

3. The Carousel and the "Schwindelagentur"

Terra's employment as a carousel operator at the carnival has been interpreted as symbolic for the fleeting reality of an aesthetic world view (La Fontaine 27, 131). The image has also been seen as representing Terra's desire to remain a pure and independent intellectual, able to stand above the irrational world and see through it (Emrich, Macht 352-53). And the carousel has been interpreted as a symbol for apolitical literature (Lehnert 91). But the image also contains a statement about power and leadership.

Both this episode and the following episode of the "Generalagentur für das gesamte Leben" contain satirical allegories of the Wilhelmian empire.¹¹ The carousel image

¹¹ For the second image as a satirical allegory, see König 179; Emrich, Macht 353.
is similar to the metaphor of the theater, in that it is a
world of illusion, in which the public, here the children, can
enter a realm of fantasy and escape: "die Kinder in einem
heftig schaukelnden Postwagen machten eine bewegte Reise, der
Junge auf dem Schimmel fühlte sich als General, und die
Mädchen, die der goldene Schlitten trug, lebten [...] in einer
Wirklichkeit, die nicht weniger trügerisch war" (K 205).

The ride is a circular one, accompanied by music. And
Terra is in charge of its motion: "Dem allen sah Terra zu,
stand in der Mitte und verteilte es sozusagen -- flüchtiges
Glück für arme Menschen, denen übrigens nicht zu trauen war;
hier aber drehte er sie, teuflisch lächelnd, um seine eigene
Person" (K 205). His "leadership" goes through various stages
during the ride:

Er lächelte zeitweilig mit einem Hohn, der an
Irrsinn erinnerte [...] Dann aber bekam er ein
Vatergesicht, sah gutmütig dem Traum nach, der seine
Kinder entführte, um schließlich, indes das
Karussell schon langsamter ging, als der gewöhnliche
Aufpasser an seinem Posten zu stehen, plump, schofel
und mit Geschäftsmiene. (K 205)

He represents a devlish, despotic leader, then a paternalistic
leader oblivious to reality, and finally a detached,
businesslike one. But the "state" he is leading promises all
the illusion and glitter of the Machtstaat, which also does
not progress forward in humanitarian goals, but only
accelerates and decelerates, continuing in a circular path of
wars and power struggles. The leader's main function is to
keep the illusion going, either for tyrannical reasons, out of
an identification with the illusion, or because it is good business.

Terra makes the allegory even clearer when he explains his "public position" to Mangolf: "Die Menschen richtig lenken, wie sie es gewohnt sind, nämlich im Kreise; sie in Bewegung setzen, berauschen, beschwindeln, ihnen ihr Geld abnehmen und sie zum Teufel schicken: -- tu als Staatsmann mehr für sie, wenn du kannst! Oder bin ich ein Dichter?" (K 207). Terra's cynical description of leadership can apply to many of the images of leadership that Mann incorporates into the novel: the Kaiser, the industrialist, the theater director, the director of the "Generalagentur," the "Reklamenchef," the actor/actress, the poet Hummel, and Terra and Mangolf themselves. The underlying theme that unites these leaders is the force that Emrich calls the impetus of the Wilhelmian empire: "der alle Lebensbereiche beherrschende, soziale und persönliche Bindungen sprengende Wille zur Macht" (Emrich, Macht 353). Ralf Schlichting also analyzes the influence of Nietzschean philosophy in Mann's work, and he sees the carousel image as a "Gleichsetzung von Deutschem Reich und Nietzschescher Philosophie" (Schlichting 679). Mangolf encourages Terra to join in with the spirit of the times: "Wir haben den Trieb, zu herrschen [...] Habe Erfolg!" (K 208).

Eventually Terra does decide to join in instead of trying to remain detached and pure, in order to try to bring the
world up to his level of *Geist*. He sells his carousel, and tries to explain the irrationality of the carousel image from the point of view of society, saying to a stranger in a bar, "Ist es nicht [...] der Irrsinn in Person [...] daß Sie das Gottesgeschenk Ihres Daseins auf ein und demselben Karussell verfahren, immer im Kreis und taub gegen alles, was nicht Ihr schlechter Leierkasten spielt?" (K 231). This is a reference to the nationalistic society, caught up in the marching music of the *Machtstaat*, as portrayed in the last scene, and deaf to everything else. Then Terra refers again to leadership of such a state, saying, "Treiben Sie selbst das Karussell, da können Sie was erleben" (K 231).

But the conclusion he reaches is to join into the illusion, in order to change it from within: "Herrschcn! [...] Herrschcn zum Ruhme Gottes! Geschäfte kann man nur mit der bestehenden Gesellschaftsordnung machen" (K 232). Terra does not realize he is only jumping back onto the carousel, and he will end up back where he started, working for a circus (K 647). The passage indicates the level of Terra's intellectual hubris: he perceives himself as descending to the real world, Christ-like, with a "Sendung" to bring the ideal to the world, "zum Ruhme Gottes." This image will be completed in his suicide with Mangolf as they fall over each other in the form of a cross (K 652).
The third chapter "Der Direktor" contains another satirical allegory for the German empire, with Terra's employment at the "Generalagentur für das gesamte Leben." As Schlichting points out, the allegory is also directed toward the Weimar Republic, which in many ways, as Mann writes in his essays, has become a continuation of the empire (Schlichting 685). This interpretation is reinforced by Mann's inclusion of parts of this chapter in his novella "Die roten Schuhe" (1924), which is unmistakebly set in the Weimar Republic, not in the 1890s, the time frame of "Der Direktor." The element of the "Generalagentur" that unites both Kaiserreich and Republik is the spirit of speculation (Schlichting 685).

The "Generalagentur" allegory corresponds to Mann's essayistic metaphor of the society as a "business." It is a much more detailed and complex picture than that of the carousel, corresponding to, as La Fontaine notes, the increasingly complex relationship to reality in the novel (La Fontaine 191). The "Generalagentur" is an agency that is supposed to encompass "das gesamte Leben" with its two departments: "Das Leben [...] besteht aus Gelderwerb und Vergnügen" (K 233).

Like the carousel image, the system is built on "Schwindel," driven by an ethic of power and success. Terra's job as a "Reklamenchef" represents his first attempt to do business with the society as it is. It is also a foreshadowing of his work with Knack. As Herbert Lehnert
describes it, Terra works there as a "Moralist unter Hochstaplern und Betrügern" (Lehnert 91). His job is to convince the public, "daß jedermann Gott danken müsse, geboren zu sein, weil er so die Gelegenheit erhalten habe, sein Geld in die Generalagentur für das gesamte Leben zu tragen" (K 236). The director Von Praß describes Terra's job in clear terms: "Gut ist, was Erfolg hat. Für den Erfolg werden Sie bezahlt" (K 236). The scene parallels aspects of the carousel image, including the idea of deafness — the director is deaf (K 235) — and the circular image — Terra discovers after his tour of the agency that he has "made the rounds" and is back where he started from (K 238).

Here the dichotomy is not the "Staatsmann" and the "Dichter," but the two departments of the agency, business and art. The connection between the two elements is the same as in the earlier dichotomy: power. The departments of art and business become united in Terra's job as a propaganda writer. He is the satirical parallel to the "Dichter" of the carousel scene, the "Komödienschreiber" that Terra will become. His counterpart, the director, is the business oriented parallel to the political leader, a prefiguration of Kobes/Stinnes.

The director wants Terra to have an opera written, which will make the agency a "Weltmacht" (K 238). This combines the illusion of the stage with the reality of business, a combination designed to lead to world power. The image brings together the Machtpolitik of the empire and the economic
obsession of the republic, each spurred on by the spirit of speculation. In each case the speculation involves the lives of others, and Mann's criticism is directed toward irresponsible leaders who operate under such a system. In defining "unverantwortlich handeln," Jonas uses as one of his illustrations a "Glücksspieler" who puts everything on the line even though he or she has a family to take care of. Acting irresponsibly means, "Die Ausübung der Macht ohne die Beobachtung der Pflicht," when the fate of others is involved (Jonas 176).

The effects of Terra's method of bringing his Geist to the real world are shown in his first attempt to do so, at the "Generalagentur." His goal is to achieve a position of power in one day by exposing Mohrchen, the industrialist who is speculating with the agency's money (K 251). Terra thinks by underhandedly exposing Mohrchen, he is allowing for a new start "auf eine gesunde Grundlage" (K 252). But the director cannot survive without the speculator. He says, "Ohne Mohrchen geht es nicht" and kills himself (K 252).

The idea of illusion and the masquerade permeate the scene. Terra comments on the difficulty of reaching Von Praß's office (an allusion to the anonymity of modern power that is portrayed similarly in "Kobes"), saying "Der Mann verspricht zu viel. Nach allem Bisherigen müßte er eine eiserne Maske tragen" (K 235). The director's bookshelves filled with books are only painted facades (K 236). Terra
realizes that the director is really only a "kümmerlicher Poet in der Dachkammer" (K 240), and admits that what he (Terra) is writing for the agency is really "Hirngespinst, Geistererscheinung oder Schwindel" (K 240). When Terra sees the body of the director, he says,

> Armer Schwindler [...] Dies alles war einzig auf deinen schwindelnden Geist errichtet, auf unser aller schwindelnden Geist [...] Du bist das Opfer des allgemeinen Bedürfnisses nach dem Unwahrscheinlichen, seine Spender verschwinden unbedankt. Schlaf wohl! (K 253)

Schlichting sees in this statement a representation of Mann's own turning away from the illusion of his hope for a sudden change in society with the republic (Schlichting 695), the "utopian" element of his idealism. It also represents the theme of illusion or "Schwindel," that is an essential element of all of the representatives of leadership in the novel. Terra's comment "Schlaf wohl" is an illusory euphemism for another aspect of this scene that connects it with the carnival scene, the aspect of violent death. The carnival episode contains the murder of the two wrestlers and the suicide of the snake charmer. These images are the first reflections of the "Blutspur," the motif of violent death that runs through the novel, and is the basis for Mann's concentration on power and responsibility.
4. Violence and Power

a. The "Blutspur"

In "Politik als Beruf," Max Weber identifies violence as an essential element of political action:

[Der Staat] gilt als alleinige Quelle des 'Rechts' auf gewaltsamkeit. 'Politik' würde für uns also heißen: Streben nach Machtanteil oder nach Beeinflussung der Machtverteilung, sei es zwischen Staaten, sei es innerhalb eines Staates zwischen den Menschengruppen, die er umschließt. (Weber 506)

In the early 1800s, Karl von Clausewitz defined war as "a true political instrument, a continuation of political activity by other means" (Clausewitz 87). The influence of Clausewitz's thinking was demonstrated in the first world war (Pinson calls Ludendorff a "disciple of Clausewitz" [Pinson 318]) and is still apparent today. In his writings of the Weimar Republic, Mann tries to work against the prevailing attitudes toward war and politics.

In Der Kopf, Mann raises the issue of violence both on the level of state policy and on the private level. He connects all forms of violent killing in the image of "die Blutspur, die durch das ganze Leben führt" (K 601). Mann's original title for the novel was Die Blutspur (Anger, "Afterword" 690). The "Blutspur" runs throughout the novel; on the private level there are episodes of murder, suicide, and the duel, and on the state level the death penalty and war. The "Blutspur" is introduced into the novel in the
prologue, here titled "Neunzig Jahre vorher," but also published separately as a novella in December 1918 under the title "Der Mörder." The motif is carried throughout the novel to the final scene, which combines images of war and suicide.

Terra makes the connection between killing on the private and the state level in the scene with Lannas at Liebwalde. He is trying to convince Lannas to abolish the death penalty, and in his thoughts he follows the trace of blood from the deaths he has recently witnessed to a possible future war: "Von seinem Sessel hing tot der Direktor. Erschlagen umarmten einander die Ringer. Mordrufe heulten aus Gassen, und eine Straße mit den unauslöslichen Spuren vergossenen Blutes führte rückwärts bis wohin? Zu neuen Schlachten, neuen Brudermorden?" (K 326).

Terra finds the source for this "Blutspur" that runs through private and public life in the "wahnsinnige Gipfel jener Verachtung, die wir Menschen für uns und unser Blut haben" (K 326). He argues that state killing is sanctified by an ideology based on a "sublimierte Blutgeilheit" (K 327). His argument against the death penalty continues as a plea to destroy this "Blutmacht" ideology from the bottom up:

Solange im Frieden auf gesetzliche Weise Blut fließt, können Kriege keine Verbrechen sein. Aber Menschen werden die Tötung unschuldiger Soldaten schwerer hinnehmen, wenn nicht einmal mehr Mörder so sterben müssen [...] Den höheren Funktionen der Blutmacht ist erst beizukommen, wenn ihre ersten, untersten gestört sind. (K 328)
Walter Müller-Seidel correctly identifies the thrust of Terra's argument against the death penalty: "die staatlich verordnete Todesstrafe ist nicht isoliert zu sehen. Zum Kampf gegen sie gesellt sich der Kampf gegen Duell und Selbstmord [...] jedem gewaltsamen Tod wird hier der Kampf angesagt" (Müller-Seidel 123). Elke Segelcke suggests a weakness in Terra's jump from the death penalty to war, calling the argument a "typische Verkürzung" (Segelcke 152). But it is important to keep in mind that in Der Kopf it is Terra who is formulating the argument, and not Heinrich Mann. Terra is clearly portrayed as having an over-zealous sense of his mission in life and an absolutist view of bringing the ideal to reality: "Meine Sendung heißt: Ihr sollt euch nicht mehr umbringen müssen. Abgemacht. Und jetzt arbeiten wir uns aus dem Dunkel!" (K 373). In the process of fulfilling his mission, Terra violates his own commandment on nearly all the levels of violence: his bluff leads to Von Praß's suicide, he aids in the assassination of Tolleben, out of resignation he attempts to join the war effort, and he ultimately sentences himself to death and commits suicide.

With this portrayal of Terra in mind, it would be misleading to miss the continuity of ironic detachment of the author from his protagonist. Identifying Terra too closely with Mann, and thereby writing off Mann's message as too idealistic and bound to failure in the real world, misses the
point of the novel. There is more behind the "Blutspur" argument than just Terra's own idealistic conclusions.

One concrete issue of the "Blutspur" theme is the justice issue of the abolition of the death penalty in and of itself, without Terra's connection of this form of killing to all other forms of killing. Mann introduces the issue of the death penalty in the prologue, which involves the murder of one friend by another (the novel reveals that they are ancestors of Terra and Mangolf), and takes place in the context of the Napoleonic wars in 1801. The murderer receives an immediate death penalty, casually sentenced by the general: "Er hob die Schultern, miißbilligend und mit Verachtung. 'Aufhängen'" (K 170).

The setting of this obviously unjust death sentence more than a century ago is meant to suggest the continuance of an outdated and inhumane system of justice in the modern use of the death penalty. The death penalty was an important justice issue for the Weimar period and would remain a significant issue for Mann after 1925 as well, as exhibited especially in his essay series "Justiz" from 1927. The issue is no less significant today, as the popular acceptance of the death penalty continues to grow in the United States.

Müller-Seidel points out that during the 1920s the topic of abolishing the death penalty had become "aktuell [...] wie nie zuvor," and he gives an overview of the issue in the political and literary context of the Weimar Republic.
Müller-Seidel points toward the incomprehensible level of inhumanity that the death penalty would reach under the racist ideology of the Third Reich, when he notes that Hitler's *Mein Kampf* appeared in the same year as the publication of *Der Kopf*. He goes on to quote the section of the National Socialist party program that addresses the death penalty: "Gemeine Volksverbrechen, Wucherer, Schieber usw. sind mit dem Tode zu bestrafen" (Müller-Seidel 126), commenting that this is "das infamste 'Undsoweiter,' das man sich denken kann" (Müller-Seidel 126).

The other concrete issue is Mann's stance against war. Terra's plea for the abolition of the death penalty becomes a strong anti-war stance, which includes an argument against the prevailing attitude toward power and authority. La Fontaine also underlines the connection of the argument against the death penalty and the argument against "das legalisierte und organisierte Massentöten, den Krieg" (La Fontaine 142). The fight against the death penalty becomes a fight for humanity, "dessen Erfolg zur Schicksalsfrage der ganzen Menschheit erhoben ist" (La Fontaine 143).

Nikolai Serebrow sees the strength of Mann's anti-war stance in the depth of his search for the economic and political roots of war, noting that Mann's argument is not from a purely abstract pacifistic stance (Serebrow 2). Segelcke also recognizes the depth of Mann's analysis, saying his uncovering of the hidden forces that drive war is "bis
heute überzeugend" (Segelcke 152). The point of this "Antikriegsroman," as Kraske and Lellau write, is to show "wie zwangsläufig sich [...] die wilhelminische Gesellschaft in Richtung des Krieges entwickelte, auf ihn geradezu hinlebte" (Kraske and Lellau 25). But it must be added that the point is also to reveal how this seemingly automatic drive to war was continuing in the Weimar present.

Mann draws the parallel between the death penalty and war to underline that both are state-sanctioned forms of killing based on power and not justice. Terra reveals the paradox that the business of killing in war is accompanied by a state and historically sanctioned stamp of honor and glory: "Welcher Stand geht allen anderen vor? Der euch töten darf. Dem Staatsmann empfiehlt es sich, Kriege anzufangen, nur so ist es sicher, in die Geschichte zu gelangen" (K 326). He argues further that state-sanctioned killing is ultimately an expression of power: "wer Blut fordert, will nicht Gerechtigkeit, sondern Macht, die Juristen wie die Militärs. Ohne Blut keine Macht, das zwinkern sie einander zu" (K 328).

Another aspect of Mann's anti-war stance in the novel is his criticism of the notion of waging war to achieve an ideal peace. Mangolf has convinced himself that the war would lead to European unity and lasting peace, an idea that the novel says was "kein Traum eines einsamen Genies mehr, wie noch im Fall Napoleons. Jede aufgeklärte Willenskraft wurde heute von selbst dorthin gelenkt" (K 631). This was also Thomas Mann's
argument for justifying the war (Kraske and Lellau 45). But the reality behind Mangolf's desire for war was his drive to power: "Der zur Macht drängende Mangolf hatte den Krieg gewollt -- zuerst und vor allem, weil er die Macht wollte" (K 631).

As Kraske and Lellau write, Mangolf realizes too late that wars are never fought for ideas,

 sondern immer, um die bestehende Macht- und Besitzverhältnisse zu befestigen und nach Möglichkeit auszubauen, und weltverbessernde Ideen sind allenfalls dafür willkommen, sie auf die Banner der Kriestreiber einer jeden Seite zu schreiben, um damit vom wahren Sachverhalt der Dinge abzulenken. (Kraske and Lellau 45)

Even if the ideal goal were the true motivation behind a war, such a position cannot be brought in line with the ethic of responsibility that Mann, or Jonas, is calling for.

Mann's novel also shows the effect of the dangerous illusions of the past on the present and the future. The children of Terra and Mangolf are representatives of the next generation, who will be the young generation of the Weimar era, which has inherited the power and success mentality of their parents' generation and incorporated it into their world view. Near the end of the novel, Terra's son expresses his war enthusiasm, telling his father, "Jetzt kommt Krieg, ich habe gewonnen. Wir Jungen haben gewonnen" (K 601). Mangolf's daughter is given the final word of the novel. She steps past the bodies of Terra and Mangolf as the sounds of military music and marching outside become louder: "Ohne Aufenthalt
Mann's argument against the war is not only that of the Mosaic commandment ringing in Terra's ears as he wrestles with the thought of killing Tolleben: "Du sollst nicht töten!" (K 620). This is not enough to stop even Terra. Mann is also trying to reveal the mythology behind the popular acceptance of war. The connection of the "Blutspur" in the novel is not only in the blood that flows from all violent death. Nearly all of the examples of the "Blutspur" are connected with illusory perceptions of power: The killing of the weak so that the strong can survive, the idea of social Darwinism, is represented in the prologue murder and the murder of the wrestler at the carnival (Emrich, *Macht* 355-56). The director of the "Generalagentur" kills himself because of his reliance on speculation in holding his position of power. The death of Tolleben results from Terra's belief in the power of the symbol of his death to prevent the war: "Tolleben mußte fort, noch vor Ausbruch der Mordpest. Es konnte sie aufhalten. Das Zeichen aufrichten!" (K 620). Terra's son, who believes in his illusory title of Fürst, kills his mother because he thinks she has prevented him from achieving power and success by obstructing his marriage into a wealthy industrialist family. The young woman's infatuation with Lea's celebrity and power as an actress leads to her suicide. Terra's son's war enthusiasm leads him to be among the first to die in
battle. And Lea's suicide is motivated in part by her theatrical failure. Nearly her last words are, "Ich verzeihe mir selbst nicht [...] Mißerfolg war unerlaubt. Das Unglück ekelt mich" (K 615). All these examples of the "Blutspur" are provided to show the force driving society to war: the illusory desire for power and success.

Mangolf embodies this desire in the novel, and the war is referred to as "his" war both by Terra and Mangolf himself (K 607, 628). Just as Lea is the individual representative of the sacrifice of his war (K 607), Mangolf is the individual representative of society's drive to power and success, and its justification of wars that are based on this drive.

Müller-Seidel argues that the reasoning behind the connection of the death penalty issue with the war, and the overall "Blutspur" connection of the various forms of killing, is not in the idealistic equation that "wo Duell und Todesstrafe abgeschafft sind, könne es keinen Krieg mehr geben." Rather, the argument is for the necessity of "Änderungen der Denkweise" and "Bewußtseinswandlungen, die vielleicht verhindern könnten, was innerhalb des Romans nicht zu verhindern war" (Müller-Seidel 123-24). This is the idea behind Mann's ethic of responsibility, still an ideal, but a decidedly more modest and realizable goal than Terra's utopian ideals.

Along with the force of the illusory power mentality driving society to war, Mann exposes a concrete and hidden
element that motivates and accelerates the dynamic of
destruction: the power of industry.

b. Industry

The more hidden yet concrete force that spurred on the
drive to war is a companion of the "business" side of the
"Generalagentur für das gesamte Leben": the rapidly growing
power of big industry. Mann saw in the power of industry a
modern and more dangerous outgrowth of the ideology of power
without responsibility spawned in the Machtstaat. Mann
identified the core of Der Kopf as "die Verantwortung der
Industrie," and as I argued earlier, this statement refers not
only to Mann's retrospective unmasking of industry's co-
responsibility in bringing about the war, but also to the
novel's underlying message of the urgent need for an ethic of
responsibility to accompany this new force.

Mann recognized that the leadership position of industry
and technology on the "business" side of politics was not only
an indication of a new economic mindset, but also a warning of
a unique new territory in the idea of power and
responsibility, which is the starting point for Jonas's ethic
as well. Kraske and Lellau explain the lack of responsibility
that accompanied industrial power in Mann's time: "Der Stand
der politischen Unschuld diente also dem Industriellen als
Schild, Deckung, als Gewißheit, sich nicht für die Politik
verantworten zu müssen, die zu seinem Vorteil getrieben wurde" (Kraske and Lellau 28-29). Mann saw not only the absence of political responsibility in industrial power, but also an overall lack of responsibility to humanity: "Die Bürgerklasse fühlt sich nicht verantwortlich für die Völker, die sie ausbeutet, als Futter ihrer Machtgier benutzt" (SJ 111).

Another example of the irresponsibility of industrial power is in its original connection to nationalism, through the self-perpetuating necessity of the armament industry. The business and profit motive that fuels the war industry is easily covered by the overpowering mask of nationalism that accompanies the act of supplying arms for the fatherland. This explains, as Kraske and Lellau point out, how industry naturally became allied with the military (Kraske and Lellau 29-30). This is Mann's point in his combination of the metaphors of the theater and the business, the illusions of power in the nationalistic Machtstaat and the reliance on industry for its success. One does not have to look very hard for current examples of the almost incomprehensible labyrinth of irresponsibility that the business of the modern armament industry has become. And the vast military budgets of modern industrial societies reveal that Mann's view of war and preparation for war as "das bestmögliche Geschäft, das es für Industrie gab" (Kraske and Lellau 37) still holds true.

In Der Kopf, Terra discovers the truth about the arms industry as an insider working for Knack. But even before
this, in his conversation with Knack at Lannas's villa, Terra sees through the hypocrisy of Knack's business, ironically praising him as a peacekeeper:

Sie verkaufen Ihre menschenfreundlichen Erzeugnisse mit gleicher Bereitwilligkeit an fremde Diplomaten wie an inländische Generäle, und wenn Sie dereinst die ganze Welt, ohne Unterschied von Religion und Geldwährung, gleich furchtbar ausgerüstet haben werden, dann, mein Herr, oder niemals ist der Welt ihr Friede sicher. Ich trinke auf den ersten werktätigen Pazifisten. (K 300)

Terra then symbolically buys an "armament" from Knack, a pocketknife worth three marks. Knack responds to Terra's purchase by saying "So ist die Welt" and laughs (K 300).

Knack's response is similar to that of Lannas in his discussion with Terra at Liebwalde. Terra says,

Leidenschaften der Völker, Graf Lannas, kennen nur wenige Auswege, und der ihnen geläufigste ist der Krieg. Eure Exzellenz vertraut, um ihn zu bestehen, auf die unnachahmlichen Eigenschaften der Deutschen. Wissen Sie aber, daß es zuletzt gleich ist, welche Eigenschaften der gehabt hat, der in seinem Blut liegt? Haben Sie schon bedacht, nein, erschaut, daß am Ende der Politik wirkliches Blut fließt? (K 325)

Lannas replies, "Was wollen Sie gegen den Lauf der Welt?" (K 326).

Both perceptions are based on prevailing attitudes toward the world of the industrialist and the world of the political leader: business is business, and war is a necessary element of politics. Both responses indicate the willingness to let these seemingly "natural" dynamics run their course, without taking responsibility for their results. Mann's argument is that neither perception is natural or inevitable, and that
only an ethic of responsibility can prevent the disastrous consequences of the combination of the two.

When Terra is working for Knack, he exposes the hidden dealings of the international trade of industry to Lannas: "Auf dem Umweg über die Rüstungsindustrie unserer Verbündeten ist die Firma Knack beteiligt an der feindlichen" (K 496). Lannas responds with disbelief, saying, "Unmöglich [...] Was hieße dann Krieg? [...] Krieg hieße, daß diese Leute gemeinsam auf alle Fälle verdienen. Sie sind beieinander rückversichert. Beide Völker können untergehen, beide Firmen werden blühen" (K 496). Terra's solution is to bring heavy industry under state control. He explains, "Kein Staat hat heute noch die Macht, der nicht die Kohle hat. Die Wirtschaft beherrscht, wer die Kohle hat. Krieg entscheidet, wer die Kohle hat [...] Errichten Sie das Kohlenmonopol!" (K 496-97). However, any plea for responsible leadership will not work if the leaders themselves lack an ethic of responsibility. Of the three chancellors before whom Terra will argue this point, Lannas only uses the idea as a threat to retain his position of power, Tolleben is unable to bring himself to act upon it, and Mangolf rejects it outright.

Mangolf already realizes the power of industry before he becomes chancellor. But in his vast overestimation of the power of his own Geist he believes he will be able to unite with industry in war and control its power with the power of his ideal of the European state (K 578). He discovers too
late that industry has been his enemy and is now a force that is too great for his Geist to combat: "Der Schwiegersohn Knacks bemerkte spät, daß die Klasse, deren er sich zu bedienen geglaubt und die ihn nur benutzt hatte, sein ärgster Feind war, Feind des Gedankens, auch des nationalen, Feind jedes geistbewegten Menschen, sein Feind" (K 635). When Mangolf explains the "Interessenherrschaft" of the industrialists to the Kaiser, he underlines their irresponsibility:

Die Forderungen der sogenannten Industrie, einiger unverantwortlicher Personen, bestimmten unsere Kriegsziele. Diese Leute brachten es fertig, hinter unwissende Militärs verschanzt, für ihren privaten Nutzen die maßlos überanstrengte Nation weiterkämpfen zu lassen -- wer weiß, bis wohin. (K 634)

The height of Mann's criticism and exposure of industrial power comes in the satirically grotesque scene of the industrial meeting. The imagery is similar to the grotesque expressionistic imagery of "Kobes." The description of the scene includes black and red colors -- a red building and "schwarze Gestalten, verrenkte, verdorbene Gestalten" -- and a burning smell that makes it hard to breathe (K 590). The conversation of the leading military and industrial representatives takes on exaggerated proportions. President Plockwurst asks the question, "Was ist der Hauptzweck?" The replies are, "Endlich mal loschlagen," "Kolonien nehmen!," "Diktatur muß kommen," "Angriffsgeist!," "Keine Steuern zahlen!," "Kontrolle der gesamten Weltwirtschaft."
president says that is all fine, but their main goal is, "Arbeiter kleinkriegen, Gewerkschaften zerschlagen! [...] Noch zehn Jahre Gewerkschaften, und sie werden uns über, wir sind fertig. Darum keine Zicken mehr, Krieg und dalli" (K 591).

The industrialists' idea of nationalism is revealed when the Kaiser, here only referred to as "das weiche Gesicht" (La Fontaine 104-05) interrupts saying, "Ich kenne außer Interessen auch noch Menschen, außer Ihnen, meine Herren, noch die Nation" (K 592). The industrialists reply, "Wir sind national!" and Plockwurst continues, "Nationalhaß soll sein, woher sonst Geschäfte!" (K 592). Racism enters the picture as well: "Auf einmal sprachen sie nicht von ihren Lieferungen, sondern von der sittlichen Pflicht, degenerierte Rassen zu kastrieren" (K 592).

The intellectual in the group is "Der Totenkopf," a parody, as La Fontaine points out, of the novel's representatives of "Der Kopf," Terra and Mangolf (La Fontaine 102-03). He is an ominous extension of the rule of Geist that the two protagonists want to bring about, regardless of the means. This is another instance of Mann's criticism (and self-criticism) of elitist intellectual ideals taken to their extreme: "Der Totenkopf siegte mühelos über die ganze gegen uns verbündete Welt, die Offiziere staunten. Aber auch die Niederlage hielt er für ein durchaus erträgliches Unglück. Innere Zerrissenheit, das Chaos selbst gebar dann endlich die
Diktatur, die uns schon längst fehlte..." (K 593). The smell accompanying the "Totenkopf" is of decay (K 593).

The combined affect of this nightmarish picture of the new modern power prophesies a situation of the ultimate end of the league of industry, war, and business, in which racism, injustice and an overall scorn for humanity reign, and for which the decaying death's head of dictatorship is the symbol. Even the glory of nationalist power is gone, with the supreme actor, the Kaiser, reduced to "das weiche Gesicht," quietly demanding at least the old semblance of concern for humanity and nation. It has been replaced by outright hate, which is good for business.

5. The Retreat and the Cross

When Terra is talking to his son Claudius he brings in the theme of the "Blutspur," saying,

Ich traute der Welt Bestand zu, seitdem ich in ihr tätig mitwirke. Dies ist der Irrtum des reifen Alters [...] In deinem Alter dagegen erkannte ich auf das allerdeutlichste die Blutspur, die durch das gesamte Leben führt. Die Narrheit meiner Generation war, sie tilgen zu wollen. (K 601)

Terra's generation is the generation of "die 1870 Geborenen" that Mann writes about in "'Wirtschaft' 1923": "Sie liebten Gerechtigkeit, Völkerfrieden, das auf Vernunft zu errichtende Menschenglück, und sie glaubten daran. Sie waren Utopisten, die von der Natur und ihrer Bitternis erlernten, es zu sein" (SJ 101).
The idealism that spurs Terra to action includes two major elements: the belief in the basic permanence of the world around him, and the belief in his ability to change what was wrong in the world as it was, to bring about justice and peace through reason and the power of his own Geist. His admission of the "Irrtum" and "Narrheit" of these beliefs is not yet a recognition of his overestimation of his own power. It is, however, a statement about his recognition of the loss of permanence in the modern world, with the dynamic of industry and power that is sweeping the country to a war of unprecedented dimensions. Terra's Kantian ethic is based on a world which Jonas describes as the realm of ethics before the rise of modern technological power. Jonas says the difference was that earlier "von der Zukunft das meiste dem Schicksal und der Beständigkeit der Naturordnung überlassen werden mußte und alle Aufmerksamkeit sich darauf richtete, das Jetzige und Jeweilige recht zu tun" (Jonas 222).

Terra's recognition of the modern dynamic of power that is increasingly leaving the individual powerless explains the element of resignation in his statement to his son. This idea of resignation is further depicted in the following scene of Terra and Lea's retreat to the countryside. The place of retreat is described with idyllic, romantic images:

Aus schwüler Nacht dufteten große Äpfel, Wein hing schwer im Laub, der Mond verging wieder, ein burgartiges Bauernhaus bewachte hoch über der Wegbiegung, rund und weißlich, den Aufstieg. Schleife der Straße um jähre Wasserfälle, gleich hinter der Bergecke waren sie verhallt und nie
gewesen. Betaute Kräuter erfrischten köstlich die Luft. Noch bewaldeten jeden Hang die Edelkastanien. (K 611)

The idyllic nature imagery is accompanied by their thoughts of retreat into a dream world, away from suffering and reality, an earthly nirvana: "O duftende Nacht, erhabenes Rauschen, die Sehnsucht des Wetterleuchtens, was wir nur wünschen, Nirwana? Täuschest du, Natur? Wir, deine Geschöpfe, täuschen so sehr. Nein, wir danken ab, es werde wieder eingegangen in dich, in die Wahrheit" (K 612). But this is an illusion, as the line immediately following illustrates: "Da brach aber das lange verhaltene Gewitter los" (K 612).

The storm is symbolic for the war about to break out in the real world, a symbol also used at the end of Der Untertan. As soon as the nirvana illusion is broken, "Sogleich hieß es wieder zu kämpfen, sich durchzusetzen hier wie immer, um das Leben" (K 612). The war/storm metaphor includes sounds of thunder, the "Flammenwelt" of lightning, and the "Krieg des Lebens" in Lea's eyes (K 612, 613). When they find shelter in a guest house, Terra, still referring to the storm, says, "Segnen wir doch diese Zuflucht! Draußen bricht Krieg aus." But Lea answers, "War immer schon" (K 615). Here the conversation turns to the real war, and Terra says,

This is a further admission of the reality of modern power bringing with it catastrophes that require more to prevent them than an individual ethic based on permanence and fired by a utopian ideal.

Lea's answer is resignation, to stay in retreat from the world: "Nie mehr von hier fortgehn [...] Endlich ausruhn. Feuchte Erde. Kein Herz mehr" (K 615). She eventually commits suicide there. Terra also wants to retreat at first; to go back to the house of their childhood and forget everything (K 615). As they go to sleep, he hears the rising stream and imagines it carrying them away: "o seliges Warten auf Entführung, auf Hingabe" (K 616). The stream is not only an image of resignation, but also a metaphorical reminder of the flow of the "Blutspur," rising with the onset of war.

The scene the next morning with the monk continues the theme of retreat from the world. But here Mann portrays a new representative of Geist, one that has the ability to see into the future. The monk explains that the founder of his order (who it is suggested is actually the monk himself [K 619]) went to a cloister, "anstatt sich in die Geschäfte der Welt zu stürzen," because of his ability to foresee people's actions, to know their sins before they are committed (K 617). The goal of the order is "Jerusalem," an eschatological utopian image: "dorthin zu gelangen, hoffen wir [...] Es ist unser Ziel. Aber auf dem Wege liegt viel Arbeit, viel Aufenthalt; der Tod kommt vielleicht noch vor der Stadt. So viel sind zu
erinnern an den vergessenen Geist in ihnen, an den Geist Gottes" (K 617).

Terra asserts that he has put his faith in humanity rather than God (K 617). But he has really put faith only in his ideal of humanity, ultimately in himself. He has seen in the human being "das gröbste, gefräsigste und boshafteste, allem Höheren abgeneigteste Geschöpf des Ewigen," and wonders, "Wenn ich ihm bei all dem eine Zukunft der Einsicht, des guten Willens, der Annäherung an die Reinheit zutrauen möchte, so frage ich mich, ob mein Glaube im Grunde nur Stolz ist" (K 617-18). The monk answers, "Er ist Stolz" (K 617-18).

But Terra is not yet ready to accept this recognition of the elitism and egotism of his world view. His belief is in a human created god, the god of reason:

Wie könnte sonst ein Gedanke dem andern antworten, die nächste Tatsache der vorigen. Woher Logik, wieso Vergeltung [...] Unfähig, Gerechtigkeit lange zu wollen, haben wir unsern Willen ein für alle Male verkörpert in Gott, der menschlich-außermenschlich nun fortlebt. (K 618)

What neither he nor the monk can comprehend is an image of a God that made humans responsible for each other. Terra's responsibility has been only to his ideal, that is, to himself. The monk, able to see into the future, rejects earthly responsibility for an otherworldly solution. After Terra sees Lea's body carried past him in the stream, he realizes the monk has foreseen Lea's suicide but was unable to do anything to prevent it (K 619). The monk, true to his order, has decided not to intermingle with the "Geschäfte der
Welt" (K 619). He also foresees Terra's act of killing Tolleben, saying, "Ich werde für Sie beten" (K 619). The other prevailing images of the scene are Lea's resignation from life and the image of the nirvana, a realm of freedom from purpose or responsibility.

Mann's argument is for responsibility in the real world, realizing that an apparent ability to predict the future or to rely on the security of permanence is no longer an element of the modern world, in which the "Blutspur" is threatening to rise to a gushing river. The situation cannot be deterred by a lone individual Geist with a utopian ideal, nor with a retreat from the ways of the world, focusing only on a vision of the hereafter.

Faith is, however, necessary for an ethic of responsibility to humanity. Mann writes in "Die jungen Leute" from 1925, "Überhaupt haben diese Zeiten zwingend erwiesen, daß der Begriff der Verantwortung nicht mehr besteht. Um so mehr wird mit dem Wort umhergeworfen. Aber um zu wissen, was Verantworten wirklich heißt, hätte wenigstens der Durchschnitt doch wohl nötig, an Gott zu glauben" (SJ 213). Jonas writes that the new imperative of responsibility for the future of humanity is "theoretisch gar nicht leicht und vielleicht ohne Religion überhaupt nicht zu begründen" (Jonas 36). They are not referring to the god of Wirtschaft or human reason, or the religion of power or technology, but belief in a God who has
created humans to act responsibly toward each other and their world.

In the final double suicide scene, Terra and Mangolf have a conversation that is a counterpart to their discussion at the beginning of the novel, which resulted in each predicting the other's demise and death. The earlier conversation portrays the conviction of their world views and the belief in their own power and Geist. In the final conversation the atmosphere is of critical self-reflection. Terra provides a reason for their failure: "Wir im besonderen sind noch daran gescheitert, daß wir von unseresgleichen zuviel verlangt haben" (K 648). They were both idealists, Terra in his Kantian will to improve humanity through reason, and Mangolf in his Nietzschean will to power, and his demand for "übermenschliche Opferfreudigkeit" (K 648).

Mangolf asks, "Behauptest du wie alle Welt, wir Idealisten verständen von Geschäften nichts?" Terra's response is, "Noch schlimmer, wenn wir sie verstehen. Ich faßte den Entschluß, meine Geschäfte mit der bestehenden Gesellschaftsordnung zu machen. Das Schlimmste, was geschehen konnte, ist eingetreten: ich habe sie gemacht" (K 648). Mann portrays the consequences of an attempt to bring an absolute ideal to reality even more radically in "Kobes." The danger of the attempt to force the ideal, taken to the extreme, into reality is also the basis of Jonas's criticism of the Marxist
utopian ideology. He writes, "Die größte innere Versuchung liegt in der innersten Seele des Marxismus -- der 'Utopie.' Sie ist seine nobelste und daher gefährlichste Versuchung" (Jonas 278), and further, "Kurz, der Utopieglaube, wenn er mehr als Sehnsucht ist (und das ist sein erstes Selbstprädikat im marxistischen Realismus), verleitet zum Fanatismus mit all seinem Hang zur Erbarmungslosigkeit" (Jonas 340).

Terra recognizes the mercilessness of both of their attempts to bring their Geist to reality, saying that the better leaders are those who are "im Geistigen mittelmäßig," because "die Mittelmäßigen handeln menschlicher als wir" (K 648). He goes on to explain, "Mittelmäßige [...] werden nicht die abstoßenden und erbärmlichen Geschicke der Menschen auf die Spitze treiben [...] Mit Mittelmäßigen als Führern haben die Menschen einige Aussicht, dem Schlimmsten zuletzt noch zu entgehen" (K 649). True to Terra's character, these words sound elitist and resigned, both attitudes that Mann is criticizing in the character. But Terra's insight comes out of Mann's own more realistic view of democracy in "Kaiserreich und Republik," tempered, through experience with the republic, from his earlier more utopian dreams for a new society.

In the section of "Kaiserreich und Republik" that was also published separately, with some variations, as "Demokratie," Mann writes about his ideas for leadership in a democracy:

Das Volk mit seinen durchschnittlichen Fähigkeiten erwählt aus seiner Mitte eine große Anzahl Personen,
die im ganzen nicht mehr und nicht weniger begabt sind als es selbst. Diese sollen es führen: was werden sie tun? Natürlich nicht, mit Überspringen einer langen Entwicklung, glanzvolle Scheinerfolge davontragen, denn das kann kein Durchschnittsmensch. Natürlich auch nicht plötzlich zusammenbrechen; denn Durchschnittsmenschen leben friedlich und lange. Ein Volk irreführen und überanstrengen, ist Sache der großen Machtpolitiker, die wir immer nur zu unserem endlichen Schaden kennen gelernt haben [...] Eine Demokratie bricht nicht nieder [...] Sie muß nicht prahlen, nicht glänzen, die Demokratie braucht die Lüge nicht. Ihre Menschen leben vor aller Augen, jeder das Gewissen und der Mitverantwortliche des andern; und die Selbsterkenntnis der Gesamtheit erhält sie wahr. (MuM 231)

The "Durchschnittsmensch" is not a mediocre person of a lower caliber of intellect, as Terra's attitude would suggest, but rather, as Heinz Schöpker explains, "jener, der Verantwortung für die Mitmenschen spurt und dem es zwider ist, den anderen irrezuführen" (Schöpker 168).

Mangolf says if he could do it all over again, he would not change anything: "Lieber, als einfach nur lügen und erwerben, will ich nochmals fallen und zugrunde gehen" (K 649). Terra only sees one alternative to their methods of action: "Es fragt sich, ob wir das nächstmal nicht besser tätten, alles unbesehen mitzumachen, sämtliche Infamien, die nötig sind, damit ein Mensch in aller Unschuld sein täglich Brot ißt" (K 649). Neither sees the alternative of an ethic of responsibility to anyone beyond himself.

Their suicide is accompanied by the military marching music outside the window, symbolizing the simultaneous death occurring on a more massive scale in the war. Mangolf says, "Die Armen! [...] Sie -- wofür sterben sie? Noch hundert
Jahre werden sie jedem glauben, der ihnen von ihrer Pflicht und Größe spricht und nur ihr Geld will" (K 651). They link arms and shoot themselves in the head, falling over each other in the form of a cross.

This image of the cross is on the one hand a symbol of a representative death, dying for the sins of Mann's generation. Schlichting sees the ending as part of Mann's criticism of the "Realitätsferne geistasristokratischen Sendungsbewußtseins" (Schlichting 733). La Fontaine has a similar interpretation, seeing in the novel's conclusion "Die Selbstkritik des Dichters als Selbstmord des abstrakten Herrschaftsanspruchs" (La Fontaine 187). Both Terra and Mangolf believe they have a "Sendung" and view themselves as Christ-like figures; Terra in his decision to come "down to earth" after selling his carousel, and to rule "zum Ruhme Gottes," and Mangolf in his identification with the Christ figure on his journey to the cross, depicted in a painting in Mangolf's room (K 640, 645).

Mangolf's dying thought refers to this painting: "Mangolf hatte als Letztes das unbezweifelbare Gefühl, er ersteige, in Gestalt jenes Christus, leicht und glücklich jenen Hügel. Er hätte sich gesehen -- nur daß seine Augen schon brachen" (K 651-52). Even in his own death, Mangolf sees himself as more powerful than Christ, able to easily climb the hill, whereas in the picture Christ is struggling under the burden of the
cross and falling; one could see, "daß eigentlich niemand viel
teilnahm am Jammer des Fallenden" (K 644-45).

But though Mangolf's view of his own death "on the cross"
is only an extension of his own aristocratic feeling of power,
Terra's death brings a more positive light to the image of the
cross. His dying thought is of his sister Lea. At the moment
of her death, though she was nowhere near Terra, Terra had
heard her call out "Claudius!" (K 619). The title of the
final section of the novel, "Wer ruft?" is a reference to
this. The scene also refers to what Mann believed to be an
actual experience: He heard his name being called one day in
a place where no one could have known his name; later that day
he received the news that his sister Carla had committed
suicide at the time he heard the call (Z 195). Terra's dying
thought is to hear Lea call his name again: "Das ganze Innere
Terras war inständig darauf aus, seinen Namen rufen zu hören
von jener Stimme, die ihn als Letztes vormals gerufen hatte"
(K 652).

With this image in mind, the symbol of the cross is not
only a reference to the intellectuals' overestimation of
themselves as Christ figures. The positive messages of the
Christian cross are also meant to be awakened: messages of
ideal love and responsibility for humanity brought to a broken
and warring earth. Though the message is almost completely
covered by Mangolf's dying image and the final enthusiastic
"Hurra!" shouted out to the war by the child, Terra's death
helps shed a faint light on it, suggesting there is still hope for "resurrection" in society.

Terra's relationship with Lea is really the only one in the novel that is based on love and responsibility. Terra pours his heart out to Lea after they reach shelter, having struggled together through the storm. He then feels tired, "wie nach verantwortungsvollsten Kämpfen" (K 616). The two images of the cross in the end are also meant to awaken the Christian image of God becoming human to teach and suffer out of love for humanity.

Before turning to "Kobes," two other novellas need to be looked at which express the theme of power and responsibility in Der Kopf, and which have been overlooked in the secondary literature, "Die beiden Gefahren" (1924) and "Die roten Schuhe" (1924). Both novellas are incorporated to a large extent into the plot of Der Kopf. They both discuss the danger of power, from two different aspects, and speak to the modern Weimar society.

6. The Two Dangers and the Red Shoes

Along with the novellas "Der Mörder" ("Neunzig Jahre vorher"), and "Szene" (which will not be discussed here), Mann incorporates two other novellas into Der Kopf, "Die beiden Gefahren," published first in the Berliner Tageblatt in December 1924, and "Die roten Schuhe," published in the
1924/25 issue of Der Neue Merkur. The first novella has been ignored by Mann researchers, and the second has also been overlooked, given serious consideration only by Haupt and Volker Riedel (Haupt, "Entwertung" 58-59; Riedel 131). Both novellas have as their theme the dangers associated with power.

Most of the text of "Die beiden Gefahren" can be found word for word in the novel, with the names of the characters changed. But there are some added lines which help to make it a clear work on its own, and not just a slice of the novel. The idea of the two dangers is not brought out clearly in the novel, but becomes the title and theme of the novella. The novella is about political leadership, and it reinforces Mann's connection of the theatrical stage and the political stage, by paralleling them as the "two dangers."

The scene is a social gathering in the actress Nora's house, bringing together people in various positions of power: political councillors, business leaders, industrialists, the "Sohn des Zeitungsgottes," Knack's daughter, the chancellor's daughter, and a socialite. A connection is made between art and politics that emphasizes the powerful effect of illusion in both. The realm of art is represented by Nora (Lea), who is "die Schauspielerin, die die meisten Brillanten hat" (RS 43). There is also a reference to a painting in her apartment by the impressionist Degas. Janka (Blachfelder), who has
given her the valuable painting, says, "Die Kunst rechtfertigt alles [...] Nora ist Künstlerin" (RS 41).

When the discussion moves to the realm of politics, the aesthetic effect of the Kaiser's Morocco mission is emphasized and seen as successful: "Aber zur Politik! Die Tangerfahrt des Kaisers hat gewirkt wie Zauber [...] Ich sage nur: blaues Meer, weißes Schiff, vorn darauf Gestalt im Adlerhelm, er versteht sich auf Wirkung" (RS 41). Lassen (Mangolf) replies, "Wir alle. Deutschland versteht sich auf Wirkung" (RS 41). The historical situation is the resignation of France's foreign minister Delcassé in 1905, which indicated France's backing down from intervening in Germany's Morocco policy, thus averting German threats of war (La Fontaine 42-44). The situation in the novella is the atmosphere of a potential European war: "gerade jetzt werde im Auswärtigen Amt aus Paris die Entscheidung erwartet: Sturz des Ministers, sonst neun zu eins für Krieg" (RS 41-42). In the novella, the chancellor's being given the title Fürst is dependent on the French minister's resignation (RS 42), although historically the relationship between the two events was only temporal (La Fontaine 44-45).

The effect of the Kaiser is paralleled with the effect of the actress. Both are masquerading, the Kaiser as the all-powerful "Gestalt im Adlerhelm" and Nora as the superstar celebrity, with the "Maske ihr bewegtes Liebesleben. Das war für das Publikum" (RS 43). Like the Kaiser's war threats,
which are connected to mercantile interests in Morocco, Nora is threatening to miss her performance on stage unless she receives more money (RS 44). Her acting concerns become swept up into the atmosphere of the political power struggle: "Nora Darell freilich mischte ihre eigene Kampfstimmung in die des Weltteils, sie erklärte, das Theater nicht mehr betreten zu wollen, bevor Direktor Necker ihr die Gage erhöhe" (RS 45).

Here Mann adds a paragraph unique to the novella, in order to bring in the theme of the two dangers. The danger on the political stage is paralleled to the "danger" of Nora's situation on the theatrical stage. Manchandel (Schellen), after hearing that the French minister has just been forced out, compares him to the theater director Necker, saying, "Necker soll auch fort! [...] Er ist die andere Gefahr" (RS 45).

The parallels between politics and theater are in the aspects of performance, effect, success, and power. Mann is saying that Germany's aspirations to world power had swept up its citizens in a momentum like that of a successful stage performance. The parallel is made more clear by referring back to the statement made by Lannas earlier in the novel. In reference to the upcoming trip to Morocco he tells Terra,

Deutschland will Erfolg sehen. Es ist heute das Land, dessen einziger Maßstab Erfolg ist. In einer Sache nicht dabei zu sein, ist Mißerfolg [...] Ich muß drohen, dann bin ich doch mit dabei. Auf den Tisch schlagen ist, in Anbetracht dieses Landes, noch die kleinere Gefahr für den Frieden. Nicht dabei sein ist die größere. (K 493)
In this light, Janka's response to Machandel's statement about "die andere Gefahr" is clear: "Die Gefahr ist, daß er nicht spielt [...] Die Leute fortschickt, die bezahlt haben. Können Sie ihn zwingen, an die Öffentlichkeit diese ungeheureliche Zumutung zu stellen, Fräulein Darell?" (RS 45). The audience has invested in taking part vicariously in the illusion on stage, just as the German people have invested in their nation's rise to world power.

After Nora declares her confrontation with the director a "nackte Machtfrage" (RS 45), the two conflicts run together, becoming confused in their similarity: "Jeder stimmte irgend jemandem zu, ohne daß er wissen konnte, welcher Konflikt gemeint sei, der mit Necker oder der andere" (RS 46). In another passage unique to the novella, Mann makes the parallel more clear: "Wie endete dies? Zahlte Necker? Oder trieb er zum Krieg, und sollte die herausgeforderte Öffentlichkeit Feuer fangen, die Welt in Flammen aufgehen?" (RS 46-47). The exaggerated importance of the theater suggests the parallel illusion of the political power drive, and the apocalyptic image reminds the reader of the results of the power drive of the empire and warns of the continuing threat of the new "Machtfrage" in the present, the speculation-driven dynamic of modern industry.

The novella ends with an apparent resolution of peace that would be recognized by the Weimar reader as only a temporary illusion, a calm before the storm. The director
comes to pick Nora up and take her to the theater, just after she has proclaimed "Jetzt kommt Necker persönlich und zahlt, oder die Kriegserklärung ist da" (RS 47). On both stages there is a threat of war, with a stable solution depending on performing ("dabei sein"), an increase in economic power, and the participation of the audience in the success of the performance. Peace depends upon the success of the bluff, the speculation with the future. The men reply to Nora's threat: "Fest bleiben ist das Ganze" (RS 47). On the level of the theater, the conflict is insignificant. But politics has also become a stage, and Nora's threat stands for the Kaiser's threat and for all bluff and speculation with the future of humanity as the stakes, the epitomy of irresponsible leadership. The illusion of the novella's resolution, of avoiding the war on both levels, is clear to the post-war Weimar reader.

Mann's critique of the dangerous theatrical illusion that is holding society is summed up as the director and Lassen walk to the car. The narrator tells us of the director: "Er persönlich ließ Politik gelten -- überzeugt freilich, daß seine eigenen Theatersorgen nicht nur ihm, sondern auch der Öffentlichkeit unvergleichlich näher lägen" (RS 48). Lassen then tells the director,

Es ist von einschneidender Wichtigkeit für alle und jeden, daß Ihre öffentliche Anstalt, mein sehr verehrter Direktor, nicht etwa gar versagt. Den Sturm der öffentlichen Meinung möchte ich nicht erleben. Über die Frage: Krieg oder nicht, hat sich
außer den paar geschäftlich Nächstbeteiligten wieder einmal kein Mensch aufgeregt. (RS 48)

In the novel, this is Terra's line, and the statement is clearly ironical. But Terra does not appear in the novella, and this last passage is spoken by Lassen (Mangolf), who is not portrayed as anti-war. The irony of the statement is left for the reader. The director appropriately misses any importance in such a distortion of priorities as well: "Der Direktor dankte, leer lächelnd, wie für die gewohnten persönlichen Anerkennungen" (RS 48).

The other novella incorporated into Der Kopf, "Die roten Schuhe," is more of a novella on its own. It contains characters, situations and lines that are found in Der Kopf (not all from one section of the novel, like "Die beiden Gefahren," but a conglomeration of various scenes), but also contains a story line that is its own.

The Hans Christian Andersen fairy tale "Die roten Schuhe" is referred to twice directly and once indirectly in Der Kopf. The first scene with the motif is early on, when Lea, Terra, and Mangolf have each had their first experiences in the worlds they have chosen for themselves, the theater, the carnival, and the political arena. The outcome of their future drives for power is only hinted at. Lea says, "Unsereiner mag entschlossen sein, für den Erfolg alles, rein alles zu tun" (K 214). When Terra replies, "Du kannst Menschen umbringen [...] Du wirst davon nichts haben," Lea
says, "Einer wird etwas davon haben," referring to Mangolf, who has ignored Lea since she has not been successful in the theater (K 214).

Terra wants his sister to be successful and to have revenge on Mangolf for breaking his ties with Lea, and he tells her, "Du sollst Erfolg haben [...] Ich gründe ein Theater, du wirst die Primadonna" (K 215). They reminisce about their childhood home, and Lea says, "Auf der Bank lasest du mir das Märchen von den roten Schuhen vor. Ich fürchtete mich vor ihnen. Noch jetzt, manchmal, wenn ich nicht weiß, wohin es kommen soll, denke ich, daß ich an den Füßen die roten Schuhe habe, die immer weiter tanzen" (K 215).

The motif is repeated later, again in connection with the three main characters at a critical point on their various paths to success and power. This time Terra thinks Lea is about to commit suicide because of Mangolf's announcement of his wedding plans to Bella Knack. Again, there is a hint of foreboding in connection with Mangolf, who is on the road to political power, entering a "Vernunfthe" with the industrialist Knack's daughter. Terra says, "Ich bürge dir dafür, er wird todunglücklich" (K 383). When Terra tries to comfort Lea, he tells her, "Wer sind wir denn. Weisheiten -- als ob uns damit gedient wäre! Wir sind nicht mehr grün genug, uns abgebrühte Flausen vorzumachen. Schwester! Ich will dir Märchen erzählen, wie einst von den roten Schuhen" (K
Lea's next performance is a success, and she is on her way up to becoming a "verehrte Künstlerin" (K 389-90).

The third reference is an indirect one. It is in the scene of Terra and Lea's retreat. Terra's reference to their childhood home parallels the image of Terra reading Lea the fairy tale in the first passage. Terra says, "Warum gingen wir einst fort vom Elternhaus? Ich will es zurückkaufen. Es steht doch noch? Es soll noch stehen. Wir beide wollen zusammen darin wohnen, alles soll vergessen sein" (K 615). At this point, the catastrophe is upon them; Mangolf is chancellor and war is breaking out (K 615).

The three scenes all come at critical points in the careers of the three major representatives of the drive to power: Terra, with his desire for bringing his high ideals to reality, Mangolf with his desire to achieve political power, and Lea, with her drive to success on the theatrical stage. The first scene is at the naive beginning stage of their careers, the second in the maturing stage of "Aufstieg," and the last at the brink of disaster for all three characters. All three achieve both power and notoriety. All are indirectly responsible for someone's death (for Lea the young woman, for Terra Von Praß and Tolleben, and for Mangolf Lea, as well as those who will die in "his war"), and all three eventually commit suicide. The connection of these three characters and scenes becomes clear with the image of the red shoes, an image from a fairy tale that is not elaborated upon
Andersen's "Die roten Schuhe" is a fairy tale about an obsessive desire that becomes an uncontrollable power. The story is about Karen, who is obsessed with her beautiful red shoes and the attention she receives because of them. When an old soldier remarks, "Nein, was für schöne Tanzschuhe!," she begins to dance and loses control over her legs, "als hätten die Schuhe Macht über sie bekommen" (Andersen 252). Her feet stop moving only when the shoes are taken off, and the shoes are put away. But she cannot resist them and puts them on to go to a ball, leaving her dying caretaker behind. This time the power of the shoes is greater and she cannot stop it. The shoes dance her out into the night and into the woods. There the face of the old soldier shimmers above the trees, saying again, "Nein, was für schöne Tanzschuhe!" (Andersen 252). An angel appears and condemns her to dance until she is "bleich und kalt" (Andersen 253). Only by fully confessing her sins and repenting is she able to find peace, and she is raised to heaven.

The connection of this fairy tale with the three scenes, and with the theme of the entire novel, is in the aspect of a power that quickly becomes uncontrollable, brought about by pride, the enticement of grandeur, and the denial of responsibility for others. This type of power not only dominates Lea, who sometimes feels like she is wearing the red
shoes, but also Terra and Mangolf in their uncompromising quest for an ideal. The red shoes symbolize Germany's obsession for and drive to world power that resulted in bringing the level of the "Blutspur" to previously unknown heights, like the rising river in the retreat scene. The uncontrollable power of the red shoes is also a symbol for the modern power that is gaining an uncontrollable momentum under the more anonymous and irresponsible mask of modern industry, accompanied with the enticement of money and speculation, and the wounded pride of nationalism in the Weimar era.

Mann's novella "Die roten Schuhe" helps to highlight this theme, with the advantages of the succinctness and single theme concentration of the short prose form. Though it refers to parts of Der Kopf (the first scene with Lea and Mangolf, Terra and Lea's conversations, the "Generalagentur," Mangolf's marriage, the retreat scene), the additions and changes in the story line make it an unmistakably Weimar novella, taking it out of the Wilhelmian time frame of the novel.

The Weimar atmosphere is set in the beginning when the two young siblings, Berthold (Terra) and Luise (Lea), reject their parents and go out into the world to make their fortunes with their talents: "Wir haben euch nicht nötig. Ich bringe mich allein durch. In vier Wochen bin ich gemacht -- wie heute jeder Jugendliche, der es richtig anfaßt, womöglich anständig, sonst anders. Vorurteile ausgeschlossen. Wir haben neue Erlebnisse, ein neues Weltbild" (RS 30). The
setting moves to Berlin. It is clearly the early 1920s, with the post-war spirit of revolt of the younger generation against the older and the chaotic economic atmosphere of rising inflation and speculation. On his first day in Berlin, Berthold's luggage is robbed, he loses money in a gambling club, and he turns to robbery himself, joining up with the person who robbed him. Then he turns to more sophisticated methods of making money:

Auf kühne Art erlangte er eine Empfehlung, trat als Lehrling in eine Bank ein und behielt einfach die Börsenwerte, die er auszutragen hatte, einige Stunden für sich. Das genügte, um gut zu verdienen. Nach vier Wochen besaß er ein Auto [...] wieder vier Wochen, und das Auto war gepfändet. Er besaß noch mehrmals ein Auto im Verlaufe des Jahres. (RS 33)

The extremes brought about by such a society are revealed in a one sentence summary about Berthold's first year on his own: "Einmal konnte er Generaldirektor werden, und einmal wollte er in den Kanal springen" (RS 33).

The speculative atmosphere is one accompanied by the lack of any concept of an ethical sense of responsibility: "Durch langes Nachdenken belehrt, baute er nun, anstatt auf eigene Wagnisse, auf die anderer. Das hielt er für weniger verantwortlich" (RS 33-34). In the scene corresponding to the "Generalagentur" scene of Der Kopf, Berthold becomes a combination of Terra and Mohrchen, the one who is speculating with the director's money in the novel. In the novella, the Weimar atmosphere is enhanced; the agency has modern equipment (an electrical device for carrying money from the director's
office to the cashier [RS 34]), and the modern speculative nature of the business is more strongly emphasized. Berthold follows the director, "der doch den neuesten Weg zum Erfolg mit ihm zusammen [...] beschritt" (RS 35). This emphasizes more clearly the spirit of the Stinnes-type speculation of the time.

The catastrophe here no longer points to the past war, but to a new disaster. On one level it is the economic catastrophe of the German inflation: "Die Kasse war schlechthin leer, und diesmal blieb sie es" (RS 35). Although Berthold tries to push off the blame onto an employee (RS 35), he is discovered as the "speculator": "Sie haben für den Direktor gespielt, das war das ganze Geheimnis" (RS 36). As in the novel, the "Blutspur" is also represented, in the suicide of the director.

On another level, the catastrophe in the novella represents the threat of a larger catastrophe in the future. Unlike in the novel, when Berthold and Luise meet in the novella, Berthold is in hiding. When he sees it is Luise, he brags to his sister: "Du glaubst nicht, was ich in den zwei Jahren für Geschäfte gemacht habe! Gute. Sehr gute. Ohne daß darum die geistigen Ansprüche, die wir stellten, im geringsten gelitten hätten" (RS 36). He describes his friend the director to her: "Direktor eines großen Unternehmens natürlich. Das sind wir alle" (RS 37). The elements of the Andersen fairy tale are present in the illusion of grandeur,
the enticement of power, and the growing uncontrollable nature of that power: "Unser neues Menschentum ist nur dynamisch zu bestimmen. Wir mußten handeln -- nun kurz, wir mußten spielen" (RS 37). The other common element is the denial of responsibility that went along with achieving power and that led to catastrophe.

Mann ends the novella by summing up the theme behind his call for an ethic of responsibility: the continuation of the old hunger for power, now on a newer and even more dangerous level. Referring to the disastrous situation their drives for fame and fortune have led to, Louise says, "Haben wir eigentlich nicht schon das Ganze als Kinder erlebt?" Berthold replies, "Im Traum" (RS 38). These lines are not included in Der Kopf. "Die roten Schuhe" is a Weimar novella; what they experienced as young children, "im Traum," was the Wilhelmian empire and the first world war. The catastrophe is continuing, paralleled to the old one in the aspects of blinding pride, overpowering desire, and an increasingly uncontrollable power, the power of the red shoes.

The novella ends with the lines from the novel that introduce the motif of the red shoes: "Auf der Bank lasest du mir das Märchen von den roten Schuhen vor. Ich fürchtete mich vor ihnen. Und jetzt, manchmal, wenn ich nicht weiß, wohin es noch kommen soll, denke ich, daß ich an den Füßen die roten Schuhe habe, die immer weiter tanzen" (RS 38). But here a last line is added, to reinforce the theme of the continuation
and uncontrollability of modern power: "Ob man will oder nicht, immer weiter" (RS 38).

B. "Kobes": A Heuristic of Fear

Mann's novella "Kobes," written in the winter of 1923 (Gontermann 81), but not published until 1925, is not incorporated into Der Kopf, but its central theme of power and responsibility runs parallel to the novel. The novella is a sharp satirical allegory with elements of expressionism and the grotesque. Georg Grosz drew 10 lithographs to accompany the 1925 Propyläen publication, and Grosz's style of drawing merges well with the satirical style of the novella.

In the context of Mann's ethic of responsibility, "Kobes" is an example of what Jonas would call a "Heuristik der Furcht": "[...] wir brauchen die Bedrohung des Menschenbildes [...] um uns in Erschrecken davor eines wahren Menschenbildes zu versichern" (Jonas 63). The depiction is different from the satire of Der Untertan or Professor Unrat, because it replaces the quality of ridicule detectable in those satires with a foreboding and threatening atmosphere of seriousness. Its style is most reminiscent of the scene of the industrial meeting in Der Kopf.

"Kobes" is a satirical allegory of the Weimar Republic during the inflation of 1923. Elke Emrich calls the work "eine Prophetie des Faschismus" (Emrich, "Kobes" 155). Rolf
Linn also sees an anticipation of the Third Reich in the work, and says it could be "a frighteningly good handbook for dictators" (Linn, Heinrich Mann 85). The three levels of society highlighted in Mann's Kaiserreich trilogy, the middle class, the working class, and the leadership class (including intellectuals, political leaders, and industry), are also represented in "Kobes." The picture at the beginning combines expressionistic and grotesque images of the industrialized city:

Feuersäulen standen rings in der Luft, der Himmel war rot und schwarz, ein höllisches Pfeifensignal krallte manchmal hinein. Tageszeit unbekannt, so war der Himmel von je. Auf leeres Pflaster fiel schwarzer Regen, der gewaschener Ruß war [...] Die Stadt hatte einstöckige Häuschen -- und dann die ungeheuren, nacktten, lodernden Fabriken über undurchdringlichen Labyrinthen von Kohlengruben. (KO 5)

The workers are "in den Fabriken, den Gruben" (KO 5). The "Wildling im Cut" running through the city is not only a representative of the middle class, but an allegorical figure named "Mittelstand" (KO 5-6). The image of the Untertan is apparent in this representative figure, who is "ehrgeizig in Selbstverleugnung" (KO 6). Like Diedrich Heßling chasing after the Kaiser, Mittelstand runs to the house of his leader Kobes to deliver the message that Kobes has been elected: "Er lechzte danach, die Zunge weit draußen, Augen wie beim Nahen Gottes" (KO 5). His guiding thought is "Ihn sehen und sterben!" (KO 6). When he reaches Kobes's house, he is taken for an assassin and shot dead.
Here the hero of the middle class is not the emperor but the industrial business leader. Kobes is a deliberately transparent portrayal of the industrial giant and inflation speculator Hugo Stinnes. In a letter to Félix Bertaux in February 1924, Mann indicates the identity of the figure, saying, "denn Kobes ist ein Anderer auf -es" (Mann, "Sieben Briefe" 391), and in a letter to Kurt Tucholsky in May of the same year, Mann writes, "Diesen Winter schrieb ich auch den Hymnus der Inflation, eine Art Stinnes-Verklärung in Novellenform, kurz, aber vehement" (Cited in Anger, Heinrich Mann 212).

Kobes is the reelected dictator of the state in the novella, with a cabinet of "Rayonchefs" who have never seen him in person. The only contact the people have with Kobes is as a radio voice, continually transmitting propaganda. As with the historical figures behind Mann's characters in Der Kopf, the identification of Kobes as Stinnes is not the telos of the work. The purpose of the satire is not merely to defame Stinnes as a person. Rather, as Walter Gontermann writes, "Wichtiger noch als die Person des Wirtschaftsführers war Heinrich Mann die Darstellung des Wirtschaftsimperiums von Hugo Stinnes, das seinerzeit die Republik bedrohte" (Gontermann 125).

The portrayal is also not merely a gross exaggeration of reality, purely for effect. Though the overall picture of the novella is exaggerated to a nightmarish satirical level,
Gontermann shows in a detailed analysis of the text that the fundamental points of Mann's portrayal of the activities, propaganda, and effects surrounding the "Kobesmythos" agree with the actual situation in Germany at the time. In summary, Gontermann writes, "Durch Heranziehung des wirtschaftsgeschichtlichen Quellenmaterials, das Mann zum Teil selbst benutzte, konnte erwiesen werden, daß die Geschäfte des Kobes allesamt mit denen von Hugo Stinnes übereinstimmen" (Gontermann 81-135, 125).

The conversation of Kobes's cabinet is similar in tone to the industrial meeting in Der Kopf. Politics is run as a corrupt business, without concern or responsibility for the governed or for the truth. The "Rayonchef für Völkisches" says, "Ich habe seit drei Tagen dreimal meine Dispositionen ändern müssen. Einmal bezahle ich den Putsch, damit er kommt, ein anderes Mal, damit er nicht zu weit geht" (KO 9). The "Rayonchef für Propaganda" proudly boasts his success in guiding the public to treat the state as a business:


The atmosphere of the state is one of totalitarian control and censorship of freedoms. Self-sacrifice is demanded for the good of the whole, the industrial business-state. With the middle class dead, the workers are next:

The "Blutspur" theme of *Der Kopf* is continued in "Kobes," but the focus here is on one form of violent death: suicide. The novella takes the undercurrent of suicide in *Der Kopf* to the extreme, in order to underline its theme: modern society is driving toward self-destruction, or mass suicide. The suicide theme runs throughout the entire novella, and throughout the various class representatives, from the opening scene of the "totgerannt[r] Mittelstand" to the final scene of the intellectual reaching for the revolver.

The "Rayonchef für Soziales" complains about the low number of suicides in the state:

Wir haben erst 60 000 Selbstmorde jährlich erreicht [...] Aus öffentlichen Mitteln oder durch Wohltätigkeit des In- und Auslandes leben zwanzig Millionen. Leben immer noch, während ihr Recht ans Leben schon längst auf uns -- auf uns, meine Herren, übergegangen ist. Kann irgendeine Propaganda bewirken, daß sie sämtlich Selbstmord verüben? (KO 10-13)

He concludes by calling for "Abbau des Lebens," and justifying this by saying,

Mann is showing what he considered the logical extreme of the prevailing attitude associated with the modern dynamic of industrial power: the self-destruction of humanity. Jonas also uses the idea of suicide in anchoring his ethic of responsibility to counteract the gamble of modern technological power. He argues that there is "kein Recht der Menschheit zum Selbstmord," and arrives at the ethical principle, "Niemals darf Existenz oder Wesen des Menschen im Ganzen zum Einsatz in den Wetten des Handelns gemacht werden" (Jonas 80, 81).

The satirical form of the novella allows Mann to portray more effectively and ominously the underlying theme of his essays and Der Kopf: the idea that the Machtpolitik of the German empire, resulting in the catastrophe of the world war, was continuing in a slightly varied form; under the god of Wirtschaft, with an increasing receptiveness to fascism. The spirit of business was overcoming human values, and a success dynamic based on the power of industry was becoming increasingly irresponsible and uncontrollable. A necessary tenet of Jonas's ethic is that the modern world is facing a potential catastrophe of universal dimension. He explains the danger in relation to the success of industry and technology: "Die Gefahr geht aus von der Überdimensionierung der naturwissenschaftlich-technisch-industriellen Zivilisation" (Jonas 251). The "Erfolgsdynamik" of this process "hätte bei der Kurzfristigkeit menschlicher Zielsetzung, ja der
Mann sees the spirit of such an "Erfolgsdynamik" embodied in the figure of Stinnes, who stood out among his contemporaries, as Gontermann writes, because of the "Ausmaß seines Erfolges" (Gontermann 98-99). Kobes, like the director of the "Generalagentur" in Der Kopf, is a hidden figure, almost impossible to reach. To the people, he is only a radio voice, which proclaims, "Ich habe einfache Gedanken, einfache Ziele. Ich bin nichts Vornehmes, Politik verstehe ich nicht. Rühriger Kaufmann bin ich, Sinnbild der deutschen Demokratie. Mich kann keiner. Ich bin Kobes" (KO 15). In both "Die beiden Gefahren" and "Die roten Schuhe" (the section corresponding with the "Generalagentur" scene in Der Kopf), the telephone is emphasized as the means to communicate to each "director." The image of access to the leader by telephone or radio in all three novellas suggests the growing anonymity of leadership in the modern technological age.

The voice portrays Kobes as an all-powerful god-like figure. He is morally pure: "Kobes schlemmt nicht, Kobes säuft nicht, Kobes tanzt nicht, Kobes hurt nicht [...]" (KO 15). And he demands duty, sacrifice, and dedication: "Viel mehr arbeiten sollt ihr! Nicht für Geld, nein für die Sache! [...] Wo das Ganze Not leidet, muß der einzelne Opfer bringen" (KO 15-16). With his portrayal of Kobes as a god, Mann is saying that modern industry and high capitalism have taken on
mythical and almost religious dimensions. The phenomenon promises to spread throughout the industrial nations: "Kobesmythe! Die neue Religion, nach der unser ganzer Erdteil in furchtbaren Zuckungen ringt, sie ist gefunden!" (KO 18).

In comparison to the person of Kobes, the Kobes myth is shown to be an illusion. Like the director of the "Generalagentur" and the political leaders in Der Kopf, Kobes is wearing a mask. The radio voice is not his own; his true voice is "so hoch wie eine Pfeife" (KO 37). He hides behind a facade of traditional patriarchal values, seeing himself above all as a "Familienvater" with a great "Achtung vor Familie und Moral" (KO 42). But his facade hides a more ominous figure than any of Mann's other leaders. The American woman sees him as the devil (KO 42). Grosz's drawing accompanying the scene depicts Kobes as half devil and half human (KO 35). The woman admires Kobes for being "von allen der größte Schurke" (KO 42).

His irresponsibility is shown in his elevation of power and money over humanity and his exploitation of human suffering for purposes of personal gain. Kobes, "wie alle Großindustriellen," was able to multiply his fortune during the war (KO 17). He also is accused of denying responsibility for the children his industry has harmed: "Haben Sie auch nur zehn Cents für die tuberkulösen Kinder gegeben, die Ihr Werk sind?" (KO 41). Mann realizes the power of such an image for depicting a lack of responsibility. Jonas uses a similar
image to show ultimate irresponsibility: "[…] ein verhungerndes Kind, das heißt das Zulassen, daß es verhungert, ist eine Versündigung an der ersten, grundlegendsten aller Verantwortungen, die es überhaupt für den Menschen geben kann" (Jonas 241).

The other representative of leadership in "Kobes" is the intellectual figure, who becomes an even more dangerous combination of the type of intellectuals represented by Terra and Mangolf, with a desire for power and a pursuit of an extreme ideal. His name is "Sand [...] Nicht Kant. Nur Sand" (KO 22), he has a "zu großen Philosophenkopf" (KO 22) and is a "Doktor der Philosophie, der Naturwissenschaften und anderer inzwischen abgebauter Spezialitäten" (KO 22). Gontermann sees Sand as a "zur Karikatur entarteter Nachfahre des deutschen Idealismus" (Gontermann 127). Emrich calls him "in der Tat 'nicht Kant,'" but rather "ein später Anhänger Nietzsches" (Emrich, "Kobes" 163). He is blinded by "alles, was nicht Gedanke ist" (KO 23) and has a "geheimes Machtgefühl" (KO 24).

Sand is a combination of Terra and Mangolf, but his name reflects the illusion of their overestimation of their individual power. Like Terra, he attains a position of power under the leading industrialist in order to secretly work against him. But his own drive to power is much more like Mangolf's. Sand's combination of will to power and will to translate his ideal into reality is more dangerous and extreme than either Terra's or Mangolf's idealism. He believes he can
become "göttergleich" (KO 26) by unmasking Kobes, and believes the ideal goal of his actions justifies any means of achieving it. Sand thinks, "Vielleicht will der Weltgeist nichts Geringeres von mir, als daß ich diese fürchterliche Veranstaltung, Geißel der Menschheit und ihr Gegenbeweis, stille ge, ja dem Erdboden gleichmache. Ich kenne ein Giftgas..." (KO 25).

Finally, human existence is by no means sacred to him: "Vor die Wahl gestellt, entschied sich der kleine Mann nicht frisch und frei für den Genuß des Seienden. Es auszulöschen, schien ihm ersehnswerter" (KO 25). His plan to expose and destroy Kobes will involve bringing "das reine Werk des Gedankens" to its logical end (KO 59). In portraying the execution of this plan, Mann introduces the image of the Moloch. The Moloch scene is the climax of the suicide theme of the novella. It portrays a prophecy of catastrophe, resulting from the continued dynamic of irresponsible industrial power in a society that worships such power. The Moloch refers to an old semitic god to whom children were sacrificed; it is a symbol of insatiable power that feeds on humanity. In the Moloch scene, Mann portrays the ultimate extension of power without responsibility, as well as a grotesque and prophetic image of fascism.

The Moloch is introduced to the workers as a stage performance, bringing in again Mann's theme of the illusion of power politics and the metaphor of the political "stage." The
workers believe that the previously unseen Führer Kobes is on stage, but it is really an actor hired by Sand. The Kobes actor has total control over his audience, commanding them at first to stand up and sit down, then making more grotesque, irrational, and violent demands:


Then the curtain lifts and the fiery blast furnace appears on stage, which Mann refers to as the "Moloch" (KO 55). The self-destruction of humanity through an insatiable monster of technology and industry is portrayed in connection with a romantic appeal to desires and a Nietzschean "will to power." The Kobes actor tells the audience that they can become like him, "jenseits von Gut und Böse" (KO 55), if they only jump into the furnace: "Wollt ihr meine Kinder? Ihr könnt! Ihr müßt nur bereit sein, sogar in den Hochofen zu springen. Dann habe ihr's geschafft. Wer in den Hochofen springt, ist gefeit und kann tun, was er will" (KO 55). The people begin throwing themselves into the Moloch, with the
children going first (KO 55). Grosz provides a stark drawing of the Moloch to accompany the scene (KO 57).

The desire for power, the susceptibility to illusion, and the willingness to self-sacrifice, when combined, are characteristics common to the Untertan, the war, and the future Nazi state. The Moloch is a symbol for power that is devoid of all responsibility for human life. Connected with Kobes and the blast furnace it becomes a symbol for modern industrial power.

When the oven has taken enough people, the Kobes actor says: "Ich gebe euch frei. Vergewaltigt eure Schwester! Springt jedem an die Gurgel!" (KO 56), and an orgy of lust and violence erupts (KO 56). Sand explains the situation to the "Rayonchef für Soziales" behind the stage: it is "die neue Religion, nach der unser Erdteil in furchtbaren Zuckungen ringt" (KO 56).

Finally Sand betrays his intentions, "das reine Werk des Gedankens," to the "Rayonchef für Soziales." He is trying to destroy the mythical god he has been propagating by carrying out its horrible consequences to their logical end. Sand climbs onto the stage amidst the fire and frenzy and announces,

[...]
Dein Gott will, Volk, als Endopfer deine Vernunft: her damit! [...]
Wenn er das letzte von dir hat, Volk, verstehst du, wenn dieser Gott von dir das letzte hat, ist seine Stunde da. Dann kann er nichts mehr fressen, dann ist er voll. Dann ist er abgeklärt und kann sich nicht mehr wehren. Dann wird er umgelegt, erledigt, gekillt. (KO 59)
Sand's insight into the destructive potential of Kobes's system and the Kobes myth is a true one. But his method for destroying the system is just as dangerous as the system itself, because it gives the ideal goal, a construction of the mind, absolute dominance over consideration of the means of attaining that goal. Sand's plan denies an ethic of responsibility to humanity. In this aspect, Mann's critique of Sand is analogous to Jonas's critique of the Marxist utopia, an ideal dependent on revolution and technology.

Once Sand betrays himself, his extreme experiment is put under the control of the "Rayonchef für Soziales." The Kobes actor is told he can no longer perform openly because the performance is not "tragbar" for the system. But he is asked to take his act behind the scenes, to the workers' "Heil- und Pflegenanstalt," an institution which is becoming more and more populated (KO 62). The "outcasts" of society will be quietly sacrificed to the Moloch. Here again Mann discovers seeds of fascism.

The novella ends when Sand loses his power and becomes the "Liftjunge" (KO 66). The "Rayonchef" shatters Sand's idealism with the realities of modern power:

Gestehen Sie doch! Sie sind gegen Kobes. Sie wollten sich vergreifen an Kobes. Sie wollten ihn -- na, stürzen. Ihre Religion sollte ihn bloßstellen, seine letzten Folgen verraten, sollte die Welt vor die Brust stoßen, damit sie erschrak [...] Weltfremdes Kind! Ist denn ein Hochofen widerlegt, wenn man hineinspringt? Ist Kobes tot, wenn Sie dumme Witze mit ihm machen? Da er nie Mensch war, lebt er weiter. Sie wissen keinen Witz, der das System umbringt. Systeme sind noch weniger

The system is real, and is recognized by Mann. In his attempt to uncover the system, he provides an insightful analysis of modern power and leadership. As in Der Kopf, it is clear that Mann does not end on a note of pure resignation or despair when the novella ends with Sand trapped in his "grave," the elevator, reaching for the revolver. The conclusion is not, as A. F. Bance suggests, a "cry of anguish" over the ineffectiveness of the intellectual (Bance 157). The thrust of "Kobes" is to portray a "Heuristik der Furcht," in order to lead the readers to an ethic of responsibility. As Jonas writes, "Der Geist der Verantwortung verwirft den voreiligen Spruch der Unvermeidlichkeit [...]" (Jonas 389). It is not too late to prevent a coming catastrophe. "Kobes" ends on chapter eleven, not twelve. But Mann's ethic of responsibility needed a positive portrayal as well. His next novel Mutter Marie contains the underlying theme and moral imperative "lernt verantworten."
PART 2: RESPONSIBLE CITIZENSHIP, 1925-1932

CHAPTER III: Preventing Catastrophe

The situation in Germany in 1925 was marked economically and politically by the end of the great inflation. The Dawes Plan of August 1924 had settled the problem of reparations payments and had opened the door to large foreign loans to Germany, mainly from the United States. By October 1925 the Locarno Treaty with France and England was signed, as well as a commercial treaty with Russia. These events contributed to an overall atmosphere of relative stability and prosperity that lasted until the economic collapse in 1929.

However, as most Weimar historians illustrate, underneath the surface of stability was a republic whose foundation was becoming increasingly shaky. 1925 was also the year in which the right wing was able to get Hindenburg elected as president and successor to Ebert. At least symbolically, the election of the war hero Hindenburg represented a step backward, away from republicanism toward a renewed desire for the nationalistic and militaristic leadership that had been the basis of the German empire.
Most historians also try to analyze this period of Weimar history by looking for undercurrents and signs of the downfall of the republic and the rise of Nazism. Rather than concentrating on the demise of the republic and looking at Mann's writings as futile efforts in a society that was on an inevitable road to failure, I will approach Mann's works in a manner similar to Waltraud Berle's method, trying to view the texts from Mann's own perspective and context. Up until the final days of the republic, Mann's analysis and literary portrayal of his society reflect a firm belief in the possibility of building a lasting republic.

Mann's overriding concerns during the period of 1925-1932 were the threat of a coming war and the rise in anti-democratic and fascist tendencies in his society. In this context I will study Mann's intensified efforts to convey an imperative that citizens of the modern state have a responsibility that reaches beyond the scope of their own daily existence.

A. Democracy and Fascism

The editor's introduction to an interview with Mann about "Zeitprobleme" in 1927 highlights a recurring theme in Mann's remarks during the interview: "Die Idee der Republik muß zur Gewohnheit werden" (Mann, "Zeitprobleme" 1). In the latter half of the Weimar years, Mann's ethic of responsibility is
increasingly within a context of building and strengthening a free and democratic society and preventing the movement toward fascism that seems to be accompanying Germany's growing subjugation to a "Diktatur der 'Wirtschaft'" (SJ 118). Mann's detection and criticism of fascist tendencies can be traced back to his Untertan, considered by many to be one of the first major German works to portray the seeds of fascism.¹ The novella "Kobes" is a more direct criticism, providing a stark picture of a dystopian fascist system in which people are finally convinced to throw themselves into an industrial Moloch. According to Klaus Thoenelt, the body of Mann's societal analysis throughout the Weimar period contains "eine relativ vollständige Psychologie des Faschismus — genauer: der Entstehung des Faschismus" (Thoenelt 222).

Mann begins to criticize fascism in his essays as early as 1923 in "Diktatur der Vernunft." In his first reference to the National Socialists he points out the party's connection with its "Geldgeber," industry (SJ 162), a relationship that Mann will repeatedly underline in future essays. In most of his essays from this point on that address the problem of fascism, Mann holds up democracy as a counter to the threat. But the focus of his contrasting pictures of democracy and fascism after 1925 is not on the failure of society to live up to an ideal of democracy, but on the growing imperative of future-oriented responsible citizenship. In July 1932, one

¹ See especially Rumold 168-81.
week before the vote that was to make the Nazis the largest party in the Reichstag for the first time, Mann's message is that responsible citizenship is still possible:


In 1925, Mann's observations of fascist tendencies in his society are as insightful as they are bitter and cynical; at this point he is still the sharp satirist of "Kobes." In the wake of Hindenburg's election, Mann discusses Hindenburg's most fervent supporters and their relationship to the republic, in his "Briefe ins ferne Ausland." Exploiting the new business arena of the republic while retaining their nationalistic and militaristic views held over from the empire, these self-proclaimed "monarchists" are anti-democrats who exhibit for Mann the beginnings of fascism: "Sie nennen sich nur so, um anzudeuten, daß die erhaltenden Grundeigenschaften, wie Ordnungssinn und Gehorsam, bei ihnen besonders stark vertreten sind [...] ihnen nützt die Republik. Sie haben alles Geld und den Marschall-Präsidenten" (SJ 224). Though they align themselves with the former German empire, the monarchists know, "daß sie nur mit der Republik gute Geschäfte machen können" (SJ 225). The problem is that those
who call themselves republicans are competing under the same set of values. The current definition of democracy, Mann notes cynically, is a situation, "in dem ein Volk, mündig geworden, sich den Interessen der wirtschaftlich Mächtigen hingibt mit voller Kraft" (SJ 226).

Mann identifies post-inflation Germany as a situation ripe for fascism, a society in which the material difference between the poor and the rich has suddenly become less distinguishable, but the formerly well off fear giving up the illusion of their class superiority and their lifestyle:

Der praktische Lebenskämpfer [...] fürchtet und haßt die Besitzlosen, je mehr sein eigener Besitz nur noch Schein ist. Er will nicht werden wie sie. Er ist zu ihrer Abwehr und Unterdrückung entschlossen. Die Erhaltung eines gar nicht vorhandenen Besitzes macht ihn grausamer, als wenn er wirklich etwas hätte... Man muß die Herkunft des Fascismus nur verstehen. (SJ 242)

Along with the newly oppressive "scheinbar Besitzende," there are those who have been economically devastated, with no hope for regaining their middle class status. This type "verschwindet im Dunkel der Millionen, die nur noch auf eine ganz neue Zukunft hoffen können und inzwischen träumen dürfen von der Gewalt, die sie heraufführen soll" (SJ 241). Mann's perception of the state of the republic in 1925 is one of large numbers of people adapting to the idea of violent solutions for their economic problems.

A year later, protesting the "Schmutz und Schund" censorship proposal, Mann takes issue with what is in his evaluation a further anti-democratic warning sign. The law,
which was passed by a substantial majority in December 1926 (Eyck 124), was aimed at protecting the youth from literature deemed to be dangerous or immoral. Mann sees the forces behind the proposal as mainly those who consider the republic itself "Schmutz und Schund" (SJ 299), and warns in "'Die Jugend bewahren'" of where the path of reducing freedom of opinion and expression can lead:

Jetzt soll jedem Staatsbürger vorgeschrieben werden, was er lesen darf. Das Ende des Weges wäre dies noch lange nicht. Er führt dahin, daß Gesinnungen verboten werden. Gedankenfreiheit wird endlich wieder zum Problem [...] Fehlt einzig noch die ausdrückliche Zustimmung der Öffentlichkeit zur Durchführung des 'trockenen' Fascismus. (SJ 293-94)

But in this essay, instead of reacting with cynicism or satire, Mann counters the fascist and authoritarian tendencies he sees emerging in society by advocating the active pursuit of a more solid, self-assured democracy. His idea of democracy no longer has the ring of a utopia of Glück that he had envisioned before 1919, but includes setting long range goals and humanitarian priorities based on the given reality:

Demokratie, ihres Lebens hoffentlich gewisser als Diktaturen, trifft Vorkehrungen auf lange Sicht. Sie sagt denen, die vielfach nur schlecht essen und erbärmlich wohnen, nicht erst lange, daß sie unsittlich seien und behütet werden sollen vor Schmutz und Schund [...] Sie fühlt, daß ein Schmutz- und Schundgesetz barer Hohn auf die gegebene Wirklichkeit ist. (SJ 295)

Instead of a law censoring literature to protect the young members of society, Mann points toward creative reform measures such as the Prussian education minister Becker's
school reform plan. Making education more democratic and egalitarian by bridging the gap between Volksbildung and higher education is an example of a measure designed to get at the roots of the problems facing youth, as opposed to a law that would merely try to prohibit and control.

In 1927, in the height of the "years of stability," Mann's warnings against fascism intensify along with his message of responsible citizenship. In three essays from that year he argues for a socially responsible democracy to weaken the threat of fascism. "Der tiefere Sinn der Republik," was presented first as a speech to the German Democratic Party in 1927, a party that had been led by intellectual liberals such as Weber and Naumann, but that was now continually loosening its embrace of the democratic form. One of the party's original founders, Hjalmar Schacht, would be an important player in Hitler's rise to power (Pinson 412, 501). It was the Democratic party's Wilhelm Külz who was responsible for putting forth the "Schmutz und Schund" law (Eyck 124).

For Mann, the deeper meaning of the republic is to be found in its combination of social responsibility and freedom. A republic begins, he writes, "wenn die Gesellschaft Pflichten übernimmt gegen jedermann und uns alle für ihre Gläubiger hält" (SJ 356). Couched in the positive and optimistic overall tone of the speech, Mann repeatedly emphasizes the need to maintain a society that values freedom of ideas and expression. Mann's pleas for freedom reflect his concerns
about the signs of fascism in his society, expressed in a desire for authoritarianism, the increasing use of violence, and the suppression of ideas. An essay called "Lebensfeinde" addresses those who hold such views. Referring to Spengler's Der Untergang des Abendlandes (1918), Mann writes, "Der Untergang ist euer Wunschtraum, gerichtet an das Leben, das euch nicht gehorcht [...] Gewalt! -- die nie anders beginnt, als mit Maßnahmen gegen den Gedanken" (SJ 368). Their goals are "Diktatur [...] völkische Reinheit [...] Vernichtung des Gedankens samt Mord an allen Denkern," and their allegiance is to the "Herrschaft der wirtschaftlich Stärksten" (SJ 368). The essay again points to a stronger embrace of democracy to bring the "unpropertied majority" to have a voice in their state (SJ 368).

Democracy for Mann needs to be a kind of school for learning justice: "Menschen sind von Natur nicht gut, und nichts bedarf so langer Lehre und Übung, wie Gerechtigkeit. Aber welchen Sinn hätte denn Demokratie, wenn sie uns nicht gerechter machte!" (SJ 361). All of the concerns of a true democracy -- caring for the social needs of the people, maintaining a free society, and continually working toward greater justice -- can only be met by realizing a fundamental ethic of human responsibility: "Demokratie ist im Grunde die Anerkennung, daß wir, sozial genommen, alle für einander verantwortlich sind. Keiner hat einzeln volle Geltung oder
"Deutsche Republik" continues the theme of the state as a business found in "Briefe ins ferne Ausland," now referring to the republic as an "Aktiengesellschaft" and the "Republikgeschäft," under the control of the "Verwaltung," or the "Monarchorepublikaner," a prefiguration of the fascist (Thoenelt 222). This essay still evokes some of the cynicism of the 1925 essay, but it also includes a call for citizens to take responsibility for their state: "Wir könnten aber sehr wohl die Republik für etwas ganz anderes halten. Wir könnten sagen und vertreten: die Republik, das sind wir selbst" (SJ 377). Mann holds up a picture of what concrete reforms a true republic could strive for, such as peace through a better understanding with France, general improvement of living conditions, and school reform. These stand in opposition to the measures of the "Verwaltung": establishing an iron cartel as the only approach to France, more money to the army instead of to social concerns, laws against freedom of expression, and increased arms production.

Throughout the Weimar years, Mann considered strengthening ties with France to be the best way to work for far-reaching peace and stability. "Die Situation Deutschlands" (translated from the French original "Situation de l'allemande") was published in December 1930, three months after the Nazis increased their delegate count from twelve to
107 in the Reichstag elections, becoming the second largest party in the assembly (Pinson 470). Addressing a French audience and calling for the French to help Germany remain a republic, Mann devotes the essay to explaining his understanding of fascism and the recent upsurge in the success of the Nazis in his country. Here again he sees the seeds of fascism in the spirit embodied by reactionary and irresponsible capitalists (E II 396). At the time of the essay, Hitler was establishing strong ties with big industrialists such as Kirdorf, Thyssen, and Hugenberg, among others, whose support would help propel him to power (Pinson 501).

Mann explains the basis of Nazi politics as "ein krankhaftes Bedürfnis nach Gewalt" (E II 399). Violent solutions are having an increasing appeal to the growing numbers of people in Germany whose lives are becoming dominated by fear, anxiety, and hate: "Die Gewalt scheint alle ihre so lange unterdrückten Leidenschaften zu stillen, und zwar in einer Art Dschungel, den sie das 'Dritte Reich' nennen" (E II 397). Instead of taking responsibility for their state, the middle class citizens are looking for a powerful leader to take over responsibility. Though Mann sees the formal republican government as dead at this point, having put up no real defense of the republic, he still anticipates enough resistance from republican citizens to put down a

---

2 See also ÖL 258, 310.
"Third Reich" (E II 401-02). He finishes the essay by calling for action in the context of responsibility to the future, urging the French audience to take the first step in stretching a hand out to Germany's dying republic, which could be the start of a solidarity among workers, social organizations, parties, and even many of those now aligning with the National Socialists. The beneficiaries of such action would be future generations: "Tun Sie es, und unsere Kinder, die Ihren sowohl wie die unseren, werden Ihnen dafür danken" (E II 404).

Though Mann's writings during the Weimar period seem generally to underestimate the problem of antisemitism in the German national socialist brand of fascism he does address the problem in at least two major essays and two other minor publications of the period. The thread connecting two articles responding to the problem of antisemitism in 1920 and 1925, and the 1928 essay "Der Antisemitismus und seine Heilung," is Mann's identification of antisemitism with the nationalist mentality. In the 1920 article, he pits the republic as a stronghold against proponents of racism:

Wir sollen die Nationalisten, jene Menschenfeinde und Deutschenverderber, deren Geistesart und Willensrichtung uns bis hierher gebracht hat, niederhalten, entlarven und unschädlich machen, bis sie bereut haben oder ausgestorben sind. Dafür ist die Republik errichtet, die sie Recht haben zu hassen, und die auch ihr Schliche einer Judenhetze nicht fallen wird. (Volkskraft-Bund, Deutscher Geist 79)
In the 1925 article, he refers to nationalism and its "antisemitisch[e] Ergänzung" (Mann, "Über Rassenantisemitismus").

The 1928 essay sees most German antisemites falling under the category of the nationalist with a combination of low self esteem, an inferiority complex due to national defeat in war, and hate springing from bitter envy of the quality that they deem to be most "jewish": success (SJ 554). Mann explains his view of the antisemite, writing, "Jeden, der Erfolg hat, ist er zuerst geneigt, als Juden anzusprechen. Man frage nicht lange, was der Antisemit am liebsten auch seinerseits wäre und in gelungenen Fällen wirklich wird. Er wird genau das, was er jüdisch nennt" (SJ 554).

In "Gut geartete Menschen" from 1932, Mann criticizes the antisemitic scorn toward "Jewish intellect," seeing it in its essence as a denial of responsibility: "'Jüdischer Intellekt,' das ist kein Angriff auf eine Schicht, es ist weit darüber hinaus die Verleumdung unseres Menschlichsten. Man will sich der menschlichen Verantwortung entheben, dann beschimpft man den Intellekt" (ÖL 318). Denial of responsibility leads to denial of human rights, and, "Wer mit Entrechtungen erst angefangen hat, hört bei den Juden nicht auf [...] Die Antisemiten machen sich mitschuldig an allen sittlichen Unmöglichkeiten, die auf die Entrechtung der Juden noch folgen würden" (ÖL 318-19).
Mann continues the theme of human rights and responsibilities in "Autoritäre Demokratie" (later "Die Demokratie bleibt unbesiegbar"), first presented as a speech to a women's convention in Magdeburg (Zenker 152). He begins by providing a sort of bill of rights, freedoms, and social responsibilities that should be an essential part of a democracy, ideas which arose from the struggles of the previous century. The last of these is "Das Recht auf Leben als Grundlage aller Rechte und Freiheiten. Das Recht der Gesellschaft auf ihre Gesittung, das Recht des einzelnen, gesichert in ihr zu leben" (E II 494).

His point is that a democracy needs to preserve the sanctity and dignity of human existence, and to prevent any threat to this concept. Mann considers these rights "fruchtbare Gegenwirkung gegen die zerstörenden, verneindenden Kräfte: Krieg, Unterdrückung, Ausbeutung, Entwürdigung des Menschen, Nichtachtung des Lebens" (E II 494). The task of working toward these freedoms and rights, though they remain ideals that can never fully be met, can only be taken up by a society that is willing to learn an ethic of responsibility for keeping humanity intact:

Die ganze Demokratie, als genaues Abbild des Lebens, ist im Grunde Pflicht und Gebundenheit. Das fängt an mit dem Gebot, das Leben der anderen zu achten, und endet mit dem Anspruch an jeden einzelnen, zu denken, die Gesellschaft zu begreifen und verantwortungsvoll an ihr mitzuarbeiten. (E II 494)

The difference between true republicans and fascists is not in their acceptance of fundamental rights, which no one would
deny for him or herself, but in their acceptance or denial of responsibility for others: "Die Faschisten sind auch nur Demokraten. Sie begehen bloß die alberne Verwechslung, sich selbst für die alleinigen Nutznieder der Demokratie zu halten -- nur Rechte, keine Pflichten" (E II 495).

Many of Mann's contemporaries recognized fascist trends in Weimar Germany as well, but Mann's viewpoint differs from those of others in that it continually seeks an answer to the problem in an ethic of responsibility among the citizens of the republic. Mann's goals did include, as David Gross writes, "educating people for the responsibilities of participatory democracy" (Gross 190), but his ethic of responsibility also extends beyond the level of traditional democratic civic duty. Its deeper meaning is in its Jonas-like future-directed sense of preventing the destruction of humanity, which Mann saw as a very real potential outcome of fascism and its counterpart, war, in an age of rapidly increasing technological capabilities. In this context, Mann directs his attention increasingly toward society's representatives of the future, the generation of youth, as a decisive force in the choice between democracy and fascism.

B. "Wir sind jung"

Mann's intensified concentration on the young members of society after the years of inflation is another expression of
his shift from an analysis of leadership and power toward an ethic of responsible citizenship. The generation of people who are just beginning the stage of their lives in which they become contributing members of society and participants in public life represents for Mann both a potential audience for his works and a potential force for moving society in the direction of responsibility. In "Die jungen Leute" from 1925, Mann indicates the kind of change needed in the societal ethic, identifying a void in the area of responsibility to the future. He begins by saying the current older generation has created for its children a world of war, but has denied responsibility for its consequences. From Mann's point of view, the recent years have proven above all, "daß der Begriff der Verantwortung nicht mehr besteht" (SJ 213).

That Mann's Weimar novels after Der Kopf, especially the three Berlin novels, are directed to a great extent toward younger readers has been a focus of discussion in the sparse secondary literature on these novels. Incorporating numerous changes into his writing technique, such as elements of popular literature, experimentation with Kinotechnik, and striving for Lebensnähe, Mann was clearly attempting to reach a wider and younger audience. His concentration on youth also increases in his essays of this period. Consistently avoiding a heavy-handed or moralistic approach, Mann's essays always

3 See Berle 190, 257; Haupt, "Moralische" 141-43; Schütz 82-91.
recognize the difficult social situation that the younger generation has inherited. Commenting on the "Schmutz und Schund" censorship legislation proposed out of concern for the perceived growing immorality among the younger generation, Mann writes,

"Übrigens aber ist Entsittlichung einer ganzen Jugend noch nie durch Lesen bewirkt worden, sondern immer geradeswegs durch das Leben. Ein verantwortungsloses älteres Geschlecht hat die Kinder hineingestellt in ein Leben, das verroht und verdummt ist durch Krieg und Nachkrieg, durch Inflation, die tückische Enteignung der Schwächeren allein, durch Not, Entlassungen, den überharten, viel zu frühen Kampf um das Dasein. (SJ 284-85)"

Mann's observations about the younger generation in his essays and in his moral trilogy are not merely those of a traditional moralist with a "resolve to preach to the young" (Roberts, Artistic 157), but those of a warner calling for a broader and more universal sense of morality: "Sittlichkeit ist Achtung vor Menschlichem, nichts anderes" (SJ 285). His picture of "die Jugend" is one of a highly collectivized group, having a common bond of "Existenzangst" and very real material concerns. This collective spirit is symbolized in several of Mann's writings by the motto "Wir sind jung!"4 But though it is an exclamation of courage and resolve, it is at the same time hollow, with no echo and no duration, a spirit of collectivity without responsibility.

4 For example "Liliane und Paul" (NOV 2) 689, 692; "Sie reichen sich die Hände" (SJ) 310, Die große Sache 194; and the title of Mann's 1929 novella collection is Sie sind jung.
One of the main warnings expressed in Mann's essays about the younger generation is their potential receptiveness to fascism. In "Jugend früher und jetzt" from 1928, Mann speaks in a non-condemning tone that fully recognizes the self-centered world view that comes with being young, as well as the struggle for existence that has been placed upon the current group of young adults. The understandable result is a generation with daily concerns that overshadow critical thought: "Sie sind weltgerecht, denn Ungesicherte, täglich Gefährdete könnten anders nicht bestehen. Nie war so wenig Protest in der Welt" (SJ 539). The subtle warning comes not from a judge but an observer trying to provide insight into a growing problem:

Nur der tiefesitzende Wunsch, alles was da ist, und besonders die eigene Existenz aufrecht zu erhalten, ermutigt sie zur Strenge, -- junge Leute können strenge Richter sein [...] Aber darum heucheln sie noch nicht, der Widerspruch bleibt ihnen, wie so vieles Sittliche, einfach unbekannt. Problematischer waren duldsamer. (SJ 539-40)

The combination of uncritical thinking and intolerance are for Mann warning signs of a susceptibility to fascism.

Mann's warning becomes more direct in the article "An die deutschen Studenten" (later incorporated into the essay "Morgen"), published in March 1930 in Die Literarische Welt as a response to the survey topic, "Deutschland, wie sie es sich wünschen." Again emphasizing the absolutist traits of the young, he points to their susceptibility to authoritarian leadership. In this essay written to German students a few
months before the election that would bring the first giant leap in Nazi delegates, Mann emphasizes a message of democratic tolerance and acceptance of diversity:

[...]

In response to an increasing acceptance of absolutism and violence among the youth, and in society in general, Mann advocates a humanitarian skepticism:

Mann ends the essay with an image that illustrates the threat of fascist attitudes among the young, both openly and on a more subtle cultural level. He describes a scene in front of a movie theater in which a group of enthusiastic fans is paying homage to the presence of their favorite celebrity. The expression of their devotion results in a frenzy of people shoving and pushing each other down. Then a group of nationalists begin to drive their trucks into the crowd, shouting "Weckrufe":

In his brief description of these two combined images, Mann has depicted a psychology of fascism on the level of an everyday occurrence, involving violence and irrationality, hero worship and nationalistic slogans, flags and group frenzy. Mann's wish is for "ein Deutschland der Vernunft, -- das zweifelt, Milde kennt und deshalb um nichts weniger handelt" (Mann, "An die deutschen Studenten" 2).

"Die geistige Lage," one of the major essays in Das öffentliche Leben, includes a section that was published first in November 1930 as an article called "Von der Lebensangst zur Gewalt." In a review of a recent novel by a young author, Karl Nils Nicolaus, Mann continues his analysis of the psychology of a generation that no longer seems to understand the value of freedom or even of life itself. In a society that is anxiety ridden and yet insistent on "Sachlichkeit," a serious problem is emerging: "der Wert des Lebens selbst wird bezweifelt," as exhibited by the title of Nicolaus' novel Leerlauf Mensch (ÖL 74). Mann interprets Nicolaus's message as representative of a what is becoming a prevalent response of the author's generation to its situation: "Das neue Ideal des Gehorsams" (ÖL 75).
Peter Gay sees these trends as well in his analysis of Weimar culture. He writes of the growing right-wing youth movements,

But whether they were demanding a Führer who would organize their energies and compel them to the voluptuous passivity of total obedience, a restored and purified monarchy, or a Prussian-Socialist dictatorship, they were also betraying their youth and enslaving themselves, not merely to political adventurers and psychotic ideologues, but to the old industrial-military bureaucratic machine disguised in new forms. (Gay 139)

Gay also sees Weimar youth as "hungry for action -- any action, brutalized, often imbued with notions of racial purity and sheer hatred for the most conspicuous of outsiders -- the Jew -- and in despair over the future" (Gay 139).

Enthusiasm is not lacking in the "jungen Verehrern der Maschine und des Gehorsams": "Sie fühlen sich als ein 'unsichtbares Heer,' das 'einen Führer und eine Fahne sucht'" (ÖL 76). But it is enthusiasm directed toward empty movement, action, and violence: "Gewalt ist überhaupt das erste und das letzte" (ÖL 77). Violence, Mann concludes, is the "Doktrin der Lebensangst und der Furcht vor der Freiheit," and the young are "Das brauchbarste Werkzeug, um Gewalt auszuüben" (ÖL 77).

The attitude of the younger generation toward machines and technology is a major cause of concern for Mann in his ethic of responsibility. This is a concern similar to the starting point of Jonas's ethic, the problem of responsibility in the technological age. The problem Mann sees is that his
society is in general "moralisch wie geistig hinter den technischen Errungenschaften vorerst noch zurück" (ÖL 245).

The dedication to machines and technology among the young is becoming a quasi-religion: "Sie gehen vor der Maschine bis zur Anbetung -- einer sachlichen Anbetung; aber Gott, geradezu Gott wird erlebt durch die Maschine" (ÖL 74). A mechanical-technical outlook on life is replacing a spiritual, ethical, and critical view. In a world of rapidly expanding dimensions of human power and potential for destruction, Mann sees this generation ill-prepared for the responsibility that comes with its new situation. Their understanding of technology and modern society is superficial, and they are not ready to look for deeper meaning, or to think of far-reaching consequences:

Das junge Geschlecht eines Zeitalters setzt scharenweise sein Leben an technische Wagnisse ohne inneren Belang; bedenkenlos geben sie sich der Welt hin, sich selbst sind sie nichts. Sie wollen lieber mit ihrem Flugzeug aus der Höhe und der leeren Luft unmittelbar in den Tod stürzen, viel lieber das, als alt werden. (E II 310-11)

The word that Mann uses most often to characterize "die Jugend" of post 1925 Weimar Germany is "Bewegung." This term brings forth a number of images that Mann considered exemplary for the generation's exclusive attention to the surface, such as sports, dance, money, technology, and action for its own sake. The term also suggests a susceptibility to the Nazi ideology, which was always packaged as a "Bewegung." In "Mein Roman" (a discussion of Die große Sache), printed first in October 1930, Mann identifies this dynamic as the main element
of his novel about the younger generation: "Der erste, tiefste Gegenstand meines Romans, zugleich auch der Antrieb, ihn zu schreiben, ist die Bewegung. Einige Personen, die meisten jung, andere in mittleren Jahren, sind die ganze Zeit hinter etwas her, das sie 'die große Sache' nennen" (ÖL 332). Mann's understated explanation of the "unpolitical" intention behind the novel points to his attempt to reveal a level of human strength beneath the surface of technical capabilities:

Ich mache den geliebten Zeitgenossen leise und verstohlen darauf aufmerksam, daß er nicht nur seine Existenzangst hat, sondern doch vielleicht in einer tieferen Gegend unbefriedigt ist. Ich versuche, ihn bemerken zu lassen, daß er nicht nur funken und fliegen kann; seine Kräfte gehen noch weiter, und er verfügt über eine andre, zu wenig bekannte Apparatur [...] Wir haben auch Seelenkräfte und wissen noch nicht, wie weit sie gehen. (ÖL 335)

Another problem related to a surface level of thinking of the younger generation of adults is their denial of historical context, and their subsequent willingness to adapt to any situation without reflection: "Mit ihnen ist schwer zu reden -- so schwer, wie mit einfachen Naturen, die doch fortwährend wechseln, weil sie sich anpassen [...] Vor allem aber sind sie unhistorisch, als wären sie vom Himmel gefallen" (SJ 540). In "Philippe Soupault oder der junge Franco-Europäer," Mann expands on this idea:

Überlegen wir noch dazu die ausschließliche Gegenwärtigkeit dieser Jugend. Energieerfüllte Gegenwärtigkeit, wie sich versteht; aber überlegen wir sie -- samt diesem merkwürdigen Widerwillen zurückzudenken, zu wissen, was vor wenigen Jahren war, und vergleichen zu lernen. Hinzu gehört ihre Unbekümmernheit um die Zukunft, die eigene und die
The problem is not only one involving the younger members of society. But it is a problem with serious implications for the future of a young generation bent on action, increasingly prone to violence and authoritarian leadership, and with a spirit that is collective, but without context or responsibility. As Mann phrases it, "Eigene Verantwortung trägt nicht mehr der einzelne, die Gesamtheit eines Geschlechtes steht für sich ein, und es wird ihr leicht gemacht, es ist 'die Jugend'" (SJ 540-41).

C. The Importance of the Past

Though it is perhaps human nature to want to forget or gloss over the negative aspects of the past, Mann's ethic of responsibility on the societal level emphasizes recognizing, analyzing, and coming to terms with past failures in order to prevent their endless repetition. For Jonas, realizing historical continuity is an integral element of "total responsibility" (or responsibility that encompasses the total being of the object, from basic existence to happiness) (Jonas 189-90). Describing the importance of continuity for total responsibility, Jonas writes,

Totale Verantwortung aber muß immer fragen: 'Was kommt danach? Wohin wird es führen?'; und zugleich auch 'Was ging vorher? Wie vereinigt sich das jetzt Geschehende mit dem ganzen Gewordensein dieser Existenz?' Mit einem Wort: totale Verantwortung muß
'geschichtlich' verfahren, ihren Gegenstand in seiner Geschichtlichkeit umgreifen [...]. (Jonas 196)

After 1925, Mann's essays begin to focus increasingly on the loss of historical context not only among the youth, but in his entire society's image of itself. In "Uns gemeinsam erinnern" from 1926, an essay addressed to authors but that speaks to the general public as well, Mann detects the loss of memory in his society regarding the war of only seven years before:

[...] es handelt sich nicht darum, zu verleugnen, was vom Gedächtnis unserer vergangenen Irrtümer noch lebt, man soll es vielmehr erhalten. Wir Menschen haben keine Ausdauer und nicht genug Gedächtnis, dies verschuldet mehr als die Hälfte unserer Leiden. Nach manchen bewundernswerten Kämpfen um das Recht, um unsere Besserung und die Besserung der Welt stürzen wir uns jedesmal sehenden Auges in irgendeine abscheuliche Katastrophe. Wenig später aber haben wir alles vergessen. So geht es nicht vorwärts. (SJ 317)

The problem of a societal short-term memory is an indicator of a greater problem of short term and superficial approaches to the future. Though this myopic outlook can provide comfort and stability for the present, it denies the kind of responsibility that Mann is arguing is a crucial element of life among others in modern society. Mann's ironic question, "Nicht von Verantwortung zu wissen, auch nicht bitter zu sein, wäre das beste, aber wie macht man das?" (SJ 316), prefaces his observation of two dangerous prevailing outlooks from the position of irresponsibility that exhibit short term views of historical context.
The first is the violent nationalistic posture — "diese starke Gebäride, die in Deutschland so gut wie in Frankreich vorgeführt wird" — that preaches, "vor allem müsse gelitten und gestorben werden" (SJ 317), even after years of suffering and death in the war and its aftermath. The other viewpoint is that of the "Klassizisten," who believe that all of Germany's past problems have been overcome and the past can be forgotten. Of this position Mann writes, "Dann kommen noch die Klassizisten vor. Sie stellen sich, als wäre in aller Welt nichts Besonderes geschehen oder als hätten sie selbst es restlos überwunden. Wenn harmonische Sprache ein Beweis wäre!" (SJ 317).

Mann's suggestion, arguing again within the context of German-French understanding, is for both countries to grasp their past and learn from it:

Wir müssen lernen, uns zu erinnern — noch mehr an unsere Schande als an das Gute [...] Um uns zu reinigen, menschlich zu werden und aus Fremden Freunde, ist leichtsinniges Vergessen nicht der Weg. Sie, die dasselbe erlebten, sollen es nicht vergessen [...] denn sonst kommt alles nochmals, sonst wiederholt sich dasselbe Unglück unaufhörlich. Einzig unser festes -- gemeinsames -- Gedenken kann es aufhalten und vielleicht beenden. (SJ 317-318)

The urgency of such a message of remembering should also not be lost among a post-Holocaust audience, in a time of growing popular acceptance of Holocaust "revisionists."

Mann's criticism of his society's lack of collective conscience also extends to the films of the period. As a co-founder and chair of the "Volksverband für Filmkunst" in 1928
and through his work on *Der blaue Engel*, Mann took an active interest in the new medium. His approach to film is the same as his approach to writing, seeing it as an art form with a potential for bettering and teaching through reflection: "Die Kunst ist verantwortlich der Mit- und Nachwelt und steht noch ein für ihre fernsten Auswirkungen. Kunst, auf die ein Volk blickt, verführt es nicht, sondern erzieht es" (SJ 468). In his address to the first meeting of the "Volksverband," Mann emphasizes the lack of historical understanding in current filmmaking: "Man bringt ihn [den einfachen Menschen] dahin, einer Vergangenheit, die er doch, käme sie wieder, nie mehr wirklich ertragen würde, im Bilde und in der Idee den Vorzug zu geben. Welch eine Verfälschung des einfachen Menschen selbst wird damit unternommen!" (SJ 465). His criticism focuses on current nationalistic films that falsify or romanticize the past, or glorify the war (SJ 465).

Mann's call for a change in the film industry comes out of his general concern for the way in which society views itself, as reflected in its art forms. At this time film was on its way to becoming the most accessible and influential form of expression. As in society in general, Mann sees in the film industry a willful ignorance of the past:

Es ist so weit, daß für gewöhnlich nichts von den Veränderungen der sozialen Struktur Deutschlands seit 1914 heute im Film noch gezeigt werden darf. Alles wird so hingestellt, als sei nie etwas geschehen, gesellschaftlich nicht, seelisch nicht -- und nichts sei im Wege, daß auch der Staat wieder so werde. (Mann, "Es soll anders werden")
Siegfried Kracauer, a contemporary of Mann, discusses the period of 1924-1929 in the German film as being in a state of "inner paralysis" (Kracauer 137), describing the popular films as shallow, escapist, romantic, and unwilling to ask questions (Kracauer 131-39).

The importance of remembering the past for Mann's ethic of responsibility comes through concisely and pointedly in "Seit die letzten fielen," the final essay of Sieben Jahre. In this short essay, Mann writes about the need to remember the war of ten years ago, in order to be able to look toward the future with responsibility. The essay is a literary memorial to the dead of the war and its aftermath, not in the traditional heroic sense of war monuments, but in the true spirit that the memory of their unjust deaths deserve: "Der Toten des Krieges, der Gefallenen und der nachher Geopferten soll gedacht werden, nicht um sie zu feiern, denn keiner starb gern. Keiner starb mit Recht" (SJ 558). The essay contains a message about the imperative of opening one's eyes to the past and learning from history, in order to prevent its repetition:

Der Krieg mit allen seinen Opfern in endlosen Jahren hat kommen können, weil wir ihn kommen ließen. Nie wäre er gekommen, hätten wir es ihn nicht erlaubt. Seine Vorbereitung und sein Ausbruch hängen ausschließlich vom Willen der Menschen ab. Dem Willen derer, die ihn wollten, begegnete damals kein entschlossener Wille, ihn zu verhindern. Er kommt auch das nächstemal, wenn nicht Wachsamkeit ihn aufhält. (SJ 557)
The need for citizens to take collective responsibility against a coming war is the essential theme of the essay. Mann warns against being lulled into inaction by trusting either the "Gutwilligkeit der Mächtigen" or the "Selbstregelung der Ereignisse" (SJ 557), both of which are positions that deny the need for responsible citizenship. The sentence that best describes the feeling of responsibility that Mann is calling for in this period reads, "Es ist nötig, innerlich gewappnet zu bleiben gegen jeden Angriff auf das Dasein unserer Kinder" (SJ 558). Mann will turn to an image of responsibility for children in his novels as well, an image that, Jonas argues, is the essence and the origin of the human feeling for responsibility (Jonas 189).

The essay ends with an image of the spirit of the past, represented by the memory of the war dead, walking in accompaniment with the present: "An die Toten werde gedacht wie an Mahner. Was seither besser geworden ist in unserem Zusammenleben, ist durchsetzt mit ihrem Tode. Wir gehen auch weiterhin, gerade als Lebende und am Leben Arbeitende, mit diesen Toten Hand in Hand" (SJ 558).

Mann portrays the idea of remembering the past in his novels as well, bringing the theme from the societal to the individual level. An often misunderstood aspect of Mann's work of this period is his conception of the individual and the collective. Berle is correct in emphasizing Mann's criticism of the collectivization of the human spirit, and the
danger of people becoming machines and objects of society rather than thinking, autonomous and responsible individuals (Berle 195-97). An important element of Mann's criticism of the Untertan is the ability to escape responsibility by disappearing behind the collective. But what Berle and most critics of Mann's last four Weimar novels overlook, when they interpret Mann's moral imperatives as directed only toward individual moral improvement, is the more universal view of Mann's idea of morality that recognizes the importance of a societal understanding of its past and a collective responsibility to the future.

The collective nature of Mann's ethic of responsibility responds to the collective dangers of war and the forces that drive a society to war. The belief that the movement toward war can be prevented assumes the possibility of collective consciousness and effort. But collective responsibility must begin with the individual's realization of the need for such an ethic. Through a self-conscious incorporation of elements of the Märchen and the parabel, Mann's last four Weimar novels are designed to bring the reader to draw conclusions from the individual level and translate them to the societal level. An awareness of social forces is the foundation for Mann's idea of the social novel: "Ein sozialer Romancier liebt


6 The main characters at the end of Eugénie and Die große Sache each refer to their life as a "Gleichnis."
seine Menschen nicht nur einzeln und um ihrer selbst willen. Noch mehr bewegt ihn ihre soziale Bedingtheit -- die Gesellschaft, die sie hervorbringt, der allen aufgezwungene Kampf, der Erwerb und seine Gesetze" (ÖL 67-68).

Mann's insistence on keeping the past alive is tied to his belief in the existence of a collective societal conscience. In Mutter Marie, the idea of a collective searching of the conscience and remembering sins of the past is portrayed on the symbolic individual level of the Beichte. In his essay "Mein Roman," Mann compares the novel to the act of confession: "Ein Roman heißt in vielen Fällen etwas wie eine Beichte, die der Autor für sich selbst und auch gleich für seinen Zeitgenossen mit ablegt" (ÖL 330). To Mann, literature is more than just art, "sie ist Gewissen -- das aus der Welt hervorgehobene und vor sie hingestellte Gewissen" (SJ 352).

Mann's last major essay before being forced out of Germany, "Das Bekenntnis zum Übernationalen," can be interpreted as a collective confession. Printed first in December 1932, the essay is Mann's last literary effort to help turn his society away from fascism and war. The focus is on the repentance of the German sin of nationalism, of which Mann said in another essay, "Der Nationalismus selbst setzt immer den Krieg voraus" (E II 486). Mann's enemies of course were quick to point out that nationalism was by no means a sin, nor were they suffering from a loss of memory. The Nazi
writer Walter Bloem reacted strongly to Mann's public stance in his "public letter" to Heinrich Mann, in which he warns, "wer es künftig wagt, unsere heiligsten und gewaltigsten Erinnerungen, den stolzen und unerschütterlichen Glauben des 'Militaristen' und des 'Nationalisten' zu bespötteln und zu beschimpfen, der bekommt es mit uns zu tun" (Bloem).

The first three sections of "Das Bekenntnis zum Übernationalen" -- "Ablauf eines Zeitalters," "Unfall einer Republik," and "Unbeliebte Tatsachen" -- provide a historical overview of German nationalism, from the German empire's drive to the nationalistic war, to the failure of the republic to subdue the forces of nationalism, and finally to the current situation of the National Socialists on the doorstep of control. The final section, "Das Bekenntnis," ends with a confession in the form of an oath against nationalism, for "supranationalism." Mann calls on individuals to act as if they were a collective: "Einzelne müssen bekennen, daß sie den Nationalstaat verlassen haben; denn sie sind nur der Anfang der Masse und nehmen ein Volk vorweg. Sie müssen einfach sprechen, als wären sie schon das Volk, obwohl es sie bis jetzt lieber niederschläge, als daß es sie anhört" (H 42). The series of confessions ends with the statement that even in this late hour, all is still possible: "Das Bekenntnis muß nur abgelegt werden; die einmal ausgesprochene Wahrheit ist immer schon auf dem Wege" (H 43).
The mental and spiritual exercise of grasping, understanding, and coming to terms with the past remains for Mann until his final Weimar publication an essential step in preventing the next war.

D. The Next War

Though a critical awareness of the past and an awakened conscience are essential elements of Mann's ethic of responsibility, its main thrust and its urgency are not focused on taking responsibility for past guilt, or even on trying to live one's personal daily life in a civicly responsible manner, but on humanity's collective future. The focus of Jonas's ethic is similar: "Vor allem aber ist es die Zukunft, mit der es die Verantwortung für ein Leben, sei es individuelles oder kommunales, über dessen unmittelbare Gegenwart hinaus zu tun hat" (Jonas 197). Jonas's revision of Kant's categorical imperative to include this orientation toward the future reads, "Schließe in deine gegenwärtige Wahl die zukünftige Integrität des Menschen als Mit-Gegenstand deines Wollens ein" (Jonas 36).

In many of his essays of this period, Mann analyzes the signs of the drive to the next war. In an interview with the editor of Die Literarische Welt in November 1927, Mann discusses "Zeitprobleme," focusing mainly on the threat of a future war. He encourages the youth of France and Germany to
work together, saying, "Der Sinn dieser Zusammenarbeit ist vor allem: die Verhinderung des Krieges mit Rußland, der immer wieder vor der Tür steht" (Mann, "Zeitprobleme" 1).

Looking for ways to encourage popular action, Mann recommends "organisatorische Kleinarbeit" as a way to prevent a future war:

Wie ist denn der letzte Krieg bei uns 'gemacht' worden? Durch zähe organisatorische Kleinarbeit! Da war der 'Flottenverein' und das Dutzend anderer Organisationen, durch das die Generale ihre Militärpropaganda unterirdisch bis in die kleinste Dorfschule trugen. Ihr müßt es ebenso machen, um die Republik und den Frieden durchzusetzen! (Mann, "Zeitprobleme" 1)

Mann's arguments throughout the Weimar period continually point toward working responsibly to prevent a future war. He rejects extreme solutions such as the communist promise of world peace after a world revolution, purported to be the final war against wars:


Along with trying to persuade citizens of an ethic of responsibility against war, Mann continues to criticize big industry in the Weimar state and its role in fueling the dynamic toward war. In his novels, powerful representatives of industry such as Seehase and Schattich carry on in the tradition of Kobes and his board of ministers. In "Deutsche Republik" from 1927, Mann criticizes a film that tries to
morally justify the production of weapons by saying the armament industry provides jobs. Mann calls this "morality" nothing more than business sense, and says of the social reactionary leaders in the Reichstag, "Sie kennen nur das leere Wort 'Sittlichkeit' als technisches Mittel, irgend jemand hineinzulegen" (SJ 379).

Weapons manufacturing is nothing more than the "Republikgeschäft" preparing for the next war, and the workers are providing their services, "dafür, daß sie einwilligen, sich einstmals wieder für edle Brotgeber vergasen zu lassen" (SJ 379). In "Film und Volk," Mann points again to industry's role in preparing for the next war: "Furchtbar ist der nächste Krieg, und statt aller Heldentaten bekümmere man sich lieber um die, deren unersättlicher Erwerbsinn ihn schon wieder vorbereitet" (SJ 465-66). The term "unersättlich" brings to mind Mann's metaphorical image of the Moloch in "Kobes," with its insatiable demand for power and human sacrifice.

The theme of industry's drive to the next war is continued in "Gräber des Geistes öffnen sich," in which Mann attacks German and French industry for taking the idea of German-French reconciliation -- "der einzige Gedanke dieser Jahre, den mitzudenken stolz machen konnte" (SJ 486) -- and applying it only to weapons manufacturing. Mann anticipates here again a European war against Russia, accusing the powerful circles of France and Germany,

Ihr wisst, was hinter allem steckt. Ihr tut nur so, als wüsßtet ihr es nicht. Alle Tatsachen,
politische, sittliche und die der Wirtschaft, verbergen nur den nächsten Krieg. Unser sittlicher Zustand besonders ist nicht mehr Folge des letzten, so gründlich vergessenen Krieges. Er ist schon Vorbote des nächsten. (SJ 486)

The essay calls for a "resurrection," of mass conscience, and opening of the "Gräber des Geistes, des Gewissens und Menschentums" (SJ 488).

A key insight into Mann's ethic of responsibility during this period is provided in his foreword to the new 1929 edition of Der Untertan. Addressing a new generation of readers, Mann describes his Untertan, the "Typ des kaiserlichen Deutschen," as a parody of power without responsibility: "Die Furchtbarkeit der Macht parodierte er, ihre drohende Maske in Politik, Geschäft und überall; er parodierte den weltbeherrschenden Machtwillen. Selbst ohne Verantwortung und offene Mitentscheidung, parodierte der Typ des Untertans wahrhaftig die Macht" (Mann, "Vorwort" 9).

Mann's message to the readers of 1929 is about the modern Weimar Untertan, in a new context of power, with the threat of the next war ahead, but lacking the qualities of responsibility and conscience needed to prevent it:

The new forces to which the Weimar Untertan is subject are more dangerous and also more difficult to identify, because they do not wear uniforms:

Die nicht uniformierten Gewalten sind aber tückischer und ebenso grausam. Sie sind sogar zielbewuβter. Man hält auch sie, infolge der wirtschaftlichen Abhängigkeiten, die alle zu ertragen haben, leicht für schicksalhaft und gleitet den Schreckensweg entlang, den sie vorschreiben. (Mann, "Vorwort" 11)

The unseen and seemingly self-motivating force that Mann is talking about is the new economic dynamo of industry and technology. This idea can be compared to what Jonas describes as the "quasi-utopian" dynamic of modern technological power, with its extreme potential consequences and its seemingly unavoidable determination (Jonas 388-89). To the Weimar Untertan of 1929, Mann responds with the message echoed in his recent novel Mutter Marie: "Wir werden noch viel Verantwortung lernen müssen" (Mann, "Vorwort" 11).

In his 1932 essay "Der nächste Krieg" (translated from the French original "La guerre prochaine"), Mann shows the depth of his concern for the catastrophic consequences of another major war and demonstrates most clearly his ethic of responsibility for the prevention of this catastrophe. He tells his French audience,

Zweifellos würde der nächste Krieg das Ende unserer Zivilisation bedeuten. Deshalb glaube ich, daß
Mann urges a widespread effort of recognizing and teaching the atrocity of war and its threat to the future. He appeals to the object of responsibility, the generation of children, "denn sie sind es, die im technischen Vernichtungskrieg sterben müßten" (E II 416). But he also realizes that citizens must first come to believe that the danger is in fact preventable (E II 416).

Mann sees the root of the problem of modern warfare in society's letting the dynamic of technology take precedence over the concern for humanity:

Der größte Fehler der Menschen war sicherlich, daß sie sich schon seit langer Zeit weniger für sich selbst interessierten -- für die Menschheit, ihre Erziehung, ihr Glück -- als für Gegenstände, die von ihm nur hervorgebracht werden. Geld und technische Erfindungen erschienen ihm viel wichtiger als der Mensch, und das eine ganze Epoche hindurch, die noch nicht beendet ist, die sich aber sichtbar ihrem Ende zuneigt. Man erwarb mehr wirtschaftliche und technische Kenntnisse, als daß man den Menschen studierte. Alle Erfindungen und alle Unternehmungen sind im Grunde zum Schaden des Menschen gemacht worden; und er ist ihr Opfer gewesen, der Krieg hat es zur Genüge bewiesen. (E II 416)

On the level of national action, Mann continues to see the strengthening of German-French understanding as the most effective means of preventing the next war. His understanding of the responsibility of such an action is in the same context as Jonas's ethic; Mann writes that such a preventive measure would exhibit "ein ganz neues menschliches
Verantwortungsgefühl für die Zukunft der Menschheit" (E II 417).

Upholding such an ethic will require continual hard work and a collective spirit of protecting humanity. In "Der Schriftsteller und der Krieg," a speech given in August 1932 at the Amsterdam peace conference, Mann still believes such an effort can be made: "Wir haben wachsam zu sein, immer zu kämpfen und rückhaltlos zu bekennen. Der Wille zum Frieden gibt nicht das Recht, auszuruhen!" (E II 487). As Jonas writes, "was vermeidlich und was unvermeidlich ist, stellt sich immer erst heraus durch das, was vermieden und was nicht vermieden wurde nach ernsthaftem Versuch. Der Geist der Verantwortung verwirft den voreiligen Spruch der Unvermeidlichkeit" (Jonas 389).
CHAPTER IV: Stories of Citizenship

Mann wrote his three novels following Der Kopf with the concept of a moral trilogy in mind. In a letter to Félix Bertaux in 1928 he explains, "Die Motti meiner drei Romane heißen wohl (ungeschrieben): Lernt verantworten, lernt ertragen, lernt euch freuen! Alle drei zusammen könnten 'Die gute Lehre' heißen" (Cited in Anger, "Afterword [MM, GS]" 457). In the third novel, the three moral imperatives are directly stated by the protagonist Birk (GS 186).

All three novels, Mutter Marie, Eugénie oder Die Bürgerzeit, and Die große Sache, have been almost unanimously judged as literary failures. Many dismiss these works as trivial literature, or read Mann's attempt to "moralize" as a simplistic, outdated, or futile effort, and one not suited to literature that is to be taken seriously. However, though the style and tone of these works reflect an unconventional departure from traditional concepts of the novel, their artistic quality has been misjudged, and there is much content below the surface that has been as yet uncovered. Regarding Mann's moralism, what Bettina Haas writes about his journalistic publications in the Weimar period applies equally well to the novels:
Die Bedeutung von Heinrich Manns publizistischer Arbeit für die Republik und gegen den Militarismus wird von der Literaturgeschichte zu wenig beachtet. Prägnanz, Aktualität und Weitblick in seinen politischen Aussagen widerlegen die Meinung, er habe 'bloß' moralisiert. (Haas 98)

Mann wrote in *Ein Zeitalter wird besichtigt*, "Moralisten sind nicht so sehr Prediger wie Betrachter. Für sie wäre kein Platz mehr, sobald feststände, daß ohne Wissen, ohne Verantwortung eine Menschheit bestehen kann" (Z 151; cited in Haas 98). The underlying theme of the novels of Mann's Weimar trilogy is the same as that of many of his essays: the responsibility of citizens to preserve humanity and to prevent fascism and war. This moral theme becomes clearer in the context of Mann's ethic of responsibility.

A. *Mutter Marie*: Turning to Responsible Citizenship

1. The Reception

*Mutter Marie*, published first in the *Berliner Tageblatt* in forty-three sections during January and February of 1927, and in book form the following month by the Zsolnay publishing house, is undoubtedly Mann's most rejected novel. In overviews of Mann's works it consistently receives little or no attention, and there have been no in depth studies of the work to this date. Sigrid Anger's evaluation of *Mutter Marie* can serve as a polite representation of the work's overall reception in the secondary literature:
Bestehen bleibt die Tatsache, daß Heinrich Mann für ein zentrales menschliches und gesellschaftliches Problem eine verhältnismäßig abseitige Lösung suchte — gemessen an den sozialen Zusammenbrüchen der zwanziger Jahre; und daß dieser Roman die künstlerische Überzeugungskraft früherer und späterer Bücher keineswegs erreichte. (Anger, "Afterword" 459).

The reception of the novel in its time was mixed, with evaluations ranging "von Enthusiasmus bis zu schroffer Ablehnung" (Anger, "Afterword" 463). Those expecting another Untertan were no doubt disappointed by the drastic change in style, especially the absence of sharp satire, the incorporation of characteristic elements of popular fiction, and the "happy ending." Others praised the novel as "Scharfsichtig im Erkennen, erbarmungslos in der Schilderung" (Berg 248-49), "ein genießerreicher Zauber erzählender Kunst" (Dunin 16), and "einer der wichtigsten Romane unserer Zeit" (Kayser). Walter Schröder writes of the novel, "Er hat den Tonfall des Zeitalters selbst, seine Härte gemahnt an Brückenkonstruktionen aus Beton und Eisen" (Schröder 165).

Discussing the novel's "Beichtkapitel," Anger cites a contemporary criticism of the book's "aufgeklebt[e] Katholizität" and another reviewer who called the novel a "Kirchenstück," and posed the question, "Heinrich Mann auf dem Wege nach Rom?" (Anger, "Afterword" 463-64). Others, however, highlighted this central chapter as a "Glanzstück" (Cited in Anger, "Afterword" 463), attributed to it "dichterische Größe" (Hallmann 410), and accorded it "zum Schönsten dichterischen Schaffens überhaupt" (Dunin 17). The central chapter of
Mutter Marie remained significant to Mann even twenty years later. In a letter in 1947 to Karl Lemke, who was planning a collection of Mann's works, Mann selected part of the "Beichtkapitel" to be included in a volume representing the 1920s (Anger, "Afterword" 466).

2. A Misunderstood Theme

In 1925 Mann responded to critics of Der Kopf, saying they had missed the central theme of the work, the "Verantwortung der Industrie" (SJ 255). Two years later, Mann needed to defend the theme of responsibility again, in his new work. In response to the critic of Mutter Marie who had asked whether Mann was turning to Catholicism or whether he merely wanted to try his artistic hand at writing a Catholic confessional scene, Mann refutes both of these ideas, writing, "So steht es nicht. Aber ich hatte in meinem Roman mit dem Problem der Verantwortung zu tun. Es behauptet groß und deutlich den Mittelpunkt. Ich nehme an, daß Sie es sehen, obwohl Sie es nicht nennen" (Anger, "Afterword" 464). He goes on to note the general lack of recognition for the idea of responsibility in society, parenthetically providing an explanation of his understanding of the concept:

Wenn überhaupt, bei Erwähnung meines Buches und auch sonst, von der Frage der Verantwortung (für das Geschehen, für die Kinder und für die Welt, in die

7 See Mann, Briefe and Karl Lemke und Klaus Pinkus 97.
The brief parenthetical explanation of the ethical foundation of "lernt verantworten" reveals an ethic of responsibility that is deeper than the conventional bourgeois moralism that most critics have attributed to the theme, leaving the work unexplored. It is not merely an immediate ethic, but a far-reaching one, such as Jonas's, that evokes the "Urbild" of responsibility for offspring and extends to the responsibility for the future of the world in which they will live. Anger misses this deeper aspect of Mann's ethic, when he says the novel is a failed response to the time, concentrating on personal moral development alone: "Und so setzte Heinrich Mann in 'Mutter Marie' der sehr realen 'Macht des Geldes' ethische Werte wie Verantwortungsbewußtsein, Bescheidung und tägliche Pflichterfüllung entgegen" (Anger, "Afterword" 457). Berle also limits the significance of Mann's ethic, reading responsibility only in the sense of owning up to one's past guilt (Berle 253).

As Jonas explains his ethic, "nicht die formal-leere 'Verantwortlichkeit' jedes Täters für seine Tat, meinen wir, wenn wir von der heute fälligen Ethik der Zukunftsverantwortung sprechen" (Jonas 175). His concept of responsibility is one, "der nicht die ex-post-facto Rechnung für das Getane, sonder die Determinierung des Zu-Tuenden
betrifft; gemäß dem ich mich also verantwortlich fühle nicht primär für mein Verhalten und seine Folgen, sondern für die Sache, die auf mein Handeln Anspruch erhebt" (Jonas 174). This kind of future-directed responsibility is also at the core of Mann's ethic. And, like Jonas, Mann's ethic is in response to a new age of power. Mann talks about the dynamic of the modern age that seems to be taking away individual responsibility. Of this new social context he writes, "Wir sind durch die geistigen Gewohnheiten, die von der Wissenschaft und der öffentlichen Ordnung uns geliefert werden, eigener Verantwortung in wichtigeren Fällen enthoben. Wenn alles zugrunde ginge, niemand könnte etwas dafür" (Anger, "Afterword" 464-65).

Der Kopf spoke to a Weimar audience even though its content was historical. But Mutter Marie is Mann's first truly Weimar novel. Its setting is Berlin in 1925. The novel's sharp portrayal of social realities of the time has not been missed even by some who reject the novel as a whole. Anger concedes Mann's success in the "Gestaltung charakteristischer Typen jener Jahre" (Anger, "Afterword" 458). Though Herbert Jhering considers the work a "Sensationsgeschichte," he nevertheless sees it as an example that,
By reflecting his society in an inventive and modern work, guided by a firm belief in the teaching potential of the social novel that is "zeitgemäß," Mann sets about the difficult task of portraying the new dimensions of a familiar ethical problem to what he hopes will be a wide reading public. In an essay printed in the same month as Mutter Marie appeared in the newspaper, Mann writes, "Gerade die neue Wichtigkeit der Moral gibt der Literatur ihre Aussichten [...] Der neu beseelten Zeit ihr sittliches Bild zeigen wird, wie je, das Wort" (SJ 322-23). The new importance for morality in a new time is the theme of Mutter Marie; the need for a feeling and understanding of future-directed responsibility.

3. The Ethic of Responsibility in Mutter Marie

a. The "Urbild der Verantwortung"

The motivating event for the plot of Mutter Marie also becomes a leitmotif, recurring several times throughout the book, assuring it a prominent place in the consciousness of the reader. The image is of a young mother, Felicitas Marie, who sets her newborn child on the edge of a fountain on the property of a wealthy family. With each reference to the image, more details are added, making the picture clearer.
The first reference comes at the end of the first chapter, when Valentin tells Marie's story to his parents:

Eines Nachts im Winter hat sie das Dienstmädchen ihrer Freundin das Haus verlassen und ein neugeborenes Kind zum Brunnen tragen gesehen [...] Das Kind ist auf den Rand der Brunenschale gelegt worden. Als das Mädchen später nachsah, wurde es grade fortgetragen. (MM 30)

The next reference appears in one of the scenes that Schütte analyzes as an example of Mann's "Kinotechnik," in which filmlike methods such as flashback are used, creating an atmosphere of the past blending with the present and the suspension of time. As Schütte explains,

Rückblenden und Überblendungen, die visuell und nicht allein reflexiv gestaltet sind, schaffen ein Gegengewicht gegen die Binnenrealität des Romans. Realität wird durch sie aufgehoben. Gegenwart transparent auf Vergangenes, Personen sind sich ihrer Identität nicht mehr sicher [...]. (Schütte 98-99)

In this scene, images from Marie's past appear to her as if on screen, ending with the final central image: "Sie legte ein Kind auf einen Brunnenrand" (MM 41). At this point, Marie tries physically to reach back into her past, stretching out her hand -- "nach dem Kind, sie wollte es zurücknehmen" -- and knocking over a glass of wine on the table, which snaps her and Valentin out of a timeless state of recollection, back to the present and the temporal (MM 41).

The image of Marie and the child appears several more times briefly. As Marie ponders the sudden return of her

---

8 See ÖL 331.
memory of the child after nearly twenty-five years, she thinks, "das Haus hatte noch keine Nachbarn, das Kind lag klein da, und ach! der Brunnenstrahl fiel gleich hinter seinem Kopf vorbei..." (MM 50). Later with Ina, she once again becomes lost in her thoughts, looking out into the yard where she had stood long ago. The memories now wash over her more intensely and she feels transported out of the room into her past:

Sie fühlte sich draußen stehn hinter dem Hause, es war Nacht, war kalt, eine der kalten elenden Nächte von einst. Umsonst spähte sie durch geschlossene Vorhänge, erriet die Schatten, die darüberfuhren, erlauschte die armen, geliebten Laute des Kindes, das sie doch dahingegeben hatte. Dahingegeben, dahin, dahin! (MM 70)

The next reference adds further to the picture: "Sie hatte nie gewußt, wie die Leute hießen im Haus Berliner Straße, vor dem einst jener Brunnen stand, in das einst jener Mann ging, das Kind im Arm" (MM 78).

Finally, the full scene is presented in the "Beichtkapitel." As Marie is confessing to the priest, the images run through her mind and she tells the story as if she were watching it and narrating it:

Sie sah und sprach nur nach. Eine Gestalt schlich vor ihr her um die Ecken, unkenntlich verhüllt, die Verlassene, Arbeitslose, die das noch Ungeborene trägt. Am Kanal bei der Laterne erscheint mit ungeheuren Augen des Entsetzens das bleiche Gesicht, umfaßt von dem groben schwarzen Tuch, unter dem die verzweifelten Mädchen ins Wasser gehn... Eine Hand hält sie noch auf, sie darf nicht sterben, muß gebären. Auch findet sie Arbeit.

Bedienstet in einem rettenden Haus, mit dem Leben schon versöhnt -- plötzlich aber war sie wieder am Leben bedroht, denn das Kind war ihr von der


The selection of this image for a central position in Mann's novel about responsibility is a natural one, when seen in the light of Jonas's discussion of the "zeitlose[s] Urbild aller Verantwortung," that of a parent for a child (Jonas 234). Jonas turns to the image of the child for an elemental example of a "Soll" naturally emanating from an "Ist": "das Neugeborene, dessen bloßes Atmen unwidersprechlich ein Soll an die Umwelt richtet, nämlich: sich seiner anzunehmen" (Jonas 235). Though this responsibility is certainly not irresistible (and the scene with Marie attests to this), it is uncontradictable. It is an elemental call for responsibility that is neither a request, nor an appeal to sympathy or other feelings:

Ich meine wirklich strikt, daß hier das Sein eines einfach ontisch Daseienden ein Sollen für Andere immanent und ersichtlich beinhaltet, und es auch dann täte, wenn nicht die Natur durch mächtige Instinkte und Gefühle diesem Sollen zuhilfe käme, ja meist das Geschäft ganz abnähme. (Jonas 235)
Jonas calls this relationship the prototype of responsibility, saying his ethic will show,

> daß die Auszeichnung in dem einzigartigen Verhältnis zwischen Besitz und Nichtbesitz des Daseins liegt, das nur dem beginnenden Leben eigen ist und die Ursächlichkeit seiner Erzeugung, als eine auch erst begonnene, zu jener Fortsetzung verpflichtet, die eben der Inhalt der Verantwortung ist. (Jonas 236)

Though Mann is not trying to ground an ethical concept theoretically, his decision to base his work on the image of Marie relinquishing responsibility for her newborn shows that he also turned to the idea of parental responsibility as a foundation or starting point for his ethic of "lernt verantworten." That Mann concentrates only on the mother — the father is never fully identified, but only referred to as someone she is ashamed about (MM 132) — is certainly in part due to the social convention of the time, in which the idea of the mother as the primary caregiver was even more deeply embedded into the social consciousness than it is today. But the novel is ultimately not about motherhood, or parenthood. Marie is the character who eventually learns a less natural or instinctive, but equally urgent and therefore more imperative idea of responsibility that transcends the individual level of parenthood.

Mann's selection of the female protagonist is also the beginning of a higher concentration on women protagonists after Der Kopf, as representatives of "Geist und Gefühl in sich vereint" (Berle 285), such as Gabriele, Margo and Marie in his next three novels. In an essay in the Berliner
Tageblatt in December 1928, in response to an experiment asking authors how they would briefly explain their work to a school class of twelve-year-olds, Mann writes,

H. M. ist ein Schriftsteller, der einiges für Knaben, vieles auch für Mädchen geschrieben hat. Den Knaben sagt er vor allem, was er an dem männlichen Wesen seiner Zeit vermößt hat [...] Den Mädchen zeigte er hauptsächlich weibliche Gestalten, denen zu gleichen keine Schande wäre [...] alle diese Frauen [leben] vollständiger als die Männer, weil sie mehr nach den Gesetzen ihrer Seele leben [...] H. M. sagt euch im Grunde, daß Stolz, Mut und alle anderen sittlichen und idealen Eigenschaften, die er bei den Männern seiner Zeit vermißte, von den Männern bei den Frauen geholt werden könnten. (Mann, "Gastspiel")

The story of Marie remembering her child not only evokes images of the "Urbild" of responsibility, but images of another kind as well, on the level of the "story" itself. The first chapter of the novel ends with Ina's reaction upon hearing Marie's story: "Das fängt an wie im Märchen" (MM 31).

b. Below the Surface

Many who have commented on Mann's last four Weimar novels have emphasized the elements of the Märchen found in some or all of these novels. This is often accompanied by a reference to Mann's letter to Kurt Tucholsky in May 1924, in which he writes, "Man sollte Märchen schreiben. Ähnliches

---

9 Later published as "An Knaben und Mädchen" (ÖL 323-24).

10 See for example Schütte 95; Anger, "Afterword" 458; Schröter, Heinrich Mann in Selbstzeugnissen 108.
nehmen ich mir vor, sind meine Aufgaben nur erst gemacht" (Anger, Heinrich Mann 212). Mann does not further explain the comment, but leads up to it by talking about his continued work on the last volume of his Kaiserreich trilogy, Der Kopf, saying, "Heute kann fast Niemand dies verstehn" (Anger, Heinrich Mann 212). The tone of the letter is of skepticism about the reception of his works: "Wer weiß, was damit wird. Für wen? ist immer und bei allem die große Frage" (Anger, Heinrich Mann 212).

Mann's doubts about the reception of Der Kopf and "Kobes" apply even better to the current reception of the novels that followed. Some see his use of fairy-tale imagery as a reflection of a growing alienation from his society (Schütte 95). Others judge Mann's idea to write Märchen as confusing, misguided or simplistic. Schröter writes, "An jenem Ausweichen ins fabulös 'Märchenhafte' litt die Darstellung der Gesellschaft und ihrer Bedingungen zumindest in den Romanen, die deren Komplexität eingefangen sollten" (Schröter, Heinrich Mann in Selbstzeugnissen 108).

Little serious consideration has been given to the idea of Mann's reference to the fairy tale as a deliberate ironic device, perhaps because of the general perception of Mann's moral imperatives as being simplistic and fairy tale-like "morals" as well. Marcel Reich-Ranicki describes these as "naiv [...], simpel [...], oberlehrerhaft" (Reich-Ranicki). But similar to Mann's skillfull use of the fairy-tale motif in
"Die roten Schuhe" and Der Kopf, Mann's conscious reference to the Märchen in Mutter Marie invites the reader to look below the fairy-tale surface for a deeper meaning. The same can be said for his simple sounding imperatives. In the light of his ethic of responsibility, the moral of "lernt verantworten" gains a deeper significance than has been previously assumed. The complexity of Mutter Marie lies beneath its fairy-tale surface.

Ina Schollendorf's comment about Marie's "Märchen" at the end of the first chapter alerts the reader to the self-reflective nature of Mann's own fairy tale. Mann's method counts on the ability of the contemporary audience to recognize a level of truth beneath the surface in the novel's reflection of Weimar society. Many elements of the novel point to Mann's invitation to look below its self-conscious fairy-tale surface.

The assortment of characters brings to mind a fairy tale-like group of figures represented by their titles: the general, the Generalin -- once a "große Dame" (MM 9), the professor, the president, the baroness, the banker. They are often referred to by their titles instead of their names. The two representatives of the young generation are given traits of a fairy-tale prince and princess. The deliberate romantic fairy-tale atmosphere becomes glaringly apparent early on, when we find out that Valentin, who resembled the famous sculpture of the "Jüngling" when he was growing up (MM 8), is
engaged to a princess: "Valentin hat weiche, breite Lippen, er küßt damit wohl die Prinzessin. Mein Sohn der Verlobte einer Prinzessin!" (MM 9).

But the reader discovers quickly that the characters' titles are thin veils hiding more complicated realities. The general and his wife have lost their former wealth through the inflation, and the princess is poor and cut off from her family (MM 13). The professor is a "Kapitalist ohne Geld" (MM 24), and Valentin is a former war hero who has since become a gambler and a paid dance partner. Seehase is, like Kobes, a corrupt industrial leader who has preyed off the inflation to gain wealth and power. And Marie is a baroness who bought her title. Besides their economic situations, most of the characters are given physical or mental characteristics that suggest a more complex and problematical reality below the surface as well. Ina Schollendorf's problems are cosmetic, but still distressing to the self proclaimed "snob": "Ich bin nun mager, nicht mehr schlank, ich muß den Hals bedecken, und er war berühmt [...] Alabasterstirn, sagte Graf Oetzen auf meinem ersten Ball. Man sagt das nicht mehr, übrigens hat der Alabaster jetzt Kratzer" (MM 8-9). The general has lost an eye in the war, which he now covers with a monocle (MM 12). The professor is described as "bucklig" and the president walks with a limp (MM 161, 12). The princess is "geistig beschränkt," and described as "gedankenlos" and with eyes that are "geistlos" and "verständnislos" (MM 7, 9).
The story of Valentin and Adele remains on the fairy-tale level throughout the work. Valentin is aware that his relationship with the princess is on a level apart from the real world: "Mit Adele, seiner Prinzessin, die noch spielte wie ein Kind, führte er ein verträumtes zweites Leben abseits der unerfreulichen Geschäfte des Lebens" (MM 33). This desire to live a fairy-tale existence comes up again when Adele awakes from her unconsciousness to see Valentin making paper dolls. Valentin uses the dolls to act out his relationship with Marie in the form of a fairy tale: "Die Dame bringt der Prinzessin ihren Valentin. Sie sagt: ich bin seine Mutter. So gut wie seine Mutter. Ich will auch deine sein, kleine Hoheit. Ihr sollt glücklich sein. Ihr sollt alles vergessen haben, was peinlich war" (MM 55). The princess watches "gebannt auf das schöne Märchen," and Valentin sees, "wenn nur im Spiel alles glücklich aufging, der verdächtige Rest, den das Leben ließ, war bald vergessen" (MM 55).

The fairy-tale imagery continues when the princess is "awakened," not by a kiss but by the dance (MM 103). The repeated portrayal of the young dancing partners echoes Mann's essayistic observations of the young Weimar generation and their concentration on the surface (MM 86, 101-105). Mann often points in his essays to the current obsession with sports and dancing as an example of this superficiality. Whatever sense of responsibility the young have is directed
only to superficial activity, as Mann writes in a description of a dance contest:

Die Gestalten strecken sich ehrgeizig, undenkbar wären Weichheit und Gewährenlassen. Sie sind erfüllt von Verantwortung für die ganze Zeitgenossenschaft, die nicht nur hier in der Halle auf sie blickt. Öffentlichkeit und Mitwelt schwingen draußen mit, denn ihr Erkennungszeichen ist Sport und sein allgemein menschlichster Ausdruck der Tanz [...] Das Paar, das in dem Wettbewerb siegen wird, ist von vornherein das gestreckteste, meistbeherrschte, verantwortungsvollste [...] Sie selbst beschreiben untadelige Tanzfiguren, immer mit ihren Gesichtern voll technischer Verantwortung. Sie sind Meister und werden ausgezeichnet. (SJ 302)

Along with the princess's "awakening," Valentin achieves "manhood" by bravely and heroically defeating a foe. After Valentin chases off his blackmailers with Wernawe, Marie comments, "Wirklich, Valentin, auch ich sehe erst jetzt, wer du bist. Ein Mann, wie, Herr Wernawe? Er ist gewachsen. Er macht finstere Augen" (MM 115). But the illusion of this "heroic" episode becomes clear through veiled war imagery and the suggestion of Valentin's renewed enthusiasm for his past as a war hero: "diesmal will ich Kampf," and, "Was bist du zuerst? Soldat. Na, wir sind keine Pazifisten, du hast dich überzeugt, Mensch!" (MM 113, 116). Their act of violence is also accompanied by the reader's knowledge of Valentin's participation in a political murder, which is the basis of his being blackmailed.

The story of Marie's childhood contains a theme that further illuminates Mann's use of a fairy-tale surface. In the novel, Marie touches on the main points of a more detailed
story that is told in the novella "Felicitas," published a year in advance of the novel. The theme is about the need for deception or illusion to hide inner truth. Mann wrote to Brantl in 1926 about his novel, "Im ganzen kommt es, wie in jedem Fall ('Kopf'), auf die innere Wahrheit an" (Anger, "Afterword" 462). Felicitas's story is about her first love, a pastor whom she idolized and looked up to as an angel. She eventually discovers that he has inner secrets and temptations like all others, and is not omniscient or omnipotent. Through confessing her own act of deception she discovers, "daß auch er nicht nur zu täuschen war, nein, Täuschung brauchte" (MM 53). The need for deception and illusion to hide the inner truth becomes a running theme that points as well to the novel's deceptive fairy-tale surface.

Mann showed in his works of the Kaiserreich trilogy that the need for illusion in the empire was expressed in vicarious identification with Germany's pursuit of world power and popular enthusiasm for the war. In Weimar, Mann emphasizes here, that same need for illusion is continuing. But in a society weakened militarily and spiritually by the lost war, the source of illusion is being transferred to power in the form of money. The power politics and imperialism of the empire has become the "Diktatur der Wirtschaft" in the republic. Jürgen Haupt calls Mann's focus on money in Mutter Marie an old theme (Haupt, Heinrich Mann 109). However, the theme is not simply a criticism of materialism and greed, but
of the illusions of power, and the dangerous path of extreme capitalism without an ethic of responsibility, in a society with a weak concept of freedom.

At first Marie is convinced that without money she would have no chance at winning her son back:

Was wäre sie für ihren Sohn ohne Geld gewesen? [...] Reinigung und Freiheit sind Erfolge des Geldes. Sie war völlig überzeugt, daß auch Liebe eine seiner Wirkungen ist. Arme sind noch niemals lange geliebt worden. Sie verachtete die bürgerliche Romantik, die es sich vormacht. Käuflich ist jede Liebe, bezahlt wird jede. (MM 80)

The power struggle between the two "weiblich[e] Mächte" (MM 66) centers on money, with Ina willing to take drastic measures to assure a dowry for her son's fiancée, and Marie trying to buy and possess Valentin. Marie thinks, "Die wirkliche Mutter kann nur mit vollen Händen kommen. Dann aber ist sie die Mutter, sie beweist es" (MM 80).

False jewelry becomes another motif that symbolizes the illusion of wealth. The motif appears in connection with Marie's purchase of Ina's jewelry (MM 81), Marie's recollection of the trial (MM 91), and the scene with the blackmailers and Marie's ruby (MM 116). In this scene Marie's thoughts about Valentin and the ruby become intertwined (MM 116), which parallels the other examples of people being considered objects to be bought or possessed. Seehase wants to intice the princess away from Valentin with money, and the professor wants to possess her as well (MM 160).
Marie begins to realize in the theater scene that responsibility and love are on a different level from money. Sitting in the balcony, her thoughts center not on the performance, but on Valentin: "Die Schuld zieht keiner von mir ab, ich kann sie mit Geld nicht bezahlen [...] Ich liebe mein Kind, aber es ist schwer, wenn du es ganz begreifst. Hilf mir! Wer hilft mir?" (MM 85). But she is brought out of these thoughts by the noise on stage. Like most of Mann's novels, Mutter Marie contains a theatrical performance. Here it is the glamorous and glittering Weimar revue theater. The description of the theater underlines the aspect of surface illusion and the public's vicarious identification with it: "Sie waren teuer, sie waren reich, das Licht ließ sie erstrahlen, immer noch greller, immer noch bunter. Das ganze Haus erkannte auf der Bühne sich selbst, sein bestes Selbst -- wenn auch fast niemand genug Geld hatte, um so schön zu sein, um dergestalt zu schweben im Lebensglanz" (MM 85). The dancers on stage are wearing gold, and the message of the play is that the old must die so that the young might inherit their wealth.

As in most of Mann's novels, the action on stage corresponds to the action of the novel's characters.11 When Marie comes home, the scene with Valentin and Adele is paralleled with that of the revue. They are dancing to the same music and revealing "Gesichter ohne Hintergrund -- und

---

11 For a thorough discussion of this topic, see Hocker.
den Glanz, den etwas zu lauten Jugendglanz wie von geheimen Scheinwerfern" (MM 86). They are also dependent upon the wealth of older people; looking into the mirror Marie notices at this point that she is getting old. She sees the facade of youth in her face beginning to break. Like the facade of Mann's society, neither can last: "Ich hatte lange nichts mehr erlebt, die Fassade ist über die Frist hinaus unberührt geblieben. Das rächt sich jetzt" (MM 87).

Marie's process of breaking out of the illusion into reality and deeper truth begins with her dreams. Her dreams help her to see the connection between Seehase and her. But the dreams are really an expression of her conscience, the hidden events of her past working their way into her present consciousness. She realizes the dreams will not leave her, "ihre Vergangenheit war unverlierbar" (MM 96). Like Marie, most of the characters are hiding some secret of their past. Mann only hints at some of these secrets, not fully revealing them, but his point is to indicate the presence of deeper inner realities. It is never revealed whether or not Ina is Valentin's real mother. We learn that the princess is hiding a shameful secret (MM 150). The professor is hiding his "Doppelleben" (MM 102), and the general is secretly looking for a mistress (MM 100, 102). Valentin, as mentioned before, was involved in a political assassination, for which he is being blackmailed. And Seehase betrayed his partner, Marie's former lover (MM 91).
Below the surface of Mann's fairy tale is a complexity that corresponds to the depth of human guilt and responsibility, on the individual and societal level. This is brought out even more in Mann's portrayal of the past coming alive in the awakened conscience.

c. The Past as Living Conscience

The older characters, who represent positions of power or authority, all have problems acknowledging or confronting their past. Seehase is the president of a successful Weimar industrial concern, who accumulated his wealth during the war and the inflation. His connection to the figure of Kobes is clear. Mann even makes a reference to his earlier work, mentioning that Seehase was recently a competitor of Kobes (MM 157). As a symbol for industrial power, Seehase is portrayed as riding a rising wave of success, never looking back and with equal disregard for the future legacy of his actions. His attitude toward the past, illustrated by such statements as "Was war, zählt nicht" (MM 17), "Gewesen ist gewesen" (MM 94), and "Allzu deutliche Erinnerungen sind kein gutes Zeichen" (MM 95), is accompanied by his promise, "nach ihm selbst die Sintflut" (MM 159).

For Seehase, all that matters is the current success of his industry, and its success proves the rightness of any acts that led to it. When Von Lambart raises suspicions about the
way in which Seehase was able to funnel money from the state into his industry, Seehase responds,

[...] die wichtigere Frage ist: was wurde aus dem Geld, das auf diese, von Ihnen angezweifelte Art verdient und damit [...] der Wirtschaft erhalten worden war? [...] Dieses wertvolle, der Wirtschaft lebensnotwendige Unternehmen würde heute wackeln wie andere, ja, es wäre nie aufgebaut worden ohne das damals Erworbene. (MM 18)

When the general brings up the concept of responsibility, the president dismisses the idea, saying "Verantwortung," and shrugging his shoulders (MM 18).

Professor Wunder, an admirer of Seehase, has the traits of a Weimar Untertan, a faithful subject of the new Geldmacht. He is a thinker and philosopher who has conformed his own understanding of morality and justice to a system of extreme capitalism:


Wunder is an "Ordnungsmann" (MM 22), who has little money himself, but who has acquired "auf den mühevollen Wegen des Geistes" a position of influence among the rich and powerful (MM 24). He represents a character who would be receptive to fascist control. In turn, he exercises his own control in his strange role as the saviour and authoritarian guardian of the princess, whom he regards as "sein Werk" (MM 56).
Wunder's respect for Seehase ignores the industrialist's past, justifying all his actions by their present success and their conformity to the purposes of the day: "Wir verachten niemand wegen seiner Laster und Verbrechen, sofern sie nur im Sinne der Welt sind. Es kommt einzig darauf an, der wirklichen Welt gewachsen zu sein. Das erstreben wir mit aller Frömmigkeit des Gemütes" (MM 22). In this same spirit, though not without some pangs of conscience, the professor has accepted a job in which he must deliberately falsify history for a film manuscript, in order to satisfy the needs of the film industry (MM 25). This corresponds to Mann's opinion of the current film industry's portrayal of history, which he expresses in "Film und Volk":

Oft aber heißt es geradezu: Sand in die Augen, und dient als Menschenbetrug, noch mehr, als Verführung [...] Man spielt auf der Volksseelle die romantischen Flötentöne. Man macht ihm etwas vor [...] Man bringt ihn dahin, einer Vergangenheit, die er doch, käme sie wieder, nie mehr wirklich ertragen würde, im Bilde und in der Idee den Vorzug zu geben. (SJ 464-65)

The professor's understanding of his relationship to his "Werk," the princess, can serve as an explanation of his work in the area of German history as well: "Du mußt es vertreten und dennoch auch verhüllen. Es ist nicht einwandfrei und darf nicht ganz bekannt sein" (MM 56).

Wunder is aware of the irresponsibility of his work with the film industry, in exchange for which he has been promised a professorship at an important university (MM 147). But he is able to overcome his own moral conscience by justifying his
actions based on their success and profit in the current society:


The professor is at peace with his own conscience, because he is an intellectual who is able to separate his actions and those of the world from the philosophical world of "Geist" he hypocritically represents, with a resigned acceptance of all that is: "Die arme Menschheit ist verurteilt, ihre Übel, die alle vom schwachen Geist herkommen, bis an ihr Ende weiterzutragen" (MM 104). However, his "Zuflucht" of philosophy still allows him to ponder questions of conscience and responsibility. Distressed, he laments to the general,

Wir sind Wesen ohne Gedächtnis, sage ich Ihnen, Wesen, die nichts verantworten. Einst hat uns dieser elende Zustand noch gequält. Die Herkunft keiner unserer Handlungen wirklich zu kennen! Nie versprechen zu können, was wir im nächsten Augenblick tun werden! Unsere Vorfahren klammerten sich an das Leben nach dem Tode. Sie hofften, wenigstens vor Gott würden sie die Kraft finden, sich endlich zu verantworten. Wir aber haben uns abgefunden. Uns quält kein Drang nach Verantwortung mehr. (MM 104)

He goes on to question the relationship of power and responsibility: "Wem ist ein heutiger Machthaber, so stolz er die volle Verantwortung übernimmt, wirklich verantwortlich?"
Though the professor and the general are able to see connections between conscience and power and responsibility, neither can take the philosophical discussion to a level that Marie will demonstrate with her actions; after searching her conscience, she will check her own power and act out of non-reciprocal concern for the future of her "children."

Von Lambart is, however, one of the novel's three characters whose struggles with their past are shown in a confrontation with their own conscience, portrayed as a separate entity. In response to Von Lambart's accusations, Seehase brings up the dark side of the general's own recent past: "Sollten auch Sie, Herr General, manches nicht mehr ganz verstehen, was Ihresgleichen im Kriege zu tun und zu lassen erlaubt fand?" (MM 18). But unlike Seehase, the general is capable of reflection, and he views his former employment as Seehase's general director, a relationship signifying the union of the military and industry, critically:


Through the general's reflections, Mann makes a distinction between Pflicht and Verantwortung that is important for an understanding of his ethic. The observation comes first in the general's comment to his wife about

Justifying one's actions only by the present circumstances, disregarding the broader temporal context of those actions may be in line with a concept of duty, but denies an ethic of future-directed responsibility.

The distinction becomes even clearer in the context of the main object of Mann's ethic, in the general's reflections on the war. Acknowledging an overall collective will that accompanied the last war, Von Lambart thinks, "Soll ich, nur weil ich früher auf der Welt war, für ihre Taten meinem Jungen verantwortlich sein?" (MM 60). But with this question his thoughts begin to balk: "'Verantwortung -- ein Wort! Man kann sehr wohl sein Kind unglücklich machen, und es ging doch nicht anders.' Er dachte leiser: 'Mich rechtfertigt dies nicht.' Und wieder mit Nachdruck: 'In dem Leben, wie es ist, meine Pflicht tun ist alles'" (MM 60). The narrator then says that this is the point where his thoughts always break off (MM 60). The general is unable to comprehend an idea of responsibility beyond the traditional individual idea of Pflicht that is essential to the military way of thinking, whose context does not extend beyond its own immediacy.
This kind of distinction is also central to an understanding of Jonas's ethic. Karl-Otto Apel explains the distinction well in his discussion of a review of Jonas's work by a neo-conservative critic who misunderstands Jonas's ethic (Apel 421). Apel argues that the criticism comes from a standpoint of "Law and Order" morality, a Pflichtmoral that pertains to each individual's responsibility for his or her own actions and their direct consequences. This has a positive function in the sense of rationalisation of institutions and assuring compliance with the law. He ranks such a conventional morality in the category of "secondary virtues" such as industriousness, obedience, love of order, and so on (Apel 422-23).

Apel's point is that Jonas's ethic is on a different level, operating under a post-conventional morality, "die These nämlich, daß wir heute erstmals aufgefordert sind, die kollektive Verantwortung für die risikoreichen kollektiven Aktivitäten der technischen Zivilisation in solidarischer Kooperation zu übernehmen" (Apel 421-22). Apel goes on to make the important point that strict adherence to such a conventional Pflichtmoral of law and order can result and has resulted in disaster to humanity:

Dennoch ist im gegenwärtigen Problemkontext darauf hinzuweisen, daß die Moral von 'Law and Order' auch diejenige ist, deren reibungsloses Funktionieren bis zuletzt -- d.h. fast bis zum Mai 1945 -- Hitlers unmoralische Herrschaft, und in diesem Zusammenhang Projekte, wie die sogenannte 'Endlösung der Judenfrage,' ermöglicht hat. (Apel 424)
Within a framework of Pflichtmoral, the general is not able to comprehend a large scale idea of responsibility for humanity without resorting to the humanly impossible idea of complete individual accountability: "Merkwürdig, ich selbst ahne jetzt manchmal von fern, was Verantwortung wäre. Oh! es kommt nicht dazu, ich überschätze mich nicht. Ein menschliches Wesen, das sich anmaßte, zu verantworten, wie es gelebt hat -- reden wir lieber nicht von seinem Ende!" (MM 105).

In the last chapter, the general's conscience appears in the form of his opponent in a chess match, an appropriate image for an army general who thinks in terms of opponents and strategies. Von Lambart is alone at the chess table and begins to play for two. He becomes aware that the moves he contemplates for his opponent are better than his own. Then the opponent is given a voice and carries on a dialogue with the general, along with the chess game. He chastises the general for not taking responsibility for his child, as Marie has. The general asks what her source of strength and perserverence is, and his opponent answers, "Als ob du nicht wüßtest, daß ihre Kraft das Gewissen war -- grade das Gewissen, das anzu hören du nicht den Mut fandest. Du wärest seelenruhig abgegangen und hättest deinem Kinde eine unbewohnbare Welt hinterlassen" (MM 153). The general resorts to his usual excuse, "Ich kann für die Welt nichts" (MM 153), but his opponent immediately jumps in with a response:

Lyonel Dunin's comment on this passage is fitting: "Kann es einen stärkeren Beweis geben für das Gefühl der Verantwortung, das dieses Buch vermitteln und künden will, als den darin enthaltenen Ausspruch" (Dunin 17).

The passage exhibits the temporal and causal nature of Mann's ethic that is also expressed in his parenthetical definition of the object of responsibility in his defense of Mutter Marie: "für das Geschehen, für die Kinder und für die Welt, in die sie gestellt sind" (Anger, "Afterword" 464). Mann's ethic exhibits the "Durst nach Zeitlichkeit" that Jonas argues is essential for an ethic of responsibility for the future (Jonas 227). As Jonas explains, "Verantwortlich kann man nur für Veränderliches sein, für das von Verderbnis und Verfall Bedrohte, kurz für Vergängliches in seiner Vergänglichkeit" (Jonas 226).

The general is no match for his opponent, his own conscience. He admits, "Ich bin ein armer Mensch. Ich weiß nicht, warum ich gelebt habe und warum ich nun sterbe," and then notices that the game is over and his opponent has won (MM 153).

Ina, the general's wife, is another figure to whom her conscience appears as a separate entity. Her attitude toward
the past is different from that of the other characters. Even though she and the general have lost their wealth, she remains a character who defines herself completely by her class status, and lives only to regain the wealth that to her is an inborn right as a "große Dame." The intolerability of her current economic situation leads her to aggressively pursue her goal by any means necessary: "Jedes Mittel soll mir recht sein! Wir sind zu fein, es gibt eine Grenze. Jedes Mittel!" (MM 20), and later, "Ich gehe über Leichen" (MM 59). This amoral attitude is exhibited in her attempts to attain money from the president by manipulating and endangering her son's relationship with his fiancée. She begins to see everyone as an opponent: "Auf ihrem Herzensgrunde war die Generalin gegen alle in Abwehr" (MM 102).

After her final confrontation with the president in the stairway, Ina's conscience appears at the top of the steps as a "schattenhafte Dame -- die noch immer gutfrisiert war und kein von Katastrophen zerstörtes Gesicht hatte, obwohl das Unglück sie festhielt" (MM 168). The figure confronts her with her decision to renounce her morality in the face of misfortune: "Diese Dame hatte sich ein für allemal gesagt, daß Unglück nicht dasselbe wie Mißerfolg ist; den Sinn von Mißerfolg bekommt es höchstens durch deine Schuld. 'Keine Moral mehr haben macht noch nicht stark,' sagte diese Dame. 'Das Unglück hat mich grade gebessert!'" (MM 168). When the
figure disappears, Ina recognizes the figure as her conscience: "So hätte sie selbst sein sollen" (MM 168).

Ina's response to the appearance of her conscience is similar to her husband's; one of resignation and dismay. The demand "büße!" directed toward the general by his "opponent" is a call to grasp the temporal context of responsibility, to search and repent the mistakes of the past in order to motivate a change for the future. This is a step that the general and his wife are not willing to risk, but that only Marie will take.

Coming to terms with her past is what brings Marie to learn responsibility. Through flashbacks of memories and in dreams Marie begins to see her actions in a deeper context of their interrelationships and effects. Marie had denied her past, because it had been a threat to her: "Ihre Vergangenheit war bis jetzt doch wesentlich getrennt gewesen von ihrem anerkannten Leben, war versteint und kalt dort hinten zurückgeblieben, indes sie selbst hier atmete" (MM 97). What had awakened the realization of her past was the memory of her child: "Erst die Wiederkehr des Kindes hatte das andere erhellt [...] Die Not um das Kind machte sie schwach gegen längst Vergessene. Sie hatte nun Gewissen, denn sie wußte um das Kind" (MM 97).

This memory of her past, an image of her rejection of the most elemental human feeling of responsibility, triggers a flow of memories that begin as a recognition of a dark
"Gestalt" from her past trying to work its way into her consciousness (MM 40). The image of the courtroom then comes alive in her dream, and the judge's sentence opens her eyes to a dangerous connection between her and a figure from both her past and present, Seehase (MM 90-92). After that, other images and faces begin to emerge from her subconscious. She tells Kappus, "Alles, was ich tat, Kappus, kommt jetzt wieder, die Gesichter kommen wieder. Ich bin nie mehr allein" (MM 109). She begins to see a trail of victims, who had drowned in the wake of her business deals and of her lifestyle in general (MM 109).

Marie's past comes to life in a way different from the other two characters. The figure that appears to her is not an expression of her inner conscience, but a mirror of her outer self, standing in opposition to her awakening conscience. The image appears in a framed picture of the Madonna that has accompanied her throughout her life. It is not a depiction of the mother Mary with the child, but of the "Himmelskönigin" with a crown, a thrown, and a scepter. Marie prays to the picture as if she were looking in a mirror, "im Stehen, mit den Augen in seinen und ohne die Hände zu falten" (MM 117). Its frame is covered with gold and red jewels. Marie has projected her own self image onto the painting, and it has become to her a goddess of power and success, a bringer of good fortune. Through the years she has been able to justify any cold-hearted actions before the picture, as
fulfills of its will: "Gott unterschied sich nicht vom Erfolg, das Seelenheit vom guten Geschäft -- weder für Beterin noch Bild. Sie verstanden sich. Es verzieh ihr sogar Taten, die ihre ungläubigen Genossen sich selbst vielleicht nicht ganz verziehen" (MM 118).

Though usually Marie feels in touch with the picture, she feels this time that the picture has become offended by her reawakened feelings:

When the picture speaks to her, it is angry, saying, "Bekenne! Du bist schwach geworden [...] Du bereust jetzt schon dein ganzes Leben. Gestehe, daß du wertlos geworden bist! Du bist reif, dich unter schwere Räder zu werfen und dich beerben zu lassen" (MM 120). And she feels that the picture has turned away from her forever.

At this point, Marie realizes, "Ihre wahre Person war auf der Flucht" (MM 120). Her inner self will come to life in the "Beichtkapitel," as the confessional priest becomes the "Gedanke" that searches her inner soul.
d. The Beichte

While working on his "Beichtkapitel," Mann wrote several letters to his legal advisor Maximilian Brantl for specific information about the Catholic sacrament of confession, since Mann was not Catholic himself (Anger, "Afterword" 459-62). This section, Mann wrote, "kostet mich so viel Arbeit, wie das ganze Buch" (Anger, "Afterword" 462). The chapter focuses on inner truth and contains the essence of the novel's moral imperative "lernt verantworten." Mann's choice of the image of repentance in a religious context as the turning point in the novel corresponds to the theological idea of repentance as a turning point. Repentance involves both remembering and renewing, recognizing one's sins and turning one's course to a new direction. Mann, like Jonas, is arguing the need for a new collective ethical direction with his focus on responsibility in the modern age. The Beichte is a fitting symbolic prescription for Mann's diagnosis of his society, which he sees as having lost its conscience, unwilling to truthfully acknowledge its past, and proceeding on a path to war.

During Marie's first visit to the confessional, the priest tells her, "Ihre Gewissenserforschung braucht um so mehr Zeit und Fleiß, je falscher Sie gelebt und je länger Sie nicht gebeichtet haben" (MM 128). That Marie has not been to confessional in at least twenty years is mentioned twice (MM
118, 128). Since around 1905, her prayers for success to her "goldbedeckte Himmelskönigin" (MM 129) have substituted for this spiritual act (MM 118). The year 1905 is an important one for Mann's socio-political criticism. This was the year, at the height of the "Ära Bülow," in which Bülow received his princely rank and Germany raised the level of international insecurity in the Kaiser's visit to Morocco, events which Mann connects and highlights in Der Kopf and "Die beiden Gefahren." According to Schröter, 1905 was the year that triggered Mann's political criticism (Schröter, Heinrich Mann in Selbstzeugnissen 74-75). 1906 is the date Mann gives for starting work on Der Untertan (Z 178).

The connection of Marie's last confession (twenty years ago, i.e. 1905) with this important date in Mann's perception of German history points to her position in the novel as a representative figure, whose past actions and present struggles need to be seen not only on the individual level. The other characters also portray, as indicated by Mann, "wichtige Typen von heute" (Anger, "Afterword" 460), but the central figure of the "Abenteuerin" who rose quickly to success represents an even broader group than the aristocracy, the military, the academic world or industry. Marie is the most self-reflective character in the work, a trait that is reinforced by two scenes in which she contemplates her outer and inner identity, looking into the mirror (MM 86, 117). The "Beichtkaptel," the high point of Marie's inner reflection,
reveals Mann's effort to portray Marie as a mirror of his society, a figure in which, through certain highlighted aspects of her life, German citizens could recognize characteristics of their nation as a whole.

The problem of power in Germany that Mann had analyzed especially in *Der Kopf*, under the two main aspects of nationalism and industry and the destructive path of their combined success drives, is also shown in Marie's character, but on the symbolic level of the individual. The aspect of nationalism is reflected in Marie's pride. When she first enters the church and looks for something to grasp with her eyes, she focuses on the "Diplomatenloge," from which she once looked down upon a glorious religious festival (MM 121). The blinding light of the stained glass windows draws her attention away from an image of the repentant Mary Magdalene on her knees. But though she enters the church as Baronin Hartmann, she will leave as Marie, the name that represents her innermost identity (MM 100, 130).

The process of breaking down her illusion of superiority is portrayed well in her encounter with the "Dienstmädchen" during the service of the Rosenkranz. The servant girl is asked by a well dressed gentleman to give up her place in the pew for the baroness. But the atmosphere of the Rosenkranz service, punctuated by the prayers to the suffering Jesus, brings Marie's thoughts to her own past, and the servant girl she once was (MM 124-25). Here she also begins to understand
the image of humility and repentance she had missed earlier that morning: "am Morgen hatte Baronin Hartmann sie gehaßt. Jetzt erst begriff sie die Magdalena, fing doch an, sie zu begreifen" (MM 125).

Her path to success and wealth -- "ich bin von Sünde zu Sünde gegangen, um reich zu werden" (MM 131) -- is described in imagery that corresponds to Mann's perception of Germany's path to world power before the war. Her birthdate, indirectly suggested as 1882,\(^{12}\) corresponds to the beginning of the era of German imperialism (Geiss 44). Her path to fortune began around 1900, when she started demanding "unermüdlich Glanz," acquiring both money and severity from her rich benefactor, and multiplying the former by means of the latter (MM 134). 1900 was one of the first years of Germany's full pursuit of "Weltpolitik" (Geiss 90-95). From that point on, she confesses, "Die Geschäfte brachten mir nicht nur Geld. Ich erwarb Würde, die Bestätigung der Welt [...] Jetzt brachte ich vielen andern Unglück" (MM 134-35). After that she acquired the illusion of nobility to go along with her wealth, buying her title by marrying Baron Hartmann (MM 135). Upon hearing most of her confession, the voice from behind the thin wall of the confessional says, "Unglückliche, merken Sie nicht, daß nur Ihr unverbesserlicher Stolz Sie in immer ärgere Fallen

---

\(^{12}\) Marie tells the priest that she was eighteen years old after the episode with her child (MM 134). We are told earlier that the child was born in 1900 (MM 30).
verstrickt? Nichts brauchen Sie dringender als Verdemütbung" (MM 136).

Learning humility is not only an individual message (Anger, "Afterword" 458), but a societal one that speaks to a nation both exhibiting symptoms of a resurging national pride and turning increasingly with religious like reverence to the new source of human power represented by industry. Jonas also believes that "eine neue Art von Demut" is necessary in response to the modern dynamic of technology: "eine Demut nicht wie frühere wegen der Kleinheit, sondern wegen der exzessiven Größe unserer Macht, die ein Exzeß unserer Macht zu tun über unsere Macht zu werten und zu urteilen ist" (Jonas 55).

Along with the aspect of nationalism illustrated in Marie's pride, her confession also brings up the subject of industry in the symbolic figure of Seehase. Marie combines her past and present association with Seehase when she names him by his current title of president and calls him one of her worst temptations (MM 131). Her dream had awakened the realization earlier that she had joined forces with Seehase years ago, before the war, and that she was on her way to an even more dangerous alliance with him now. Her anxiety about the president pertains to her present relationship with him, and that she could still be tempted to follow him in his attempted seduction of a representative of the younger generation (MM 131).
Marie's pursuit of success and wealth, representative of Germany's pursuit of world power, could begin only after she blocked out her feeling of responsibility for her child. Her "ärgste Sünde" was not the act of giving up her baby, which was done out of anxiety and doubt, but her rejection of the feelings of responsibility that remained with her for a time after that incident. She describes sneaking out behind the house that had taken her child in, standing in the snow and accompanying the sounds of his crying with her own. In order to pursue her own goals, she had to deny this elemental feeling: "Das schlimmste ist, daß ich dies vergessen mußte, damit es mir gut erging. Ich habe nicht wieder geweint und nie mehr im Schnee gekniet" (MM 134). This portrayal of a loss of a feeling of responsibility, along with the loss of the humility of kneeling and repenting is a symbolic image for Mann's understanding of the path his society has taken. The path has already led to a war of previously unknown dimensions. Marie's forgotten child, represented by Valentin, becomes the symbol for the youngest generation to experience the war first hand.

But at twenty-five, seven years after the war, Valentin also represents the generation of the future builders of society. Along with Adele, he becomes the object of Marie's new found ethic of responsibility. The novel does not end with the timeless inner realm of the Beichte, in which "die Zeit nicht galt und [...] es kein Vergessen gab" (MM 132), but
goes on to portray in the last chapter Marie's action for the future.

4. The Object of Responsibility

Jonas makes a distinction between the feeling of responsibility and the emotional element in traditional ethical theory. As examples of the primary affective elements in classical ethics he lists Jewish "fear of God," Christian "charity," Platonic "eros," and Kantian "reverence," among others (Jonas 165). In most ethical systems, the object of such feelings is an idea of a "highest good," which is traditionally a timeless, eternal goal that is to be emulated and appropriated as closely as possible in the temporal world (Jonas 165-66). The object of responsibility, by contrast, is "das Vergängliche qua Vergängliches"; neither a transcendent object to be assimilated, nor an "überragend Besseres," but an object whose value is simply its own sheer existence (Jonas 166). It is an imperfect object, "wahrgenommen gerade in seiner Vergänglichkeit, Bedürftigkeit und Unsicherheit" (Jonas 166).

The object of responsibility is the human being, and the feeling of responsibility is prepared for by the built-in response of human beings toward their offspring. But only with the threat to human existence that has come with the new dimensions of power since the industrial revolution has
responsibility for the future of humanity become an issue of ethical consideration. In Jonas's words, "Die Zukunft der Menschheit ist die erste Pflicht menschlichen Kollektivverhaltens im Zeitalter der modo negativo 'allmächtig' gewordenen technischen Zivilisation" (Jonas 245).

The ethic of responsibility in Mutter Marie reveals Mann's foresight in his understanding of this new imperative. Marie's feelings of responsibility are first awakened by the memory of placing her infant on the edge of the fountain. Her life following that event is revealed to be a pursuit of power and success that acquires a dynamic akin to that of the future industrialist leader, Seehase. By the critical point of the novel's present time frame, Marie and Seehase are in a parallel situation in which they pose a threat to Valentin and Adele, the two characters who represent the next generation of German citizens. By the end, these representative characters become the object of responsibility, not on the individual parental level, but on a broader symbolic level of human responsibility for humanity's future. Marie's actions after the turning point of the Beichte are directed entirely toward these two figures, without thought of reciprocity, based not on the merit of their actions, but on a feeling of responsibility for their future. Her actions involve not only holding back her own power, but also working to control the power of her partner, the industrialist.
The idea that Valentin and Adele represent the future is reinforced by the more generalized depiction of Marie's relationship with them in the last chapter. Two passages suggest that Marie's individual relationship to her son, whom she believed to have found in Valentin (a relationship that is never presented as a fact to the reader), is not the relationship that is at the heart of the novel's theme of responsibility. In the final scene, when Valentin calls "Mutter!", Marie responds, "Das war. Jetzt weiß ich daß ich geirrt habe, aber es war unser Glück, unser großes Glück. Du bist nicht mein Sohn. Nur das Kind meines Herzens bist du wirklich" (MM 173). Her new attitude toward Adele reflects a similar position. Looking out from her room in the villa, Marie sees the princess on the beach as a bright point of light: "die Prinzessin -- der helle Punkt dort hinten ist alles, worauf es jetzt ankommt, das große Ereignis [...] Auf einmal war es entschieden, ganz einfach und still: sie liebte jenen hellen Punkt, liebte die junge, törichte Adele als ihr Kind, wie Valentin" (MM 147). Her love for each "as her child" is an expression of a feeling of responsibility to the "child of her heart," the bright light that represents the generations of the future.

The focus of the novel is not on the representatives of the future but on Marie's attitude toward them. Valentin and Adele, though they do undergo change in the novel, do not show the type of inner change demonstrated by Marie in her
realization of responsibility. They are not presented in a negative or satirical light, but from the same stance of critical yet empathetic observation that characterizes Mann's essays about the younger generation. Their change remains on the superficial level, as illustrated by Marie's observation of the "awakened" princess: "Da war nun dies von Liebe geistig erweckte Geschöpf. Sein erster Gedanke aber: Geld" (MM 155). By the end, it seems Valentin is beginning to touch on issues of inner depth as well, as he thinks about his relationship with Marie: "Was aber hatte er aus ihr gemacht? Fast sein Opfer [...] Der Versucher war nur er -- in seiner Rolle als Mann, als eitler Mann" (MM 157). But these thoughts are fleeting, and come to him as nothing more than an interruption, "während seines technischen Gespräches mit der Prinzessin über den neuen Rennwagen" (MM 158).

Valentin's experience with the world has been marked by death, both on the massive, unreal stage of the war, for which he was honored as a hero, and on the individual and much more real level of the political murder he became involved in after the war, through his association with a nationalist group. His self-perception is full of insecurity and detachment:

Valentin represents his generation, prone to the extremism of both the radical right and left and finding a common denominator for both in violence, as demonstrated in the scene with the communist Wernawe and their fight with the nationalists. The scene depicting Valentin's step to "manhood" demonstrates not a positive inner change, but the ease with which this representative of youth can become invigorated with reawakened feelings of the warrior, thirsting for more action, ready to conquer and possess: "Ich will handeln, daher will ich auch besitzen. Wer handelt, will als Zeichen den Besitz" (MM 116).

But as one of the youngest participants in his society's war, Valentin also represents a victimized generation with a threatened future. He is on a path to becoming a victim of the industrialist, of hate and violence on both ends of the political spectrum, and of the success dynamic embodied by Marie. His value to his victimizers is symbolized by his comparison to the novel's highest object of desire, the ruby. This comparison is suggested in several references (MM 42, 115), most clearly after Valentin's escapade with Wernawe: "[Marie] dachte: 'Ich war im Begriff, ihn mit mir niederzureißen ... Sein Versteck werde ich nie mehr öffnen.' Sie wußte nicht, ob Valentin oder der Stein" (116). The attitude of those who want to possess Valentin is reflected in their reactions to the ruby. For Marie, the ruby "stellte ihr Leben vor, Erwerb, Erfolg" (MM 114). Wernawe, who is intent
on bringing Valentin into his ranks, does not trust his own morality when he is near the stone (MM 114). The nationalist blackmailers attempt to steal it. But after the confrontation, the red stone, having been used as a weapon, is dripping with blood, a subtle indicator of an ongoing cycle of violence and victimization (MM 115).

The danger of the impending catastrophe of war is not directly referred to in this novel as it is in Mann's essays of the time, but it is subtly interwoven into the novel's fabric. Ina uses war imagery to describe the industrialist's main business headquarters: "Es sieht sogar aus wie eine Kriegsmaschine -- ein Tank" (MM 16). Volker Ebersbach sees this as an example of Mann's criticism of the "Technisierung aller Lebensäußerungen der Menschen" in Weimar Germany (Ebersbach, Heinrich Mann 224). It is also one of many subtle warnings of the growing elements of fascism and violence in his society, and its drive to war, fueled by the war industry.

The "catastrophes" depicted in the novel are consistently on a personal and seemingly trivial level. But as the entire novel invites the reader to search for deeper meaning, the surface battles and catastrophes all suggest the deeper ones that become clear only in the context of the post-inflation Weimar society. The ending is depicted against the backdrop of a rising storm, a symbol for war that Mann also used in Der Untertan, Die Armen, and Der Kopf. But here, in the Weimar novel, the storm is accompanied by the illusory magic of a
fireworks display, symbolizing along with the threat of war its romantic allure as a glorious adventure.

The older characters all have battles on their own levels. The general loses a game of chess to his own conscience. Ina battles Marie and eventually everyone in her attempt to recover her social standing. The professor's battle is over his illusory control of the Geist of the princess. His lost battle finds its glaringly trivial expression in his discovery of Seehase's secret financing of the princess's bridal gown: "Ich sehe nichts, was ist. Meine Prinzessin trägt ein Kleid, das nicht ich bezahle, ich aber rede. So ist mein Leben vergangen" (MM 161). But the real issue is the one of control, a dominant theme in the novel that points to the danger of fascism.

The professor is in control of the princess and sees himself as the savior, guardian, and teacher of her Geist. Her "awakening" arouses his suspicions that he is losing this control: "Seit einiger Zeit nun beobachte ich wirklich ihr Erwachen. Aber ich habe schärfsten Verdacht, daß keineswegs meine erzieherische Vernunft, die noch so herrliche Kraft meiner Vernunft es bewirkt hat -- sondern der Tanz" (MM 103). Wunder later derides himself for losing his possession, the princess, to Valentin:

Womit er nur geißeln, sich selbst geißeln wollte dafür, daß er die Prinzessin erweckt hatte mit der Leidenschaft seines Geistes, sie erweckt und dann fahrengelassen hatte. Ein anderer, der nichts für sie tat, ward zum Inhaber seiner, seiner Erfolge -- ward von der Prinzessin geliebt. (MM 160)
Wunder equates love with possession and is convinced of the necessity of a powerful ruling elite, of which he is to be included as a representative of Geist. He says to Seehase, "Die Welt der Liebe ist einzig und allein für die paar Herren des Lebens da [...] Die Welt des Reichtums auch. Ihresgleichen, Herr Präsident, hat unschätzbare Verdienste. Sie stützen die leider wankenden Naturgesetze -- und ich mit Ihnen! [...] Wir beiden Breitschultrigen!" (MM 160-61). His system of thought, though not based on brutality or violence, is an irresponsible and self-destructive one that is susceptible to fascism. The system breaks down in the midst of the "catastrophe" of losing control over the princess: "Die Prinzessin war fort, er schrieb das Unglück seinen eigenen verbrecherischen Wünschen zu. Er hatte keine Philosophie mehr, sein heiteres Denken setzte Frieden voraus; der Professor verlor sich sofort an die Katastrophen" (MM 169).

Ina also exhibits a desire to control. The bit of self-determination and depth that is revealed in the growing relationship of the two young people is enough to raise her suspicions about her own control. Watching the couple dance, she feels her plans are being threatened:

Seitdem auf vernünftig nicht erklärbare Art der Verstand der Prinzessin erwacht war, spürte die Generalin dort den Widerstand, den die Persönlichkeit leistet. Jenes Wesen, das ernst und stumm hier Bewegungen machte wie aufgezogen, konnte zur Gefahr werden, denn es hatte Tiefen. Die Generalin versprach sich, sie auszuheben, sie unschädlich zu machen. Nur wer von ihr beherrscht ward, konnte sie nicht schädigen. (MM 102)
The greatest threat to the youth however is Seehase. His danger is forewarned on several occasions, in the princess's comment that he is a thief (MM 22), in Marie's warnings about him to Valentin (MM 72, 82), and especially in her dream, in which Seehase appears as a figure with the claws of a predator (MM 91-92). His danger is indicated subtly in an offhand reference to Kobes that reveals Seehase as an even greater force than Mann's earlier figure: "So standen seine Stirnfalten an dem Tage, als sein stärkster Gegner Kobes zusammenbrach" (MM 157).

Seehase openly expresses his desire to possess and control Adele when he promises her stardom on the stage, an offer that rings of Mann's criticism of the nationalistic desire for a leading role on the world stage: "Prinzessin, wollen Hoheit die Meine werden, so übernehme ich jede Garantie, ich mache Sie zur größten Sängerin der Welt" (MM 57). He goes on to make his plans to possess the princess known to Ina (MM 57) and finally to Marie. His offer of alliance with Marie is an effort to increase his ability to thwart the potential "betrayal" indicated by the small signs of the young couple's self-determination: "Wir haben schon so viel geleistet für die beiden Kindchen, jeder für seins, daß es kein Wunder wäre, wenn wir uns gemeinsam zur Wehr setzten gegen ihre Verättereien" (MM 93). The president knows the value of a dismal economic situation for his efforts to secure the allegiance of his princess: "Vorläufig aber ist es
geboten, daß sowohl sie wie der junge Mann an Geldmangel leiden. Sonst scheitern unsere Absichten, Ihre wie meine" (MM 95).

Mann parallels the danger of the president in the final chapter with the rising storm that accompanies his attempt to abduct the princess. Along with his power, Seehase has self-destructive tendencies. He is shown as a character who is willing to risk everything to gain his objective, unconcerned with the outcome of his failure. He promises catastrophe after his own fall: "nach ihm selbst die Sintflut, verhiß er. Nichts Geschaffenes habe Bestand, nicht einmal sein Industriekonzern" (MM 159). Driven to a frenzy by his anxiety over losing control, Seehase considers jumping out of a window twice (MM 160, 161), and is persuaded by Marie against his own better judgement to throw himself into the sea during the storm, in futile pursuit of the princess (MM 162). He is in total pursuit of his objective, without regard even to his own destruction: "'Mir ist alles gleich, ich gehe über Leichen.' Ihm war anzusehn: auch über seine eigene" (MM 162).

Seehase is portrayed not only as a powerful industrial leader, but also as the true controller and representative of the leadership of the republic.13 His attitude of ignorance toward the past and indifference to responsibility, along with his potential for self-destruction and his desire to control

13 Seehase says, "Ich bin Republikaner" (MM 19), and Valentin says, "[...] die Republik in ihrem Vertreter Seehase [...]" (MM 36).
the representatives of the future, all point to the hubris of modern power that is fueling the drive of Mann's society to fascism and war.

In his final stand in "das tankartige Haus" (MM 170), Seehase reveals his desire for either total control or total self-destruction. In the midst of a heart attack he calls out to Valentin, "Ihr könnt ohne mich nicht leben, nicht ohne daß ich dabei bin" (MM 171). But Marie recognizes his heart condition as psychologically self-inflicted: "Ich hatte längst den Verdacht, daß sein Herzleiden nicht ganz echt ist. Es ist Hysterie, die Strafe der Unersättlichen" (MM 172). Like the Moloch in "Kobes," Seehase represents the insatiable power of an industry that demands human sacrifice for its own survival.

Marie is the character who is able to finally break away from the path leading to destruction. The inner search of her past leads her to the awareness of her intimate connection with Seehase in her attempt to control and possess Valentin. It also leads her to check her own power and act on behalf of the couple against the president. Marie's relationship with Valentin before she turns to the confessional evolves gradually into a dangerous one. First she only feels the guilt of her past, which leads her to try to find her son. But once she believes to have found him, she sees him as another object to conquer and possess, like the ruby: "Du sollst dir deinen Sohn erobern" (MM 79). Just before Valentin surrenders to her will and agrees to leave the princess and
move in with her, she calls him "'Mein Junge' [...] wie zu ihrem Eigentum" (MM 89).

This self-serving attitude is reflected in her confession as well: "Ich muß doch mein Kind für mich haben" (MM 138). But the "Gedanke" in the confessional probes the relationship to find a deeper truth: "Lockten Sie ihn an mit List und Gewalt?" (MM 138). She discovers that her relationship has been one of power, control, and desire, not unlike the president's pursuit of Adele. The relationship is also paralleled to her own relationship with the pastor of her youth, who had a power over her that she recognizes later: "So viel Macht darf niemand bekommen, er kann sie nicht halten" (MM 53). What she does not realize until her confession is that she is exhibiting the same kind of power over Valentin as the pastor did over her. Her gesture of stroking Valentin's face immediately after telling him the story of her youth mirrors a similar gesture of the pastor in the moment of his greatest power over her (MM 53).

The relationship brings Valentin to the point of wanting to sacrifice himself for Marie, perceiving himself as a romantic warrior: "Ich will endlich deiner würdig und Mann werden. Kämen wir doch in Gefahr, damit ich es dir beweise! Für dich verlasse ich alles. Nimm mich auf!" (MM 89). The Untertan cycle of domination and submission is reflected once again in a parallel image, this time in the picture of Marie's submission to her first lover, a horse groomer who beat her:
"Er schlug mich, aber ich hätte für ihn gemordet" (MM 132). When Valentin does get the chance to prove himself, Marie, like her abusive lover, has mixed feelings of love and hate toward him. She secretly hopes that he will carry out his sacrifice. She also has a desire to sacrifice herself, that becomes confused with a desire to kill the object of her love: "Sie, die nicht wüßte, ob sie sich opfern oder ob sie töten wollte! Die nicht mehr Liebe vom Haß unterschied!" (MM 117). This is the high point of her inner torture as well as her outward threat to Valentin. At this point she turns first to her success goddess, and finally to the confessional.

After serving out her penance in the Exerzitienhaus, Marie has changed. There is no guarantee that it is a permanent change, but rather her new attitude will have to be constantly renewed in order to prevent further self-deception: "Nach Rückfällen stände es mit dir schlimmer als vorher, zur Zeit der Unwissenheit. Vor allem sei streng gegen neue Selbsttäuschungen!" (MM 143). Her new outlook allows her to carry out an act of responsibility. By putting herself in Adele's place, she prevents the catastrophe symbolized in the president's act of abduction. Her advice to the princess is to remain aware of the president's threat to their future: "Laßt ihn sich aber nicht an eure Zukunft hängen! Die müßt ihr ganz allein bestehn" (MM 156).

The future of Adele and Valentin is left to them. But Marie's act symbolizes the kind of responsibility "für das
Geschehen, für die Kinder, und für die Welt, in die sie gestellt sind" that is missing in any of the other representative figures. The novel's ending shows an optimism on the level of Mann's own cautious hope for society's capability of realizing a deeper responsibility to the future and taking control of its own power. The focus of this optimism has been missed by most, who have rather seen the novel as optimistic because of its resolved "happy ending," which is actually much more an open question than a resolved ending. Marie's hope for Valentin's and Adele's ability to respond as she has is cautious: "Sie glaubte zuletzt nahezu [...] daß aber die Kinder richtig wählen würden" (MM 156). The choice is theirs, but the future remains uncertain. With Marie gone, and the president still alive, Valentin no longer feels like a war hero, but rather, "daß eine Kraft ohnegleichen ihn verlassen habe und daß er nur gerade genug haben werde an all seinen Mut" (MM 174).

B. The Completion of the Moral Trilogy

1. Eugénie oder Die Bürgerzeit: The Spirit of Speculation

Wolfdietrich Rasch first argued convincingly for a reevaluation of the second novel in Mann's Weimar trilogy, which had been considered by most to be a nostalgic look at a
better time in the past (Rasch 467-77).14 Though the novel's time frame takes the reader back to the Bürgerzeit of the 1870s, the early years of German nationhood, Eugenie does not simply look backward, but provides a historical analogy to post-war and post-inflation Weimar Germany.

Referring to Arthur Rosenberg's history of the Weimar Republic, Rasch explains the analogy by which the founding years of the German nation after 1871 can be compared to the "years of stability" after 1924. The primary aspect of comparison is in the desire for rapid economic expansion fueled by war reparations in the 1870s and by the foreign loans accompanying the Dawes Plan in the 1920s. Rasch interprets Eugenie in the light of Mann's awareness of this parallel and of the deceptive atmosphere of security and stability covering the shaky political and economic foundation of the republic (Rasch 469).

As in the other two novels of Mann's Weimar trilogy, Eugenie features a character who represents a force that is driving society to a catastrophe. In Mutter Marie, this force was portrayed by the Weimar industrialist Seehase. The corresponding figure in Eugenie is the business speculator

---

14 For an earlier interpretation, see Weisstein, Heinrich Mann 151. For later interpretations along the lines of Rasch, see Eilert 211-19; Wuthenow 229-44. Eilert argues that the novel does not turn nostalgically to the past, but warns of dangerous trends of the present (218-19). Wuthenow notes that Mann "hat Analogien nicht etwa hergestellt, sondern aufgezeigt. Damit wird nun der scheinbar historisch orientierte Roman als verfremdender und objektivierender Spiegel der Gegenwart zu begreifen sein" (230).
Pidohn. Mann's portrayal of these characters, from Kobes and Knack to Seehase, Pidohn, and Schattich (*Die große Sache*), is not an attempt to project a literary "Feindbild des Industrieherren," as Lehnert argues (Lehnert 100). In all of the works, these figures are portrayed not as the embodiment of evil but as human characters. The figures are not projections of a personalized scapegoat for society's failures, but representations of the modern dynamic of human power that is embodied by industry, but that is also reflected in the spirit of society as a whole.

The short novel *Eugénie*, with its neatly resolved ending and moral is once again deceptively "leicht lesbar," to use Mann's own words. The threatening undercurrent of the novel is masked by a surface of illusion, which is reflected in the theatrical performance that motivates the plot and the atmosphere of lightness that accompanies the picture of the era. As in *Mutter Marie*, a self-conscious fairy-tale tone invites the reader to explore beneath the novel's surface. This novel, described by Ralf-Rainer Wuthenow as a "bürgerliches Märchen," plays into the fairy-tale atmosphere even more deliberately than its predecessor with its optimistic ending (Wuthenow 229). Monika Hocker calls the work a "sozial-kritische[s] Märchen [...] mit harmonischem

---

The novel ends with a resolution of the conflict in the private sphere of the family. The *deus ex machina* of the mayor helping the Wests out of their debt, the promise of Jürgen and Gabriele to love each other, and the conciliatory handshake with the poet Heines all lead up to the novel's final moral, "Lernet ertragen!," a message seen written in the rosy morning sky of a new day (E 227). But the irony for the Weimar reader is precisely in this overstated optimism, which, as Rasch points out, may have reminded the reader of a "Familienblattroman" (Rasch 475). This irony is also expressed in Reuter's statement to West after West's loss of position and wealth: "Wir rechnen mit langen Fristen, und wehe, wenn wir Eile hätten. Dann wäre die Bürgerzeit bald vorbei" (E 224). The Bürgerzeit was indeed nearing its end at the time depicted in the novel, to be replaced by the age of imperialism and the drive to world power starting in the next decade.

Mann's ironic stance toward the time portrayed in the novel comes through clearly in his essay "Kurzes Besinnen," from 1928. He describes the romantic view of power that prevailed among the French and German emperors, both of whom are featured in the play within the novel: "Wilhelm I., einer der Bürgerfürsten, hatte wie sein feindlicher Vetter Napoleon III. in seinem Lebenslauf noch alle Anzeichen der Romantik
Mann then highlights four thinkers of the time who exemplify for him a spirit of critical reflection toward their era:

Als die Bürgerzeit zu Ende ging, ward sie sich in einigen Geistern mit herrlicher, an Grausamkeit grenzender Klarheit bewußt, was sie gewesen war, und was sie statt dessen hatte scheinen wollen. Die Geister hießen Ibsen, Zola, Tolstoi, Nietzsche. Sie beherrschten die Geisteswelt 1880. Wer beherrscht eigentlich 1928 die Geisteswelt, gesetzt, es gäbe eine? Damals stand in Frage das Sittliche der Lebenden, -- nicht, ob sie nur gelebt und Kraft entwickelt, sondern warum und wie sie gelebt hatten [...] Alle standen zu ihrer Zeit kritisch. Dadurch förderten sie das Leben, -- das niemals gewinnt, wenn man seinen gerade geltende Formen bedingungslos zustimmt. (SJ 480)

Mann is referring to this critical and analytical view toward the Bürgerzeit, a time that seemed on the surface light and easy, when he ends the essay, "Das beste, was sich hoffen läßt, ist [...] daß 1880 und sein sittliches Geschehen sich in anderen Zusammenhängen später wiederholt" (SJ 482). He is not calling for a return of the Bürgerzeit itself, but a return, in a new context, of that critical and ethical awareness that the era gave rise to, an attitude that will be necessary for an ethic of future-directed responsibility.

The self-conscious fairy-tale ending of the novel does not undermine its moral of learning to endure, but rather it underlines the seriousness of the message by reflecting in story book simplicity the illusion that is threatening both the time portrayed and the present. As the reader is aware, reality did not provide such a clean resolution to the
problems that began in the Bürgerzeit. After the Bürgerzeit followed "die imperialistische und was sie uns Armen bringen sollte" (SJ 480), the world war. In light of the analogy of the spirit of Weimar with that of the Bürgerzeit, "lernt ertragen" gains a deeper significance than its seemingly private application in the novel. Wuthenow writes of the ending,

So erscheint das Ende optimistisch, menschlich-gütig und moralisch-privat [...] aber so sehr steht das von Verlusten und Bedrohungen überschattete Happy-End in Anführungszeichen, daß man wohl begreift, ein zweites Mal werde eine solche Rettung nicht mehr gelingen. Die Mahnung bleibt. Und wenn auch die Lösungen dergestalt einen privaten und zufälligen Charakter haben, die Probleme und Verhältnisse, von denen der Erzähler handelt, tragen ihn nicht [...] Hinter dem vergoldeten Märchenschluß steht ein ironisches Fragezeichen. (Wuthenow 244)

Mann's ironic question mark becomes even clearer when his moral imperative of learning to endure is brought into the context of his ethic of responsibility. The moral is not simply a general maxim of learning to endure the hardships of one's life, such as the Wests' financial loss, but rather it is an imperative that only gains significance in the light of its counterpart in the novel, the spirit of speculation. The theme of speculation, like the theme of control in Mutter Marie, becomes the symbolic threatening element that an ethic of responsibility will need to counteract.

As Rasch points out, the opening scene evokes an atmosphere similar to the beginning of Fontane's Effi Briest (Rasch 467; Roberts, Artistic 158; Wuthenow 233), in its
description of the light summer air, the swing, and the game of croquet. But Mann's ironic stance toward this description is made clear when nearly the exact wording of the first paragraph is repeated in the middle of the work, in a new context. By this time, all of the underlying elements of danger have already been exposed in the plot. The imagery of the paragraph, which begins, "1873 an diesem Nachmittag im Sommer erhob die Luft sich leicht und so hell wie Perlen über den Gärten vor der Stadt," and ends, "Das glückliche junge Lachen der Konsulin war einmal genau zu hören" (E 7, 122-23), is undermined the second time it is presented. This time there are observers outside the gate who remark, "Wie lange hält sich das noch?," referring to their stock speculation with Pidohn (E 123). The question is accompanied by two further muffled warning signs; Gabriele falls unconscious after a look from Pidohn, and the sound of the young Jürgen drumming is heard in the background (E 124).

The whole town has become involved in Pidohn's speculating business ventures. Private economic concerns become symbolic, as in Mutter Marie, for concerns of a deeper nature. In the earlier novel, wealth was a symbol for the power to control; in Eugénie, financial speculation stands for speculation with the future. The statement made by the observers of the carefree game of croquet applies to the facade of Weimar as well: "Wie lange hält sich das noch?" Rasch describes the time portrayed in the novel as the
beginning of a period in German history in which "bedenkenlose
Erwerbslust sich durchsetzt, gleichzeitig ebenso bedenkenloses
Machtstreben im politischen und militärischen Bereich, die
Großmannssucht, die persönliche wie nationale
Selbstüberschätzung" (Rasch 472). The warning of the
continuation and escalation of such an attitude in an era in
which the danger of power has escalated as well, in which the
Pidonhs of the Bürgerzeit have become the Kobes's of Weimar
Germany, becomes clear in light of the analogy.

The atmosphere of speculation fits into Mann's ethic of
responsibility in its relationship to the future. In the
light of this ethic, speculation, defined as taking unusual
risks in the hope of large gains, becomes a method of action
based not on a sense of preservation or responsibility to
future beings, but on risking the future on the chance for
great success for the risk takers. Pidonh defines his role as
the prime speculator by his risky attitude toward the future:
"Der Spekulant kann stürzen [...] Der Spekulant kennt die
Gefahr, ihn bedrohen die Zukunft und der, dem die Zukunft
gehört" (E 15). The seriousness of this for the Weimar
audience comes through even more clearly in his comments such
as the following, directed to the two army officers: "Sieger
wie wir! Wann könnte es uns fehlen! [...] Stürzen wir uns in
neue Schlachten!" (E 16).

Wuthenow notes the parallel of such a shortsighted
success ethic with Mann's assessment of the current tendencies
of young authors in Weimar (Wuthenow 232). In his essay "Geistige Neigungen in Deutschland," Mann writes, "Was sie, die Peitsche hinter sich, verfertigen, ist für heute und jetzt gedacht, es soll sie für ein paar Jahre nach vorn bringen. Nachher die Sintflut" (SJ 233). This statement represents an overall spirit that can be translated to a level beyond literary success. In Mutter Marie, Seehase represents a similar spirit, promising, "nach ihm selbst die Sintflut" (MM 159). But in both novels, society is not a victim of these powerful figures, but shown to be moving in step with the spirit they represent. Gabriele's observation makes this clear: "Die Lust nach seinem gezauberten Geld hat euch alle blind gemacht" (E 114). Pidohn also points out that his role as scapegoat is unjustified: "Ich soll der Sündenbock sein, während alle Leute Mitschuld haben" (E 150).

Pidohn's character is in essence a portrayal of the source of the spirit that Mann had tried to capture in his analyses of Germany's past, and elements of his character echo those of Mann's previous notorious figures. The comparison of Pidohn with Seehase also extends to their attitude toward the past, for which Pidohn has no regard: "Es stand einmal anders mit Ihnen? Wer fragt danach? Was Sie heute sind, das ist der Punkt" (E 76). He is the prime speculator, "[der] erfolgreichst[e] Geschäftsmann weit und breit" (E 78), whose

---

16 This spirit is also reflected in Der Kopf, in the "Generalagentur" episode.
only thoughts of the future are of his own dreams of castles (E 80), pleasure boats and sailing "in lauter Lust und Herrlichkeit hinaus auf die blaue, blaue See" (E 82). The image of the blue sea as a symbol for glorious, romantic aspirations was also alluded to in the description of Wilhelm's mission to Morocco in Der Kopf. As Rasch points out, Pidohn represents a force that is "unersättlich" (Rasch 471), a figure who once again brings forth the image of the Moloch in "Kobes."

Another primary character in Eugénie is Jürgen West, who quickly falls into league with Pidohn and eventually loses both his social standing and his wealth. West is the character who in the beginning sees the danger of speculation from the vantage point of the responsible businessperson. He warns of Pidohn early: "Er sieht nur, daß durch Spekulation jetzt häufiger Vermögen entstehen, als mit gediegener Arbeit. Merkt er nicht auch, daß die Rückschläge schon häufiger werden -- und uns näherkommen? [...] Solchen Leuten fehlt die klare Vorstellung ihrer Grenzen. Auch ihrer Pflichten" (E 28). When placed in the Weimar context, this statement applies to the industrialists and the technological pursuit of modern power that sees no boundaries.

In a passage that can be seen as the core statement of the novel, West goes on to explain the spirit that needs to be upheld in opposition to boundless speculation:

Verantwortung! [...] Daran liegt es grade. Er ist ihrer unfähig, sonst hätte er sich längst darauf
West's statement refers not merely to individual responsibility for one's actions, but once again to a sense of collective responsibility for the future well being of the whole. In view of Mann's perception of Weimar society, money symbolizes the drive to power and success, and the "Kaufleute" are not just the bourgeois business class, but the citizens of the "Republikgeschäft."

Although West is given this insight into responsibility, he is shown to defy his own words, which are beginning to sound untrue to him even the moment after he says them (E 29). The primary focus of the novel is not on West, but on his wife Gabriele. The character Gabriele represents a romantic and carefree spirit of happiness and irresponsibility, but she also exhibits the will to power in the role she plays, the empress Eugénie. As Heines explains her role, "Ihre schöne Kaiserin, der Sie ähnlich sehen, war keine schlechte Natur [...] Freilich verwandelte die mächtige Stellung, die sie einnahm, all dies nur zu bald in Herrschsucht" (E 34). To those around the table and the society of 1873 it is well known that Eugénie wanted the war to come (E 34).

Like Marie, Gabriele experiences an awakening of her conscience. Mann also incorporates the image of parental responsibility into the portrayal of his protagonist. The
references to Gabriele's neglect for her five-year-old son are scattered throughout the work to become a motif, not unlike the image of Marie with her newborn at the fountain. In one such scene, on her way to the seacoast town Suturp, Gabriele pulls the young Jürgen along, unaware of the anxious state of his thoughts: "die Hand der Mutter verlieren und in der Welt verlorengehn" (E 70). Jürgen's fear echoes Gabriele's own dream about losing her mother (E 46-47). His worries become reality when she turns her back on him, leaving him at a home along the road in order to ride alone with Pidohn to Suturp (E 71).

Gabriele's conscience is awakened not through the confession, but through the play, and the realization of her relationship with Pidohn and the threat of Suturp. Heines's play, orchestrated to provide insight for Gabriele, mirrors the reality of the novel. In keeping with the ironic stance toward the fairy-tale atmosphere of the novel, the moralist Heines is portrayed, as Eilert notes, with ironic touches of caricature (E 212). He is the great patriotic poet who is able to orchestrate a moral lesson on the private level, just as he was able to inspire the nation to unity with his poetry: "'Ich führte das Schwert wie ihr,' sagte er zu den jungen Kriegern ihm gegenüber. 'Ich erhielt es so lange rein und stark, bis ihr den letzten Streich tatet'" (E 31). His play brings about a tidy resolution in the novel, culminating in

17 See 8, 46-47, 51, 58, 66, 100, 154.
the handshake and embrace with West (E 215). The figure, identified as Emmanuel Geibel of Lübeck (Rasch 468), is also formulated in part from an ironic self-reflection of the author. But on another level, when one looks beyond Geibel's character and the private surface of the novel, the play and the conflict of its main actress Gabriele reflect Mann's message of the threat to the Weimar society and the response needed.

The play is about Napoleon III and Eugénie meeting just after France's defeat at Sedan. The theme of a lost war and a defeated French empire is played to a German audience within the novel. The analogy for the Weimar audience is in the comparison of the French and German empires, a comparison Mann had also made in "Zola." The audience's reception of the play is an important factor for the message to the readers of the novel, in their parallel situation.

Before and during the play, there is a tension in the audience that combines their business concerns with their concern for the action on stage. The audience is awaiting the arrival of Pidohn, who plays Napoleon, and with him the news of success or failure in his speculation deal, through which they hope to become rich. When Napoleon steps on to the stage (though it is really Heines) many in the audience think, "Also doch. Er ist da. Er hat da Geld. Ich verdiene" (E 193).

The theme of the play is of the empress Eugénie and her husband Napoleon learning to endure their own defeat and the
defeat of their empire. At first Eugénie's plan is to find a way to bring Napoleon back to Paris, in order to continue their former lifestyle and secure the eventual rule of her son. But Napoleon is more realistic in accepting his defeat: "Nichts gab es mehr als Ertragen" (E 195). He realizes his glorious aspirations have come to a sudden end: "So endet der Ruhm der Welt" (E 196). The reactions of the audience toward this portrayal reveal Mann's intentions in establishing an analogy with his readers. The academics in the audience compare the scene to an earlier effort of Heines: "Das ist zweifelsohne vom Geist seiner Elektra" (E 197). They judge Heines's setting of "antique characters" into recent history, saying, "Man könnte sagen, daß der Dichter seine richtige Erkenntnis der Seelen diesmal in falsch erfundene Umstände verlegt hat" (E 197).

Likewise, Mann is speaking to his current audience with characters from a time over a half century ago, a time that seemed ancient compared to the present. As Mann notes in "Kurzes Besinnen," "Alles was heute lebt, fühlt sich hauptsächlich groß im Gegensatz zu 1880. Damals gab es die technischen Errungenschaften meistens noch nicht [...]" (SJ 478). But Mann's hopes for an understanding of the comparison are reflected in another reaction in the audience: "Andere hörten vielleicht im Falschen mehr das Richtige, besonders die Kriegsteilnehmer im Publikum" (E 197).
Others, though they are aware of the historical outcome of the play, are still under the illusion of the power of the "Schicksalstür" through which the characters enter the stage, and the chance that success may still await both the characters of the play and themselves: "Zum Beispiel hat Napoleon plötzlich doch gesiegt. Pidohn hat das Geld. Ich gewinne, ich bin reich" (E 199). Through the audience's reactions, the spirit of speculation is combined with the imagery of victory and defeat in the war, and the illusion of the stage. The image that prevails is one of giving up the pursuit of glory, which is reflected best in the character of Gabriele, in her role on stage and in her own life. This is the picture that reflects the ethic of responsibility and the message of endurance overcoming the temptation of speculation.

Gabriele arrives at this insight before the actual performance of the play. In reflecting on her recent romantic fantasies, the general application of her thoughts for the reader is suggested by her use of the plural pronoun:

Wir konnten im Hafen das Schiff besteigen, das in die Vergangenheit fährt, oder die Zukunft mit einem Abenteurer teilen oder den sanftesten der Liebhaber erhören. Zuletzt drängt uns doch alles auf einen unausweichlichen Punkt, und er heißt Bescheidung, heißt Ertragen. (E 188)

She has come to this realization through the rehearsal with Pidohn, and the imagery of Suturbp. Suturbp represents adventure, escape, and danger, with its access to the open sea
and its threatening storms. For Pidohn the sea is a place of relief, a symbol for paradise after victory. But Gabriele's remark points to the short-sightedness of his thinking: "Aber so still wie heute, und besonders von so verlockenden Farben, ist die See vielleicht nur einmal im Jahr. Schon morgen kann sie wieder blau und nebelig sein, und schon ist auch der Sturm da" (E 82). The illusion of Pidohn's statement about the "Bürger" is clear from a post-war perspective: "Sie werden nicht mit hinaus müssen in den wilden Sturm. Nein, so weit kommt es mit Euresgleichen nie. Ihr seid, sogar für Unglücksfälle, noch immer beieinander versichert" (E 82-83).

The threat of Suturp is symbolic for the self-destructive end of a path of romantic illusion and irresponsibility. This threat is first made clear by Gabriele in her fit of imagination in the company of Heines, and again later in the rehearsal with Pidohn: "Mit dir in das Elend und in den Sturm von Suturp. Untergehn mit dir!" (E 115, also see 143). In the rehearsal scene, her use of the name Suturp interrupts their acting by evoking an incongruity that confuses the play and reality. This causes Pidohn to identify her romanticized perception of their relationship (E 143, 147). After this illusion is broken, Gabriele begins to realize a deeper reality: "'Ich trage die Schuld, ich muß sie büßen,' dies

---

18 See Harbers 352-53.
ergab das Ende. Es war das Ende eines romantischen Lebenslaufes" (E 155).

The significance of Suturp for the theme of endurance necessary for an ethic of responsibility is also underlined in a novella published in advance of the novel. In the final lines of "Suturp," a story that is also about the illusion of power and success, the struggle of the two main characters against the storm of Suturp is described:


The imagery suggests the struggle Mann sees as necessary in preventing the storm of war that is threatening the future of his society.

In the final scene, after the play has been performed, Mann returns to the theme of responsibility for the child. When Gabriele realizes her son is missing after the play, and her conscience awakens:


She runs out to find him, thinking, "Das Kind! Nichts auf der Welt, das Kind!" (E 220). She finds him in the same place she
had left him before, on the way to Suturp, and brings him home.

The speculation theme of Eugénie speaks to the citizens of Weimar in their willingness to be swept up in a renewed spirit of the pursuit of success and power. It also exposes the roots of an irresponsible industrial-technological dynamic that is putting humanity at risk, in the character of Pidohn, and the town's enthrallment with him and his method of business. Mann's message is to counter our speculation with the future by embracing a modesty that allows for an outlook of responsibility. Jonas also identifies a "Promethean immodesty" in the utopian dynamic of the current technological situation (Jonas 201). We are also being swept up in a risky adventure of our own power, a situation which Jonas describes as "[die] groß[e] Wette, die das menschliche Unternehmen als Ganzes geworden ist" (Jonas 218).

2. Die große Sache: In Pursuit of Destruction

The third novel in Mann's trilogy of Weimar "fairy tales" is Die große Sache. Walter Schröder points out the similarity of the novel's plot to the folk tale "Der Schatz im Weinberg," in which the pursuit of a non-existent treasure by the sons of a farmer results in their digging up an entire vineyard. The moral, orchestrated by the father, is that a more valuable reward awaits them in the tilled soil of their labor than in
the treasure they were trying to find (Schröder 175). The parallel is readily apparent in Mann's story of Reinhold Birk and his children, whom he sends out in pursuit of an easy fortune from a fictional invention, in order to learn in the end, "Niemand kann sich freuen wie ein guter Arbeiter" (GS 451). But once again there is more to Mann's fairy tale than the "kindische alte Weisheit" that Emanuel sees in Birk's lesson (GS 451). The treasure, the "große Sache" in Mann's novel set in Germany in 1929,\(^{19}\) is a new technological weapon, "ein Sprengstoff -- der stärkste, der bisher erfunden ist. Ein Sprengstoff von äußerster Brisanz" (GS 192).

Few critics since Herbert Jhering have noticed the significance of Birk's invention for the time of the novel, perhaps because war technology has become a part of life that is taken for granted since the atom bomb. Jhering writes in 1952, "'Ein Sprengstoff von äußerster Brisanz' -- heute würden wir Atombombe sagen. So wird von Heinrich Mann mit der Leichtgläubigkeit zugleich die technische und physikalische Erfindungsgabe der Menschheit angegriffen, die nicht auf Frieden, sondern auf Krieg gerichtet ist [...]" (Jhering 115-16). The importance of the technological invention and the novel's underlying theme of the drive to the next war is also seen by Volker Ebersbach:

[...] er registriert sie [examples of the "Technisierung aller Lebensäußerungen"] als Spuren

\(^{19}\) Ulrich Weisstein argues convincingly that the city depicted is Essen (Weisstein, "Unsachliche" 236).
The fairy-tale enticement of Birk's supposed technological miracle is grotesquely incongruous with the invention's purpose.

In his essay "Kolonial-Ausstellung," Mann indicates his perception of the current state of ethics and technology:

Die meisten nehmen die sogenannten Wunder der Technik zwar hin; es gibt kein Neues, an das sie sich nicht sofort gewöhnen. Aber sie beherrschen sie nicht -- in dem Sinne, daß sie ihnen schon angepaßt wären in der Höhe ihres Verstandes und ihrer Gesittung. Die Zeitgenossen sind moralisch wie geistig hinter den technischen Errungenschaften vorerst noch zurück. (ÖL 245)

Die große Sache carries Mann's ethic of responsibility directly into the context of a new age of technology, with the pursuit of technological power represented in the frantic chase of both the old and young to control and exploit the illusory superbomb.

Birk, the inventor of the fake bomb and orchestrator of the moral lesson that is meant to result from his fabrication, is the novel's main spokesperson for the ethic of responsibility, and also a projection of Mann in certain aspects. The authenticity of the invention is taken on Birk's word because of his reputation and past success as a world famous engineer: "Sein Name machte den Weg durch die welt, den, alle verschiedenen Gebiete unserer Tätigkeit zusammengerechnet, doch nur einige hundert Namen machen" (GS
He is known as an "Entdecker und Pionier, noch aus dem heroischen Zeitalter der Technik" (GS 427).

Set in opposition to Birk is his one time friend Karl August Schattich, a former Reichskanzler and current political advisor, board member, and leader in the field of industry. Ulrich Weisstein thoroughly discusses the details of Mann's portrayal of Schattich that correspond with the historical figure Hans Luther, chancellor in 1925 and 1926 and Reichsbankpräsident from 1930 to 1933 (Weisstein, "Unsachliche" 235-41). However, as in Der Kopf, Mann's purpose is not to denounce a historical figure or provide a scapegoat (Weisstein, "Unsachliche" 237), but to create a representative of the spirit of the time who comes across not merely as a fictitious character, but also as a reference to reality.

Mann's main reason for choosing Luther, as Weisstein points out, is emphasized in the first paragraph of the novel (and again on 325), in which Schattich is reported as chancellor to have given seven hundred million marks to his "employer" industry, a reference to the actual amount of money shuttled from the first Dawes plan loans to industry when Luther was finance minister (Weisstein, "Unsachliche" 238-29). Mann reflects on the importance of this event for his perception of the Weimar situation in Ein Zeitalter wird besichtigt:

Einst hieß der Reichskanzler Luther, ein vielversprechender Name, er schoß denn auch den
Vogel ab. Zu seiner Zeit traf in dem entblößten Reich die erste amerikanische Anleihe ein -- achthundert Millionen. Luther, nicht faul, übersandte den Scheck der Industrie, den Herrschaften, die sich so nennen und deren Beauftragter er war. Er fragte niemand. Nachher erklärte er, er habe die zuviel gezahlten Löhne ersetzt -- sie waren schon zweimal erstattet worden, abgesehen davon, daß inzwischen die gesamte Wirtschaft eine Funktion derselben Herrschaften geworden war [...] Mir ist der Vorgang als einer der ungeheuerlichsten im Gedächtnis geblieben [...]. (Z 315-16)²⁰

Schattich, who equates industrial concerns with those of the country (he is the first to use the later often echoed phrase "Industrieverrat ist Landesverrat" [GS 235]), is also Mann's vehicle for portraying the growing elements of fascism Mann sees connected with the leadership of industry and government. Weisstein overlooks the point that Schattich is a representative figure who is not to be limited to a mere reflection of Luther, in his search for the significance of Schattich's "Verein zur Rationalisierung Deutschlands." The significance of the group is not to be found strictly in a comparison with Luther's "Bund zur Erneuerung des Reiches" (Weisstein, "Unsachliche" 240-41), but in the spirit embodied by Mann's fictional organization itself.

By the end of the 1920s Germany, along with the other industrialized nations, was in the midst of an era of the "rationalization of industry," in which new scientific methods were being applied to make industry and the production of

²⁰ Cited in Weisstein, "Unsachliche" 239-40; see also Z 302 for a related passage.
modern technology more standardized and efficient, and in which giant industrial concerns such as Germany's I.G. Farben (portrayed in the novel as I. G. Chemikalien, a competitor of Schattich's concern) were combining and expanding to new levels of concentration (Pinson 450-51). This idea of rationalization applied to the governing of a nation is a symbolic indicator of the growing tendency toward fascist solutions.

The portrayal of the meeting of Schattich's organization reveals the group's ties to fascism and war. Schattich addresses the group standing in front of a picture of the "Sonnenkönig." As he speaks to the group about the "Konzentration aller bürgerlichen Kräfte" in a manner as if "das ganze Deutschland, das rationalisiert werden sollte, ihm zuhörte," the powerful Austrian business leader Von List thinks about his plans to help Schattich back into power, not as chancellor but as president of the Reichsbank:

'Wir werden ihn an eine Stelle schieben, wo er bessere Dienste leistet. Brauch ich einen Reichskanzler, der Faschismus macht?' dachte Herr von List. 'Faschismus mach ich selbst,' dachte der Großkapitalist. 'Aber dort, wo die größten Geschäfte vergeben werden, muß ich ihn haben.' (GS 322)

The subject of war with Russia is brought up in Schattich's dealings with the priest before the meeting starts (GS 321). And now that he has learned of Birk's invention, Schattich also sees his leadership in the organization as providing the
perfect opportunity to exploit and control the new superbomb (GS 297).

Portraying himself as "der Mann, der Deutschland retten wird, der Mann des Schicksals," Schattich is shown to be an individual whose only real concern is his own rise to power, as he tells Birk and Margo candidly, "Sieh mal meinen Verein zur Rationalisierung Deutschlands, alter Freund! Der trägt mich todsicher noch mal an die Spitze der Reichsregierung. Dafür ist er doch da!" (GS 201). Reminiscent of Mann's previous power figures, Schattich is also willing to "climb over corpses" to get to the top (GS 322). But there are powers greater than Schattich as well. One of these is Von List (whose name reflects the underhanded business deals through which he has amassed his fortune and power), who is equally unscrupulous, but tramples over his corpses without bothering to lay down a wreath (GS 386). In the end, Von List is able to easily force Schattich to concede control of the invention to him (GS 386-87).

Above Von List and Schattich is the "sagenhafte höchste Person" Karl der Große (GS 284), an all-powerful Kobes figure who has ultimate control over industry and the country from a position of anonymity, and who is seen by the younger generation as "ruling the world" (GS 429). Connected with Karl der Große is the image of the "Kontrollabteilung," an invisible force that evokes paranoia, suspicion, and fear among the young and old. Schattich explains the secret
department's constant presence to Margo, saying, "Übrigens -- beobachtet werden Sie natürlich schon jetzt. Die anderen alle auch -- ich sogar... Ich sage Ihnen viel zuviel" (GS 236).

Mann shows not only the fascist tendencies of society's leaders, but also the receptiveness of the citizens to a fascist system. This is depicted in the public event that takes place at the same time as Schattich's meeting, the boxing match. In "Mein Roman," Mann explains the episode as a reflection of the mixture of desire and pain that is prevalent in the increasingly raw struggle for existence:

es ist ein lustiger Weltschmerz, sie gehen ins Leben wie zu einem Boxkampf. Die Zuschauer erblicken im Ring das wahre Bild ihres täglichen Lebens und begleiten es mit Beifall und Entrüstung; denn alles, was bei ihnen selbst vorgeht, ist Kampf. (ÖL 333)

The boxing image becomes a central metaphor for Mann's criticism of war and fascism in its depiction of a violent struggle on a "stage," being observed and cheered on by an audience that identifies with the fighters' pursuit of the "Weltmeisterschaft" (GS 211). The black Alvarez and his blond opponent Brüstung are "Höchstleistungen der männlichen Rasse" (GS 307); they reflect both the simplistic and racist perception of good and evil and the patriarchal image of the male that are inherent to the war imagery they represent.

At first the crowd's overall thirst for blood overcomes their nationalistic ties to the blond Brüstung:

Die Frage und der Vorgeschmack waren nur das Blut. Über welchen der beiden geölten Manneskörper sollte
But soon the underdog Brüstung (an image that reflects the underdog status of the German army after the limitations imposed through the Versailles treaty), who is recognized by the audience as smaller, but "kunstvoller" (GS 308), becomes the "Liebling des Volkes" (GS 310). The crowd becomes an integral part of the fight, and Alvarez falls: "Vielleicht unter den erhaltenen Schlägen, aber sicher unter den feindlichen Wünschen aller brach der Riese nieder" (GS 311).

Emanuel quickly relinquishes his individuality to become wrapped up in the mass psychology of the event. At first he is neutral about who should win, but by the third round he is cheering on Brüstung: "Es bewegt ihn mitsamt allen seinen Zeitgenossen [...] man empfindet mehr, wo viele sind" (GS 312). Eventually the fighters tire each other out and the audience begins to get bored. When both finally fall down exhausted, the fight is called a tie: "Zum Schluß war das eine wie das andere dahin, und weiter als bis zur Erschöpfung ging es nicht" (GS 313).

Mann's metaphor of the boxing match for society's receptiveness to war and fascism reveals the mass psychology toward the event on stage, in which a winner and a loser should emerge, and the thirst for blood and a strong hero fills the audience for a time. But the futility of such
spectacles is shown in the tie, reflecting the futility of the cycle of war and revenge that continues to dominate modern foreign policy to this day. The gradual boredom with the event reflects the reality that sets in after the enticing illusion has lost its hold. Those in the audience who want blood have soon had enough: "ihr Bedarf war im Grunde nicht groß" (GS 313). Mann's suggestion is that the mass thirst for violence is not true to the nature of the people, but rather they are being blinded by the illusion of the spectacle. They are being whipped into a frenzy by a societal atmosphere that supports the drive to success over responsibility to the future, and exclusive views of race, nation, or team over humanitarian views and international understanding.

Shortly after the novel was published, a newspaper editor made a comment that Mann recalled in his autobiographical account from 1946:

Als er von seinen Romanen der Republik den am meisten prophetischen in der Zeitung abdrucken wollte, sprach der verantwortliche Redakteur: 'Wenn die Republik wirklich so wäre wie in der Großen Sache, dann müßten die Nazis kommen.' Das war 1931, und schon Ende 1932 waren sie da. Das Unglück tritt ein, weil man es vor Augen hat und die Augen schließt. (Cited in Anger, Heinrich Mann 550)

The characters of Mann's novel have closed their eyes to responsibility, and are limited to seeing their own future and the future of their society as beyond their control, determined by chance alone. Consequently, they are all looking for the big chance, the "große Sache," which would mean the end of all of their struggles and problems. The
pursuit of the big chance can result in success or disaster, but the risk is worth the utopian goal they envision. In "Mein Roman," Mann writes of the spirit of the modern age reflected in his work:

> Selten ist die Gefährlichkeit des Daseins so deutlich wie heute von allen empfunden worden [...] Jede Minute kann die große Katastrophe eintreten, oder, was genau so schlimm wäre, wir werden persönlich abgebaut. Das fürchtet der Chef kaum weniger als der kleine Angestellte; daher stürzen sich alle kopfüber in die Jagd nach der großen Sache, die sie endlich sichern und unabhängig machen soll. (ÖL 332)

The ultimate goal of the pursuit of the "große Sache" is a utopian freedom from the power of chance. Mann's novel reveals this goal to be illusory, and society's pursuit of it to be a denial of responsibility to the future. It is also a denial of the sanctity of human existence; those who try to achieve their goal most vigorously are shown to be able to do so only with violent and destructive means.

Brüstück's big chance is in the boxing ring, where his goal is to become the world champion (GS 216). In the match with Alvarez he is provided a chance to bring his opponent down with an illegal jab to the eye. The blow, which causes blood to pour down Alvarez's face, is viewed by the crowd with understanding: "Jedem ist eine Chance gegeben, fühlten alle, die feststellten, was geschehen war" (GS 310). Mulle hopes to obtain the inheritance he believes he is due as Schattich's abandoned son by going on record as the "youngest double
murderer" (GS 355). Though his methods are not as subtle, his search for the big chance is similar to Emanuel's:

Jeder brauchte eine Chance. Mulle suchte sie vorläufig im Mord, was aber weder sehr aussichtsvoll noch gute Klasse war. Nicht, daß Emanuel Mord auch bei günstigsten Umständen grundsätzlich abgelehnt hätte [...] möglich im Ablauf der Tatsachen blieb alles, und vierzig Millionen, durch Mord erworben, waren so gut wie die vierzig Millionen, die Emanuel auf dem Verhandlungswege erstrebte. (GS 250)

Emanuel and Schattich both see their big opportunity in the invention, and both are convinced of the utopian change that it will bring. Emanuel speaks for the young generation that Mann is both trying to reflect and appeal to when he says, "Wir sind jung. Wir wollen nicht nur leben -- ohne Angst leben -- und leben, ohne uns zu verkaufen. Wir wollen sogar Einfluß und Macht bekommen, bevor es zu spät ist, bevor die große Maschine uns endgültig schluckt! Dafür haben wir jetzt die Erfindung, sie soll alles von Grund auf ändern" (GS 194). Emanuel cannot even comprehend the concept of responsibility, asking, "Was heißt Verantwortung," and answering his own question, "Es heißt überhaupt Chance -- statt Verantwortung" (GS 262).

Schattich's motivation is similar to Emanuel's. He also believes the invention will guarantee his success: "Ich kann meine Existenz durch sie auf Jahre sichern -- vielleicht endgültig" (GS 266). His method of obtaining Birk's invention is to rely on his power, enforcing it with threats of violence: "Ich habe die Macht, deine Erfindung an mich zu bringen [...] Wenn du bei deinem Starrsinn beharrst, werde ich
zum erstenmal im Leben unsere alte Freundschaft vergessen müssen und lasse dich die eiserne Faust fühlen" (GS 267). Schattich views the position of power he hopes to achieve with the help of the invention as "die endgültige Befreiung von dem überlebensgroßen Dämon der Chance. Einmal ein Ruhekissen" (GS 432). But like Birk's invention itself, the utopian goal of Schattich's efforts is an illusion. Schattich's dream of the "Ruhekissen" is followed immediately by a narrator's comment: "-- das dann auch wieder keins gewesen wäre; aber der Spekulant Schattich sah es noch dafür an" (GS 432).

The object that represents the greatest chance for the novel's characters is also a symbol for the powerful destructive potential of the human technological pursuit. It is described as an invention "auf den die ganze Welt wartete" (GS 244). Birk only has to mention that he has invented the new bomb and the characters are set into a frenzied pace that allows for no wider range of perspective than that of the immediate present. Mann sees the technological pursuit without an ethic of responsibility as a pursuit of destruction, fired on by a utopian goal.

But the means of pursuing this goal are violent, and the overall system that is reflected is a fascist one, a system that will ultimately not only destroy its opponents, but itself, as Birk tells Schattich, "Das System, dem du dienst, vernichtet dich ebensogut wie mich" (GS 267). Mann writes in his essay that the utopian goal of a "gründliche Änderung des
Bestehenden" promised by the Nazis is an illusion. Instead of doing away with corruption, violence, anxiety, and immorality, "Das alles wird es in jedem sogenannten Dritten Reich nicht weniger, sondern erst recht geben, denn manche, die bisher nicht weit genug vorn lagen, wollen dann erst mal richtig ran. Dafür strampeln sie sich doch jetzt so ab" (ÖL 334).

The two characters who are able to provide an alternative to the pursuit of destruction are Birk and his daughter Margo, who are connected in spirit, representing a bridge between the past and future generations. In Margo's character the idea of fascist control is symbolized by her being physically tied to the mannequin of Schattich during the meeting of the "Verein zur Rationalisierung Deutschlands." Schattich is reminded of his tied up "conquest" in the other room as he prepares to discuss his other plans of attack with Von List (GS 327). But Margo soon realizes that she can control the mannequin, and eventually frees herself of its bonds before it strangles her (GS 343).

During this episode Margo also discovers a level of herself that is beyond the control of both the mannequin's strings and Schattich's power. As she has her hand on the telephone, she is transported in spirit to the boxing match, and the scene is depicted from her vision. Wolfram Schütte sees this episode as not only a primary example of Mann's experimental "Kinotechnik," but also a sign of the "mystical character" of the novel (Schütte 100). But more specifically,
the episode is an example of Birk's message of the "Freiheit unserer Seele" that he hopes to teach in accompaniment with his three moral imperatives (GS 186).

Margo learns this lesson at least partially. Her efforts to save Emanuel and the rest of her family show her in control of herself as well in control of technology, in her ability to fly the airplane transporting Karl der Große. She is separated from the other characters by her early realization that the invention is an illusion, and by her actions, which are done out of concern for others and not herself. Although even her character is undermined in the fairy-tale ending, which is brought about by the success of her "big chance" with Karl der Große, Margo is the only one of the young characters to exhibit a sense of individual responsibility. In her dream of flying with Emanuel, she sees that she, as the pilot "ganz allein trug die Verantwortung für das, was geschah" (GS 422).

Her connection with Birk is both in their sense of responsibility and their "Seelentechnik." But Birk's age and insight give him deeper abilities than Margo. The goal of his lesson is a modest one: "Ihr letzter Ertrag sollte Freude sein, so meinte er: mehr Freude an dem Leben, wie es nun ist" (GS 186). The concept of the joy and sanctity of human life in the novel is far from the utopian concept of Glück of Mann's pre-Weimar writings. As in Der Kopf and Mutter Marie, Mann once again brings in the religious image of the cross to reinforce his message of responsibility. In each reference to
Birk's "Seelentechnik," it is emphasized that Birk's eyes are focused on the crucifix across from his hospital bed (GS 266, 276, 374). The image is there to remind the reader of an ultimate picture of responsibility for humanity, signified by the Christian belief in a God who became human to suffer for the collective of human existence.

But, like Margo, Birk's responsibility is portrayed as such an individual effort, that it remains incomplete. Birk perceives himself with godlike powers (or poetic powers, as Mann once again ironizes his own position as author) in carrying out his plan:

Ja, er unternahm es, in jeder Hinsicht seinen Menschen freizulassen [...] Alles aber, als ob Oberingenieur Birk, was geschah, selbst dichtete. Er hatte die junge Welt samt mehreren Alten in Bewegung gesetzt und jeden in seiner Richtung bestärkt, die seine Natur ihm ohnehin anwies. Die einzelnen aufzuhalten war ihm jetzt nicht mehr erlaubt. Er hatte auch keine Lust, sich selbst und den gegebenen Verlauf der von ihm erfundenen Handlung noch abzubremsen [...] Er hatte die außerordentliche Verantwortung übernommen, hier und dort sein zu müssen, gleichzeitig im Bett und an den Schauplätzen der verschiedenen Abenteuer. Er war verantwortlich für die von ihm Losgelassenen, war verpflichtet, sie nötigenfalls vor sich selbst zu schützen, und konnte daher nicht genug auf sie aufpassen. (GS 276)

But the reality of Birk's human frailty is shown in the physical toll that this kind of responsibility takes on his body. In the end, the strain kills him, and what he has accomplished is "etwas sehr Unvollkommenes" (ÖL 335).

Though his effort is an impossible task on the individual level, it becomes symbolic for Mann's theme of collective
responsibility and its object of preventing catastrophe. This idea is symbolized by Birk's outstretched arm as he appears in spirit to Emanuel and prevents him from shooting Schattich (GS 411). In his essay, Mann indicates in a subtle and understated tone the novel's ethic of responsibility that requires a collective effort:


The novel's "happy ending" is once again ironic, as Erhard Schütz points out in his comparison of the tone of the novel to that of Brecht's Dreigroschenoper (Schütz 89). Like mayor Reuter in Eugénie, the letter from Karl der Große saves the day, and all are "in märchenhafter Weise befördert" (GS 444). Each character makes a final appearance, as in a comedy ending, and Margo and Emanuel are given the final romantic scene, having resolved their marital problem in the seventy-two hours of the novel. Schattich's "conversion" (GS 431-33, 439-440) is also not to be taken at face value, as exhibited by the narrator's ironic comment after Schattich's night of "inner change" in the hotel room: "die eine kritische Nacht hatte ihm reichlich genügt" (GS 433). The report of his
radical attempt to destroy himself on the bridge also underlines the irony, along with as his wife Nora's indication that things will soon get back to normal in their marital power struggle (GS 454-55).

Beyond the sense that Inge is heading for trouble in her pursuit of film stardom, and the clear portrayal that Emanuel has learned nothing from Birk's lesson, the ending also contains a subtle sign of danger that has been overlooked in the secondary literature. Blending in with the young couple's romantic words of love are the liquid sounds of the bells ringing from the nearby church. But the bells are being rung by the priest who is celebrating his agreement made with Schattich at the meeting of the "Verein," in which in reference to Schattich's overtones of a coming war with Russia the priest had given his craftily worded compliance: "Es wäre durchaus denkbar, daß meine kirchlichen Vorgesetzten das Zusammentreffen gewisser äußerer Umstände, die unsere Kirche und, wie Sie sagen, die Wirtschaft beunruhigen -- daß sie es anerkennen und für ihre Zwecke, die rein sind, benutzen" (GS 321).

This is not the cry of jubilation that accompanied the war in the end of Der Kopf, but a much more ominous sign of the readiness to accept violent solutions, in the symbol of the sweetly ringing church bells. And the glaring overstatement of the fairy-tale ending also forces one to remember that Karl der Große, Von List, and the
"Kontrollabteilung" are still looming in the background. Though the characters of the novel are unable to realize it, Mann hopes the reader will see that the forces of the pursuit of destruction need to be met not with a utopian hope for a "große Sache," but with an ethic of responsibility that focuses on the collective future of humanity.
CONCLUSION

The underlying context of much of Heinrich Mann's literature of the Weimar Republic is the attempt to find a realistic and persuasive ethical response to the problem of power in modern society. By the early years of the Weimar era, Mann had identified the problem of modern power as a combination of two main forces, an ideological force and a material force. The essence of the first is a "will to power," through which the attainment of power and success becomes the ultimate goal. This force finds expression both on the individual and the collective levels, in the pursuit of wealth, the nationalistic mindset, fascism, and even overzealous idealism; that is, in any belief system in which the goals of attaining power and success override concern for human life. The second force is the concrete power of modern industry, in its increasing role in dictating the course of human progress, and specifically in its role in the development and production of war technology. Mann realized that these two forces were becoming more and more united in the modern business of politics and the overall dynamic of modern human existence.
Mann's works reflect a belief that the ideological force was based on a fundamental self-deception, and that a sufficient change in the collective spirit of society could come about, given the human potential for moral understanding and behavior. In his literature, Mann uses the metaphor of the theater, allusions to the fairy tale, and romantic imagery, in order to portray the illusion of the projected goals of such success and power-based ideologies, which ultimately end in self-destruction. Though the "business" side of power, the rapidly increasing influence of industrial and economic concerns on political decision-making, had become an element of modern reality that promised to be lasting, the mythological dimensions that industrial and technological power and progress were taking on also needed to be exposed and counteracted. Working to expose the illusion of an invisible, all-powerful, and self-motivating "god" of a new religion of success, Mann tried to unmask the anonymity of the new force of industry through his essayistic analyses, as well as in his fictional characterizations of industrial overlords, such as Von Praß, Kobes, and Karl der Große. He also created industrial figures such as Knack, Seehase, Pidohn, and Schattich, who represent the catastrophe-oriented dynamic of this new power, if it is allowed to continue on an irresponsible path. With all his efforts to expose the illusions of his society, Mann began to realize that ultimately, the threatening combination of the two forces of
modern power could only be met ethically on a widespread level. The ideas in Mann's Weimar literature that accompany this insight can best be analyzed as Mann's ethic of responsibility to the future.

In Mann's essayistic work, the ethic of responsibility is expressed in Mann's attempts to expose the illusions and realities of power, to urge a stronger sense of the role of citizens in building a democratic society that values both freedom and social responsibility, to warn of the threat of the next war, and to argue the imperative of overcoming and transcending the nationalistic mentality, focusing especially on establishing a better relationship with France. In his fiction, Der Kopf and "Kobes" portray unsatisfactory and self-destructive responses to the modern situation on the level of society's leaders, among which a concept of future-directed responsibility is missing. The moral trilogy looks for positive solutions to the problem of responsibility on the level of citizens, urging reflection on the new context of collective causality, resistance of the temptations of power, and renunciation of an irresponsible pursuit of success. The underlying moral imperatives seek to convey a spirit of responsibility to the future, endurance of human limits, and recognition of the joy of life in humanity, instead of a myopic success drive, speculative adventurism, and utopian pursuits of the "big chance" at the expense of human beings. Taken out of context, the final imperative "lernt euch freuen"
may seem to hearken back to Mann's pre-Weimar idea of the "Pflicht zum Glück." But the works reveal that with Mann's growing awareness of a new imperative of responsibility, his idea of human happiness took on a more modest overall tone of respect for human life, rather than a dream of a utopian ideal. Taken together, Mann's works of the Weimar Republic reflect an insightful ethic of responsibility to the future of humanity aimed at preventing the catastrophes of war and an ideological system that is based on violence and disregard for human life.

The situation of power that Mann identified is still with us, in a new context. Hans Jonas has shown the even greater level of responsibility demanded by the dynamic of technology at its current pace, not only in the area of technological warfare and the nuclear threat, but also in the areas of biotechnology and our plundering of the environment. The range of the effects of our actions has reached such dynamic proportions that for Jonas, only an ethic of collective Fernverantwortung can prevent impending catastrophe.

With the current dynamic of modern technology in the increasingly industrialized world and the continued pursuit of success and power among nations, the underlying message of Mann's literature of the Weimar Republic remains imperative today: "Wir werden noch viel Verantwortung lernen müssen" (Mann, "Vorwort" 11).


Klein, Johannes. "Der Novellist Heinrich Mann." Matthias 11-35.


---. "Demokratie." *Dresdner Volkszeitung* 8 June 1919.


---. "Erneuerung." Berliner Tageblatt 1 Jan. 1919.

---. "Es soll anders werden." Berliner Tageblatt 1 April 1928, morning ed.: supplement 1.


Pick, Erika, Friedrich Albrecht, Helga Herting, and Frank Wagner, eds. Heinrich Mann am Wendepunkt der deutschen Geschichte. Internationale wissenschaftliche Konferenz


---. "Zwischen Autobiographie und Zeitgeschichte: Zu Heinrich Mann's Roman *Der Kopf.*" *Koopmann* 169-181.


Schütz, Erhard. "'Die große Sache' oder Für Tänzer schreiben... Zur Aktualität eines 'verunlückten' Romans." *Arnold* 82-91.


Song, Dong Zun. "Das verfälschte Bild Heinrich Manns in der

Spielmann, Alfred. "Der Roman Die Armen. Einige Aspekte zum

Stark, Michael. "'...es spricht sich herum; und man war nicht
unnütz.' Öffentlichkeitsanspruch und Wirkungsskepsis bei
Heinrich Mann." Koopmann 129-54.

Stark, Michael. "'Ihre Briefe sind selten...' Neuigkeiten
zum Briefwechsel zwischen Heinrich Mann und Kurt
Tucholsky." Arbeitskreis Heinrich Mann Mitteilungsblatt

Thiessen, Rudi. "Barmherzige Skepsis gegen erbarungslosen
Optimismus. Zur Verleihung des Friedenspreises des
deutschen Buchhandels an den Philosophen Hans Jonas."

Thoenelt, Klaus. "Heinrich Manns Psychologie des Faschismus."

Toller, Ernst. Eine Jugend in Deutschland. Reinbek bei

---. Masse Mensch. Afterword Rosemarie Altenhofer.

Trapp, Frithjof. 'Kunst' als Gesellschaftsanalyse und
Gesellschaftskritik bei Heinrich Mann. Quellen und
Forschungen zur Sprach- und Kulturgeschichte der


Volkskraft-Bund. Deutscher Geist und Judenhaß: Äußerungen

Wagner, Frank. "Heinrich Mann zum Verhältnis von Roman und
Gesellschaft." Pick 155-59.

Winckelmann. Intro. Theodor Heuss. 3rd ed. Tübingen:
Mohr, 1971.

Weiß, Ernst. "Heinrich Mann, Die große Sache (1930)." Weiß.
Die Kunst des Erzählens. Essays, Aufsätze, Schriften


