

A COMPARISON OF IRONY IN W. M. THACKERAY
AND THOMAS MANN (UNTIL 1918)

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INTRODUCTION

Irony, as a means of literary and philosophical expression, has had a very extensive history. Socrates used it in ancient times,¹ Shakespeare more recently in Mark Antony's funeral oration in Julius Caesar, and writers have continued to utilize this device in their works up to the present day. However, it is the romantic period in which irony was most employed and was considered to be a very important element of a work of art. Since Thomas Mann has been strongly influenced by the romanticists in respect to his use of irony,² it would be well to consider the romanticist's concept of irony first before dealing with Mann.

Now the problem of irony can be approached in two ways. One can either deal with irony as it is viewed and interpreted by the artist, or one can analyse the irony as found in the works of art themselves. Naturally both approaches are bound to one another and affect each other reciprocally, yet it is possible for an artist to have an ironical attitude toward life and art and still not be able to express this ironically.

The romanticists were primarily concerned with irony as seen by the artist. The concept of romantic irony goes back to Friedrich Schlegel and Novalis. Schlegel conceived of the world as consisting of infinity and finiteness which

¹Soeren Kierkegaard, Ueber den Begriff der Ironie. Mit ständiger Rücksicht auf Sokrates, übersetzt von H.H. Schaa-der (München und Berlin: R.Oldenbourg, Verlag, 1929).

²See Käte Hamburger, Thomas Mann und die Romantik (Berlin: Junker & Dünnhaupt, 1932) Chap I, 3.

may be otherwise formulated as universality and individuality, or reality and ideality. According to Schlegel, the artist has the power, although bound to his subject matter, to rise above it and view it from a higher standpoint and thus, as it were, enter the infinite. It is as though the artist disengages his objective from his subjective self. This is the freedom of the artist, his poetic license; it is the duality and dissension within him, "eine lachende Erhebung über sich selbst, einen Wechsel von Selbstschöpfung und Selbstvernichtung".³ In other words, we have a pair of absolute opposites, a break between infinity and finiteness which the poet or writer tries to mend. He seeks to combine seemingly uncombinable things.

Rudolf Haym points out the difference between Schlegel's and Novalis' conception of irony.⁴ Schlegel's interpretation of irony was an "über dem Gegenstand schwebende Freiheit des Subjekts"⁵ whereby the poet controls the object and uses it to his purposes. Novalis, on the other hand, conceived of irony as a freedom of the subject that is able to penetrate and alter the objective world. In fact, both the subjective and objective worlds act on, and change, one another.

The critics' interpretations of irony vary. There are those who say that irony is an expression of the artist's subjectivity and others who maintain that it is an expression

³Quote from Schlegel, ibid, p. 27.

⁴Rudolf Haym, Die Romantische Schule (Berlin: Weidmann, 1914), p. 436.

⁵Haym, loc. cit.

of his objectivity.⁶ However, all seem to agree to the fact that the ironicist possesses a mental freedom over his material and within himself. The artist has, so to speak, a double personality, an ideal and a real self, which gives him an inner freedom and enables his ideal self to look down on his real self and vice versa. As Kirkegaard says: "Die Ironie oszilliert zwischen dem ideellen und dem empirischen Ich".⁷ Or again he writes:

Der Ironiker hebt das Individuum aus der unmittelbaren Existenz, das ist das Befreiende; aber darauf lässt er es schweben, so wie nach der Sage Muhammeds Sarg zwischen zwei Magneten, dem anlockenden und dem abstossenden.⁸

The common conception of irony is the saying of one thing and meaning the exact opposite. The ironicist shows that the appearance of a thing is not the essence of the thing itself, but rather the very reverse of what it seems. He can say something serious and not mean it to be serious, or, more seldom, he can say something jestingly and mean it to be taken seriously. Irony, therefore, is negative. It destroys the reality of the phenomenon which we have before us and shows us that there is something else lying

⁶Kierkegaard says that irony is "eine Bestimmung der Subjektivität. In der Ironie ist das Subjekt negativ frei". (Kierkegaard, op.cit., p. 219) Blitz agrees with Kierkegaard. (Karl Peter Blitz, "Das Problem der Ironie in der neueren deutschen Literatur, insbesondere bei Thomas Mann." Inaugural Dissertation (Frankfurt am Main: 1932), p. 10.) Brüggemann also says that irony is subjective in nature. (Fritz Brüggemann, Die Ironie als entwicklungsgeschichtliches Moment (Jena: E. Diederichs, 1909), pp. 4, 27.) On the other hand, Käte Hamburger (op.cit., p. 27.) and J.G. Brennan (Thomas Mann's World (New York: Columbia Univ. Press, 1942), p.171) assert that the principle of irony is objectivity.

⁷Kierkegaard, op. cit., p. 106.

⁸Ibid., footnote, p. 39.

beneath the phenomenon which may be the very opposite of the apparent reality. "Die Ironie etabliert das Nichts; denn das, was etabliert werden soll, liegt hinter ihr".⁹

The artist makes use of irony in that he reveals that the appearance of what people say or do is quite the opposite to the reality underneath these thoughts and actions. In this manner the author can lose himself in his characters and at the same time he can observe them from a distance, and comment on, and criticize them. He can describe his characters in complete seriousness and display his love and sympathy for them, and then suddenly turn around and point out their faults and laugh at them. Thus he always leaves himself room to view that which he creates from more than one standpoint.

Humor is a basic element of irony.¹⁰ Our first reaction to an ironical situation is one of surprise. We are struck by the incongruity of the situation which frequently causes us to laugh or smile. However, although humor is a fundamental quality of irony, an ironical situation may not always be laughter-provoking. Tragic irony, for instance, does not cause us to laugh, and yet the very nature of a tragically ironic situation, the fact that it is dissembling or incongruous, implies the presence of the comical element, and even though we, as humans, may not see the humor in it, perhaps sub specie aeternitatis this element is present.

Thomas Mann has more than once expressed his conception of irony both in his critical works and in his artistic

⁹Ibid., p. 219.

¹⁰Rudolf Haym, op. cit., p. 300, and Rudolf Jancke, Das Wesen der Ironie (Leipzig: Joh. Ambr. Barth, 1929), p. 12.

productions. In the Betrachtungen he writes that "Ironie ist immer nach beiden Seiten hin. . . ."¹¹ Thus, as Brennan says, the metaphysical function of Mann's irony consists in "exposing the two sides of every fundamental question, and thus it mirrors the antithetical character of reality".¹² And so Mann reveals the serious and comic aspects of Life and Spirit, and of death, or the dual nature of morality, or the antithetical components of the artist. In fact, the author casts light on almost every problem from two, opposite points of view.

After the First World War Mann writes: "Ironie ist das Pathos der Mitte".¹³ He says that in matters pertaining to humanity every decision in favor of one or the other of the polar forces of reality may prove to be premature, and therefore the only tenable position is the ironic one because then we can sway between the extremes and thereby combine all the antitheses in an harmonic whole. Thus irony here is negative in that it is unable to take sides one way or the other, but always swings from one extremity to the other, thereby having both, and at the same time neither.

Another aspect of irony which we find in Mann's early writings is that Spirit is negated, by means of Spirit, in favor of Life, that is, in the Life-Spirit antithesis Spirit denies its own existence and affirms Life. To be mentioned in connection with this is Käte Hamburger's distinction between Mann's irony before and after 1918. Before the war Mann's

¹¹Betrachtungen eines Unpolitischen (Berlin: S. Fischer, 1918), pp. 56, 592.

¹²Brennan, op. cit., p. 172.

¹³Bemühungen (Berlin: S. Fischer, 1925), p. 138.

irony more closely resembles Schlegel's in that Spirit views Life as a "differentness". After this time, however, Spirit is transformed into an active force which can alter Life, and this interpretation is similar to Novalis'.¹⁴

These are, however, metaphysical approaches to irony. In our comparison of the irony found in Mann and Thackeray we will first discuss irony in its more concrete aspects, ironic content and then ironic form. Further, and particularly in connection with Mann, we will speak about the nature and position of the artist. This topic is actually another aspect of ironic content, but it is such an important problem in Mann's early works that it deserves special consideration. And finally, we will return to Mann's metaphysical irony.

¹⁴Käte Hamburger, op. cit., p. 41.

CHAPTER I

A BRIEF BIOGRAPHICAL COMPARISON

Before beginning an analysis of the works of each writer let us point out some similarities in their personal lives.¹ Both men came from middle class families and this background is reflected in their works in that both portrayed the upper-middle class levels of society. Both writers displayed artistic talent in drawing at an early age. Thackeray utilized this talent later on in life, but it is noteworthy that there are very few descriptions of landscapes or non-human things in the works of either artist. Both are more concerned with the thoughts, feelings, and actions of human beings. In Mann, as in Thackeray, we find the desire to mix with society and carry on the normal, bourgeois functions like other people, but, unlike Thackeray, Mann is frustrated in his attempts because of his artistic calling. Both had a great dislike for school and were therefore mainly self-educated men.

Thus both come from similar backgrounds, reveal, to some extent, at least, similar attitudes and so may be expected to show considerable similarities in their works.

¹For a more detailed biographical treatment of each writer see: Malcolm Elwin, Thackeray. A Personality (London: Jonathan Cape Ltd., 1932) and Arthur Eloesser, Thomas Mann. Sein Leben und sein Werk (Berlin: S. Fischer, 1925).

CHAPTER II

IRONIC CONTENT

Thomas Mann has never stated in writing that he has been influenced by Thackeray, but at least one writer on Mann has made mention of this influence.² Mann himself has acknowledged Nietzsche, Schopenhauer, and Wagner as his three masters.³ However, there is no mistaking the fact that the two novelists have certain literary features in common.

The greatest similarity between these two writers lies in the fact that they seek to expose and ridicule people who try to appear other than they really are. In the works of both men we continually find instances in which the veils of appearance are lifted and we glance at the characters as they exist in reality. This exposure of falseness and snobbishness extends to people of all classes and from all walks of life. Both men seek truth and sincerity and in their search for truth they must often expose the deceitful and insincere practices of people and show them, as it were, in their naked state. The artists accomplish this by means of irony.

This does not mean, however, that the artist is necessarily obliged to seek to correct these faults. Mann himself believes that it is not the writer's job to further progress or change, but rather to express his own problems and conflicts.⁴

²Albert Sörgel, Dichtung und Dichter der Zeit (Leipzig: R. Voigtländer, 1928), p. 846.

³Betrachtungen, p. 34.

⁴Ibid, pp. XXI, XXII.

It may sometimes happen that a writer can indirectly bring about a corrective action by exposing something which he thinks is wrong, yet this is not his essential purpose or goal. Helbling rightly remarks in reference to Mann that this method of observing, uncovering, and doubting life in all its forms without the intention of improving it is in itself ironical.⁵ The artist has the power to explore and reveal all that he sees and knows, including man's faults and weaknesses which he laughs at. Consequently, he is in a position to try to better man's ways. Mann, however, does not attempt to do this.

Thackeray, too, likes to point out man's follies and ridicule them, but in contrast to Mann he is often satirical. The reader of Thackeray frequently feels that the author is not only exposing human frailties and errors, but would also like to see them corrected, even though the author may not come right out and state that explicitly. But Thackeray's satire is not vicious or bitter. On the contrary, it is laughter-provoking. In Vanity Fair he explains his attitude toward people who have no other values than prosperity and success:

Such people there are living and flourishing in the world--- Faithless, Hopeless, Charityless; let us have at them, dear friends, with might and main. Some there are, and very successful too, mere quacks and fools: and it was to combat and expose such as those, no doubt, that Laughter was made.⁶

But beneath all the satire and irony that Thackeray uses there is warmth and a love for his characters, as well as for the

⁵Carl Helbling, Die Gestalt des Künstlers in der neueren Dichtung. Eine Studie über Thomas Mann. (Bern: Seldwyla Verlag, 1922), p. 22.

⁶Vanity Fair, (London: Smith, Elder & Co., 1900), p. 72.

world in general.

It is precisely the brand of snobs that places so much importance on money and success that the Victorian particularly enjoys poking fun at. It is not the possession of much money that Thackeray objects to, but rather the fact that to many people wealth is the be-all and end-all of life. The author shows that the wealthy are not always happy in spite of their riches, and that often they are even very poor specimens of human beings. He not only mocks the rich, but also the people who bow down to them because of their money. Furthermore, he points out how many people who have very little money nevertheless live and act as though they were well-off.

Lady Clavering in Pendennis is a good example of someone who has plenty of money but is nonetheless unhappy. Tormented by her daughter who always corrects her speech, and aggravated by her husband who spends her money on gambling, the good woman has no peace. She once informs her friend Strong that she would rather eat a turnip than pineapple for dessert if she could only do so in quiet, and then she tells him how happy she was before she acquired all her money.⁷

Another case in point is Mr. Osborne in Vanity Fair who is very wealthy but exceedingly unhappy after his son George runs off and marries Amelia. But Osborne's unhappiness is due to his own stubbornness. He believes that he is always right and refuses to recognize any opposition to his views and demands. Filled with hate, he would attack anyone that stood in the way of his desires. The author says of him:

⁷Pendennis, (London: Smith, Elder & Co., 1900), p. 584.

"Always to be right, always to trample forward, and never to doubt, are not these the great qualities with which dullness takes the lead in the world"?⁸

In pointing out the follies of the rich Thackeray shows how mean and vulgar they can sometimes be. The baronet, Sir Pitt Crawley, in Vanity Fair is described as a ragged, dirty man who is stingy with his money and has no consideration for other people. The aristocratic Lord Steyne in the same novel lavishes gifts and money on Becky Sharp in the hope of being sexually gratified by Becky in return.

But more than this, Thackeray attacks those who do not have much money and yet try to put on noble airs. Moreover, he mocks the people who have no money themselves but who nevertheless associate with those who are rich and consequently feel that they belong to the elite. These traits are especially apparent in Becky Sharp. Becky's father was a painter and her mother a French actress, professions which were not highly regarded in those days. But Becky is clever and knows how to act like a lady even if she is not one. Although she has no money, Becky manages to live in grandiose style. She entertains and is entertained by the very best company and even manages to be presented to the King. Thackeray titles one of his chapters "How to Live Well on Nothing a Year" in which he explains how Becky and Rawdon are actually able to live splendidly on nothing, or rather at the expense of Raggles' hard-earned money which supplies them with their house, food, and drink.

⁸Vanity Fair, p. 342.

Ellis remarks in his book on Thackeray that the novelist revolted against his age which wanted its characters pure, either all good or all bad, in that the novelist would mix the good and bad qualities in the same character.⁹ And so, even Thackeray's heroes do not escape censure for their faults. When Pendennis goes to Oxbridge he dresses and entertains well beyond his means and as a result gets into debt and causes hardship for his mother who must skimp and save for her son. Harry Warrington in The Virginians also tries to live above his station. He loses all his money and his brother's patrimony in gambling and is then thrown into jail because he cannot pay his debts.

Harry's servant, Gumbo, is of another type. He himself has no money but he gains distinction and wins the admiration of others because, as he says, he serves "the richest man in all Virginia".¹⁰ The colorful Captain Costigan is also almost penniless but that does not prevent him from bragging about the nobility of his Irish ancestors and assuming the airs of a gentleman.

Once in a while Thackeray would attack the British public because of the value it places on money. In doing this, the author brings the full weight of his satire to bear. Speaking of Lady Clavering's wealth and generosity, he tells how she was patronised by the noble and virtuous aristocracy and adds: "So great and beneficent an influence had the possession of ten (some said twenty) thousand a year exercised upon Lady Clavering's character and reputation".¹¹ Again in reference

⁹G.U. Ellis, Thackeray (London: Duckworth, 1933), p. 88.

¹⁰The Virginians (London: Smith, Elder & Co., 1900), p. 133.

¹¹Pendennis, p. 204.

to Lady Clavering's popularity, Thackeray writes:

This fact shows our British independence and honest feeling ---our higher orders are not such mere haughty aristocrats as the ignorant represent them: on the contrary, if a man have money they will hold out their hands to him, eat his dinners, dance at his balls, marry his daughters, or give their own lovely girls to his sons, as affably as your commonest roturier would do.¹²

In regard to Harry Warrington's reputed wealth, the novelist expresses his surprise that the boy did not receive more attention than he did and remarks that it is good to be a citizen of a country where wealth is so respected and a successful person has so many loyal admirers.¹³

Under this same category of love and admiration of money we can include the marriage of convenience which, as Kleiner notes, Thackeray always fought against in his writings.¹⁴ This illustrates again the Victorian's opposition to all insincerity and falsehood, and his antipathy to the vain people who think that money alone will bring them happiness.

The outstanding figure of this type is Lady Crawley in Vanity Fair. Lady Crawley was an ironmonger's daughter who gave up the man who loved her for the wealthy Sir Pitt Crawley and a place in Vanity Fair. The author then describes her "happiness":

She had a small flower-garden for which she had rather an affection; but beyond this no other like or disliking. When her husband was rude to her she was apathetic: whenever he struck her she cried. She had not character enough to take to drinking,

¹²Ibid, p. 361.

¹³The Virginians, p. 167.

¹⁴Ernst Kleiner, "Frauengestalten bei W.M. Thackeray". Inaugural Dissertation (Halle, 1908), p. 28.

and moaned about, slip-shod and in curl-papers all day. O Vanity Fair---Vanity Fair! This might have been, but for you, a cheery lass. . . . but a title and a coach and four are toys more precious than happiness in Vanity Fair.¹⁵

Becky Sharp also thought she would have a title and a coach and four when she married Rawdon Crawley, but her desires were frustrated by Miss Crawley. In her efforts to live like a princess and be a woman of the world Becky completely neglected her son and eventually earned the wrath of her husband who divorced her. But money and a high position in society were her goals until the very end.

Maria Osborne likewise prizes luxury and riches as the supreme goals in life and would have married the "gouty, old, bald-headed, bottle-nosed Bullock Senior" and spent the rest of her days with perfect modesty by his side except that he was already married, so she bestowed her affection on his son, the junior partner of Hulker, Bullock, and Bullock.¹⁶

Beatrix Castlewood rejects Henry Esmond because she wishes to marry a man of great wealth and position. At one point she is on the verge of marrying a duke, but he is killed in a duel shortly before the wedding takes place. In The Virginians we meet up with Beatrix again where we learn that, ironically enough, she ended up by marrying the village parson after whose death she married a Baron de Bernstein who, it turns out, was no more than a one-time valet in Munich.

Thomas Mann has also mocked the false pride attached to the rich and has ridiculed the people who consider money as the most important thing in life. But we must realize in

¹⁵Vanity Fair, p. 74.

¹⁶Vanity Fair, p. 105.

connection with Mann that the characters he depicts represent either Life or Spirit and thus reflect his philosophical approach to life and art. In his descriptions of the life-loving bourgeois the author indicates their fondness for good eating and proper dress, their sense of order and their reverence for work. These features are especially common to many of the characters in Buddenbrooks, but are found in the other works as well. In contrast to these are the artists, or representatives of Spirit, who possess qualities opposed to these bourgeois traits. We will discuss this Life-Spirit duality more fully later on.

Mann has portrayed in the figure of Consul Justus Kroeger in Buddenbrooks a man of means and of good standing in society who is nevertheless unhappy. Although the Consul is not terribly rich, his wife aggravates the situation by sending almost all the money he gives her to their good-for-nothing son, so that there is nothing left for the household and the poor Consul has very little to eat.

The multimillionaire, Samuel Spoelmann, in Königliche Hoheit is also an example of a man whose degree of happiness does not correspond to his wealth. He suffers from kidney trouble which often causes him to be laid up for many days. Furthermore, he has had an unhappy past in America and his life in general is one of isolation and comparative loneliness.

Just as Thackeray pokes fun at those who live well on nothing, or almost nothing, a year, so does Mann mimic the royal family in Königliche Hoheit. The members of the royal household all possess carriages and entertain in grand style, although they actually have no money. The Krull family in Bekenntnisse des Hochstaplers Felix Krull also throw lavish

parties, even though their firm is on the verge of bankruptcy, and, in fact, does in the end go bankrupt.

Tony Buddenbrook is similar to Becky Sharp in that she considers money and station as the greatest things in life. Tony's ambition is to marry a wealthy businessman and uphold the family tradition and the good name of Buddenbrooks. The only real happiness that she enjoys is her association with Morten Schwarzkopf, the medical student, whom she does not marry because he has no money. Her three marriages are all marriages of convenience and each one of them collapses. When she marries Grünlich she thinks she will be able to live in luxury and style as she has been accustomed to, but at the end of four years it turns out that Grünlich has no more money, and after spending all of Tony's dowry to pay his debts, he goes bankrupt. Bankrupt: that is the most horrible word in Tony's vocabulary; it is chaos, ruin, shame, despair, misery, something worse than death itself. She receives the biggest shock in her life when her father informs her that Grünlich is broke, and it is for this reason that Tony decides to leave her husband. Her marriage to Alois Permaneder also goes to pieces, but for reasons other than bankruptcy. Her last husband, Hugo Weinschenk, is actually married to Tony's daughter. But Tony lives with her daughter and son-in-law, performs all the household duties, and claims all the pride and joy of the family. Tom once remarks that this is like a third marriage for his sister. This marriage, too, is unsuccessful and breaks up when Weinschenk is sent to jail for illegal transactions made on behalf of his insurance firm.

But perhaps Tony cannot be given all the blame for her unfortunate marriages, especially her first one. She did not

like Grünlich from the very beginning and she sought to ward off all attempts to get her to enter the marriage. Encouragement, however, came from all sides, and Mann illustrates by this the importance that people place on money at the expense of other values. Not only did Tony's parents seek to influence her, but also her grandmother and the Buddenbrooks' maid, Ida Jungmann, urged her on. Ida reminded Tony that she would remain in the better circles if she went through with the marriage. Even the parson gave a sermon one Sunday directed at Tony in which he pointed out that it was the duty of every woman to leave her mother and father and follow her husband.

It is not only in regard to marriage, however, that the people in Buddenbrooks respect money. The "Bürger" in general measures the importance and character of a person in terms of the amount of capital that he has. As the Hagenströms become more wealthy they are more highly regarded by the citizens, whereas the importance and influence of the Buddenbrooks in the community wanes with a decrease in the firm's business. This is evidenced by the fact that Tom can do nothing to prevent Weinschenk's imprisonment even though the latter's crime is neither great nor unusual. Nevertheless, the Senator is regarded as a prominent figure in the town, and when he dies the wealthy burghers feel obliged to send large wreaths as a display of their wealth. The author writes:

Was man zunächst in der Sache zu thun hat, war dies, dass man Kränze schickte, grosse Kränze, teure Kränze, Kränze, mit denen man Ehre einlegen konnte, die in den Zeitungsartikeln erwähnt werden würden und denen man ansah, dass sie von loyalen und zahlungsfähigen Leuten kamen.¹⁷

¹⁷Buddenbrooks, (Berlin: S.Fischer, 1903), II, p. 436.

The admiration that the populace has for wealth is better brought out in Königliche Hoheit. When Jettchen Isenschnibbe informs the royal family that the multimillionaire Spölmann is coming to the country, she says that people will come from all over to see a man who spends a half million daily.¹⁸ Not only do foreigners come to see this great attraction, but the natives as well follow all the Spölmann's activities either through personal observation, or by means of the newspapers which report everything the Spölmanns do. Like the royal family, the Spölmanns are constantly kept in the public's eye.

Mann is also very ironic in his treatment of the aristocratic gentleman in the sketch "Das Eisenbahnunglück". The aristocrat takes his dog with him into the compartment (which is forbidden), and when the conductor asks him for his ticket, the gentleman calls him "Affenschwanz" and then opens his compartment door and throws the ticket in the conductor's face. The ticket hits the conductor in the eye, and although his eye begins to tear as a result of this blow, the conductor, realizing whom he is dealing with, clicks his heels, thanks and salutes the gentleman.¹⁹

Like Thackeray, Mann pokes fun at the people who are not wealthy themselves but who associate with, or work for the rich and therefore consider themselves important. Herr Stuh't's wife in Buddenbrooks buys old clothes from good homes and by virtue of this fact the Stuh'ts frequent the upper circles of the town, Herr Wenzel, the barber, only shaves the

¹⁸Königliche Hoheit (Berlin: S. Fischer, 1910), p. 195.

¹⁹Der kleine Herr Friedemann und andere Novellen (Berlin: S. Fischer), p. 163.

well-to-do burghers and is therefore regarded as one of their group. Ida Jungmann is conscious of the noble name of Buddenbrooks and consequently prevents Thilda, and later Hanno, from playing with the ordinary school children. Under this same category we might include the aristocratic colly-dog in Königliche Hoheit. Percival refuses to associate with the ordinary street-dogs and always remains aloof from them. He is so proud that he was never heard to cry out in pain. He eats very little and is seemingly wasting away internally so that he is expected to die at an early age.

In their efforts to expose all hypocrisy and falsehood the writers have left practically no stone unturned. One of the species that they have scoffed at is the hypocritical clergy. Of course their ridicule does not extend to all the members of this profession, but only to those whose daily activities are at odds with the dictates of their calling.

Thackeray describes the Reverend Bute Crawley as a complete hoax. The Reverend is interested in all athletics, especially horseracing, at which sport he loses his money; he is consequently constantly in debt. His great hope is that his sister, the wealthy Miss Crawley, will soon die and leave him half her money. On his way home one day after just having seen his sister, the Reverend indulges in some "solemn speculations". He says to his wife:

She drank cherry-brandy after dinner. . . . and took curaçao with her coffee. I wouldn't take a glass for a five-pound note: it kills me with heartburn. She can't stand it, Mrs. Crawley--- she must go---flesh and blood won't bear it! and I lay five to two, Matilda drops in a year.²⁰

²⁰Vanity Fair, p. 94.

On Pendennis' trip abroad he hears a sermon from a Mr. Shambles "(an erratic Anglican divine, hired for the season at places of English resort, and addicted to debts, drinking, and even to roulette, it was said)." ²¹

Finally, there is the character of Mr. Sampson in The Virginians. Although Thackeray reveals the hypocrisy of the parson, he nevertheless paints him as a sympathetic figure, which again illustrates the writer's habit of mixing good and bad qualities in the same person. The author says of Mr. Sampson:

. . . .in his chapel in Long Acre he whipped Vice tremendously; gave Sin no quarter; outcursed Blasphemy with superior anathemas; knocked Drunkenness down, and trampled on the prostrate brute wallowing in the gutter; dragged out conjugal Infidelity, and pounded her with endless stones of rhetoric---and, after service, came to dinner at the "Star and Garter", made a bowl of punch for Harry and his friends at the "Bedford Head", or took a hand at whist at Mr. Warrington's lodgings. . . .or wher-²² ever there was a supper and good company for him.

In Buddenbrooks Mann ridicules two characters of this type. First there is Thränen-Trietschke, so called because he would burst out into tears every Sunday in the midst of his sermon. In spite of the fact that he is married and has many children, this pastor has a letter left in Tony's room containing a strange mixture of biblical quotations and amorous phrases. Tony shows this letter to her mother and of course it is impossible for Thränen-Trietschke to visit the Buddenbrook house again.

But the house is open to other clergymen, and traveling preachers know that they can always find food and lodging at

²¹Pendennis, p. 560.

²²The Virginians, pp. 346, 7.

Buddenbrooks' place. Among the wandering missionaries there is a bald pastor who once asks Tony whether she thinks the burnt curl on her forehead is in keeping with the spirit of true, Christian humility. Tony retorts by saying that he should worry about his own curls.

In addition to the hypocritical clergymen the novelists deride the laymen who profess devoutness on the one hand, and yet whose actions stand in sharp contrast to their professed religious beliefs.

Thackeray characterizes Mrs. Bute Crawley as this kind of woman. She, like her husband, is interested in getting Miss Crawley's money at all costs. When the old spinster has a nervous breakdown, Mrs. Crawley nurses, and almost kills the woman by keeping her locked up in a dark room where she reads Scriptural chapters to her patient. Only when the Doctor makes it clear to Mrs. Crawley that the patient will die under those conditions and Rawdon Crawley would then inherit the Crawley fortune does the nurse decide to take Miss Crawley outdoors and thus make it possible for her to recover. But Miss Crawley is so fearful of death that at first she welcomes Mrs. Crawley's Scriptural readings. When she was in health and in good spirits, Miss Crawley "had as free notions about religion and morals as Monsieur de Voltaire himself could desire",²³ but when she was ill she was terrified by the thought of death and sought to repent her ways.

Lady Warrington also uses religion as a mask for her unchristian feelings. She has the false notion that morality merely consists of going to church and reading the Bible. When

²³Vanity Fair, p. 173.

Harry Warrington is in jail and in need of a friend, he writes to his aunt and uncle asking them for help. Lady Warrington replies by sending him one of Mr. Whitfield's sermons, "Daniel in the Lion's Den", and her "heartfelt prayers" and "deepest commiseration" along with "profuse references to particular Scriptural chapters which would do him good".²⁴ The author satirizes this kind of sheltered religion which appears so upright on the surface but in reality only shields the moral vacuity which lies underneath.

The false religiousness of Johann Buddenbrook is of another variety. The kind of religion he represents is completely different from the sweet, affected religiousness of the characters that Thackeray portrays. The Consul exemplifies the typical German Protestant with his love for hard work and his sense of order and propriety. He is interested in maintaining the high status of the family and the importance of the firm in the community. As the dominating force in the family, he has the last word in everything that happens. He is a god-fearing man who believes that everything he does is right from a religious point of view. He reads excerpts from the Bible each morning before breakfast, and in the family book he thanks God for having saved his life as a child. But, at the same time he wields all his influence to get Tony to marry Grünlich, although he knows that she despises him. However, he is primarily interested in maintaining his respectable bourgeois position and name in the community by having his daughter marry someone he thinks is a wealthy

²⁴The Virginians, p. 394.

businessman. The Consul knows that Tony is only going through with the marriage for his sake, and when his wife asks him whether he thinks that Tony is happy with Grünlich, he replies: "'Ach, Betsy, sie ist zufrieden mit sich selbst; das ist das solideste Glück, das wir auf Erden erlangen können.'"²⁵

Later on, of course, the whole affair blows up in the Consul's face. Grünlich goes bankrupt and confesses that he only married Tony for her money. Although prepared to grant Grünlich the sum needed to avoid bankruptcy if Tony desires to continue to live with her husband, the Consul hopes that Tony will leave Grünlich and seeks to influence her in that direction so that he can spare himself the high costs. After refusing to lend his son-in-law the necessary money to get him out of debt, the Consul takes his daughter with him and then comes back to the broken Grünlich and says: "'Fassen Sie sich. Beten Sie.'"²⁶

Betsy Buddenbrook has not always been religious like her husband, although she does have delicate ears which cannot bear to hear words like "verdammt" and "Geschmeiss". However, after the Consul's death she begins to be more and more occupied with religious thoughts. In a conversation with Justus Kröger she makes some reference to a biblical saying which astounds her brother because such phrases had only been uttered by the Consul previously. But Betsy, like Miss Crawley, is afraid of death and seeks refuge in religion because after her husband's death, she realizes that her time will be coming soon. And so, although stricken by pneumonia, the "Konsulin"

²⁵Buddenbrooks, I, p. 232.

²⁶Ibid, I, p. 328.

has such a strong will-to-live (characteristic of her bourgeois nature) that she is able to temporarily ward off death until it finally claims her. Ironically enough, because her will-to-live is so strong, her death is that much more painful and agonizing.

Both writers have attacked the school systems of their time. They show how poorly the schools are run and how the pupils' initiative and imagination are stifled by the incompetent, despotic teachers. Thackeray denounces the kind of education which solely emphasizes studying the classics and which has no bearing on the modern world. He furthermore objects to the severe discipline found in the schools. The teachers are veritable tyrants who simply demand a formalistic knowledge of Greek words and exact translations and who care little for the subject matter of the works. Consequently, the pupils can never do anything on their own, but are restricted at every turn.

In Pendennis we get an idea of the kind of training that the youthful Pen is subjected to at the Grey Friars School. The Doctor of the establishment has the habit of frequently scolding his pupils; he calls them profligates and predicts that they will bring ruin on themselves and their family, and will eventually end up on the gallows because they make a mistake in Greek or Latin. He once rebukes Pen by saying:

'Pendennis, sir. . . .your idleness is incorrigible and your stupidity beyond example. You are a disgrace to your school, and to your family, and I have no doubt will prove so in after-life to your country. . . . Miserable trifler! A boy who construes $\S\epsilon$ and, instead of $\S\epsilon$ but, at sixteen years of age is guilty not merely of folly, ignorance, and dulness inconceivable, but of crime, of deadly crime, of filial ingratitude which I tremble to contemplate'.²⁷

²⁷Pendennis, p. 16.

Pen did not return to school after his father's death. He could not stand the discipline and pettiness of the place. He did not enjoy being forced to learn, but wanted to have the freedom to explore. On his own, he did not only concentrate on the classics, but read modern literature as well. But he does read the ancient poets with his tutor, Mr. Smirke, and at a very pleasant rate, "very different from that steady grubbing pace with which the Cistercians used to go over the classic ground, scenting out each word as they went, and digging up every root in the way".²⁸

Thackeray also makes fun of Miss Pinkerton's Academy in Vanity Fair. Miss Pinkerton, that tall, roman-nosed "Semiramis of Hammersmith", boasts that she was the friend of Doctor Johnson on the basis of one visit that he paid the institution, and that she corresponds with Mrs. Chapone herself. Yet she "no more comprehended sensibility that she did Algebra",²⁹ and when Becky Sharp addressed her in French, she would get all excited and irritated because she herself "did not understand French; she only directed those who did".³⁰

Thackeray here ridicules the type of institutions that profess to transform young girls into ladies. The girls learn embroidery, needlework, deportment, carriage, and similar subjects which go into the making of a gentlewoman. However, the girls lead a very sheltered existence in the Academy since they have little contact with the real world outside, and they are, in truth, nothing but highly sentimental, twaddling creatures.

²⁸Ibid, p. 23.

²⁹Vanity Fair, p. 4.

³⁰Ibid, p. 6.

Thomas Mann devotes an entire chapter in Buddenbrooks to a description of a typical school day in the life of Hanno. With great irony the author shows up a farce the whole Prussian school system with its emphasis on discipline, order, and exactness. Hanno is subjected to much the same kind of training that Pendennis was, only Mann describes the conditions more in detail. He shows how the entire system is built on a hierarchical basis with everyone taking orders from a superior and, in turn, exercising authority on someone inferior in rank. And at the top of the pyramid sits "der liebe Gott", director Wulicke. This tyrannical, Prussian-trained director replaced the classical educational methods of the old school system, where one could pursue his studies in peace and leisure, with the new concepts of authority, duty, power, service, and career.³¹ Not only the teachers, but also the students feel like officials under this system, and everyone strives for advancement and recognition from the people who are in power.

Every class period is torture for the students. They enter the classroom in morbid fear, even when they have prepared their lessons, and frequently they resort to cheating. Hanno, for instance, gets by in the Latin class by reading the translation of the boy sitting in front of him. Another pupil, however, is caught with a pony in his book and is severely punished. But it is no wonder that the students cheat; the exactitude demanded of them is ridiculous, as the following example indicates:

. . . .Gottlieb Kassbaum, Sohn des verunglückten Grosskaufmanns Kassbaum, erhielt trotz seiner zerrütteten Familienverhältnisse eine vorzügliche Note, weil er mit Genauigkeit feststellen konnte, dass

³¹Buddenbrooks, II, p. 484.

Hiob an Vieh siebentausend Schafe, dreitausend
Kameele, fünfhundert Esel und sehr viel Gesindes
besessen habe.³²

The new teacher of English, Herr Modersohn, is easy with the students, who take advantage of his laxity by not preparing their lessons and by saying and doing whatever they please in class. But during the class period, "der liebe Gott" enters. He wants to examine the instructor's methods and see what the pupils have learned. Modersohn's future hangs in the balance. The author then remarks: "Und wie bislang nur die Schüler geprüft und begutachtet worden waren, so geschah es nun gleichzeitig auch mit dem Lehrer...Ach, es erging beiden Teilen schlecht!"³³

Not only Hanno, but the other artist figures in Mann's stories dislike school and do poorly in it. Tonio Kröger thinks that the teachers are comical and always brings home bad marks from school. He is not like the ordinary, bourgeois pupils who do well in their schoolwork. Axel Martini in Königliche Hoheit does not even finish school. The Bajazzo is too busy trying to find the comedy in the gestures of the teachers to pay attention to what they have to say. Felix Krull hates school so much that he frequently forges his father's name on absence excuses, and once successfully puts on a sick-act which keeps him out of school for a few days. This dislike and ineptitude on the part of the artist for school is indicative of the fact that he is unlike normal people and is one of the signs of his artistic nature.

Another group of people whom Thackeray enjoys poking

³²Ibid, II, p. 475.

³³Ibid, II, p. 511.

fun at are the women who like to play Doctor or apothecary. Lady Esmond in The Virginians has a host of recipes for various medical concoctions. Whenever anyone on or around the plantation is sick, she rushes to them and brings them her quack medicines. The author says: "They trembled to be ill, lest the little lady should be upon them with her decoctions and her pills".³⁴

Lady Southdown in Vanity Fair does not make the medicines herself but subscribes to all kinds of quack patents on the market. Not only that, but this strong-willed person forces all her friends to take these medicines. Pitt Crawley, one of her victims, "had been made to accept Saunders McNitre, Luke Waters, Giles Jowls, Podgers' Pills, Rodgers' Pills, Pokey's Elixir, every one of her Ladyship's remedies spiritual or temporal".³⁵

Mann has not dealt with characters such as these, but instead has struck directly at the men of the medical profession. He points out that this profession has its share of quacks and phonies just like many others. The most ironised figure of this species is the dentist, Doctor Brecht, in Buddenbrooks. The dentist is pictured as being more nervous and frightened than his patients. When Brecht extracts one of Hanno's teeth, the boy notices drops of sweat forming on the Doctor's brow, and after the extraction is completed, the dentist is forced to sit down, wipe the perspiration from his forehead, and take a drink of water.³⁶

Later in the novel the author again illustrates the

³⁴The Virginians, p. 34.

³⁵Vanity Fair, p. 319.

³⁶Buddenbrooks, II, p. 178.

dentist's professional incompetency. When Thomas comes to have his decayed tooth pulled, Doctor Brecht is uncertain as to the nature of the decay and uses Tom for experimental purposes. After his unsuccessful attempts at an extraction, the dentist is completely exhausted and looks like death itself. He tells the Senator: "'Die Krone ist abgebrochen, Herr Senator...Ich fürchtete es...Der Zahn ist ausserordentlich defekt...Aber es war meine Pflicht, das Experiment zu wagen...'"³⁷

The Buddenbrooks' family Doctor, Grabow, is also ridiculed. When the "Konsulin" is sick and in great pain, he assures Tom and Tony that the invalid's consciousness is dulled and that her movements are only reflexive in nature; whereupon the author remarks that every child could see that this was not true and that the woman was conscious and could feel everything.³⁸

Doctor Dusing in Bekenntnisse des Hochstaplers Felix Krull is another example of a physician who is totally unfit for his job. He was appointed to office through connections that he had. He caters to the rich and would often let his poorer patients wait while he handled his wealthier clients first. He suspects Felix of trying to skip school, which was true. But, since the boy does not let on that this is the case, Dusing does not know what to do; he therefore diagnoses Felix' condition as the flu, along with swollen tonsils and catarrh, and prescribes something for him. Felix then thinks to himself that the medical profession contains a majority of quacks just like the other professions whose

³⁷Ibid, II, p. 421.

³⁸Ibid, p. 257

members try to disavow that which is obvious and make something out of that which is not there.

Both novelists have also mocked people's social manners. Thackeray says of Mr. Pitt Crawley, for instance, : "He was a man of such rigid refinement, that he would have starved rather than have dined without a white neckcloth".³⁹ Similarly, the author pokes fun at Pendennis' tutor: "Smirke was a man perfectly faultless at a tea-table, wore a curl on his fair forehead, and tied his neckcloth with a melancholy grace".⁴⁰ In addition, the Victorian derides the small, and often very injurious, talk of society, and the way that many people spend their time in gambling.

Mann mocks social manners with sharp humor in his description of François Knaak in "Tonio Kröger". This poised and nimble dancing master cuts a ridiculous figure. He introduces himself in French because, as he says, although one is not in the position to introduce one's self in French every day, if one can do it correctly in that language, then one will be able to do so perfectly in German.⁴¹ Furthermore, one must make his exit from company walking backwards; one should not drag a chair along the floor, but lift it up by the arms and gently set it down; nor does one stand around with one's hands on one's stomach and one's tongue in the corner of one's mouth. If you do these things, however, Knaak has a way of chastising you that will make you regret your deeds for the rest of your life. Tonio Kröger thinks to

³⁹Vanity Fair, p. 74.

⁴⁰Pendennis, p. 23.

⁴¹Tristan (Berlin: S. Fischer, 1904), p. 184.

himself what an ass this fellow is, but notices that the beautiful Ingeborg Holm is quite impressed by the dancing master.

The way that people dress is also often ironically described by the novelists. Thackeray especially laughs at the gaudy colors and the fancy ornaments that people sometimes wear. The lavishly dressed Harry Foker in Pendennis wears a scarlet shawl neckcloth, a fur waistcoat laced with golden chains, a green cut-away coat with large buttons, and a white upper-coat with cheese-plate buttons, all of which ornaments go into the making of a "Swell".⁴²

The French cook, Monsieur Mirobolant, makes an unfavorable impression on the English because of his dress. His favorite costume, which he wears when he goes strolling through the village, is a light green frock, a crimson velvet waistcoat, trousers with a large, checked pattern, an orange satin tie, a gold embroidered cap, and a richly gilt cane.⁴³

When Becky Sharp first meets Jos Sedley, Amelia's stout brother, he is clad in "buckskins and Hessian boots, with several immense neckcloths, that rose almost to his nose, with a red striped waistcoat and an apple green coat with steel buttons. . . ."⁴⁴

One of the characteristics that Mann has often described in connection with the bourgeois is their fondness for proper dress. Tom Buddenbrook would spend many hours in dressing,

⁴²Pendennis, p. 29.

⁴³Ibid, p. 222.

⁴⁴Vanity Fair, p. 16.

Tonio Kröger's father was also always carefully dressed, and Tonio himself is neat and orderly in respect to the clothes he wears, which is a sign of the bourgeois side of his character.

However, Mann, like Thackeray, has also poked fun at people's dress. François Knaak wears a black silk frock-coat which clings close to his plump hips; his trouser-legs fall in soft folds upon his patent-leather shoes which are adorned with wide, satin bows. The wealthy Samuel Spölmann wears a discolored paletot. Doctor Ueberbein wears only white ties which appear festive, although his wardrobe is actually paltry. When he goes riding, the Doctor wears a worn out frock-coat (whose lapels are edged with safety pins), tight pants, and a high hat. The short and stout Alois Permaneder wears a brown coat and a bright, flowery vest decorated with a gold watch chain which sparkles with gold and silver amulets.

The final topic to be mentioned under this heading is Mann's mocking of newspapers. The revolutionary thinker, Morten Schwarzkopf, utters his contempt for the aristocratic newspapers once in a conversation with Tony. He tells her that the papers are written by and for the upper classes and only relate how a Consul so and so plans to celebrate his silver wedding anniversary and items of a similar nature, but contain little or no information about political events. This disgust that Schwarzkopf has for the newspapers is characteristic of his fiery, revolutionary temper and his contempt for the wealthy in general.

The greatest lampooning of the newspapers, however, appears in Königliche Hoheit. The two papers, the "Eilbote"

and the "Staatsanzeiger", relate every incident that occurs in connection with the royal household and the Spölmanns. They report the tennis matches, teas, visits, ceremonies, and all the insignificant activities performed by the members of these two families. When the young Klaus Heinrich goes riding through the town and is the object of all the onlookers' attention, he feels embarrassed at presenting himself to the crowd and he blushes. The author then writes: "Aber der "Eilbote" schrieb, dass die Wangen unseres kleinen Herzogs wie Rosen gewesen seien vor Wohlbefinden".⁴⁵

When Samuel Spölmann plans to come to Europe, he is preceded by reporters from two large New York papers, who telegraph descriptions of the sites and follow every move that the capitalist makes. Thus, Mann laughs at the newspapers who devote so much time and space to accounts of all the minor activities in connection with people of wealth and position.

These, then, are some of the similarities that we find in respect to the authors' contents. Common to both men is their effort to expose falseness, insincerity, and artificiality in whatever shape or form it may appear. They aim at revealing the deceits and subterfuges that people frequently use, consciously or unconsciously, to mask their true characters. In doing this, both writers often ironise the same types of figures, as we have seen. However, these similarities in ironic content result from the nature of the subject matter and do not necessarily imply a direct influence of Thackeray on Mann.

⁴⁵Königliche Hoheit, p. 78.

CHAPTER III

IRONIC STYLE

Just as important as what the authors have ironised is the way that they achieve an ironical effect. The similarities between the ironical styles of the two novelists are quite numerous, and in respect to at least one stylistic device it seems that Mann was directly influenced by Thackeray.

In our treatment of ironical form we will make four main subdivisions, namely: 1) direct contact with the reader, 2) situation, 3) speech, and 4) description or characterization of a person. In addition, we will handle, especially in connection with Mann, 5) the ironical use of names and 6) of the leitmotiv. It is obvious that the lines of demarcation between these groups are not always sharply distinguishable and that two or more can often overlap.

1. DIRECT CONTACT WITH THE READER

When we read Thackeray we are struck by the number of times that he stops to comment on some character or incident in the story, or on morals or society in general. He no longer assumes the role of author, but rather momentarily views his work as an outsider, as a critic. He converses with his reader in a direct manner about his characters, or about some human folly in general. This device enables the artist to regard his work in an objective light. It prevents him from getting too deeply engrossed in his characters, and by becoming more impersonal in respect to them he can indicate, and comment on their

faults, or even their good points. Thackeray expresses this attitude in Vanity Fair where he writes:

And, as we bring our characters forward, I will ask leave, as a man and a brother, not only to introduce them, but occasionally to step down from the platform, and talk about them: if they are good and kindly, to love them and shake them by the hand: if they are silly, to laugh at them confidentially in the reader's sleeve: if they are wicked and heartless, to abuse them in the strongest terms which politeness admits of.⁴⁶

This technique has the further advantage of making the reader conscious of the fact that what is being told is, after all, only a story, and not life itself. A work of art is, in the final analysis, not reality but only an image of reality, and the author's insertion of parenthetical remarks brings us to this realization because, on the one hand, we see the artist, as an artist, in the work that he has created, and at the same time we see him as another human being who is able to step aside and speak with us about what he has written. Thomas Mann has expressed this distinction between art and life in his essay "Bilse und ich" in which he vehemently denies that his Buddenbrooks is a "Bilse novel", that is, a critique on society. He writes:

Die Wirklichkeit, die ein Dichter seinen Zwecken dienstbar macht, mag seine tägliche Welt, mag als Person sein Nächstes und Liebstes sein. . . . dennoch wird für ihn--und sollte für alle Welt!--ein abgründiger Unterschied zwischen der Wirklichkeit und seinem Gebilde bestehen bleiben: der Wesensunterschied nämlich, welcher die Welt der Realität von derjenigen der Kunst auf immer unterscheidet.⁴⁷

And this device of the direct approach to the reader is an

⁴⁶ Vanity Fair, pp. 71, 72.

⁴⁷ Rede und Antwort (Berlin: S.Fischer, 1922), p.9.

excellent way of illustrating this difference. The parallels between the two writers in respect to their use of this technique seems to indicate an influence of Thackeray on Mann. However, we must be cautious in drawing our conclusion too far, realizing that Mann has also been exposed to the romanticists and other writers who have employed this same device.

It would be impossible to enumerate the many instances in which we find Thackeray using this informal style. Examples are to be found on almost every other page. Sometimes it merely consists of a remark regarding the nature of one of the characters. For instance, at the beginning of Vanity Fair Becky Sharp tells Amelia a lie which could easily be detected, whereupon the author declares: "But we must remember that she is but nineteen as yet, unused to the art of deceiving, poor innocent creature! and making her own experience in her own person".⁴⁸

Now and then some incident acts as a springboard for a diatribe on man's follies, or the follies of the age, about which the author even rambles on for a few pages. At one point in The Virginians, for example, Thackeray denounces at great length the deceitful practices that women use to ensnare their men, and derides the credulity of the men who fall prey to these beguilings. Lady Maria, who is middle-aged, had given young Harry Warrington a rose with which she planned to win his affection, and Harry was taken in by Maria's scheme. But then the author remarks:

⁴⁸Vanity Fair, p. 14.

He does not see that the siren paints the lashes from under which she ogles him; will put by into a box when she has done the ringlets into which she would inveigle him; and if she eats him, as she proposes to do, will crunch his bones with a new set of grinders just from the dentist's, and warranted for mastication.⁴⁹

Thackeray continues by saying that it is the same old story of woman enticing man, and after stating that Harry kissed the rose, he ironically adds: "I cannot write this part of the Virginians, because Harry did not dare to write it himself to anyone at home. . . ."⁵⁰ Here we have an example of a stylistic trait common to both novelists. Frequently they stop and express their surprise over some incident in the story, or ironically state that they are unable to explain the actions or motivations of their characters. This is an especially effective way of achieving an intimate, confidential tone.

Sometimes Thackeray converses with the reader about some imaginary acquaintance of his, as when he tells us how Jenkins manages to live like an aristocrat on 1200 pounds a year.⁵¹ Or, the author may address a fictitious reader of his book. At the beginning of Vanity Fair Thackeray presumes that Mr. Jones, who reads the novel at his club, will not enjoy the sentimental speech to be found in it but prefers the noble and heroic in life, so the author advises him to seek his entertainment elsewhere.⁵² These examples indicate the informality with which Thackeray approaches the reader, as well as the spontaneous quality of his style.

⁴⁹The Virginians, p. 149.

⁵⁰Ibid, p. 150.

⁵¹Vanity Fair, p. 347.

⁵²Ibid, p. 5.

Thomas Mann does not utilize this method of parenthetical expression to the extent that Thackeray does, perhaps because Mann is not as spontaneous a writer as the Victorian. Nevertheless, Mann has also employed this device, (usually as a studied and carefully calculated effect), especially to comment on and ridicule the characters that he ironises, as, for example, Detlev Spinell in "Tristan". Spinell writes a letter to Klöterjahn in which he says that what he has to say so fills him and torments him, and the words flow into him so, that he simply must unburden himself. Mann then remarks: "Der Wahrheit die Ehre zu geben, so war dies mit dem 'Zuströmen' ganz einfach nicht der Fall, und Gott wusste, aus was für eitlen Gründen Herr Spinell es behauptete".⁵³ The author continues to say that whoever saw Spinell working would come to the conclusion that writing comes harder to a writer by profession than to anyone else. This statement is also applicable to Mann who himself works at a very slow and painstaking pace.

Then there is the scene in Buddenbrooks where, after Tom's death, the granary workers come to see his body. The sad expressions on their faces betray their sorrow about the death of their former director. Tony was thrilled and declared that many had cried in their rough beards. Whereupon the writer states: "Das war einfach nicht wahr. Dergleichen war nicht vorgekommen. Aber wenn sie es doch so gesehen hatte und wenn es sie glücklich machte"?⁵⁴

One of Thomas Mann's most informal, and also most ironi-

⁵³Tristan, p. 70.

⁵⁴Buddenbrooks, II, p. 439.

cal sketches is "Das Eisenbahnunglück". Right from the start the author strikes this conversational note. He ironically begins: "Etwas erzählen? Aber ich weiss nichts. Gut, also ich werde etwas erzählen".⁵⁵ And then the entire story is carried on in this informal vein whereby the author not only relates the incident of the train accident, but comments on the characters as well. He particularly mocks the gentleman with the dog. When, for instance, the conductor requests the gentleman's ticket and the gentleman answers by calling him an "Affenschwanz", Mann says: "Er gebrauchte den Ausdruck 'Affenschwanz'---ein Herrenausdruck, ein Reiter- und Kavalierausdruck, herzstärkend anzuhören".⁵⁶

Occasionally we come across expressions in Mann's writings like: "Plötzlich geschah etwas Erschreckendes", or "und siehe da", or "was ging vor"? whereby the author utters his bewilderment at some event that occurs. These ironical exclamations likewise serve the purpose of bringing the author in direct contact with the reader.

2. IRONICAL SITUATION

Lötschert writes that it is characteristic of Thackeray to mix sadness and happiness, crying and laughing, seriousness and mirth in a given situation.⁵⁷ This is true of Mann as well. Both men often combine heterogeneous elements in a certain situation to produce an ironic effect. This mingling

⁵⁵Der kleine Herr Friedemann und andere Novellen, p. 159.

⁵⁶Ibid, p. 163.

⁵⁷Hugo Lötschert, "William Makepeace Thackeray als Humorist", Inaugural Dissertation (Marburg, 1908), p. 25.

of the tragic and the comic in a situation is a very effective stylistic device for evoking the reader's laughter.

There are at least two outstanding examples of this form of irony in Pendennis, both in connection with Major Pendennis. When Pen comes from Oxbridge, he informs his uncle that he has been "plucked". The major thinks that it is some kind of corporeal punishment and asks his nephew if it were done in public. Pen is forced to smile at this misapprehension of the word and the tragedy of his situation is thus somewhat alleviated.⁵⁸ Later in the book Pen gets critically ill and the Major arrives with Pen's mother and Laura to visit the boy. Until that time, Fanny Bolton, a girl-friend of Pen's who was disliked by the family, had been nursing him. The Major asked the Doctor whether he knew anything about Fanny whom he had seen sitting outside on the steps, and at the same time remarked that she was exceptionally good-looking. "The Doctor looked queer: the Doctor smiled---in the very gravest moments, with life and death pending, such strange contrasts and occasions of humour will arise, and such smiles will pass. . . ."⁵⁹

At the beginning of Vanity Fair Thackeray relates how Amelia sits pining away for George Osborne and how she anxiously waits and waits for him to come. He, however, is playing billiards at this time and pays hardly a thought to Amelia. She sends him hundreds of love letters with one of which he was seen lighting his cigar. When he finally

⁵⁸Pendennis, p. 189.

⁵⁹Ibid, p. 508.

does visit her, they sit together conversing and building castles in the air "which Amelia adorned with all sorts of flower-gardens, rustic walks, country churches, Sunday schools, and the like; while George had his mind's eye directed to the stables, the kennel, and the cellar. . . . "60

Captain Shandon's position in Pendennis is also portrayed in ironical fashion. The Captain lives in prison because he is unable to pay his debts, but at the same time he writes articles for the Pall Mall Gazette which he says is addressed to the upper classes and is written by and for gentlemen.⁶¹

In Henry Esmond Henry engages in a plot to return the exiled prince to the throne. Everything is in order and all the prince's supporters are assembled, but the prince is nowhere to be found. He left town to chase after Beatrix Esmond and so missed his only opportunity to regain the crown.

These are only a few of the ironical situations that Thackeray has created in his works. They serve to illustrate his fondness for joining juxtaposed actions or moods in a given situation.

Mann has likewise employed this device to a large extent. Examples of ironical situations appear especially in the novels of this period, although they do occur in his short stories as well. A good example of this type of irony is the celebration of the centennial anniversary of the Budenbrooks firm. Soon after Thomas had taken over the company,

⁶⁰Vanity Fair, p. 113.

⁶¹Pendennis, p. 317.

it started on its downgrade. Before the anniversary celebration Tom made a big gamble on a certain transaction. On the same day of the commemoration Tom receives a telegram which informs him that the deal has failed which marks the beginning of the end for the firm. And so, the entire celebration is no more than a farce.

In the same book there is the humorous incident which takes place at Hanno's christening. Grobleben brings some flowers for the occasion on behalf of all the granary workers. But before presenting his bouquet he makes a little speech in which he congratulates the family and then ends by emphasizing the fact that, whether rich or poor, ". . . .tau Moder müssen wi Alle warn, wi müssen all tau Moder warn, tau Moder...tau Moder....!"⁶²

Königliche Hoheit begins with the meeting of a general and a lieutenant on the street. But instead of the young lieutenant, who it turns out is the Prince Klaus Heinrich, greeting the older general, as one would expect, the general salutes first and makes way for the inferior officer. And in general, the story of how an American multimillionaire finances the destitute country and thus saves it from collapse is, needless to say, supremely ironic.

The novelist's vision of a ham sandwich in "Beim Propheten" while the Swiss youth is reading the very serious "Proclamations", and the little contraption in Felix Krull playing "Freut euch des Lebens" while the assessors strip everything else from the bankrupt Krull household are further examples of this kind of irony.

⁶²Buddenbrooks, II, p. 15.

3. IRONICAL SPEECH

There are various ways of expressing the irony in speech or conversation. The artist can mock the grammar, or pronunciation of his characters (dialectal or otherwise), or he can have them say something which stands out in contrast to their nature, actions, or fate.

Thackeray especially mimics the mispronunciation and dialectal usage of people's speech. He pokes fun at characters from all levels of society in this respect. Sir Pitt Crawley typifies a supposed aristocrat whose speech the author ridicules. In a letter to Emily, Becky quotes Sir Pitt as saying: "'There's an avenue.... a mile long. There's six thousand pound of timber in them there trees. Do you call that nothing'"? And Becky notes: "He pronounced avenue--evenue, and nothing--nothink, so droll".⁶³ Lady Clavering in Pendennis also speaks incorrectly. She asks Pen once: "'What have you been a doing of? Nothink, I hope, to vex such a dear Mar as yours? How is your dear Mar? Why don't she come and see me? We an't seen her this ever such a time'".⁶⁴ But unlike the mean and selfish Sir Pitt Crawley, Lady Clavering is painted as a kind and generous person.

The Victorian novelist enjoyed mimicking the Irish and cockney accents. In pointing out speech peculiarities Thackeray either records the words as they are spoken, or he writes them correctly and then adds the actual pronunciation that the character used, as: "'Sure I've made a pie,' Emily

⁶³Vanity Fair, p. 65. The italics are the author's.

⁶⁴Pendennis, p. 239.

said, with perfect simplicity. She pronounced it "Poy'".⁶⁵ Major and Mrs. O'Dowd and Captain Costigan and his daughter are the most prominent figures who speak with an Irish accent. Although Thackeray laughs at their speech, he treats them sympathetically, while the cockney-speaking characters of the hack-driver and servant variety are not presented in a favorable light. Major O'Dowd is an able military officer, and his wife displays her loyalty to Amelia by standing by her in the time of her greatest distress. On the other hand, the author reveals Morgan, Major Pendennis' servant, as a sneak and a blackmailer with no decency in his bones.

When the English speak a foreign language, principally French, Thackeray frequently makes fun of their false pronunciation. Harry Foker, for instance, who plans to court Amory Clavering, tells his French valet: "'Cherchy alors une paire de tongs,--et--curly moi un pew'".⁶⁶ In the same way the author laughs at the French who try to speak English as the porter in "An Invasion of France" who cries: "'Dis way, sare; are you for ze 'Otel of Rhin'?....'Ow mosh loggish 'ave you, sare'?"⁶⁷

Thackeray also shows up orthographical inaccuracies which could not be detected in speech. Rawdon Crawley writes Becky a note in which he says: "I hope you slept well. Don't be frightened if I don't bring in your coffy. Last night as I was coming home smoaking, I met with an accadent",

⁶⁵Ibid, p. 49.

⁶⁶Ibid, p. 384.

⁶⁷Paris Sketch Book (London: Smith, Elder & Co., 1872), p.9.

etc.⁶⁸ Harry Warrington writes on his first campaign in France that he saw "dragons" (meaning dragoons) on a hill.⁶⁹ Harry's tendency to confuse words like this, which is a sign of his lack of reading and learning, is once brought out in his speech. When Colonel Lambert compliments Harry by saying that he is like the Persians in that he can ride well and speaks the truth, Harry asks whether the "Prussians" really are good on horseback, and states that he would like to come in contact with them at some time.⁷⁰

Finally, and most important, there is the ironical speech whereby the characters say one thing and think or act the opposite. Becky Sharp is the crowning example of this type. All the flatteries and cajoleries which Becky uses on her acquaintances are only for the purpose of advancing Miss Sharp. She tells her dearest, sweetest Amelia that she will remain her best friend forever and ever, but then never for a moment bothers about her unless she thinks that she can use Emily for her ends. Becky also plays up to Sir Pitt and Miss Crawley in the hopes of getting a portion of their money some day. At one point she tells Miss Crawley that she will remain with her forever and ever, and then leaves that night. This practice of deceit and simulation remains with Becky to the very end, but it is perhaps precisely for this reason that she is the most interesting and colorful character in the book.

⁶⁸Vanity Fair, p. 515, Thackeray's italics.

⁶⁹The Virginians, p. 547.

⁷⁰Ibid, p.188.

Miss Crawley likewise thinks and says two different things. She once tells Becky that she adores run-away marriages and hopes that Rawdon would make some imprudent match. However, when Rawdon does secretly marry Becky, the old woman has a breakdown from which it takes her months to recover.

Mann has always been sensitive to the peculiarities in people's speech habits. He not only pokes fun at what people say, but also at the way that they express themselves. We find these variations in speech mannerisms especially in Buddenbrooks where the author also makes frequent use of two dialects, "Plattddeutsch" and the south German dialect from Munich. Aside from these there are many French expressions in the novel, especially at the beginning, spoken by the elder Johann Buddenbrook and his wife, and his son, Johann, and Betsy. Their use of French serves to indicate that they are men of the world, and is expressive of their bourgeois nature.

Mann particularly likes to mock the speech of the bourgeoisie. He ridicules the words they use, their pronunciation, and the way they speak. In a manner similar to Thackeray's, Mann relates the conversation between Tony and acquaintances of the Buddenbrooks on the beach at Travemünde. One of the friends says of Tony: "'Und welch inzückende Toilette'!---Man sagte 'inzückend'.----. . . 'Wie finde ich das forchtbar originell'!---Man sagte 'forchtbar'.----"71 Another instance of this kind is the teacher Stengel in the same novel who says "Quaeta" for "Quarta", "Line" for "Linie",

⁷¹Buddenbrooks, I, p. 184.

and "Schare" for "Jahre".⁷²

The author also mocks the speech of some characters in reference to food or drink. When Sesemi Weichbrodt, the boarding-house matron, made "Bischof", a sweet, red punch, she would ask the girls: "'Noch ein bisschen Beschaff'. . . . und das klang so appetitlich, dass niemand widerstand".⁷³ And Herr Klöterjahn orders coffee and "'Bottersemmeln'" in such a way that everyone who heard him would feel hungry.⁷⁴

But most of all Mann achieves an ironical, humorous effect by having his characters say something which is opposed to their own true nature or the situation at hand. The first meeting of Klaus Heinrich and Samuel Spölmann in Königliche Hoheit is a case in point. The multimillionaire is himself the prize example of the representative form of existence. All the money that he owns his father earned for him, and his life has been one of 'show' and little else. Yet when Klaus Heinrich tells him about his representative duties as a prince, Spölmann declares: "'Ach so'. . . . 'Zeremonien, Feierlichkeiten. So für die Gaffer. Na, dafür fehlt mir jedes Verständnis. Ich sage Ihnen once for all, dass ich nichts halte von Ihrem Beruf. That's my standpoint, sir'".⁷⁵ Later on, when Klaus Heinrich and Imma are to be married, Spölmann complains of the fact that the prince has no decent kind of job, that he

⁷²Ibid, p. 88.

⁷³Ibid, p. 117.

⁷⁴Tristan, p. 27.

⁷⁵Königliche Hoheit, p. 302.

has nothing to keep him busy. He says: "'Wenn er irgend etwas gelernt, eine ordentliche Beschäftigung hätte'"!⁷⁶
But still he gives his consent to the marriage.

In Buddenbrooks Grünlich tells Tony that she is ruining him because of her lavish expenditures. When Tony tells Herr Kesselmeyer about her husband's complaint, the banker roars with laughter, because the fact is that were it not for Tony, Grünlich would have gone broke much earlier than he did.

In "Tod in Venedig" Gustav Aschenbach goes to the barber in order to have himself made to look young and attractive to Tadzio. But after being made up, Aschenbach's face resembles that of a dead man who is ready for burial. When the barber is finished, he ironically tells the artist: "'Nun kann der Herr sich unbedenklich verlieben'".⁷⁷

We will return to this form of irony when we come to speak about the leitmotiv in connection with Mann.

4. IRONY OF DESCRIPTION

In a sense, all the above-mentioned forms of irony describe or characterize. However, under this category of "Irony of Description" we will include a special form of characterization in which the authors tersely and compactly describe their characters in an ironical manner. The writers gain this ironical effect in that they very briefly indicate the personality of various characters by joining

⁷⁶Ibid, p. 451.

⁷⁷Der Tod in Venedig (Berlin; S. Fischer, 1925), p. 136.

juxtaposed elements in describing them, or by simply attributing to a character a trait which stands in contrast to his true nature.

Thus in a few words Thackeray aptly portrays Jane Southdown's character (and her mother's) when he writes: "Her mamma ordered her dresses, her books, her bonnets, and her ideas for her".⁷⁸ In the same way he describes Mr. Bungay, the publisher of the Pall Mall Gazette, who "knew no more about novels than he did about Hebrew or Algebra".⁷⁹ Or, in reference to Lady Clavering Thackeray writes that she was "one of the best-natured women that ever enjoyed a good dinner or made a slip in grammar....."⁸⁰ In one of the stories in The Paris Sketch Book the author describes Mrs. Gambouge, the wife of a painter, as a drunken, hot-tempered woman who constantly plagues her husband. At the end of the sketch Thackeray writes:

My last accounts of Gambouge are, that he has left the arts, and is footman in a small family. Mrs. Gam takes in washing; and it is said that her continual dealings with soap-suds and hot water have been the only things in life which kept her from spontaneous combustion.⁸¹

The Prince in Henry Esmond is described as a person whose personal habits do not at all comply with his position and the title that he bears. The author says of him:

⁷⁸Vanity Fair, p. 317.

⁷⁹Pendennis, p. 404.

⁸⁰Ibid, p. 584.

⁸¹The Paris Sketch Book, p. 58.

The heir of one of the greatest names, of the greatest kingdoms, and of the greatest misfortunes in Europe, was often content to lay the dignity of his birth and grief at the wooden shoes of a French chambermaid, and to repent afterwards (for he was very devout) in ashes taken from the dust-pan.⁸²

Mann employs this technique in much the same way. With a few words or sentences he can humorously characterize various figures. Sometimes the novelist describes a physical trait as in the case of the Gräfin Lowenjoul whose face turns red on one side and white on the other.⁸³ And in the story "Luischen" we get a good idea of Christian Jacoby's colossal size from the author's remark that when Christian enters his wife's bedroom, he treads so softly that one cannot hear him, but one is aware of his presence because the floor and the furniture shake.

But more often Mann comically depicts a particular quality or habit of some character. An example of this is the scene in Buddenbrooks where Elisabeth Buddenbrook is buried. Pastor Pringsheim's speech evokes tears from the listeners, except from Madame Kethelsen who understood nothing, and from the Gerhardt sisters who were happy about the death of their friend "und beneideten sie nur deshalb nicht, weil Neid und Missgunst ihren Herzen fremd war".⁸⁴

Herr Kesselmeier is another one of the many humorous personages in Buddenbrooks. We not only gain a comical picture of the banker's physical appearance, but we are also

⁸²Henry Esmond (London: A. & F. Denny), p. 333.

⁸³Königliche Hoheit, p. 341.

⁸⁴Buddenbrooks, II, p. 291.

informed that he has the peculiar habit of frequently using the expression "Ahah" which he would utter with a variety of intonations. But the curious thing about him is that the more he would use this expression, and therefore the gayer he seemed, yet the more dangerous was the mood that he was actually in.⁸⁵

Mann writes of the Pastorin Höhlenrauch in "Tristan" that she has brought nineteen children into the world and is no longer capable of a single thought. Tony Buddenbrook has the habit of throwing her head back and in spite of that tries to touch her chest with her chin. The broker Gosch in Buddenbrooks had the greatest pleasure when he once lost a great deal of money on the stock exchange. Moritz Hagenström has the unusual habit of taking a lemon roll filled with currants, tongue-sausage, and breast of goose to school with him.

These examples suffice to illustrate the fondness of the two novelists for briefly describing various characters in an ironical manner.

5. NAMES

The significance of names is something that has played an important part in the work of both writers. Most of all, the authors seek a name which is in keeping with the character they portray, but occasionally they choose a name which does not fit the character and consequently impresses the reader as being ironic. Mann, especially, has taken great care in the selection of names from the very earliest

⁸⁵Buddenbrooks, I, pp. 285, 6.

writings on. He is not only concerned with the symbolical meanings of names, but also with their sounds, and the variety of connotations which these sounds create.

The names of Thackeray's main figures such as Amelia Sedley, Pendennis, Colonel Lambert, or George and Harry Warrington do not arouse any special associations regarding the nature of these people. However, a name like Dobbin infers the trustworthiness of this person, and Henry Esmond and Castlewood have something of an old, aristocratic ring, suitable for these eighteenth century figures. Furthermore, a name like Becky Sharp implies something of the cleverness of that woman.

In respect to the minor characters we find names like "Stoopid", the servant, "Shambles", the erratic Anglican parson, and "Doctor Goodenough", all of which are appropriate to the characters they represent.

Thackeray also uses names as a device for humor and ridicule,⁸⁶ as, for instance, the ambassador, "M. de Tape-worm", the poetess, "Miss Bunion", the "Earl of Bareacres", "Mrs. Hook Eagles", and "General Tiptoff", among others. In Pendennis the novelist ironically refers to Major Pendennis as the "philosopher". One of the chapters in Vanity Fair is entitled "Arcadia", but the author ironically shows how the country life of the Crawleys does in no way reflect any pastoral simplicity but only greed and hate.

Moreover, the Victorian enjoys mocking German names such as "Madame de Schnurrbart", "Gräfin Fanny de Butterbrod", or "Princess Amelia of Humbourg-Schlippen-schloppen".

⁸⁶See Hugo Lötschert, op. cit., pp. 96. 97.

In Vanity Fair Thackeray quotes a long list of titles attached to the name of that royal personage, Lord Steyne:

. A Knight of the Most Noble Order of the Garter, of the Golden Fleece of Spain, of the Russian Order of Saint Nicholas of the First Class, of the Turkish Order of the Crescent, First Lord of the Powder Closet and Groom of the Back Stairs.⁸⁷

Thomas Mann has been even more meticulous than Thackeray in his choice of names. We must again bear in mind, however, that the names which Mann attaches to his characters often indicate their affinity either to Life or Spirit, an anti-thesis which is fundamental to his art and Weltanschauung. We will discuss this duality more fully later on.

Although the majority of the names that Mann employs suit the characters they stand for, now and then the author picks a name which contradicts the character's nature and is therefore ironic.⁸⁸ But first let us make mention of a few names which fit the personalities of the people they represent. In the story "Tobias Mindernickel" there is the name "Tobias" itself taken from a Tobias in the Bible who owned a dog. "Esau", the name of the dog, is appropriate, too, in that Esau's birthright (of being a dog) was, so to speak, lost when Tobias purchased him. The bourgeois names "Kröger" and "Hagenström" in Buddenbrooks fit these characters, as does the name "Grobleben". "Tadzio" in "Der Tod in Venedig" is emphasized for its sound, especially the "u" sound which calls up associations of the primitive and

⁸⁷Vanity Fair, p. 637.

⁸⁸For a more detailed discussion of Mann's use of names in his short stories see Martin Kessel, "Studien zur Novellentechnik Thomas Manns", Edda. XXV: 284-88, Oslo, 1926.

mysterious. "Hans Hansen" and "Ingeborg Holm" are symbolic of the innocent, unknowing Life which Tonio Kröger yearns for.

But the name "Tonio Kröger" is Mann's crowning achievement in respect to names. This name is an expression of Tonio Kröger's ironic middle position between the world of the artist and that of the bourgeoisie. The combination of Tonio, which smacks of the South and the artist, with the very common, bourgeois name of Kröger reflects the tension and conflict between the juxtaposed elements of Tonio Kröger's personality. Throughout the story the author plays with this name, particularly in the first part. Hans Hansen addresses Tonio by his first name when they are alone, but when there is a third party present, Hans calls Tonio by his last name and Tonio thinks of the king in "Don Carlos" who weeps because he has been betrayed by the only friend he thought he had.

"François Knaak" in "Tonio Kröger" and "Wie Jappe und Do Escobar sich prügeln" is another example of a name composed of opposite parts, but unlike "Tonio Kröger" this name does not bring out any inner tension in that figure. Rather, the name is used for a comical effect. The ridiculous figure of the dancing master in "Tonio Kröger" appears even more ridiculous through this strange combination of "François" and "Knaak". "Lobgott Piepsam" and "Bibi Saccellaphylaccas" are other names of this same type.

"Klaus Heinrich" strikes us as being ironic for another reason. This very common name applied to a prince is the very opposite of what we would expect. Nor does Christian Buddenbrook's name suit the personality of that character.

Not only does Christian hate work, which is contrary to a basic precept of German Protestantism, but he also keeps a mistress in Hamburg by whom he had an illegitimate child. Also Sesemi Weichbrodt's punch, which flows in streams at Christmas time, is ironically called "Bischof".

The case of Johannes Friedemann in the story "Der kleine Herr Friedemann" is again different. Here the name is appropriate to the character but it contradicts his fate. "Johannes" is symbolic of the most beloved disciple of Christ, and "Friedemann" connotes a man who seeks peace. Yet when the little Friedemann comes in contact with Gerda von Rinnlingen, he is thrown into confusion and despair, and finally commits suicide.

Names such as "Fräulein Unschlitt", "Jettchen von Isenschnibbe", "Sesemi Weichbrodt", or the teachers "Mühsam" and "Mantelsack" are further illustrations of how Mann frequently pokes fun at certain characters by means of the names he gives them.

The final topic which we will now treat under ironic style is the leitmotiv. Thackeray has not made conscious use of this device, but Mann has employed it in all his writings, and it is an important feature of his style.

6. THE LEITMOTIV

Thomas Mann has adopted the leitmotiv as a stylistic technique from Richard Wagner's music. Peacock explains the various characterizing and symbolical functions of the leitmotiv in Mann's writings.⁸⁹ We, however, will

⁸⁹Ronald Peacock, "Das Leitmotiv bei Thomas Mann" (Bern: P. Haupt, 1934).

only concern ourselves with the leitmotiv as a form of ironical expression.

Peacock notes that the characterizing leitmotiv can at the same time be ironical, and conversely, the ironical leitmotiv can characterize.⁹⁰ Furthermore, he states that when Mann uses the leitmotiv for ironical purposes he is also criticising or judging his characters, but when the author merely narrates, as in the case of *Thomas Buddenbrook* or *Tonio Kröger*, the ironical leitmotiv disappears.⁹¹

The process of repeating various motifs is aimed at creating the effect of a musical composition in which certain themes recur again and again. This is especially true of "*Tonio Kröger*" about which Mann once wrote that whereas in *Buddenbrooks* the leitmotiv was of a physiognomic-naturalistic nature, in "*Tonio Kröger*" it was no longer mechanical but gained a feeling-transparency which raised it into the realm of the musical.⁹²

The ironical leitmotiv occurs principally in conversation. The author makes use of the fact that we often repeat certain phrases in our daily conversation, and he puts various expressions into the mouths of the characters he ridicules, either to poke fun at the way they are, or to indicate that what they say is the opposite of their true nature and actions. Tony Buddenbrook, for instance, makes frequent use of the statement which she first heard from Morten Schwarzkopf in reference to honey in the comb:

⁹⁰Ibid., p. 12.

⁹¹Ibid., pp. 11, 12.

⁹²"Lebensabriss", Die neue Rundschau, Juni 1930, p. 745.

"Das ist reines Naturprodukt. . . .da weiss man doch, was man verschluckt'".⁹³ But all during her lifetime Tony never knew, as it were, what she swallowed, and the three great events of her life, her marriages, all ended in disappointment and separation. In spite of this, however, Tony thinks that she knows life and insists that her experiences have taught her something. She continually uses the expressions: "'Gewiss habe ich das Leben kennengelernt'"⁹⁴ and "'Ich bin keine dumme Gans mehr'".⁹⁵ Yet in reality she remains a "dumme Gans", simple and naive to the very end. Her efforts to marry, settle down, and preserve the good name of Buddenbrooks fail every time. But she is always prepared to bounce back at life no matter how hard it treats her. She is like a child who can never be completely suppressed. As Mann remarks at one point:

Ihr Magen war nicht ganz gesund, aber ihr Herz war leicht und frei--sie wusste selber nicht, wie sehr. Nichts Unausgesprochenes zehrte an ihr; kein stummes Erlebnis belastete sie. Und darum hatte sie auch gar nichts an ihrer Vergangenheit zu tragen.⁹⁶

Each time that Tony marries Sesemi Weichbrodt comes and says to her: "'Sei glücklich, du gutes Kënd'".⁹⁷ She also blesses little Hanno in the same way.⁹⁸ But neither

⁹³Buddenbrooks, I, pp. 169, 175, 416, II, 88.

⁹⁴Ibid, I, pp. 341, 343, 401, 489, 549.

⁹⁵Ibid, I, pp. 341, 403, 489, 555.

⁹⁶Ibid, II, p. 409.

⁹⁷Ibid, I, pp. 230, 512, II, p. 81.

⁹⁸Ibid, II, pp. 12, 227.

one is good nor happy. Tony's marriages all collapse, while Hanno is frail and sick and his artistic nature is at odds with his father's wishes and his surroundings. His will to live is spent at a comparatively early age, and he dies of typhus without even putting up a fight.

The comical figure of Grünlich often makes mention of the fact (or it is mentioned in connection with him) that he is "rege und findig".⁹⁹ However, he only marries Tony for her money because he was almost bankrupt at the time, and in the space of four years he uses up all her money and Kesselmeyer's credit in spite of his activity and resourcefulness.

The leitmotivs "Den Wind um die Nase wehen lassen"¹⁰⁰ and "Einblicke in das Leben tun"¹⁰¹ uttered first by Dr. Ueberbein and later by Klaus Heinrich have a highly ironic effect. Both men (until Klaus Heinrich breaks away from his teacher's influence) have constantly been detached from life. Dr. Ueberbein praises the "representative" existence (expressive of his love for form). He is afraid of Life and remains in opposition to it and happiness. He rarely comes in contact with his fellow teachers, but spends his time studying instead. The author mocks Ueberbein's fear and contempt of Life and paints him as a ridiculous figure.

The prince has likewise lived in isolation from Life. His only function in life is to present himself before

⁹⁹Ibid., I, pp. 130, 143, 295, 321, 323, 324.

¹⁰⁰Königliche Hoheit, pp. 102, 106, 114, 147, 187, 229, 359.

¹⁰¹Ibid., pp. 106, 113, 190, 230, 232, 281, 328, 335, 359.

the public. He takes part in various ceremonies such as laying the cornerstone to a new city hall or leading a military parade, but his existence has no meaning, no content. Only through Imma Spölmann does he learn to take an interest in Life and in the deplorable financial condition of the country, which he never bothered about before.

Mann also laughs at Herr Spinell, the artist in "Tristan", who would burst out with "'Gott, Sehen (Hören) Sie, wie schön'"¹⁰² whenever he saw or heard something beautiful. Spinell is an artist who is only concerned with form. He, like Dr. Ueberbein, is afraid of Life, the only thing that can give content to his art, and therefore the author mimics him.

A minor leitmotiv is one referring to the comical appearance of Samuel Spölmann who always wears a "missfarbene Paletot"¹⁰³ which does not exactly fit a man of his wealth, nor does it flatter the capitalist's taste.

Although Mann has employed the leitmotiv from his earliest writings on, it is in his works after Buddenbrooks that he really becomes a master of this technique. After this first novel Mann becomes more subtle and more refined in respect to his use of this device. In the later works the leitmotiv is not utilized in such an obvious fashion as in Buddenbrooks, but is given many variations and is more carefully woven into the story. This is especially true of "Tonio Kröger" and Der Zauberberg. In fact,

¹⁰²Tristan, pp. 32, 33, 41. 47.

¹⁰³Königliche Hoheit, pp. 237, 239, 255.

Mann's style in general becomes more highly developed and more meticulously thought out with each succeeding production, and the irony in his later works is, on the whole, more skillfully presented and more polished than in Buddenbrooks and the earliest "Novellen".

And now let us turn to an analysis of the artist, a subject which Mann especially has dealt with to a large extent in his early writings.

CHAPTER IV

THE ARTIST

The nature, problems, and conflicts of the artist have preoccupied Thomas Mann from the very earliest writings on. These constitute the subject matter, either explicit or implicit, of every work, and in the major productions of this period they are certainly the explicit, fundamental theme.

Mann is the example of an artist who has descended from a long line of "Bürgers" whose development reached its final expression in the form of an artist instead of the bourgeoisie.¹⁰⁴ Hence the artist possesses two diametrically opposed strains to his personality and his nature is ironic from the start. On the one hand there is the bourgeois tendency towards order, moderation, and, above all, work. Contradicting this is the artistic, creative instinct with its emphasis on abandonment and disorder. The artist's conflict arises out of his unsuccessful attempt to reconcile these polar forces indigent to his nature. Most of the other problems that appear in connection with Mann's artists can be traced back to this basic antithesis.

This duality of the artist's character is first expressed in the short story "Der Bajazzo" where we learn

¹⁰⁴Betrachtungen, p. 110. See footnote 3, p. 4 in Brennan's Thomas Mann's World for a distinction between "Bürger" and "bourgeois". Brennan declares that the German word does not carry the derogatory overtones which the English and French word does. However, we, like Brennan, will use the word "bourgeois" to avoid continual repetition of italics with the foreign word.

that the Bajazzo has a stern, active father and a musical, story-telling mother. The hero inclines more to his mother's nature and chooses to live a life of isolation.

In Mann's first novel, Buddenbrooks, Tom is the bearer of this tension between the bourgeois love of order and the artistic impulse towards irregularity. To be sure, Tom's parents are thoroughly bourgeois, and he himself has no artistic talent. However, this artistic tendency takes shape already in him and is later fully realized in his son Hanno. Both the bourgeois and artistic qualities are prominent in the Senator who dies from sheer exhaustion as a result of his inability to cope with these extremes. In one of his reflective moments Tom asks himself whether he is a practical person or merely a dreamer:

Ach, diese Frage hat er sich schon tausendmal gestellt, und er hatte sie, in starken und zuversichtlichen Stunden, bald so und---in müden--- bald so beantwortet. Aber er war zu scharfsinnig und ehrlich, als dass er sich nicht schliesslich die Wahrheit hätte gestehen müssen, dass er ein Gemisch von Beidem sei.¹⁰⁵

Hanno is also composed of a mixture of the bourgeois and artistic impulses. He has inherited his artistic instinct from his musical mother and his bourgeois strain from his father. However, in Hanno there is not the conflict between these two drives as in his father. Hanno is completely an artist who has no yearning for the bourgeois way of life.

Of Klaus Heinrich in Königliche Hoheit we learn that he has a severe, serious-minded father and a beautiful mother who has some Slavic blood in her veins. Samuel

¹⁰⁵Buddenbrooks, II, p. 115.

Spölmann in the same novel has a Creole mother and a bourgeois father. Gabriele Klöterjahn's father was a bourgeois who at the same time played the violin and encouraged Gabriele's interest in music. Gustav Aschenbach descends from many generations of bourgeois forebears on his father's side, but he inherits his creative impulse from his mother who was the daughter of a Bohemian musical conductor.

Nowhere, however, does this bourgeois-artist heritage and conflict gain the importance, nor achieve the quality of artistic expression that it does, as in "Tonio Kröger", by far the best production of this period. The whole story is built around this theme of the duality of the artist's nature and how Tonio Kröger goes astray from the bourgeois fold into the realm of art. Tonio Kröger (and we have already seen how the very name indicates this bourgeois-artist polarity) is the son of the highly respected Consul Kröger, ". . . . ein langer, sorgfältig gekleideter Herr mit sinnenden blauen Augen, der immer eine Feldblume im Knopfloch trug. . . ."¹⁰⁶ The Consul would always get angry when Tonio brought home bad marks from school. These bourgeois characteristics typical of his father are the source of Tonio's sense of order and propriety. Tonio's beautiful, fiery mother, however, is different. His father fetched her from somewhere down on the map and she is unlike the other ladies in the town. She plays the piano and the mandolin and does not care at all about Tonio's bad marks. It is from his mother that Tonio inherits his artistic instincts.

¹⁰⁶Tristan, p. 172.

An interesting feature of Mann's style is his use of the North-South and East-West axes to bring out this difference between the bourgeois and artistic influences on the artist's character. The North and the West are symbolic of the bourgeois tendencies of propriety and restraint, while the South and the East represent art, and the drive towards abandonment. Thus Tonio Kröger's father is of northern temperament, whereas his mother comes from the South, and this unusual blood mixture produces the duality in the artist's nature. Similarly, Klaus Heinrich's father is from the North and his mother has Slavic blood in her. Samuel Spölmann is the product of a Brazilian mother and a German father, and Gustav Aschenbach also has a German father, while his mother comes from Bohemia.

Thus we see how the artist's middle position between the artistic and bourgeois worlds is the result of the strange combination of these two opposing elements in his personality.

Synonymous with the bourgeois-artist duality is the very basic metaphysical principle found in every one of Mann's early works (except "Fiorenza"), namely, the antithesis of Life and Spirit. This polar principle is certainly not new with Mann. It has its origin in the Bible with the distinction between the tree of Knowledge and the tree of Life. For living Life, and knowing about Life, are two different things. The artist knows about Life, peers into its many facets, and by creating a work of art he momentarily stops the continuous flow of Life. He gives form to the formless; he kills Life. Therefore, just as the bourgeois existence is at odds with the creative, so are

Life and Spirit in eternal opposition to one another, and Mann's burning problem is how to achieve a reconciliation of these juxtaposed forces. He only reaches a compromise, however, in Königliche Hoheit and later on in Der Zauberberg.

This fundamental antithesis is found in stories like "Der kleine Herr Friedemann" where Herr Friedemann represents Spirit and Gerda von Rinnlingen stands for Life, in "Luischen" with Christian Jacoby (Spirit) opposed to Amra (Life), in "Tobias Mindernickel" with Tobias (Spirit) versus the dog, Esau (Life), in "Der Weg zum Friedhof" where Lobgott Piepsam is against "Life", or in "Der Wille zum Glück" in which Paolo (Spirit) is opposed to the Baroness Ada (Life), and so on. In each of the stories and novels of this period we find Life and Spirit placed against each other at opposite ends of the poles.

More important, however, are the works dealing with artist figures where this polarity attains a greater intensity of expression than in the other stories, and we especially see the essential oneness of Life and "bourgeoisie", and of Spirit and art.

It is characteristic of Mann's artist figures that not only does the conflict between the creative and bourgeois drives take place within their own person, but also that the bourgeois element is projected into an external, Life-representing character who stands opposed to their artistic nature. Tonio Kröger's artistic self, for instance, keeps him set apart from the blond and blue-eyed Hans Hansen and Ingeborg Holm who represent Life in all its simplicity, harmlessness, and banality. Detlev, the artist in

"Die Hungernden", is in love with the beautiful Lilli who stands for the carefree, happy Life. The Bajazzo longs for the beautiful Anna Rainer who also personifies gay Life. Gustav Aschenbach, that restrained, sober artist, finds his counterpart in Tadzio, the Polish boy, who embodies sex, beauty, Life. Axel Martini has an acquaintance whose greatest pleasure is to race through the countryside in his automobile and pick up farm girls along the way with whom he has affairs. Finally, Hanno Buddenbrook offers a contrast to the up-and-coming, bourgeois Hagenströms.

Under this category we might also include those figures who are not true artists in the sense of the above-mentioned personages, but who nevertheless possess the artistic-bourgeois qualities in their character. Furthermore, these figures are placed in a mediating position between the forces of Life and Spirit personified in other characters with whom they come in contact. Thus Thomas Buddenbrook is caught between the influence of his sister Tony who embodies Life, order, and tradition, and the contradictory influence of irregularity and idleness on the part of his brother Christian. But Tom leans toward the bourgeois side of his character. He once tells Christian that he (Tom) is the way he is because he did not want to become like his brother and he avoided him because Christian's ways were dangerous for him.¹⁰⁷

We see these conflicting spheres of influence, and the artist's middle position between the extremes, more clearly in Königliche Hoheit. Mann has called this novel,

¹⁰⁷Buddenbrooks, II, p. 276.

which is replete with irony, a fairy tale.¹⁰⁸ The underlying idea is the reconciliation of a lonely, aristocratic existence with the problems of society by means of love.

Aside from Klaus Heinrich's artist-bourgeois nature, we find him placed in the middle of the opposing forces of Life and Spirit personified in his brother and sister. Johann Albrecht embodies the "representational" element, although he ironically calls all representation "Affen-theater". (In the novel, Spirit is expressed in the form of "representation".) On the other side is Ditlinde who stands for the bourgeois way of life. She cannot bear the royal castle (that incarnation of death), nor the "stöbern" that Klaus Heinrich likes to do, so she marries a bourgeois, gets red cheeks, and keeps order. Furthermore, this polarity is conveyed in the form of Dr. Ueberbein who supports the "representative" existence as over and against the folk motif, expressive of Life. Imma Spölmann, whom Klaus Heinrich eventually marries, is in a similar situation. She is under the influence of her father, whose life is nothing more than "for show", and the Gräfin Lowenjoul who wants to "let herself go", that is, take part in Life.

Gabriele Klöterjahn is torn between the bourgeois kind of life that her industrious, food-loving husband leads and the artistic existence which Detlev Spinell represents. Her contact with Spinell spells her downfall and unwillingness to continue her bourgeois way of life.

Just as Life is in eternal opposition to Spirit, so is disease (and death) the antithesis of Spirit. Death is

¹⁰⁸Rede und Antwort, p. 346.

Spirit; it is permanent form; a cessation of the flux of Life. For that reason, so many of Mann's characters who represent Spirit are either sick, deformed, or have the features of death itself.

Johannes Friedemann is hunchbacked, Christian Jacoby is abnormally fat, Paolo has lung trouble, and Christian and Hanno Buddenbrook are both ill, especially the latter who has a delicate constitution and suffers tremendously from decayed teeth.

Most of the other proponents of Spirit have the characteristics of death itself. We get this impression from the black clothes that they wear and the death-like features of their face and head. Tobias Mindernickel is completely dressed in black. His throat is lean and his face is sallow and smooth-shaven, with sunken cheeks. He also has red-rimmed eyes. Lobgott Piepsam's features are very similar. He also wears black and has a smooth, pale face with an ugly nose. His eyes are red-rimmed and he keeps his lips tightly pressed together.

Detlev Spinell's features appear even more death-like. Also clad in black, he has a beardless face with a porous upper lip and carious teeth, all signs of disease and decay. Hieronymus, in "Gladius Dei", wears a dark robe and hood, has hollowed cheeks, bushy eyebrows, a prominent nose, and thick lips. The author remarks that this face resembles a painting of a monk which is preserved in a cloister cell in Florence "aus welcher einstmals ein furchtbarer und niederschmetternder Protest gegen das Leben und seinen Triumph erging..."¹⁰⁹ This monk, Savonarola, appears again in the

¹⁰⁹Tristan, p. 144.

form of the Prior in "Fiorenza" where he is described as having the same features as Hieronymus. Gustav Aschenbach is another figure whose physical appearance resembles death. He has a smooth-shaven face, thin hair, and lean, furrowed cheeks.

But the most striking (and most humorous) figure of this type is Johann Albrecht in Königliche Hoheit. As a child Albrecht was sick and had to remain in bed most of the time. He had a severe illness which the Doctor said caused his heart to move over to the right side of his body. His eyelids are always half closed, and when he shakes hands he never releases his forearm from his side. But most comical is the fact that he has to go South every winter because his body is so cold; it is, in fact, a veritable corpse, and only warm weather can keep him alive. Dr. Ueberbein in the same novel is humorously described as having a green face, the color of a dead man's.

The fact that there is an unbridgeable gap existing between Life and Spirit is cause for the isolation motif common to Mann's early works.¹¹⁰ All of Mann's heroes are separated from Life. They live alone because Spirit, by its very nature, is isolated from Life and cannot take part in it.

Little Friedemann lives in solitude and peace. Tobias Mindernickel is all alone with nobody in the world to depend on him. Christian Jacoby is essentially also by himself. Dr. Ueberbein leads a solitary existence, as do Klaus

¹¹⁰See Chapter 1, "Isolation in a Bourgeois World" in J.G. Brennan's Thomas Mann's World.

Heinrich and Samuel Spölmann. Wherever the representatives of Spirit appear we find them isolated from the world.

This is particularly true of the artist figures. The Bajazzo lives entirely alone. Detlev Spinell does not seek the company of any of the other patients in the sanatorium. Gustav Aschenbach had a lonely childhood, as did Felix Krull. Axel Martini, too, is divorced from the world. Detleff in "Die Hungernden" briefly and pointedly expresses the artist's fate when he says to himself: "Du darfst nicht sein, du sollst schauen; du darfst nicht leben, du sollst schaffen; du darfst nicht lieben, du sollst wissen!"¹¹¹

This idea is again best expressed in "Tonio Kröger". Tonio's greatest love is his love for the ordinary, happy, carefree Life personified in Hans Hansen and Ingeborg Holm. But there always remains a yawning abyss between him and the blond and blue-eyed, although he passionately yearns to be like them. Rather, the artist's calling requires "das Menschliche darzustellen, ohne am Menschlichen teilzuhaben..."¹¹², and this is the irony of Tonio's position. He can penetrate the depth of Life until he sees it through and through, and yet he cannot partake in Life.

It is Knowledge which keeps Tonio apart from Life. But, like Hamlet the Dane he is called to Knowledge without being born to it because the simple, banal Life is the object of his greatest love and longing. Tonio voices his disgust with Knowledge when he tells Lisaweta:

¹¹¹Der kleine Herr Friedemann, p. 153.

¹¹²Tristan, p. 204.

Alle Erkenntnis ist alt und langweilig. Sprechen Sie eine Wahrheit aus, an deren Eroberung und Besitz Sie vielleicht eine gewisse jugendliche Freude haben, und man wird Ihre ordinäre Aufgeklärtheit mit einem ganz kurzen Entlassen der Luft durch die Nase beantworten...¹¹³

And so, Tonio comes to the conclusion "dass man gestorben sein muss, um ganz ein Schaffender zu sein".¹¹⁴ The artist is not allowed to live and feel like other people. He is denied all the warmth of life. Warm, human emotions are useless to him. He must put his feelings on ice, as it were, because "Es ist aus mit dem Künstler, sobald er Mensch wird und zu empfinden beginnt".¹¹⁵ But that which gives his art meaning and content is his love for Life in all its simplicity.

After Tonio pours out his troubles to Lisaweta Iwanowna, she tells him that he is simply a "verirrter Bürger", to which he ironically answers: "'nun kann ich getrost nach Hause gehn. Ich bin erledigt'".¹¹⁶ The irony lies in the fact that during his discourse Tonio complains about how the artist neatly does away with ("erledigen") his feelings merely by giving them a name, but when Lisaweta labels him as a "verirrter Bürger" his problem is still by no means solved.

Later in the story Tonio writes Lisaweta that this label suits him well and that his bourgeois nature and his love for Life are one and the same. He then goes on to say:

¹¹³Ibid, pp. 210, 211.

¹¹⁴Ibid, p. 197.

¹¹⁵Ibid, p. 203.

¹¹⁶Ibid, p. 217.

"Ich stehe zwischen zwei Welten, bin in keiner daheim und habe es infolge dessen ein wenig schwer".¹¹⁷ That with the "ein wenig schwer" is of course highly ironic, as the rest of the story bears out. But in addition, this statement summarizes the crux of Tonio Kröger's problem and his ironic position between the worlds of Spirit and Life.

Mann writes in Die Betrachtungen that Tonio Kröger is the mediator between "Gesundheit und Raffinement, Anständigkeit und Abenteuertum, Gemüt und Artistik".¹¹⁸ And again: "Das ganze Produkt war eine Mischung aus scheinbar heterogenen Elementen: aus Wehmut und Kritik, Innigkeit und Skepsis, Storm und Nietzsche, Stimmung und Intellektualismus. . . .".¹¹⁹ The author then says that Tonio Kröger is a "Spätling der Romantik", of a very German Romanticism, in fact.¹²⁰ We will explain this more fully later on.

The artist's deviation from the bourgeois norm motivates the bad conscience theme prevalent in the pre-war writings, especially in "Tonio Kröger". Tonio Kröger considers the artist's nature as suspicious and has the same contempt for the artist that his forefathers had. When he brings home bad marks from school he finds it only right that his father should scold him, whereas his mother's indifference seems slovenly to him. He thinks it is bad enough that he is the way he is and one should punish him for his

¹¹⁷Tristan, p. 263.

¹¹⁸Betrachtungen, p. 56.

¹¹⁹loc. cit.

¹²⁰loc. cit.

negligence, not shower him with kisses and music as his mother would do. After all, he says, "Wir sind doch keine Zigeuner im grünen Wagen, sondern anständige Leute, Konsul Krögers, die Familie der Kröger..."¹²¹ And a year after the death of Tonio's father his mother marries a musician and goes South with him. Tonio finds this a bit irregular, but, he asks himself, who is he to judge? "Er schrieb Verse und konnte nicht einmal beantworten, was in aller Welt er zu werden gedachte..."¹²²

The artist's calling, Tonio tells Lisaweta, is not a profession but a curse, which he begins to feel at a very early age. Axel Martini, the poet in Königliche Hoheit, also expresses his suspicion of the artist when he says that the inability to participate in ordinary human activity is the only proof of his capability for the poetical profession, and, in fact, it is no profession at all, but simply the expression and refuge from this inability to take part in what other human beings do.¹²³

But another very important reason why the artist is worthy of suspicion and contempt is that his nature is very closely allied to that of the criminal. In the Betrachtungen Mann has with wonderful self-irony expressed his surprise at the honor accorded to him by the public. He writes that the poet is useless in every field and not only not advantageous to the State, but even harmful to it.¹²⁴

¹²¹Tristan, p. 173.

¹²²Ibid, p. 194.

¹²³Königliche Hoheit, p. 228.

¹²⁴Betrachtungen, p. 594.

Thus the author places in the same category two different species of individuals whose contributions to society are poles apart.

Mann has presented this viewpoint artistically in the unfinished, semi-autobiographical sketch Bekenntnisse des Hochstaplers Felix Krull in which the swindler recalls his childhood days and indicates that the qualities which went into the making of his criminal nature are the same as those which have formed his artistic self. The criminal and artistic instincts are inseparable from each other. Little Felix steals candy and chocolate from a delicatessen store. He also learns how to forge his father's name and in the end turns out to be a swindler---but, at the same time an artist. Felix's godfather tells the boy the story about Phidias who stole gold and ivory in order to make a statue. The robbery was discovered and Phidias was thrown in jail. After being released, he stole again and was once more put in prison where he finally died. Then Felix's godfather remarks:

'Aber so sind die Leute. Sie wollen wohl das Talent, welches doch an und für sich eine Sonderbarkeit ist. Aber die Sonderbarkeiten, die sonst noch damit verbunden---und vielleicht notwendig damit verbunden---sind, die wollen sie durchaus nicht und verweigern ihnen jedes Verständnis'.¹²⁵

Tonio Kröger relates of a banker friend of his who had committed a crime and was jailed. In jail he began to write "Novellen", and Tonio asks Lisaweta:

'Aber drängt sich nicht der Verdacht auf, dass seine Erlebnisse im Zuchthause weniger innig

¹²⁵Bekenntnisse (Berlin und Leipzig: Deutsche Verlag Anstalt, 1929), p. 45.

mit den Wurzeln und Ursprüngen seiner Künstlerschaft verwachsen gewesen sein möchten, als das, was ihn hineinbrachte---'126

Tonio Kröger himself is suspected of being a swindler on his return to his home town. He proves that he is not but he thinks that the police were right in suspecting him.

But what is it that makes the criminal and artist so similar? It is their morality, which demands that they experience both the good and the bad, the harmless and the harmful. Each must expose himself to the forbidden. Mann speaks of this duality of the artist's nature in a little essay called "Süsse Schlaf" in which he writes:

Die Moral des Künstlers ist Sammlung, sie ist die Kraft zur egoistischen Konzentration, der Entschluss zur Form, Gestalt, Begrenzung, Körperlichkeit, zur Absage an die Freiheit, die Unendlichkeit, an das Schlummern und Weben im unbegrenzten Reich der Empfindung, --- sie ist mit einem Wort der Wille zum Werk.127

But work that is produced in isolation is immoral and repugnant. Therefore, the morality of the artist is also "Hingebung, Irrtum und Selbstverlust, sie ist Kampf und Not, Erlebnis, Erkenntnis und Leidenschaft.128

This is reminiscent of the imaginary conversation between Socrates and Phaidros in "Tod in Venedig" where Socrates tells Phaidros that the artist necessarily goes astray because he is an adventurer of feeling. The poet's style and dignity are nothing but deceit and farce because he must of necessity have a sympathy for the abyss, he must expose himself to the forbidden. Therefore, the poet

126 Tristan, p. 207.

127 Rede und Antwort, p. 397.

128 Ibid, p. 398.

could never be an educator, nor could he be wise, nor honorable. The artist cannot forego this impulse which leads him into forbidden territory; he cannot be occupied with form and discipline alone. He must have both---abandonment and restraint.

That is why the people who observe a work of art are misled. They only see the finished product and are not aware of the sources of inspiration which motivated the artist. These motivations very often have their origin in what the world considers abominable and repugnant. And so, when Gustav Aschenbach creates an artistic production inspired by Tadzio's beauty, the author remarks:

Es ist sicher gut, dass die Welt nur das schöne Werk, nicht auch seine Ursprünge, nicht seine Entstehungsbedingungen kennt; denn die Kenntnis der Quellen, aus denen dem Künstler Eingebung floss, würde sie oftmals verwirren, abschrecken und so die Wirkungen des Vortrefflichen aufheben.¹²⁹

The same idea is suggested in "Felix Krull" when Felix is brought backstage after a vaudeville performance and he sees in person the artist who had so wonderfully entertained the audience. The boy is revulsed by the entertainer's ugliness but comes to the realization that the real Müller-Rosé is not the pimpled, foul-smelling creature before him, but rather the performer he watched on the stage. And Felix thinks that it is best, and only right, that the world merely sees the actor in his artistic role.

In spite of the fact that the morality of the artist is of a dual and doubtful nature, Thomas Mann has always considered himself as a moral artist. For that reason we

¹²⁹Tod in Venedig, pp. 91, 92.

find few descriptions of landscape scenes in his works, but always the emphasis is on the human. Mann writes in "Süßer Schlaf" that morality is without a doubt the biggest concern in life and is perhaps the will to life itself.¹³⁰ In the Betrachtungen the author writes: "Ethik, Bürgerlichkeit, Verfall: das gehört zusammen, das ist eins. . . . Nie war es mir um 'Schönheit' zu tun. 'Schönheit' war mir immer etwas für Italiener und Katzelmacher des Geistes" ¹³¹ The ethical as over and against the aesthetic, the ugly, diseased, and decadent as opposed to the beautiful. These are the things that Mann has portrayed and it is they that mark him as a moral artist.

Consequently, Mann has uttered nothing but distaste for the "bellezza" art of the South with its emphasis on form, beauty, sensuality, but with no morals. He has constantly denounced, in no uncertain terms, the art and artists of this type.

Tonio Kröger voices his opinion of the "bellezza" when Lisaweta asks him whether he plans to travel to Italy:

'Gott, gehen Sie mir doch mit Italien, Lisaweta! Italien ist mir bis zur Verachtung gleichgültig! . . . Kunst, nicht wahr? Sammetblauer Himmel, heisser Wein und süsse Sinnlichkeit... Kurzum, ich mag das nicht. Ich verzichte. Die ganze bellezza macht mich nervös. . . . Diese Romanen haben kein Gewissen in den Augen...' ¹³²

Detlev Spinell belongs to this Italian variety of artists. He has written one novel containing scenes in which there are beautiful salons, antique furniture,

¹³⁰Rede und Antwort, p. 398.

¹³¹Betrachtungen, p. 73.

¹³²Tristan, p. 217.

precious porcelain, and the like, but no plot. He tells Gabriele that he is in "Einfried" because he likes the austere, empire-style furniture of the place, which is again indicative of his love for form. He is fascinated by beautiful landscape scenes. He writes a letter every day but receives none in return. He cannot look a pretty woman straight in the face, but only catches a glance of her as she passes by. In short, it is no accident that Gabriele mistakes the artist's name for "Spinelli" which suggests Italy and the "bellezza".

But the most caustic lampooning of the "bellezza" appears in "Fiorenza" where Mann mocks the amorality of the group of petty Italian artists. The author ridicules their artistic preoccupations and their attitude toward art at perhaps too great length, devoting the entire second act and part of the third for this purpose. He describes how they make beautiful teaspoons, salt and pepper shakers, interior decorations, carnival masks, and similar items. They are solely interested in beauty, not morals, and it is this approach to art that the author so strongly denounces. Ghino, for instance, is commissioned to decorate Fra Girolamo's books and Aldobrandino asks him to decline the commission because the Prior has constantly attacked the artists. However, Ghino replies that the commission is a fat one and it would never occur to him to turn it down. His little Ermelina needs presents and he takes money wherever he can get it. When Aldobrandino calls him a traitor, he retorts:

'Lächerlich. Ich bin ein Künstler. Ich bin ein freier Künstler. Ich habe keine Gesinnungen. Ich schmücke mit meiner Kunst, was man

mir zu schmücken gibt und will den Boccaccio
so gut illustrieren wie den heiligen Thomas
Acquinas'.¹³³

Mann has referred to these artists as parasites, rowdies, braggarts, and buffons, talented and stupid, and, above all, morally irresponsible.¹³⁴ He has no sympathy for them, nor for the kind of art they produce.

Another type of artist that Mann scoffs at is the dilettante, the person who thinks that art is only a side-line activity to be indulged in alongside of one's other, normal life-functions. Tonio Kröger assures Lisaweta that the true artist is different. The real artist begins to feel the curse of his calling at a terribly early age, "Zu einer Zeit, da man billig noch in Frieden und Eintracht mit Gott und der Welt leben sollte".¹³⁵ There is something about his features which gives him away, even in a crowd, and when he speaks, one recognizes right away that he is something foreign, something different, non-human.¹³⁶ During the course of his conversation with the Russian painter, Tonio relates of an incident which he personally witnessed. At a party that he once attended was a lieutenant who suddenly requested permission from the assembled group to read some verses that he composed. Then he read his emotional verses and everyone was embarrassed. Tonio remarks: "'Nun bitte ich aber jedermann: ein Leutnant! Ein Herr der Welt! Er hätte es doch wahr-

¹³³Fiorenza, p. 76.

¹³⁴Betrachtungen, p. 58.

¹³⁵Tristan, p. 205.

¹³⁶Ibid., pp. 205, 6.

haftig nicht nötig...!"¹³⁷ The lieutenant is like a fish out of water. His error, Tonio states, is that he thinks he can pluck a leaf from the tree of art without paying for it with his life.¹³⁸

On the boat going to Denmark Tonio comes in contact with a Hamburg merchant who is enraptured by the beautiful "Sderne", and the artist thinks to himself: "Sicherlich schreibt er Verse. . . . tief ehrlich empfundene Kaufmannsverse..."¹³⁹

Mann has also been contemptuous of the Bohemian type of artist. When Lisaweta makes some remark about Tonio's clothes, he replies:

'Ach, lassen Sie mich mit meinen Gewändern in Ruh, Lisaweta Iwanowna! Wüschten Sie, dass ich in einer zerrissenen Sammetjacke oder einer rotseidenen Weste umherlief? Man ist als Künstler innerlich immer Abenteurer genug'.¹⁴⁰

Earlier in the story the author tells how Tonio Kröger worked isolated from, and in contempt of, the small-time, talented artists who run around with loud ties or shabby clothes and who are happy, amiable, and enjoy life.¹⁴¹

Thackeray, too, has mocked the petty artists, only not with the same intensity, or to the extent that Mann has done. Referring to Miss Crawley's servant and companion, the Victorian writes: "Miss Briggs, it will be seen by her language, was of a literary and sentimental turn, and had

¹³⁷Ibid, p. 215.

¹³⁸Ibid, p. 216.

¹³⁹Ibid, p. 239.

¹⁴⁰Ibid, p. 201.

¹⁴¹Ibid, p. 197.

once published a volume of poems--- "Trills of the Nightingale"---by subscription".¹⁴²

The novelist likewise laughs at the figure of Miss Bunion, the poetess in Pendennis who wrote "Passion Flowers" and other poems of like nature. One of the guests at Mr. Bungay's party informs Miss Bunion that he visited the Duchess who was quite impressed by the poetess' new volume of poetry. He adds: "'Those lines on the christening of Lady Fanny Fantail brought tears into the Duchess' eyes'".¹⁴³

Also humorous is the description of little Poinset, the supposed poet in one of the stories in The Paris

Sketch Book:

He was as proud as a peacock, as wicked as an ape, and as silly as a goose. He did not possess one single grain of common sense; but, in revenge, his pretensions were enormous, his ignorance vast, and his credulity more extensive still.¹⁴⁴

Then Thackeray relates various incidents concerning Poinset which demonstrate the poet's stupidity and gullibility.

In another sketch in the same book the author pokes fun at the Bohemian-like looks and ways of the French painters. They all wear beards and display an enormous variety of coiffures. He who wants to sport the latest hair-do, the novelist says, must "part his hair in the middle, grease it with grease, and gum it with gum, and

¹⁴²Vanity Fair, p. 122.

¹⁴³Pendennis, p. 335.

¹⁴⁴The Paris Sketch Book, p. 151.

iron it flat down over his ears".¹⁴⁵

In Henry Esmond Thackeray has furthermore denounced the early eighteenth century approach to art which Addison preaches. Addison writes a poem about a military campaign which Henry Esmond participated in. But the poem reveals nothing of the actual hideousness and brutality of the battle which took place. When Henry calls this to the poet's attention, Addison replies:

'In our polished days, and according to the rules of art, 'tis impossible that the Muse should depict tortures or begrime her hands with the horrors of war. These are indicated rather than described; as in the Greek tragedies. . . .'¹⁴⁶

The Victorian is opposed to this eighteenth century concept that art must be patterned after the Greek models.

Thackeray's daughter states in the Introduction to Pendennis that her father was criticised by one of the newspapers for his descriptions of literary life found in the novel. Thackeray answered this attack by saying:

'The only moral that I, as a writer, wished to hint at in the description against which you protest, was, that it is the duty of a literary man as well as every other to practise regularity and sobriety, to love his family, and to pay his tradesman'.¹⁴⁷

We see by this statement what a wide discrepancy there is between the attitude of the two novelists toward the artist. Mann has never been worried about whether the artist loves his family or pays his bills, and he has, in fact, shown that the artist cannot "practise regularity".

¹⁴⁵Ibid, p. 33.

¹⁴⁶Henry Esmond, p. 203.

¹⁴⁷Quote from Anna Ritchie in Pendennis, Introduction, p. xlii.

CHAPTER V

METAPHYSICAL IRONY

Thomas Mann views reality as composed of antithetical forces, "as a cosmic play of opposites".¹⁴⁸ This conception of reality is, as Brennan remarks, similar to Hegel's. However, the difference between the novelist and the philosopher is that the former does not attempt to reduce the antitheses to the "status of secondary levels of being in favor of an all embracing oneness".¹⁴⁹ Rather, these irreconcilable differences in reality all have equal validity and cannot be subordinated to a single, monistic principle.

We have already implied the fact that reality consists of juxtaposed elements in our discussion of the Life-Spirit dichotomy in connection with the artist. We will now be concerned with further manifestations of this principle which is so basic to Mann's Weltanschauung.

The concept and function of metaphysical irony in Mann's early writings can be divided into parts, both of which are, however, two aspects of the same idea--the duality of reality. First, there is the interpretation of irony which Mann has especially expressed in the Betrachtungen where he writes: "Ironie aber ist immer nach beiden Seiten hin, etwas Mittleres, ein Weder-Noch und Sowohl-Als auch. . . ." ¹⁵⁰ Later in the book he repeats this and adds: ".... sie richtet sich gegen das Leben sowohl wie gegen den Geist,

¹⁴⁸J.G. Brennan, op. cit., p. 167.

¹⁴⁹loc. cit.

¹⁵⁰Betrachtungen, p. 56.

und dies nimmt ihr die grosse Gebärde, dies gibt ihr Melancholie und Bescheidenheit".¹⁵¹

Thus, irony consists of the ability to see the two sides to every question. The ironist views every problem and aspect of reality in a double light. In this way he can ironize both Spirit and Life. On the one hand, Life is pictured as beautiful, simple, harmless, and on the other hand, it is portrayed as something cruel and ridiculous. We have already seen how the author gibes at figures like Tony Buddenbrook, the Hagenström, Herr Klötterjahn, and others. Opposed to these are the beautiful Hans Hansen, Ingeborg Holm, and Lilli whom Spirit cherishes as the supreme representatives of all that is good in life. But even Tonio Krögers love for Life is not altogether one-sided, as is evident by the closing sentences of the first and ninth part of the story. Speaking of this love for Life, the author writes: "Sehnsucht war darin und schwermütiger Neid und ein klein wenig Verachtung und eine ganze keusche Seligkeit".¹⁵²

Spirit is also seen from two points of view, although the positive aspect of Spirit is little emphasized. The moral artists, Hieronymus, Fra Girolamo, and Schiller in "Schwere Stunde" are examples of Mann's affirmation of Spirit. In contrast to these are the figures of Dr. Ueberbein, Samuel Spölmann, and Detlev Spinell whom the author ridicules.

We again recognize Mann's ability to see the two sides

¹⁵¹Ibid., pp. 592, 3.

¹⁵²Tristan, pp. 182, 264.

of every phenomenon in his attitude toward disease and death. The novelist's conception of disease and death is, in fact, antithetical from two standpoints. First of all, death is depicted as both tragic and comic, and secondly, death is seen in both a positive and negative light.

The fact that death also has a comical side is first brought out in Buddenbrooks in connection with Tom's death. The way that Tom dies is in itself ironic. The Senator, who had always been fastidiously dressed (an expression of his bourgeois love for order and propriety), falls in a mud puddle in the street on his way home from the dentist, and he is carried home wet, bloody, and splattered with dirt. While Tom is lying unconscious and the pastor is called in to perform the last rites, little Hanno gets the impression from the pastor's speech that he has just had coffee and rolls, an observation that seems to be out of keeping with the seriousness of the situation.

But more significant is the fact that after Tom dies, and the members of the family are writing cards to their friends and relatives informing them of his death, Hanno suddenly breaks out laughing. The immediate cause for this outburst is the name of one of the addressees which strikes the boy as being funny. But he laughs so hard that he cannot stop and must be sent to bed. These incidents all seem to show that the author sees a comical-bizarre side of death.

This bizarre aspect of death is again revealed in Königliche Hoheit with the death of the grand-duke, Johann Albrecht. In spite of the fact that the duke is tired of life, he holds on to it and its functions until his dying breath. Mann writes that the last act in the grand-duke's

life consisted of appointing the professor who masterfully performed the useless operation on him to the position of privy councillor. The dying man even made a ceremony out of it. He raised himself up with his last bit of strength and with his own hands presented the certificate to the professor. Then he mumbled a few words and died.¹⁵³

The other polarity which we find in connection with disease and death is that they can be both negative and positive.¹⁵⁴ We have already pointed out above that the representatives of Spirit are sick or have death-like features. Also to be mentioned in this connection is the fact that disease and genius can often go hand in hand. As Brennan says, there is a kind of illness which is "nonorganic in character" and which "has its roots in the personality itself".¹⁵⁵

Mann has discussed this dual aspect of disease in his "Goethe und Tolstoy" essay written after the First World War. On the one hand, he states, disease is degrading because it throws man back on his physical self. On the other hand, however, disease can elevate or ennoble the human being.¹⁵⁶ The author reasons thus: Spirit, or mind, is that which distinguishes man from other forms of organic life. The more Spirit man is, therefore, the more detached he is from Nature, and so, the more human he is. But disease also

¹⁵³Königliche Hoheit, pp. 157, 8.

¹⁵⁴See Lydia Baer, "The Concept and Function of Death in the Works of Thomas Mann", Inaugural Dissertation (Philadelphia: 1932), and Chapter 3, "Disease, Art, and Life" in Brennan's Thomas Mann's World.

¹⁵⁵Ibid., p. 48.

¹⁵⁶Bemühungen, p. 34.

distinguishes man from Nature. Therefore, Mann asks, is not he just that much more human, the more separated he is from Nature, that is, the more diseased he is?¹⁵⁷ Mann calls this the "aristocratic problem", implying by it that disease can also have an elevating effect on the human being.

In similar manner an interest in disease and death can be seen from two points of view. If we regard death as something purely physical, then it has a negative quality. But death can also be positive in that an interest in death can in reality be an interest in life. Mann writes in Die Forderung des Tages: "'Denn alles Interesse für Tod und Krankheit ist nichts als eine Art von Ausdruck für das am Leben'. Das ist der geniale Weg. Der andere Weg ist gewöhnlich, direkt, brav".¹⁵⁸ This idea is artistically expressed in Der Zauberberg.

The other aspect of irony present in the pre-war writings is that which Mann adopted from Nietzsche, namely, the negation of Spirit, by means of Spirit, in favor of Life.

The early writings are characterized by the fact that in the conflict between Life and Spirit, Life always emerges as victor. To be sure, in stories like "Der kleine Herr Friedemann", "Der Weg zum Friedhof", "Luischen", and "Gladus Dei" Life is depicted as a harsh, brutal force which actively participates in Spirit's downfall. The heroes of these stories are weak and helpless against the overwhelming strength and power of Life. This heroism of the weak

¹⁵⁷loc. cit.

¹⁵⁸Die Forderung des Tages, p. 288.

is a part of Mann's decadent, pessimistic attitude prevalent in the early works.¹⁵⁹

However, in "Tonio Kröger" and "Die Hungernden" Life is no longer cruel and ruthless, but assumes a more passive quality and is simply indifferent to Spirit. The cruelest thing that Hans Hansen does is to call Tonio Kröger by his family name when Irwin Immerthal joins the two boys during their walk home. Ingeborg Holm laughs at Tonio when he falls down in the dance and pays no attention to him when he leaves the dancing group. Nor does Lilli in "Die Hungernden" take notice of Detlev when he leaves the party.

Still, Spirit passionately yearns for Life. It is tired of Knowledge (also an aspect of Mann's "decadence" temper) and longs to be like the happy, untroubled blond and blue-eyed. Spirit thus negates its own existence and affirms Life. When Tonio Kröger is up in Denmark and watches Hans Hansen and Ingeborg Holm dancing, he thinks to himself:

Zu sein wie du! Noch einmal anfangen, aufwachsen gleich dir, rechtschaffen, fröhlich und schlicht, regelrecht, ordnungsgemäss und im Einverständnis mit Gott und der Welt, geliebt werden von den Harmlosen und Glücklichen, dich zum Weibe nehmen, Ingeborg Holm, und einen Sohn haben wie du, Hans Hansen, ---frei vom Fluch der Erkenntnis und der schöpferischen Qual leben, lieben und loben in seliger Gewöhnlichkeit!....¹⁶⁰

And Detlev utters this same feeling when he silently addresses Life: "Wir schleichen euch nach, wir tiefen Kobolde und erkenntnisstummen Unholde, wir stehen ferne und

¹⁵⁹See Gerhard Jacob, "Thomas Mann und Nietzsche zum Problem der Decadence". Inaugural Dissertation (Leipzig: 1926).

¹⁶⁰Tristan, p. 255.

in unseren Augen brennt eine gierig schauende Sehnsucht, euch gleich zu sein".¹⁶¹

In Königliche Hoheit Spirit is not negated, but is reconciled with Life when Klaus Heinrich begins to love and take an interest in the people and the conditions of the country.

In "Fiorenza", however, Life goes down before Spirit. Here the usual Life-Spirit antithesis is not present. Life is combined with art in the person of Lorenzo who is opposed to the Spirit-representing Prior. In this play Mann places the naive and sentimental poets against each other.¹⁶² In the end Lorenzo dies and the Prior remains ruler over Florence.

Käte Hamburger notes that Mann's attitude toward Life and Spirit varies before and after 1918. In the pre-war works we are confronted with a rational, knowing Spirit which experiences Life as a "differentness". Spirit is set apart from a Life with which it can never unite and which it can never change.¹⁶³

Hamburger then explains that Tonio Kröger is a "Spätling der Romantik" "weil er. . . ein Leidender war an der romantischen Urproblematik: der Icheinsamkeit und Weltsehnsucht, und weil dieses Leiden. . . gerade in der Form der Ironie ausgetragen wurde".¹⁶⁴

¹⁶¹Der kleine Herr Friedemann, p. 152.

¹⁶²Rede und Antwort, "Ueber Fiorenza" and "Ueber dasselbe", pp. 348-52.

¹⁶³Käte Hamburger, Thomas Mann und die Romantik, p. 29.

¹⁶⁴Ibid, p. 26.

She goes on to say that this early irony resembles Friedrich Schlegel's. But Schlegel's polarity consisted of "Ich" and "Ichsagen" of which the "Ich" is another expression for Life and the "Ichsagen" represents the reflective Spirit. Mann, on the other hand, has objectively projected this Life-Spirit antithesis into external, contrasting spheres as, for instance, Tonio Kröger and Hanno Buddenbrook opposed to Hans Hansen and Ingeborg Holm, and the Hagenströms.¹⁶⁵

However, starting with Der Zauberberg the concept of Spirit undergoes a change. There is a

Verwandlung des Begriffes des Geistes von einem Prinzip objektiver Erkenntnis der gegenständlichen Welt zu einer schöpferisch beseelenden Kraft 'des Gemütes', die das 'Ich' und die 'Welt' in ein grundsätzlich anderes. . . .Verhältnis zu setzen sucht.¹⁶⁶

As a result of this alteration in the meaning of Spirit, and the fact that Spirit is no longer isolated but can penetrate and transform Life, Mann's ironical attitude after 1918 more closely resembles Novalis' irony rather than Schlegel's.¹⁶⁷

After the First World War Mann adds many more topics under the primary Life-Spirit polarity.¹⁶⁸ Many of these

¹⁶⁵Ibid, pp. 27, 28.

¹⁶⁶Ibid, p. 14.

¹⁶⁷Ibid, p. 41.

¹⁶⁸The following list is set up by Brennan in Thomas Mann's World, p. 179:

<u>Nature</u>	<u>Spirit</u>
Health	Disease
Body	Soul
Classic	Romantic
Objective	Subjective

new antitheses are outlined in the "Goethe and Tolstoy" essay, where the author compares Goethe with Tolstoy and Schiller with Dostoyevsky. The former were Nature artists, Mann asserts, because they lived in harmony with Nature. But the latter were artists of Spirit, diseased, and in conflict with Nature. They died young, whereas Goethe and Tolstoy lived to an old age. Goethe and Tolstoy were concerned with creation and form, Schiller and Dostoyevsky with analysis and criticism. The latter were moral artists, the former nonmoral. In short, Goethe and Tolstoy were "God-like" and Schiller and Dostoyevsky were "Saint-like". Although, as Brennan remarks, none of these artists can belong entirely either to Nature or Spirit (since they are human), still, they incline strongly toward one direction or the other.¹⁶⁹

Man is the mediator between the opposing forces of Nature and Spirit. In him all the antitheses reach a synthesis. This middle position is advantageous because by means of it man possesses both freedom and reserve. He has the freedom to explore and affirm both sides of the antitheses, but he reserves a decision in favor of one or

Simple	Sentimental
Nonmoral	Moral
Pagan	Christian
Form	Analysis
Creation	Critique
Sense	Mind
<u>Eros</u>	<u>Logos</u>
Necessity	Freedom
Instinct	Consciousness
Eternity	Time
Aristocratic	Democratic
Nonpolitical	Political

¹⁶⁹Ibid, p. 174.

the other side. He must always remain in suspension, hovering between the extremes. This is what Mann means when he writes that "Ironie ist das Pathos der Mitte".¹⁷⁰

Not only is man this mediator, but the German people are placed between the extreme forces of the eastern and western civilizations. The peculiarity of the Germans' position enables them to ironically play with both sides (East and West), never committing themselves to either, but constantly shifting from one to the other.

Whereas man's position in the universe is ironic by virtue of the fact that all the heterogeneous elements are combined in him, "the artist is the human being par excellence",¹⁷¹ the supreme expression of all that is human. In man the counter-positions achieve a synthesis and in the artist man reaches his summit. Speaking of the naive and sentimental poet, Mann once wrote that there never was a poet who was completely one or the other. Rather, the poet is the synthesis, "die Versöhnung von Geist und Kunst, von Erkenntnis und Schöpfung, Intellektualismus und Einfalt, Vernunft und Dämonie, Askese und Schönheit--- das Dritte Reich".¹⁷²

¹⁷⁰Bemühungen, p. 138.

¹⁷¹Brennan, op. cit., p. 179.

¹⁷²Rede und Antwort, p. 352.

CONCLUSION

In summing up our comparison of these two writers in respect to their use of irony, there are two main points to be emphasized. First, and most important, is the fact that both men strive to expose falseness wherever they find it. They constantly mock those people who, either consciously or unconsciously, try to appear other than they really are. Above all, the novelists have derided the wealthy and the people who consider the acquisition of money as the supreme goal in life. We have seen how both men laugh at figures like Becky Sharp, Tony Buddenbrook, and others whose greatest ambition is to live comfortably and luxuriously. In addition, the writers have ridiculed the people who bow down to the rich, or who associate with the well-to-do and therefore consider themselves important. Furthermore, the hypocritical clergymen, the quack doctors (or women who pretend to be doctors), the non-genuine artists, and the disciplinarian school systems have all fallen prey to the authors' attacks. However, this trait of revealing and denouncing insincerity in all its forms is common to every ironical writer and does not indicate a direct influence of Thackeray on Mann.

In respect to ironic form we have observed that the greatest similarity between the two novelists lies in their use of parenthetical expressions to comment on and criticize various characters, or the events that take place. This technique of the direct approach to the reader is more common to Thackeray's style than to Mann's, but it is possible that Mann was influenced by Thackeray in the utiliza-

tion of this device. Both authors have employed other similar methods to achieve an ironical effect, such as combining heterogeneous elements in a given situation, mimicking speech and speech habits, tersely describing various figures in an ironical manner, and frequently labeling people with humorous names. Both men are especially sensitive to people's speech and the effects that names have and therefore reveal a strong resemblance in this connection.

In general, the artistic production of Mann's which most closely resembles Thackeray's art is Buddenbrooks. The type of humor found in this novel, the fairly informal style, and even aspects of the subject matter are similar to what we find in Thackeray's novels. We could also draw some parallels which are not ironical in nature. Christian Buddenbrook, for example, is similar to Becky Sharp in that he loves to mimic people's antics and speech. Also, both writers use the device of relating events in the story by means of letters exchanged by various characters in the novels. After Buddenbrooks Mann moves farther and farther away from Thackeray, both in regard to the subject matter and to the spontaneous quality of his style.

However, in spite of these similarities that we have analysed in connection with the ironic content and form in Mann and Thackeray, there is no question about the fact that the two writers are basically dissimilar. Their personalities, their attitudes toward life and art, and the nature of their works themselves are essentially disparate. As products of different ages and cultures, the two novelists have fundamentally different fields of interest. In Mann's writings we find an approach to life and art which

is totally lacking in Thackeray's productions.

One might say that Mann is a writer-philosopher who has a profound outlook on life. This is evidenced by the Life-Spirit antithesis and the metaphysical irony apparent in his works. Mann is predominantly concerned with the nature and problems of the artist. He depicts characters who live in isolation, separated from the bourgeois world and unable to participate in the activities of normal people. This preoccupation with the outcast from society runs throughout Mann's early writings and reflects the bad conscience feelings of the artist who has gone astray from the bourgeois fold.

Thackeray, on the other hand, is not interested in metaphysics, nor in the problems of the isolated artist. On the contrary, the Victorian has a close contact with society, whose many facets he portrays. His heroes are people who are well capable of carrying on the normal societal functions just like everyone else. For that reason Thackeray's works reveal more of the age in which he lives, or describes, than do Mann's. In general, we get a fairly good impression from the Victorian's novels of the way that people thought and acted at that time, at least the level of society that the author describes, whereas Mann's works, except Buddenbrooks, mirror comparatively little of the temper and conditions of his milieu and age.

Thackeray is more of a historical writer than Mann is (in the early novels), often going back to the eighteenth century or the early part of the nineteenth for the subject matter of his works, as in Henry Esmond, The Virginians, and Vanity Fair. Later on, however, Mann deals more and

more with historical themes, as in the Joseph Stories, Lotte in Weimar, and Doctor Faustus. While the theme of the solitary artist remains constant in Mann's works, the subject matter of Thackeray's writings is quite varied, ranging from the story of Colonel Esmond in the age of Queen Anne to the development of the artist in Pendennis.

The most striking dissimilarity in respect to the author's ironic styles lies in the fact that Thackeray's novels are marked by a more spontaneous, informal quality than Mann's are. That is why we find so many more side remarks and intimate conversations with the reader in the Victorian's writings than in the German's. Mann is a careful writer who works slowly and steadily, often spending years on a single production. His works are, in respect to their form, much more closely knit and better constructed than Thackeray's. However, we must realize in this connection that Thackeray wrote his novels under different conditions than Mann did. The Victorian used to write single chapters which were printed weekly in a newspaper or magazine; therefore, his novels lack much of the unity, continuity, and even consistency that we find in Mann's writings. The exception to this is Henry Esmond which Thackeray did not write in installments, but had published in its entirety and which therefore reveals a greater unity and compactness than any of his other works.

Other distinctions to be pointed out in connection with the styles of the two authors are the leitmotiv and the symbolical use of numbers and colors, devices which Thackeray did not employ, but which are important features of Mann's style.

Common to both writers is their love for humor and we have seen the various methods that the artists use to create humorous effects. Thackeray's writings, especially, are replete with humorous characters and situations. In fact, the Victorian, in general, writes in a lighter vein than Mann does, and the tragical element, which is so predominant in Mann (as in Buddenbrooks, "Tonio Kröger", "Tod in Venedig", and others), is something foreign to Thackeray's temperament and character. Thackeray's humor is often expressed in the form of satire, whereas Mann is non-satirical and conveys his humor principally by means of irony.

Irony does not only play an important part in the works of Thackeray that we have discussed, but serves a significant function in his other novels as well. Whereas the Victorian has been dead for almost a century now, Thomas Mann is still writing, and his conception and use of irony, which is so intrinsic to his Weltanschauung, has remained with him and is evident in his most recent works.

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