Durham E-Theses

'Shadowy Copies'? Film Adaptations of the Second Austrian Republic

FIRTH, CATRIONA,ALISON

How to cite:

Use policy

'SHADOWY COPIES'?
FILM ADAPTATIONS OF
THE SECOND AUSTRIAN REPUBLIC

CATRIONA FIRTH

THESIS FOR THE DEGREE OF DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY
DURHAM UNIVERSITY
SCHOOL OF MODERN LANGUAGES AND CULTURES
2010

ABSTRACT

'SHADOWY COPIES'?
FILM ADAPTATIONS OF THE SECOND AUSTRIAN REPUBLIC
CATRIONA FIRTH

For many years adaptation has been passed between literature and film studies, frequently dismissed as 'shadowy copies' and parasitic reproductions, the unwanted bastard child of the disciplines searching in vain for an academic home. Despite the emergence of insightful new scholarship into the development of Austrian film in the twentieth century, the role of the adaptation genre within Austria's film industry and literary landscape remains an academic blind spot. This study aims to address this gap in critical knowledge, reviewing the potential function of filmic adaptations within the field of Austrian studies. Through five case studies of canonical works of post-war Austrian literature, this thesis sets out to establish adaptation both as a critical tool through which to approach literature and as an object of academic interest in its own right. Drawing on psychoanalytic theory and its application in film studies, these studies compare and contrast the position occupied by the film's implied spectator with the relationship of the implied reader to the literary text. Rereading the novels retrospectively in light of their adaptations, this approach has the ability to 'light up dark corners' of the novels, illuminating those aspects hitherto left in the shadows by literary criticism. It will be argued that adaptation is uniquely positioned to hold up a mirror to literary texts, reflecting their concerns not through the filters of established grand narratives and generic taxonomies but through their creative, cinematic reworking of the novels. In challenging those assumptions that have become commonplace within Austrian literary history, this study calls for a more nuanced approach to literature of the Second Republic and proposes adaptation as the means by which this may be achieved.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

TABLE OF CONTENTS

'SHADOWY COPIES'? - INTRODUCTION

Dismissed as 'shadowy copies' and parasitic reproductions,[1] film adaptations of literary texts remain a theoretical grey area within film studies, literary criticism and most certainly within the field of Austrian studies. Whilst the latter abounds with analyses of individual adaptations, focusing on the specific relationship between one literary text and its filmic version, little attention has been paid to the potentially broader role of adaptation studies within the study of Austrian culture. Departing from existing approaches, this study seeks to review the function of adaptations and explore their revelatory potential within an Austrian context. Given that the institution of reviewing and academic criticism is crucial in the construction of the canon and therefore any literary history based on the canon, it is astonishing that the potential interpretative quality of adaptation has not yet found footing within critical discourse. Through five case studies of canonical works of post-war Austrian literature, this thesis sets out to establish adaptation both as a critical tool through which to approach literature and as an object of academic interest in its own right. As critical reworking of literature in a different medium, the adaptation is uniquely placed to reveal those elements of a text that may be overlooked in the verbal medium of academic criticism, rendering it invaluable to a reconsideration of Austrian literary history.

Beginning in the late 1950s with Gerhard Fritsch's *Moos auf den Steinen*, this study provides critical rereadings of five novels, each selected for its canonical position within Austrian literature. This methodological approach through case studies derives primarily from the representative function attributed to the works under consideration. Within literary history these novels are frequently called upon to function metonymically, standing in for wider genres, periods or political stances. Whilst this study cannot assume these representative values uncritically, their analysis may nevertheless be said to offer the most effective route to a wider understanding of the construction of literary history. Harnessing the extensive signifying power of these texts, this study is in a position to provide detailed analyses of novel and film, which expose the nuances overlooked by literary history. Whilst a comprehensive overview of the adaptation genre in Austria would potentially offer insight into the institutional structures and socio-

---

[1] Imelda Whelehan, 'Adaptations: The Contemporary Dilemmas', in *Adaptations: From Text to Screen, Screen to Text*, ed. by Deborah Cartmell and Imelda Whelehan (London: Routledge, 1999), pp. 3-20 (p. 7). The concept of 'shadowy copies' is adopted in Whelehan's review of George Bluestone's seminal work, *Novels into Film*, and may not be taken to represent the author's own attitude towards adaptations.

political factors that influence film-production, it would preclude a detailed analysis of the works themselves, replicating the very tendency in critical scholarship that this study seeks to critique. The specificity of the case study thus complements and subverts the generalising tendencies of literary history, discussed below, providing an ideal place from which to challenge generic assumptions and dominant discourses.

The temporal location of Fritsch's novel, published shortly after the creation of the Second Republic in 1955 has accorded it a privileged position within discussions of Austrian national identity. The release of its adaptation in 1968, an iconic date in post-war cultural history, places this work in a unique position to offer a detailed insight into the problematisation of identity and memory in recent literary histories of the period. The novels of Franz Innerhofer and Gerhard Roth then provide the foundation for a discussion of one of the most significant trends in post-war Austrian literature, the *Anti-Heimatroman*, whose entry into mainstream literature is frequently attributed to Innerhofer's *Schöne Tage*. Providing a rural and urban perspective respectively, Innerhofer and Roth reveal two, perhaps opposing, aspects of provincial literature, enabling a broad investigation of rural representations and their reception in literary histories of post-war Austria. Written by one of Austria's most (in)famous literary personalities, Elfriede Jelinek's *Die Ausgesperrten* offers an insight into the complex relationship between author and text in critical accounts of 1980s literature. Her near-iconic status within the post-war canon allows this study to question the role of the provocative author at the centre of literary debate. Finally, Robert Schindel's novel, *Gebürtig*, offers an insight into Austrian Jewish writing, which gained increasing prominence in the last decade of the twentieth century. Almost instantly this work was accorded paradigmatic status within Austrian literature, hailed as a symbol of a Jewish 'renaissance'. Its treatment of the complexities inherent in post-Shoah Jewish memory renders it crucial to an understanding of the relationship between literature and identity in an Austrian context. With a temporal gap of almost ten years from the most recent adaptation, and over fifty from the earliest literary source, this study thus seeks to exploit the distance in time in order to revisit and reassess some of the major literary trends that defined post-war Austrian literature in the twentieth century.

The project is thus retrospective, but it is also retroactive. The retroactive element of the project stems from its methodological basis, which calls for a rereading of the selected literary works in the light of their adaptations. Drawing on psychoanalytic theory and its application in film studies, these revisionist readings take

their impetus from the shift in subject positions, identificatory structures and matrices of pleasure which occur in the novels' transfer to the filmic medium. The position occupied by the film's implied spectator,[2] when compared and contrasted with the relationship of the implied reader to the literary text, has the ability to 'light up dark corners' of the novel,[3] illuminating those aspects hitherto left in the shadows by literary criticism. Through the retroactive reconsideration of five key works of post-war Austrian literature, this study reassesses, and in places challenges, dominant discourses on the texts themselves, their position within Austrian literature and the wider relationship between literature, politics and film in the Second Austrian Republic.

AUSTRIAN LITERATURE: 'KONTINUITÄT UND BRÜCHE?'

The mooted existence of an Austrian *Nationalliteratur* has long dominated discussions on literature in the Second Republic, to the extent that no anthology or literary history appears complete without an introductory nod to this problematic nomenclature. Whilst such debates appear to have exhausted themselves (although the opening up of Austria's Eastern borders in the wake of European Union expansion has somewhat revived the debate) and would benefit little from further discussion here, their arguments and conclusions may form a productive springboard from which to embark on an analysis of dominant narratives in Austrian literary criticism.

'Kontinuität und Bruch'[4] – the title of Friedlich Stadler's edited volume on Austrian culture between 1938 and 1955 – effectively encapsulates the dominant strand in discussions of post-war literature, which seek either to ascertain a problematic continuity from the Habsburg past to the present day or argue for the existence of an Austrian *Stunde Null* to match that in post-war German literature. Proponents of the former, most notably Claudio Magris and Ulrich Greiner, argue that Austrian literature is trapped within the 'Habsburg Myth', fleeing from political engagement into an idealised monarchic past and rejecting formal innovation in favour of a more

---

[2] The implied spectator/reader does not correspond to the 'real' spectator/reader but must rather be understood as the consumer as projected by the text itself, which calls on the 'real' spectator/reader to interpret it from this constructed standpoint. For ease of reference, however, this thesis will employ the terms 'spectator', and 'reader'.

[3] Kaja Silverman, *The Threshold of the Visible World* (London; New York: Routledge, 1996), p. 81.

[4] Friedrich Stadler, *Kontinuität und Bruch: 1938 – 1945 – 1955* (Munster: Lit, 2004).

conventional aesthetic.[5] Greiner goes as far as to accuse Austrian writers of 'Wirklichkeitsverweigerung und Handlungsverzicht',[6] positing literary inertia as a response to the authors' real political impotence.[7] Both Margris's and Greiner's conceptions of an apolitical Austrian literature have come under fierce criticism for their (deliberately) misleading over-selectivity[8] and for their lack of relevance to contemporary authors.[9]

On a more pragmatic level, continuity has often been discerned within Austrian literary institutions (amongst publishers, journals, academics etc.), as 'jene mächtige, in den fünfziger Jahren wieder geehrte Gruppe von Autoren und von gleichgesinnten Literaturwissenschaftlern und Kritikern' who continued to determine the conservative, patriotic discourse of post-war literature.[10] Aside from the evidently problematic connection to Austro-fascism and National Socialism, the bridge between pre- and post-war culture is deemed to have stifled the creativity of the younger generation:

> die Moderne, die sich auf das Experiment einließ oder radikal mit der literarischen Praxis der vorangegangenen Epoche brechen sollte, die nicht an den Restitutionsversuchen eines Doderer partizipieren wollte, hatte kein Forum.[11]

Rüdiger Wischenbart equally points to the domineering influence of the *Vätergeneration*, whose 'ungebrochenes, affirmatives Verhältnis zur Sprache und entsprechendes selbstsicheres Verständnis des Schriftstellers' prevented any literary self-reflection or linguistic innovation.[12]

---

[5] Claudio Magris, *Der habsburgische Mythos in der modernen österreichischen Literatur*, trans. by Madeleine von Pásztory (Vienna: Zsolnay, 1996). The original Italian edition was published in 1966. Ulrich Greiner, *Der Tod des Nachsommers* (Munich: Hanser, 1979).

[6] Greiner, p. 15.

[7] Greiner, p. 30.

[8] Wendelin Schmidt-Dengler comments acerbically that 'indem Greiner das ausklammert, was ihm nicht hineinpaßt, entsteht ein Bild von suggestiver Geschlossenheit'. Wendelin Schmidt-Dengler, 'Ulrich Greiner: "Der Tod des Nachsommers"', in *Für und wider eine österreichische Literatur*, ed. by Kurt Barsch, Dietmar Goltschnigg and Gerhard Melzer (Königstein: Athenäum, 1982), pp. 181-84 (p. 182).

[9] Matthias Konzett, *The Rhetoric of National Dissent in Thomas Bernhard, Peter Handke and Elfriede Jelinek* (Rochester: Camden House, 2000), p. 5.

[10] Klaus Zeyringer, *Innerlichkeit und Öffentlichkeit: österreichische Literatur der achtziger Jahre* (Tübingen: Francke, 1992), p. 24. See also Karl Müller, 'Die Bannung der Unordnung: zur Kontinuität österreichischer Literatur seit den dreißiger Jahren', in *Kontinuität und Bruch*, ed. by Stadler, pp. 181-216.

[11] Wendelin Schmidt-Dengler, 'Die unheiligen Experimente: zur Anpassung der Konvention an die Moderne', in *Literatur der Nachkriegszeit und der fünfziger Jahre in Österreich*, ed. by Friedbert Aspetsberger, Norbert Frei and Hubert Lengauer (Vienna: Österreichischer Bundesverlag, 1984), pp. 337-50 (p. 341).

[12] Rüdiger Wischenbart, 'Zur Auseinandersetzung um die Moderne: literarischer "Nachholbedarf" – Auflösung der Literatur', in *Literatur der Nachkriegszeit*, ed. by Aspetsberger, Frei and Lengauer, pp. 351-66 (pp. 351-52). See also Simon Ryan, 'New Directions in the Austrian Novel', in *The Modern German Novel*, ed. by Keith Bullivant (Oxford; Hamburg; New York: Berg, 1987), pp. 36-56.

'Continuity', when framed in the historical context of post-war Austria, can only assume a negative value. The speedy rehabilitation of authors with dubious pasts, exemplified by the awarding of the *Großer Österreichischer Staatspreis* to Max Mell (1954), Franz Nabl (1956) and Franz Karl Ginzkey (1957), each of whom had contributed to the *Bekenntnisbuch österreichischer Dichter* welcoming the *Anschluss* in 1938, is widely viewed as symptomatic of a failed literary *Vergangenheitsbewältigung*.[13] Reflecting broader political tendencies, literature of the post-war period is considered to represent an 'initial failure [...] to break with an oppressive past and confront the new, post-Habsburg world'.[14] This unwillingness to confront Austria's recent past found its political counterpart in the adoption into the *Staatsvertrag* of the 'victim thesis', whereby the Allies officially recognised Austria as 'das erste freie Land, das der hitlerschen Aggression zum Opfer gefallen ist'.[15] Whilst the Treaty qualified this status with the recognition that Austria must still accept responsibility for her role in the war, the Moscow Declaration was selectively interpreted by post-war Austrian politicians as an absolution of guilt and subsequently used to distance Austria from any association with National Socialism.

The widely accepted accusation that Austria was founded on a series of 'historische Notlügen',[16] which shaped the 'staatstragende Selbstinfantilisierung'[17] of the Second Republic, has thus dominated the discourse surrounding literary works of the post-war period (and beyond). Literary history repeatedly emphasises the lack of critical discussion of Austria's past in post-war works and notes that those texts approximating a successful *Vergangenheitsbewältigung* were poorly received or ignored.[18] Klaus Zeyringer comments in his analysis of school reading lists that 'der Rückgriff auf die Tradition […] verlangte ein positives Welt-und Staatsverständnis' and 'konnte freilich experimentelle Literatur nicht (ge)brauchen'.[19] Thus an implicit opposition is established, which sets a marginalised, 'experimental' and socially critical literature against a state-sponsored 'rückwärtsgewandte Austriazität'[20] which rejected linguistic and narrative innovation.

---

[13] Klaus Amann, 'Vorgeschichten: Kontinuitäten in der österreichischen Literatur von den dreißiger zu den fünfziger Jahren', in *Literatur der Nachkriegszeit*, ed. by Aspetsberger, Frei and Lengauer, pp. 46-58.

[14] Ryan, 'New Directions', p.37.

[15] Cited in Josef Haslinger, *Politik der Gefühle* (Frankfurt a. M.: Fischer, 1995), p. 60.

[16] Robert Menasse, *Das Land ohne Eigenschaften* (Vienna: Sonderzahl, 1992), p. 17.

[17] Walter Manoschek, 'Verschmähte Erbschaft', in *Österreich 1945-1995*, ed. by Reinhard Sieder, Heinz Steinert and Emmerich Tàlos (Vienna: Verlag für Gesellschaftskritik, 1995), pp. 94-106 (p. 96).

[18] Klaus Zeyringer notes that 'in literarischen Texten der Nachriegszeit war zwar [...] hinter die Kulissen geschaut, dieser Blick aber verdrängt worden'. Zeyringer, *Österreichische Literatur seit 1945: Überblicke, Einschnitte, Wegmarken* (Innsbruck: Studienverlag, 2008), p. 215.

[19] Zeyringer, *Österreichische Literatur*, p. 55.

[20] Ibid.

The equation of linguistic experimentation with social criticism, along with the belief in their mutual conflict with contemporary socio-political conditions, extends far beyond the post-war period, adding weight to the assertion that 'Austrian literature is interwoven with Austrian history, often providing trenchant critiques of government policies and evolving hard-hitting narratives of resistance'.[21] In his lecture series, *Brüchlinien*, the celebrated 'Literaturpapst', Wendelin Schmidt-Dengler, proposes five characteristics uniting the works of Austrian authors in the late 1960s and early 1970s.[22] Considering authors as diverse as Gerhard Fritsch, Barbara Frischmuth and Franz Innerhofer, Schmidt-Dengler identifies a common thematisation of language, a 'Füllung vorgegebenen [literarischen] Muster durch neue Sprache', a rejection of a literary replication of reality/nature, 'Positionen der Negativität' (particularly evident in the *Heimat* genre) and the belief that 'Gesellschaftskritik kann nur durch Sprachkritik erfolgen'.[23] Even a superficial glance at these proposed qualities reveals the privileged position ascribed to language, its systematic problematisation within post-war Austrian literature and its deep-rooted link to social criticism.

Bruchlinien further examines the socio-political soil fomenting these trends. Beginning with the interrelationship between contemporary politics and Austria's past, Schmidt-Dengler considers first the influence of the *Sozialpartnerschaft*, the 'neocorporate frameworks for parity, patronage, mutual consultation, conflict resolution, and resource allocation' that allowed the Socialist SPÖ and the conservative ÖVP to maintain absolute control over almost all areas of Austrian life from 1960s to the late 1990s.[24] Schmidt-Dengler argues that literature of this period may be viewed as an attack 'gegen die Repräsentanten der Österreich-Ideologie der Großen Koalition, die um den Preis der Unaufrichtigkeit einen Konsens als notwendige Basis angenommen hatte'.[25] Literature thus provides the much-needed confrontation with Austria's Nazi past, which had been swept under the carpet by mainstream politicians in the name of socio-political harmony.[26] Austria's emerging acceptance of her international role and her 'Identität als Kleinstaat' are further deemed responsible for the development of 'eine Literatur, die auch ihre innerösterreichisch lokale Kontinuität leugnet', which distanced

[21] Katrin Kohl and Ritchie Robertson, 'Introduction', in *A History of Austrian Literature 1918-2000*, ed. by Kohl and Robertson (Rochester: Camden House, 2006), pp. 1-20 (p. 9).
[22] Wendelin Schmidt-Dengler, *Bruchlinien: Vorlesungen zur österreichischen Literatur 1945–1990* (Salzburg: Residenz, 1995).
[23] Schmidt-Dengler, *Bruchlinien*, pp. 237-38.
[24] Harry Ritter, 'From Habsburg to Hitler to Haider: The Peculiarities of Austrian History', *German Studies Review*, 22 (1999), 269-284 (p. 275).
[25] Schmidt-Dengler, *Bruchlinien*, p. 238.
[26] See also Konzett, *The Rhetoric of National Dissent*, p. 110.

itself from Austria's conventional literary history to embrace less mainstream traditions from both home and abroad.[27] Hence, those authors who currently make up the canon of this period, the 'Promis' or 'Vorzeigebilder' of 1970s Austrian literature – Thomas Bernhard, Peter Handke, Franz Innerhofer, Elfriede Jelinek, Gerhard Roth and Michael Scharang amongst others – are frequently those who distance themselves stylistically or thematically from the so-called literary 'tradition'.

Nowhere is this dissent from tradition more evident than in *Antiheimat* literature whose very name evokes Schmidt-Dengler's 'Positionen der Negativität'. Whilst Andrea Kunne argues against the term, approaching the works of Innerhofer, Scharang *et al* as variations on, rather than antitheses of, the *Heimat* genre,[28] critical discourse nevertheless continues to stress their stance of rejection. Indeed, one critic goes as far as to claim that '[d]ie Idee "Heimat" als moralischer Wert ist der philosophischen Einstellung der heutigen Generation von Schriftstellern in Österreich völlig fremd geworden'.[29] Zeyringer's assessment of the element of continuity in the *Antiheimatroman*

> in dem die verschüttete Traditionslinie der vormärzlichen Dorfgeschichte wieder aufgenommen wurde, die eine soziale Studie des alltäglichen Lebens auf dem Lande bieten und auf gesellschaftliche Mißstände aufmerksam machen wollte,[30]

rather paradoxically concludes that 'sie alle [Innerhofer *et al*] stehen gegen Heimat',[31] exemplifying the taxonomical difficulties identified by Kunne and stressing the highly ambiguous status of *Heimat* in post-war rural literature and, indeed, in post-war Germanic culture in general.

The 'neuer *Heimatroman*' of the 1970s and 1980s makes use of the generic constants identified by Karlheinz Rossbacher in his study, *Heimatkunstbewegung und Heimatroman*,[32] assigning new values to the once exalted rural idyll, which now appears as a 'Bauern KZ' in Innerhofer[33] or as Hans Lebert's 'parteibraune Landschaft'.[34] In the

---

[27] Schmidt-Dengler, *Bruchlinien*, p. 239.

[28] Andrea Kunne, *Heimat im Roman: Last oder Lust? Transformationen eines Genres in der österreichischen Nachkriegsliteratur* (Amsterdam; Atlanta: Rodopi, 1991), pp. 1-20 (in particular, p. 18).

[29] Garold N. David, 'Die Idee "Heimat"', in *Österreichische Gegenwart: die moderne Literatur und ihr Verhältnis zur Tradition*, ed. by Wolfgang Paulsen (Bern: Munich: Francke, 1980), pp. 171-88 (p. 183).

[30] Zeyringer, *Österreichische Literatur*, p. 134.

[31] Ibid.

[32] Karlheinz Rossbacher, *Heimatkunstbewegung und Heimatroman: zu einer Literatursoziologie der Jahrhundertwende* (Stuttgart: Klett, 1975).

[33] Franz Innerhofer, *Schöne Tage* (Munich: dtv, 1974), p. 208.

[34] Lebert's work is considered to be one of the earliest examples of the *Anitheimatroman* and provides a searing critique of continuing fascism in rural Austria. Lebert, *Die Wolfshaut* (Hamburg; Vienna: Europa Verlag, 2001) [First edition Hamburg: Claassen, 1960].

works of Innerhofer, Scharang and Winkler, the rural village as *locus amoenus* is replaced by the *locus terribilis* of an oppressive landscape populated almost exclusively by ignorant and aggressive figures.[35] Thus, as Jürgen Koppensteiner notes, the reader is supplied with the familiar figures and scenery of the conventional *Heimatroman* but is denied any 'Heimatbezüge im traditionellen Sinn', since 'Anti-Heimatliteratur will vielmehr negative Zustände in der Heimat, im ländlich-bäuerlichen Milieu, aufdecken'.[36] Both Kunne and Koppensteiner link this revision of *Heimat* values to a change in social conditions, with Kunne positing a fundamental shift in rural power structures, which manifests itself stylistically in a change in narrative perspective. Thus, the once revered *Bauer* is now depicted 'von unten', with the previously silent rural underclass ousting the omniscient (omnipotent) authorial narrator to make its own voice heard.[37] Once again in the dominant histories of Austrian literature, social change and narrative technique are seen to be inextricably intertwined, with literature acting as spokesperson for an ignored socio-political reality.

Literary 'Aufarbeitung' of a repressed past is more commonly associated with the treatment in literature of Austria's complicity in National Socialism, its failed denazification and subsequent repression of guilt, culminating in the virtual absence of *Vergangenheitsbewältigung*. Following an extended period of repression and political 'double-speak',[38] the 1980s are portrayed in the common cultural narrative as an 'awakening' and the beginning of a more historically adequate appraisal of Austria's Nazi past. This conjectured turning-point in Austrian *Vergangenheitsbewältigung* is seen to have been triggered by the 1986 presidential elections and the so-called 'Waldheim Affair', centring upon the ÖVP's presidential candidate, Kurt Waldheim. In the course of the campaign it was revealed that Waldheim had not only spent most of his time in the *Wehrmacht* in an area of mass deportation (40,000 Jews were deported from Saloniki) and at the site of a massacre in West Bosnia,[39] but was furthermore a member of a National Socialist student organisation and an officer in the SA-Cavalry corps. More shocking than these revelations themselves was Waldheim's response that he 'wie viele

---

[35] Kunne, p. 108.

[36] Jürgen Koppensteiner, 'Anti-Heimatliteratur: ein Unterrichtsversuch mit Franz Innerhofers Roman *Schöne Tage*', *Die Unterrichtspraxis/Teaching German*, 14 (1981), 9-19 (p. 10).

[37] Kunne, p. 150.

[38] This term is employed by Anton Pelinka to describe the ambiguous relationship with the past in Austrian politics, where the lip-service paid to *Vergangenheitsbewältigung* contrasted with domestic policy which reinforced the victim thesis. Anton Pelinka, 'Taboos and Self-Deception' in *Austrian Historical Memory and National Identity*, ed. by Günther Bischof and Anton Pelinka (New Jersey: Transaction, 1997), pp. 95-102 (p. 97).

[39] Waldheim denied all knowledge of the crimes against civilians, claiming to have been on leave when these occurred.

Hunderttausende der Söhne unseres Landes, [hatte] nur [s]eine Pflicht erfüllt', which provoked outrage from Austria's intellectuals and caused international outcry. Despite the international discredit which accompanied the Waldheim affair,[40] common consensus amongst Austrian intellectuals is that 'Waldheim war gut für das Land'.[41] The Waldheim affair is considered to have signalled a 'waking up from a long hibernation of forgetfulness and seeming mastery over the past',[42] thus provoking a more critical assessment of Austria's past.

Yet certain literary histories are keen to indicate that 1980s literature was merely a further step along an already established path of *Vergangenheitsbewältigung*, which had existed in isolated examples as early as the 1960s (e.g. Hans Lebert's *Die Wolfshaut*, Gerhard Fritsch's *Fasching*). Zeyringer argues of the eighties that socio-political change brought about by various scandals, such as the public welcoming of convicted Nazi war criminal Walter Reder by Austrian defence secretary Friedhelm Frischenschlager in 1985, inspired a more overtly socially critical literature: 'Es wurde das Schreiben deutlich als Widerstand aufgefaßt, als Aufgabe "die Wahrheit zu sagen". Es wurden zunehmend Vergangenheit und Gegenwart des Landes genauer betrachtet'.[43] Thomas Bernhard and Elfriede Jelinek are arguably the most (in)famous of these 'Nestbeschmutzer',[44] tackling Austria's fascist past (and present) both directly and indirectly in many of their works. Both authors' dramatic attacks on Austria's repressed complicity in fascism (Jelinek's *Burgtheater* and Bernhard's *Heldenplatz*)[45] caused outrage amongst critics and public alike, leading to very public airings of Austria's dirty laundry. The prominence of these authors and their works fuelled a personalisation of the literary debate, most manifest in their demonisation in Austria's infamous tabloid, the *Kronen-Zeitung*.[46]

Following this more self-reflexive confrontation with the past, the 1990s saw an alleged 'renaissance' of Jewish literature in mainstream literary production,[47] as authors

---

[40] Waldheim was set on the American watch-list and made almost no state visits during his presidential term.
[41] Haslinger, p. 15.
[42] Günther Bischof, 'Founding Myths and Compartmentalised Past', in Bischof/Pelinka, pp. 302-41 (p. 304)
[43] Zeyringer, *Innerlichkeit und Öffentlichkeit*, p. 93.
[44] See Allyson Fiddler, 'Demythologising the Austrian "Heimat": Elfriede Jelinek as "Nestbeschmutzer"', in *From High Priests to Desecrators: Contemporary Austrian Literature*, ed. by Moray McGowan and Ricarda Schmidt (Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 1993), pp. 25-44.
[45] Elfriede Jelinek, *Burgtheater* (Premiere: 1985) and Thomas Bernhard, *Heldenplatz* (Premiere: 1988).
[46] For a representative collection of the tabloid press response to Jelinek see *Die Nestbeschmutzerin: Jelinek und Österreich*, ed. by Pia Janke and others (Salzburg; Vienna: Jung und Jung, 2002).
[47] Günther Scheidl, 'Renaissance des "jüdischen" Romans nach 1986', in *Judentum und Antisemitismus: Studien zur Literatur und Germanistik in Österreich*, ed. by Anne Betten and Konstanze Fliedl, pp. 132-48. Scheidl defines 'Jewish literature' as those works that foreground issues of Jewish identity and memory.

such as Ruth Beckermann, Robert Menasse, Anna Mitgutsch, Doron Rabinovici and Robert Schindel were welcomed into the canon of contemporary Austrian literature. Schindel's *Gebürtig*, which tackles the topic of *Vergangenheitsbewältigung* from a variety of Jewish and non-Jewish perspectives, found almost instant public success following its publication in 1992, winning Schindel the *Förderpreis des österreichischen Staatspreises für Literatur*. Matthias Konzett regards this emergence of Jewish literature as 'a corrective of this self-revolving national discourse in German culture whereby Germans claim to be the authority on all things Jewish'.[48] The common preoccupation uniting contemporary Jewish authors in Austria is the problematic question of Jewish identity, described by Beckermann as 'ein wackeliges Kartenhaus, das aus schmerzlichen Erfahrungen und hoffnungsvollen Phantasiebildern gezimmert ist'.[49] Indeed Konzett views this as the ultimate essence of contemporary Jewish writing, asserting that 'to be Jewish for these authors, means foremost to challenge one's own secure sense of identity defined by traditional affiliations and to enter the spheres of private and public cultures with their uneasy compromises and balances'.[50] This negotiation of identity is accompanied by a self-reflexive narrative mode, the attempt 'einen Sprachmodus zu finden, der sich den Widersprüchen des noch immer heiklen und schon wieder höchst aktuellen Themas der deutsch-österreichischen Sprechtabuisierung, anzunähern vermag'.[51] Forced to work with the 'Sprache der Mörder', Austrian Jewish writers are continually confronted with the problematic relationship between identity, language and narrative, which is only exacerbated by the silence of the 'schweigende Generation der Täter, Mitläufer und Wegschauer'.[52]

Literary history of the Second Republic would thus locate Austrian writing at the intersection between language and society. Following the dominant discourse, literary production in Austria is inseparable from its socio-political context from the politics of national identity in the 1950s to the Waldheim affair in the eighties. This element of social criticism must, moreover, find its formal complement in linguistic or

---

[48] Konzett, *The Rhetoric of Dissent*, p. 132. Konzett's use of 'German' here is somewhat anomalous in his otherwise exclusively Austrian study and would appear from the context to refer, in fact, to Germanophone culture.

[49] Ruth Beckermann, *Unzugehörig: Österreicher und Juden nach 1945* (Vienna: Löcker, 1989), p. 49.

[50] Konzett, p. 146.

[51] Neva Šlibar, 'Anschreiben gegen das Schweigen: Robert Schindel, Ruth Klüger, die Postmoderne und Vergangenheitsbewältigung', in *Jenseits des Diskurses: Literatur und Sprache in der Postmoderne*, ed. by Albert Berger and Gerda Elisabeth Moser (Vienna: Passagen, 1994), pp. 337-56 (pp. 341-42).

[52] Schindel, *Gott schütze uns vor den guten Menschen: jüdisches Gedächtnis – Auskunftsbüro der Angst* (Frankfurt a. M.: Suhrkamp, 1995), p. 114.

narrative innovation, since 'Gesellschaftskritik kann nur durch Sprachkritik erfolgen'.[53] The crucial role accorded to a self-reflexive use of language could thus suggest a potentially uneasy relationship between established literary scholarship and filmic adaptations of Austrian texts. Indeed, the inevitable renegotiation of the role of language engendered by the transfer from verbal to visual medium may account for the widespread absence of adaptation analyses in accounts of post-war Austrian literature. However, this study sets out to identify a taxonomical drive in Austrian literary history, which frequently neglects key aspects of the text in its desire to insert each work into the pre-established narratives discussed above. Approaching literature through the medium of film carries in it the potential to challenge the grand narratives of Austrian literary history and shed light on their construction precisely because of the widespread exclusion of adaptation from current discourse on Austrian literature.

ADAPTATIONS IN AUSTRIA

Despite the emergence of insightful new scholarship into the development of Austrian film in the twentieth century, adaptations of Austrian literature are yet to receive profound critical attention.[54] Whilst German *Literaturverfilmungen* have long formed a significant focus of critical interest,[55] not to mention the considerable literature dedicated to Anglophone adaptations,[56] the role of this genre within Austria's film industry and literary landscape remains an academic blind spot. There are several notable exceptions: Erich Rentschler's *German Film and Literature* and Andrew Horton and Joan Magretta's volume, *Modern European Filmmakers and the Art of Adaptation*, for example, contain several articles on Austrian adaptations from Schnitzler to Handke.[57]

---

[53] Schmidt-Dengler, *Bruchlinien*, pp. 238.

[54] Of particular interest are: Elisabeth Büttner and Christian Dewald (eds), *Anschluß an Morgen: eine Geschichte des österreichischen Films von 1945 bis zur Gegenwart* (Salzburg: Residenz, 1997); Gustav Ernst and Gerhard Schedl (eds), *Nahaufnahmen: zur Situation des österreichischen Kinofilms* (Vienna; Zurich: Europa, 1992); Walter Fritz, *Im Kino erlebe ich die Welt: 100 Jahre Kino und Film in Österreich* (Vienna: Brandstätter, 1997); Gottfried Schlemmer (ed.), *Der neue österreichische Film* (Vienna: Wespennest, 1996) and Robert von Dassanowsky, *Austrian Cinema: A History* (Jefferson: McFarland, 2005).

[55] The very existence of an encyclopaedia of German adaptations testifies to its significance within German cultural writing. Klaus M. Schmidt and Ingrid Schmidt (eds), *Lexikon Literaturverfilmungen: Verzeichnis deutschsprachiger Filme 1945-2000* (Stuttgart: Metzler, 2001). For further examples of German scholarship in this field see Franz-Josef Albersmeier and Volker Roloff (eds), *Literaturverfilmungen* (Frankfurt a. M.: Surhkamp, 1989) and Anne Bohnenkamp (ed.), *Literaturverfilmungen* (Stuttgart: Reclam, 2005).

[56] It would be impossible here to name even a representative selection. For a comprehensive bibliography on adaptation criticism, see Cartmell and Whelehan, *Adaptations*, pp. 226-38.

[57] Erich Rentschler, *German Film and Literature* (New York: Methuen, 1986). Andrew Horton and Joan Magretta (eds), *Modern European Filmmakers and the Art of Adaptation* (New York: Ungar, 1981).

However, these studies each follow their own narrow agenda, concentrating on a specific author, director, genre or period and stake no claim to comprehensiveness. Whilst this study would also distance itself from any assertion of totality, the selection of case studies aims towards a broader analysis of Austrian adaptations than has previously been undertaken.

The absence of film adaptations in accounts of Austria's cinematic history is all the more astonishing when one considers the dominant/domineering influence of literature in Austrian film production from its very beginnings. Following wider trends, early Austrian filmmakers turned to literature to lend the new medium an air of respectability, as Walter Fritz notes that 'verfilmte Literatur stimmte die Kritiker immer etwas milder'.[58] In fact, Austria's first feature film, Theodor Gleisner's *Der Müller und sein Kind* (1911), was adapted from a drama by German playwright Ernst Raupach.[59] This trend was revived in the 1950s when 'Dichter des 19. und 20. Jahrhunderts lieferten den Drehbuchautoren des österreichischen Films Stoffe, um das Kino noch attraktiver zu machen'.[60] In particular, the film industry of the early Second Republic found rich pickings in the works of Austrian authors, with filmic versions of *Bauerntheaterstücke* functioning to 'provide safe territory for the box office while underscoring the art of the Austrian Nation'.[61] Literary adaptations were thus enlisted to serve the post-war nation-building agenda of the newly created Second Republic, which sought to stress Austria's impressive cultural history.[62]

The genre continued to enjoy widespread popularity in the 1960s. Whilst Walter Fritz's claim that 'die Zahl der Literaturverfilmungen hielt sich […] in Grenzen' in the 1960s,[63] cannot itself be disputed, it must be placed in the context of the industry as a whole. Declining cinema audiences,[64] the dominance of German film and a chronic lack of government funding,[65] appeared to sound the death knell for independent Austrian productions, with Austria producing only forty feature films between 1962 and 1968,[66]

---

[58] Fritz, *Im Kino erlebe ich die Welt*, p. 219.
[59] Dassanowsky, *Austrian Cinema*, p. 12.
[60] Fritz, *Im Kino erlebe ich die Welt*, p. 225.
[61] Dassanowsky, *Austrian Cinema*, p. 141.
[62] Zeyringer, *Innerlichkeit und Öffentlichkeit*, p. 28.
[63] Fritz, *Im Kino erlebe ich die Welt*, p. 247.
[64] Between 1966 and 1967 alone, cinema attendance dropped from 65.8 million to 57.6 million. Dassanowsky, *Austrian Cinema*, p. 192.
[65] The *Filmförderungsgesetz*, which guaranteed government funding for Austrian productions, was only introduced in 1981, whilst comparable measures had been in place across Europe since the 1950s. For more information on (under)funding in Austria see Gerhard Schedl, 'Die österreichische Filmförderung', in *Nahaufnahmen*, ed. by Ernst and Schedl, pp. 177-86.
[66] Gabriele Schultz, 'Der österreichische Film und das Fernsehen: die Programmierte Krise', in *Nahaufnahmen*, ed. by Ernst and Schedl, pp. 61-74 (p. 63).

until ultimately 'in den 70er Jahren wurde der Spielfilm zu Grabe getragen, die Produktionsziffern sanken fast auf Null'.[67] In this context, the decline in the number of film adaptations seems almost inevitable; yet it must be noted that this genre still accounted for almost one third of Austrian productions.

A quick glance at the best-known Austrian films of the late twentieth century further reveals Austrian cinema's ongoing dependence on literature.[68] International hits such as Michael Haneke's adaptation of Elfriede Jelinek's *Die Klavierspielerin* and Lukas Stepanik's filmic version of Schindel's *Gebürtig* have earned critical acclaim both at home and abroad,[69] whilst film adaptations of Austrian literature have made up almost half of Austria's box office hits in the past thirty years.[70] The scholarly neglect of this evidently flourishing genre within Austrian film studies is thus astonishing. In the absence of any obvious explanations offering themselves from within Austrian film studies, consideration of the wider academic status of adaptation may provide a more useful context in which to understand this trend.

ADAPTATION THEORY

The launch of *Adaptation* in 2008, 'a journal solely devoted to the academic study of literature on screen',[71] both attests to the continuing relevance of adaptations studies within the wider field of literary and film criticism and furthermore suggests its feasibility as an academic discipline in its own right. This position, however, has arisen from decades of academic neglect and rejection. For many years adaptation studies has been passed between literature and film studies, the unwanted bastard child of the disciplines, searching in vain for an academic home. On the one hand, there has been a tendency in traditional literary scholarship to view adaptation as an inferior replica of the 'original' text, working on the assumption that 'the novel is the norm and the film

---

[67] Schultz, p. 61.
[68] This trend is not exclusive to Austria; the prominence of adaptation in New German Cinema has also been noted, and criticised as 'a direct consequence of filmmakers playing it safe for the subsidy committee'. Thomas Elsaesser, *New German Cinema: A History* (London: BFI and Houndsmills: Macmillan,1989), p. 107.
[69] Haneke's film won the 'Grand Prix' in Cannes in 2001, the 'BAFTA' for 'Best International Film' in 2002 and the 'Deutscher Filmpreis' for 'Bester ausländischer Film'. *Gebürtig*, which opened the 2002 Diagonale film festival in Graz, gained international prominence at Cannes in 2002, where it was favourably received. < http://www.cultfilm.at/gebirtig/> [accessed 19 February 2010].
[70] <http://www.austrianfilm.com/jart/prj3/afc/main.jart?rel=de&content-id=1169655765729&reserve-mode=active> [accessed 20 February 2010].
[71] Deborah Cartmell, Timothy Corrigan, Imelda Whelehan, 'Introduction to *Adaptation*', *Adaptation*, 1 (2008), 1-4 (p. 2).

deviates at its peril'.[72] The field of adaptation studies, on the other hand, has found itself the innocent victim in film studies' battle for independence from its original home in literary studies. Keen to legitimise the study of film as a valid academic endeavour in its own right, film theorists have frequently dismissed the analysis of literary adaptations as regressive, as a sign that film studies has yet to free itself entirely from the shackles of its academic origins in universities' English and Theatre departments.[73]

The uncertain status of adaptation studies is both the result and the symptom of the wider problems plaguing the reception of filmic versions of literary texts. In his review of current adaptation scholarship, Thomas Leitch explains that '[e]ver since its inception half a century ago, adaptation studies has been haunted by concepts and premises it has repudiated in principle but continued to rely on in practice'.[74] The most persistent spectre troubling adaptation studies is the omnipresent question of 'fidelity', whether explicitly manifest as an object of critical analysis, or implicitly present in value judgements of the kind: 'The film did not do justice to the novel'.[75] Foreshadowing Leitch's ghoulish terminology, Brian McFarlane describes the discipline as 'bedevilled by the fidelity issue',[76] arguing that 'the insistence on fidelity has led to a suppression of potentially more rewarding approaches to the phenomenon of adaptation'.[77] Whilst condemnation of this undoubtedly restrictive discourse has become *de rigueur* in any recent contribution to adaptation theory, it continues to form a substantial focus, albeit now as a phenomenon to be dissected and debunked.

Unsurprisingly, this study equally seeks to distance itself from the unproductive discourse surrounding the question of fidelity. However, this does not mean that the similarities and differences between novel and film (i.e. the areas of 'fidelity' and 'infidelity') are to be ignored. Without a comparative consideration of literature and its filmic counterpart, there would be no adaptation studies but merely separate analyses of individual texts. It is thus not a question of rejecting the issue of fidelity but, rather, of emptying it of its connotations of qualitative judgement in order to exploit its revelatory potential. Hence, whilst based upon a comparative study of novel and film that takes the novel to be the source text, this discussion of Austrian adaptations moves beyond a

---

[72] George Bluestone, *Novels into Film* (Berkley: University of California Press, 1957), p. 5.
[73] Thomas Leitch, *Film Adaptation and its Discontents: From Gone With the Wind to the Passion of Christ* (Baltimore: John Hopkins University Press, 2007), p. 5.
[74] Thomas Leitch, 'Adaptation Studies at a Crossroads', *Adaptation*, 1 (2008), 63-77 (p. 63).
[75] For a comprehensive discussion of the fidelity discourse in adaptation studies, see Leitch, *Film Adaptation and its Discontents*, pp. 127-50.
[76] Brian McFarlane, *Novel into Film: An Introduction to the Theory of Adaptation* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1996), p. 8.
[77] Ibid, p. 10.

linear conception of the adaptation process to explore a more complex relationship between the two media. Rather than regarding the transformation of the literary text as a unidirectional process (along the lines: novel---adaptation---film), this study suggests a more circular relationship (novel---adaptation---film---[rereading of] novel), resulting in a reciprocal relationship between both versions, whereby one complements, supplements and enriches the other.

This study will take as its basis for comparison the position of the reading/spectating subject in relation to each work, expanding upon and going beyond plot- and theme-based adaptation studies. Psychoanalysis offers itself as the most insightful means of approaching adaptation for a number of reasons. It is evident from the above discussion that the consumer of the literary or filmic text stands at the centre of adaptation theory. It is her perception of difference between the two works that provides the impetus for debate and analysis, since the shift in medium precludes any empirical comparison. It would be impossible to envisage, for example, how one might enumerate the differences between the depiction of the novel's protagonist in the written medium and her filmic counterpart. Whilst the former relies on verbal descriptions that may make little claim to totality yet could, for example, offer explicit qualitative judgements, cinema 'cannot describe in the strictest sense of the word [...] it can only be let be seen'.[78] Difference, then, is inevitable in the transition from novel to film, yet comparison is only possible through the mediation of the works' receiving subject.

A psychoanalytic approach enables this study to locate the subject within the narrative structures of novel and film and expose the textual mechanisms employed to carve out these subject positions. In this respect, it complements the narratological approach favoured by structuralist thinkers, which explores the underlying structures that shape every narrative 'decentring the individual subject, who is no longer to be regarded as the source or end of meaning'.[79] Both psychoanalysis and narratology thus offer an account of structures common to novel and film, narratives that exceed the individual work and its individual recipient, whilst nevertheless retaining the latter as their principal subject. In locating and analysing this shared ground it is possible to go beneath the surface of conventional comparative approaches to adaptation and, to borrow Terry Eagleton's terminology, plunge into the depths of the five works' 'textual

---

[78] Seymour Chatman, *Story and Discourse: Narrative Structure in Fiction and Film* (Ithaca: Cornell, 1980), p. 106.
[79] Terry Eagleton, *Literary Theory: An Introduction*, 2nd edn (Oxford: Blackwell, 1996), p. 90.

unconscious' – 'what [the narrative] does not say, and *how* it does not say it'[80] – exposing the otherwise 'repressed' elements that make up the 'truth' of a narrative.

Exploring universal narrative structures, however, does not preclude a more specific consideration of the context in which the works have been produced. An unfair criticism often levelled against psychoanalysis (and structuralism) is its supposedly 'ahistorical' approach, seen to stem from its interest in the individual psyche.[81] However, works as diverse as Kaja Silverman's *Male Subjectivity at the Margins* and Wilhelm Reich's *Massenpsychologie des Faschismus* clearly indicate that a psychoanalytically inflected cultural theory is by no means a contradiction in terms. Indeed, as the latter demonstrates, psychoanalysis may prove extremely fruitful in the analysis of specific socio-cultural and historical phenomena. This study, then, seeks to exploit the manifold advantages offered by psychoanalysis in order to reach a more nuanced understanding of the novels, their adaptations and the contexts in which both were produced and received.

PSYCHOANALYSIS

'Man versteht die Psychoanalyse immer noch am besten,
wenn man ihre Entstehung und Entwicklung verfolgt.'[82]

Whilst a comprehensive history of the origins and development of psychoanalytic theory would extend beyond the limits of this study, there is undoubtedly scope for a brief consideration of the roots and evolution of psychoanalytic film theory together with an introduction to those theoretical concepts central to this project. Rising to academic prominence in the 1970s, the application of psychoanalytic theory in film studies grew out of the semiotic approach, advanced by Peter Wollen and Christian Metz and closely linked to the emerging post-structuralist movement. Semiotic film theory finds its origins in the linguistic theories of Ferdinand de Saussure, who argued that '[t]he linguistic sign unites, not a thing and a name, but a concept and a sound

---

[80] Eagleton, *Literary Theory*, p. 155.
[81] For a recent and interesting discussion of the historical specificity of psychoanalysis see the Special Issue of *differences*: 'Psychoanalysis and the Question of Social Change', *differences: A Journal of Feminist Cultural Studies*, 20 (2009).
[82] Sigmund Freud, 'Das Ich und das Es', in Freud, *Studienausgabe*, ed. by Alexander Mitscherlich, Angela Richards and James Strachey, 10 vols (Frankfurt a. M.: Fischer, 1975), III: *Psychologie des Unbewußten*, pp. 272-330 (p. 303).

image'.[83] Saussure's splitting of the sign into linked dimensions of 'signifier' (sound-image) and 'signified' (concept) highlights the arbitrary nature of the linguistic sign, exposing the lack of 'natural' relationship between a concept and its representation in language (spoken or written).[84] The subsequent adoption of Saussurean linguistics in film theory occurred via the semiological studies of Roland Barthes and the structural anthropology of Claude Lévi-Strauss,[85] which extended Saussure's theory of the linguistic sign to wider social application, with Barthes proposing that

> We shall therefore take *language*, *discourse*, *speech*, etc., to mean any significant unit or synthesis, whether verbal or visual: a photograph will be a kind of speech for us in the same way as a newspaper article; even objects will become speech, if they mean something.[86]

Following Barthes's semiological conception of modern society, which designates as languages photographs, advertisements and even clothing,[87] semiotic film theory treats cinematic representation as a linguistic system, a structure of meaning-production with its own signs, codes and even its own grammar. Thus, the combination and selection of shots in any given film may be analysed in a similar manner to verbal language and may even be understood to contain figures such as metaphor and metonymy.[88]

Christian Metz's seminal works in the early 1970s, *Film Language: A Semiotics of the Cinema* and *The Imaginary Signifier: Psychoanalysis and the Cinema*,[89] are still considered to offer the most convincing crossover between semiotic and psychoanalytic approaches. In these texts, Metz explores the inscription of the viewing subject into cinematic structures of signification, considering the process of subject-formation in filmic discourse. Although Metz was certainly not the first to apply psychoanalytic principles to cinematic theory,[90] his introduction of the psychoanalytic theories of Jacques Lacan

---

[83] Ferdinand de Saussure, *Course in General Linguistics*, trans. by Wade Baskin, ed. by Charles Bally and Albert Sèchehaye (London: P. Owen, 1960), p. 65.

[84] Saussure, p. 67.

[85] See, for example, Roland Barthes, *Elements of Semiology*, trans. by Annette Lavers and Colin Smith (London: Cape, 1967); Barthes, *Mythologies*, trans. by Annette Lavers (St. Albans: Paladin, 1973); Claude Lévi-Strauss, *The Elementary Structures of Kinship*, trans. by J. H. Bell and others, ed. by Rodney Needham (Boston: Beacon Press, 1969).

[86] Barthes, *Mythologies*, p. 111.

[87] Barthes, *Elements of Semiology*, p. 27.

[88] See Christian Metz, *The Imaginary Signifier: Psychoanalysis and the Cinema*, trans. by Celia Britton, Annwyl Williams, Ben Brewster and Alfred Guzzetti (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1974), pp. 197-206.

[89] Christian Metz, *Film Language: A Semiotics of the Cinema*, trans. by Michael Taylor (New York: Oxford University Press, 1974).

[90] Jean-Louis Baudry, for example, had employed the Freudian conception of primary and secondary processes in his influential article 'The Apparatus: Metapsychological Approaches to the Impression of Reality in Cinema', trans. by Jean Andrews and Bernard Augst, *Camera Obscura*, 1 (1976), reproduced in

into critical discourse was to influence profoundly the development of the debate. Lacan's now infamous assertion that '[t]he unconscious is structured like a language' came to shape the hybridisation of semiotics and psychoanalysis, which took as its object the formation of the viewer's subjectivity through her insertion into the signifying structures that govern cinematic representation. The prominence of Lacanian concepts and terminology in psychoanalytic film theory thus justifies a closer analysis of the key tenets of his psychoanalysis, which may be extrapolated from his notoriously impenetrable and almost infinitely interpretable writings and seminars. In the interest of concision, this discussion will focus on those areas most applicable to film theory and to this specific project: the Lacanian subject and its foundation in lack; the 'Mirror Stage'; the gaze; language and the 'symbolic order'.

LACK AND THE LACANIAN SUBJECT

Introducing her analysis of Lacanian psychoanalysis and its application in poststructuralist film theory, Kaja Silverman remarks that 'one could say of the Lacanian subject that it is almost entirely defined by lack'.[91] According to Lacan the subject is marked from birth by a sense of deficiency, in Lacanian terms 'real lack': 'what the living being loses, that part of himself *qua* living being, in reproducing himself through the way of sex'.[92] Illustrating his argument with Aristophanes' comic account of the birth of desire through the division of the original androgynous subject into male and female,[93] Lacan posits a subject continually in search 'not of a sexual complement, but of that part of himself, lost forever' (*Four*, p. 205). This missing part is the 'libido *qua* pure life instinct, that is to say immortal life', which is separated from the subject at birth (*Four*, p. 198). In order to compensate for this potentially debilitating lack, the subject seeks out representative objects such as the female breast, which represent the part of the subject lost at birth (*Four*, p. 198). Within Lacanian algebra these objects are referred to as *objets petit a* (*a* = autre/other) and designate 'something from which the subject, in order to constitute itself, has separated itself off as organ' (*Four*, p. 103). Lacan proceeds to identify them as 'a symbol of lack', arguing that the *objet petit a* 'must,

---

Film Theory and Criticism, ed. by Gerald Mast, Marshall Cohen and Leo Braudy, 4th edn (New York; Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1999), pp. 760-77.

[91] Kaja Silverman, *The Subject of Semiotics* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1983), p. 151.

[92] Jacques Lacan, *The Four Fundamental Concepts of Psychoanalysis*, trans. by Alan Sheridan (London: Vintage, 1998), p. 205. Future references will be given in parentheses in the main body of the text.

[93] For a more detailed discussion of the relevance of this myth in Lacanian thinking see Silverman, *The Subject of Semiotics*, pp. 149-50.

therefore, be an object that is, firstly, separable and, secondly, that has some relation to lack' (*Four*, p. 103). These objects, however, can only stand in for the original lack and must thus be conceived as signifiers, placing them in the realm of the Other (*Four*, p. 205), that which is irreconcilably separate from the subject. Much of Lacanian and wider psychoanalytic theory is thus concerned with the subject's attempts to overcome this constituting lack through an incessant chain of identifications, through which the subject seeks to rediscover its lost part or, at the very least, conceal this absence. A psychoanalytic approach to film thus distinguishes itself from other filmic analyses through its focus on the identifications encouraged in the spectator and their structuring role in the creation and maintenance of cinematic pleasure.

MIRROR STAGE AND CINEMATIC IDENTIFICATION

From its inception, psychoanalytic film theory has been indebted to Lacan's concept of the 'mirror stage' whose observations and hypotheses have shaped critical understanding of the nature of cinematic spectatorship. Occurring in infants between six and eighteen months, the mirror stage refers to the subject's first act of self-recognition upon seeing its own reflected image.[94] In contrast to the reality of its lacking motor coordination, the child perceives an ideal subject, 'mis-recognising' itself in the coherent, potent mirror image with which it identifies.[95] It is the suggested act of identification with an idealised visual image that has been warmly embraced by film theoreticians, most notably by Christian Metz. In order to highlight its applicability to film studies, Metz investigates the nature of the child's identification with its mirror image, noting that 'the child's ego is formed by its identification with its like […] The child identifies with itself as an object.'[96] According to Metz, it is the infant's capacity to identify with an other (here, its reflected image) that facilitates the adult viewer's comprehension of the cinematic spectacle, which nevertheless differs from the primordial mirror stage in the absence of the spectator in the identificatory image:

> What *makes possible* the spectator's absence from the screen – or rather the
> intelligible unfolding of the film despite that absence – is the fact that the
> spectator has already known the experience of the mirror (the true mirror), and

---

[94] Lacan, 'The Mirror Stage', in Lacan, *Écrits: A Selection*, trans. by Alan Sheridan (London: Tavistock, 1977), pp. 1-7.
[95] Ibid, p. 2.
[96] Metz, *The Imaginary Signifier*, p. 45. Future references will be given in parentheses in the main body of the text.

is thus able to constitute a world of objects without having first to recognise himself within it. (*Imaginary Signifier*, p. 46)

Thus the mirror stage serves not merely as a theoretical framework in which cinematic signification may be understood but is revealed to be the very basis on which this signification is founded.

Since, however, the cinematic spectator may not identify with herself as an object, due to her on-screen absence (*Imaginary Signifier*, p. 48), the viewer must undertake a dual identification, aligning herself both with the objects (characters) on screen and with the invisible camera. The latter identification is dependent upon the spectator's self-perception as 'a great eye and ear without which the perceived world would have no one to perceive it, the instance, in other words, which *constitutes* the cinema signifier' (*Imaginary Signifier*, p. 48). In establishing herself as the all-perceiving look, the viewer is coerced into an identification with the camera and the wider cinematic apparatus as the original source of the gaze (*Imaginary Signifier*, p. 49). Following Metz's theory, identification with on-screen protagonists can only ever be a secondary cinematic identification, facilitated and manipulated by primary cinematic identification with the camera as representative of the apparatus (*Imaginary Signifier*, p. 47).[97] The manifold forms which secondary cinematic identification may adopt will be the object of further scrutiny in subsequent chapters, in particular in Chapter Two. However, it may be useful here to elaborate on the nature of the spectator's identification with the camera in the context of the Lacanian 'gaze'.

THE GAZE

In identifying the status of the gaze as an *objet petit a*, Lacan firmly locates it in the field of the Other, an object inevitably external to the subject, 'a privileged object, which has emerged from some primal separation' (*Four*, p. 83). Lacan further draws attention to the divergence between the 'eye' as the physical act of looking and the 'gaze', which is the object of this act:

From the outset, we see, in the dialectic of the eye and the gaze, that there is no coincidence, but, on the contrary, a lure. When […] I solicit a look, what is

---

[97] Metz takes care to distinguish between primary identification (with the mirror image) and primary *cinematic* identification, which is inevitably secondary to the subject's primary identification in the mirror stage. Metz, *The Imaginary Signifier*, p. 56.

profoundly unsatisfying and always missing is that – *You never look at me from the place from which I see you.* (*Four*, p. 103)

Thus the gaze becomes irrevocably separated from the subject, existing as that towards which she incessantly strives but which she may never attain. The location of the gaze outside the subject's control 'means that the gaze comes always from the field of the Other [...] it is the Other's gaze'.[98] This defintion of the gaze is crucial for an understanding of cinematic spectatorship, as it exposes the power implications bound up in the act of looking, through which the subject aspires to possess the gaze, that all-seeing authority, yet inevitably falls short. From the outset, then, the cinematic act of looking must be identified as a desire for scopic mastery, the desire to be in full possession of the gaze.

Kaja Silverman, however, draws a parallel between the gaze and the phallus, suggesting that '[t]he relationship between eye and gaze is analogous in certain ways to that which links penis and phallus; the former can stand in for the latter, but can never approximate it'.[99] This comparison gains further significance in the light of Lacan's claim that the gaze 'may come to symbolize this central lack expressed in the phenomenon of castration' (*Four*, p. 77). Following these statements to their logical conclusion, it may be argued that the (threatened) loss of the 'eye' (*qua* the act of looking) instils in the subject a fear comparable to that engendered by the threat of castration. In this context, the spectator's desire to align herself with the all-seeing gaze of the camera becomes a struggle to overcome the threat of visual castration inherent in every act of looking. A significant element of psychoanalytic film theory is thus concerned with the ways in which conventional cinema attempts to conceal from the spectator her inevitable separation from the gaze, examining the manifold ways in which the wound of visual castration is 'sutured' over in order to confer subjectivity upon the film's viewer.

SUTURE

The concept of cinematic 'suture' finds its basis in the psychoanalytic theory of Jacques-Alain Miller, according to whom '[s]uture names the relation of the subject to the chain of its discourse […] it figures there as the element which is lacking, in the form of a

---

[98] Elizabeth Grosz, *Jacques Lacan: A Feminist Introduction* (London; New York: Routledge, 1990), p. 80.
[99] Kaja Silverman, *Male Subjectivity at the Margins* (London; New York: Routledge, 1992), p. 130.

stand-in'.[100] Suture, as 'the general relation of lack to the structure',[101] clearly has its roots in a Lacanian conception of subjectivity and discourse. Rereading Freud's study of his nephew's game with a cotton reel that he repeatedly makes 'disappear' and 'reappear' from under his crib,[102] Lacan proposes that the true significance of the child's accompanying exclamations of 'fort/da' does not lie in the attempt to overcome the traumatic loss of the mother, as Freud suggests, but in its marking of the child's entry into signification.[103] By naming the actions, the child replaces the reel, which Lacan identifies as an *objet petit a*,[104] with linguistic signifiers and '[t]hus the symbol manifests itself first of all as the murder of the thing'.[105] Since, according to Lacan, there exists an impenetrable 'bar' between signifier and signified,[106] the child's use of language here marks his irreversible separation from the *objet petit a*, experienced as a partial loss of self. The separation between signifier and signified, between language and the self, results in an incessant 'signifying chain', where each signifier gains its meaning according to its relation with other signifiers (not, as in Saussurean linguistics, through its relationship to a stable signified)[107] and through which the subject strives to compensate for the absence or lack inaugurated by language. The child's entry into language, then, is marked on the one hand by loss and absence and, on the other, by the inauguration of the chain of discourse required to compensate for that loss.

Suture, as 'the element which is lacking, in the form of a stand-in',[108] names the process by which lack is concealed from the subject. Silverman summarises Miller's concept of suture as 'that moment when the subject inserts itself into the symbolic register in the guise of a signifier, and in doing so gains meaning at the expense of being'.[109] Just as the reel (as *objet petit a*) is replaced by a signifier, so the subject enters signification by the assumption of proper names and pronouns.[110] This replacement by

---

[100] Jacques-Alain Miller, 'Suture: Elements of the Logic of the Signifier', <http://www.lacan.com/symptom8_articles/miller8.html> [accessed 28 January 2010]. This text was published in French in *Cahiers pour l'analyse* 1 (1966). Its English version, translated by Jacqueline Rose, appeared in *Screen*, 18 (1978).

[101] Jacques-Alain Miller, 'Suture: Elements of the Logic of the Signifier'.

[102] Sigmund Freud, 'Jenseits des Lustprinzips', in Sigmund Freud, *Studienausgabe*, ed. by Alexander Mitscherlich, Angela Richards and James Strachey, 10 vols (Frankfurt a. M.: Fischer, 1975), III: *Psychologie des Unbewußten*, pp. 213-72 (pp. 224-27).

[103] Lacan, 'Function and the Field of Speech and Language', in *Écrits*, pp. 30-113 (p. 103).

[104] Lacan, *The Four Fundamental Concepts*, p. 62.

[105] Lacan, 'Function and the Field of Speech and Language', p. 104.

[106] Lacan, 'The Agency of the Letter in the Unconscious; or Reason Since Freud', in *Écrits*, pp. 146-78 (pp. 149-50).

[107] Ibid, p. 153.

[108] Jacques-Alain Miller, 'Suture: Elements of the Logic of the Signifier'.

[109] Silverman, *The Subject of Semiotics*, p. 200.

[110] Ibid, p. 200.

linguistic signifier further grants the subject access to the 'symbolic order'. The 'symbolic', one element of Lacan's three essential orders (along with the Imaginary and the Real),[111] designates in its narrowest sense the field of language, its structures and its codes. Yet, it has been commented that Lacan used the term 'symbolic' to designate both 'a structure whose discrete elements operate as signifiers (linguistic model) or, more generally, the order to which such structures belong' as well as 'the *law* on which this order is based'.[112] Through the interplay of these complementary definitions, the symbolic order has come to define the societal system that governs human interaction, including its linguistic, legal and moral codes.

Returning to film theory, the concept of suture was first extended to cinema by Jean-Pierre Oudart, who identified the potential unpleasure to which the viewer may be exposed.[113] Oudart asserts that the spectator first experiences a 'vertiginous delight' at the cinematic image, rooted in an imagined all-perceiving control over the image.[114] Almost simultaneously, this pleasure is negated by the spectator's awareness of the screen, when 'suddenly, he senses the space he cannot see, hidden by the camera, and wonders, in retrospect, why such a framing was used'.[115] The shattering of the spectator's belief in the autonomy of the shot reveals an invisible gaze controlling the cinematic image, the 'Absent One',[116] the 'phantom' that inhabits the invisible field of the 'fourth wall'.[117] Silverman likens this awareness of the controlling gaze of the Other to the castration threat, whereby the subject recognises its lack in the face of a potent paternal gaze, realising that what she presumed to master herself is in fact controlled by a transcendental Other, the invisible cinematic apparatus.[118] Thus, the viewer's initial pleasure is almost instantaneously transformed into radical unpleasure.

However, the continuing popularity of film rather suggests that the dominant affect aroused by the cinematic experience is not one of unpleasure, implying that some process must be in place to reinstate the spectator's enjoyment. This recuperative practice is suture, 'the procedures by means of which cinematic texts confer subjectivity

---

[111] For definitions of the Imaginary and the Real, see Jean Laplanche and Jean-Bertrand Pontalis, *The Language of Psychoanalysis* (London: Hogarth Press, 2006), pp. 210-11.
[112] Laplanche and Pontalis, p. 440.
[113] The use of 'unpleasure' is in accordance with the English translation of Freud's 'Unlust' and is well-established within psychoanalytic discourse.
[114] Jean-Pierre Oudart, 'Cinema and Suture', *Screen*, 18 (1977-78), 35-47 (p. 41).
[115] Ibid, p. 41.
[116] Ibid, p. 36.
[117] Ibid, p. 42.
[118] Silverman, *The Subject of Semiotics*, pp. 203-4.

upon their viewers'.[119] Oudart argues that traumatic cinematic moment 'introduces the image into the order of the signifier', since the on-screen filmic objects come to represent the Absent One, constituting '*the* signifier of its absence'.[120] Cinema strives to suture over this gaping wound through 'the abolition of the Absent One and its resurrection in someone',[121] often by positing an on-screen character as an adequate substitute for the elusive gaze of the invisible apparatus.

Although by no means the only method available to the cinema of suture, the shot/reverse-shot sequence has assumed an exemplary position within theoretical discussions of this phenomenon.[122] In this common formation, the initial shot of a character or object is followed by a second shot from the 'reverse' angle, revealing a second character in such a manner as to suggest that the first shot was 'seen' from her point of view. Daniel Dayan elaborates:

> The absent-one's glance is that of a nobody which becomes (with the reverse shot) the glance of a somebody (a character present on the screen). Being on screen he can no longer compete with the spectator for the screen's possession. The spectator can resume his previous relationship with the film. The reverse shot has 'sutured' the hole opened in the spectator's imaginary relationship with the filmic field by his perception of the absent-one.[123]

This sequence fulfils a dual function. On the one hand, it enables the viewer to overcome the threat of the omniscient and omnipotent Absent Other by identifying with a visible source of the gaze within the fiction.[124] On the other hand, the very structure of the sequence may be seen to initiate cinematic signification, since the substitutive function of second shot identifies it as the signified of the first – only when 'read' together do the two images gain meaning.[125] The insertion of the viewer into this signifying chain is thus said to confer subjectivity upon her in a manner similar to the subject's inauguration into language and her entry into the symbolic order.

Cinema's ability to insert the viewing subject into the dominant social order evidently carries with it potential ideological problems, especially in its treatment of marginalised groups. In particular, feminist film theorists have made use of psychoanalytic film theory to expose the perpetuation of (patriarchal) power structures

---

[119] Silverman, *The Subject of Semiotics*, p. 195.
[120] Oudart, p. 42.
[121] Oudart, p. 37.
[122] Stephen Heath, 'Notes on Suture', *Screen*, 18 (1977-78), 48-76 (p. 62).
[123] Daniel Dayan, 'The Tutor-Code of Classical Cinema', *Film Quarterly*, 27 (1974), 22-31 (p. 30).
[124] Ibid.
[125] Ibid.

in cinematic representation. Laura Mulvey's seminal, yet subsequently much criticised, article, 'Visual Pleasure and Narrative Cinema',[126] argues that cinematic pleasure depends on a form of scopophilia that arranges women 'so that they can be said to connote *to-be-looked-at-ness*'.[127] Returning to a Freudian conception of voyeurism and exhibitionism, Mulvey identifies the male gaze as an omnipotent, sadistic form of viewing that takes as its object the passive female figure.[128] Cinema's potential power is elevated beyond that of the striptease, theatre etc. by its claim to absolute reality, its reproduction of 'the natural conditions of human perception',[129] whereby 'cinematic codes create a gaze, a world, an object, thereby producing an illusion cut to the measure of desire'.[130] Mulvey's theory at once found its supporters and its critics, the latter pointing to the location of her argument firmly within the heterosexual male order she claims to criticise, as well as the implied impossibility of an active female spectator.[131]

In 'Afterthoughts on "Visual Pleasure and Narrative Cinema"',[132] Mulvey herself provides a critique of her previous article, conceding that cinema's structuring around masculine pleasure offers identification with an active gaze, which may 'allow a female spectator to rediscover that lost aspect of her sexual identity' and thus participate actively in the structures of cinematic pleasure.[133] However, identification with the dominant (male) gaze remains a problematic area within psychoanalytic film theory and will form a focal point in this study's film analyses. Without following a feminist discourse *per se*, this project at times makes use of the investigations and discoveries of feminist film theory to arrive at a fuller understanding of the potentially problematic structures of subjectivity created in the films selected for study, which may then be placed in a more specific Austrian context.

CASE STUDIES

Beginning with Gerhard Fritsch's *Moos auf den Steinen* (1956) and its adaptation by Georg

---

[126] Laura Mulvey, 'Visual Pleasure and Narrative Cinema', in Mulvey, *Visual and Other Pleasures* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1989), pp. 14-26. This article was originally published in *Screen*, 16 (1975), 6-18.
[127] Ibid, p. 19.
[128] Mulvey, 'Visual Pleasure and Narrative Cinema', p. 20.
[129] Ibid, p. 20.
[130] Ibid, p. 25.
[131] See, for example, Gaylyn Studlar, 'Masochism and the Perverse Pleasures of the Cinema', in *Movies and Methods II*, ed. by Bill Nichols (Los Angeles: University of California Press, 1985), pp. 602-21.
[132] Mulvey, 'Afterthoughts on "Visual Pleasure and Narrative Cinema"', in *Visual and Other Pleasures*, pp. 29-38.
[133] Ibid, p. 31.

Lhotzky in 1968, this study tackles first the issue of continuity in literary production in the early days of the Second Republic. Through an examination of the works' structures of narrative desire, informed by Peter Brooks's *Reading for the Plot*,[134] this chapter re-evaluates the status of the Habsburg Myth in novel and film and questions both the assumed traditionalism of the former and the supposed 'modernity' of the latter. Placing the works against their socio-political backdrops, this chapter further investigates the widespread belief in a radical societal change occurring in the 1960s and its applicability in an Austrian context.

Franz Innerhofer's *Schöne Tage* (1974) provides the opportunity for a consideration of the *Anti-Heimatroman* and its foundation in changing social conditions in 1970s rural Austria. This chapter examines the identificatory structures at work in the novel, considering the narrative mechanisms employed to encourage identification, the exact form which this identification assumes and its implication for the power structures exposed within the text. A comparison with the film's identificatory structures forms the basis for a critique of the emancipatory value assigned to the novel and to the wider *Anti-Heimat* genre, calling into question the oft-repeated praise of the novel's perceived ability to 'give a voice' to the silent misery of rural Austria.

The city/province dichotomy in *(Anti-)Heimat* literature and its accepted distribution of power form the focus of the third chapter, which examines the ethnographic mode of investigation in Gerhard Roth's *Der Stille Ozean* (1980). The prevalence of the visual in the novel, replete with ekphrastic moments and lengthy descriptions of the landscape and its inhabitants, suggests an affinity with the cinematic techniques of visual ethnography, which equally find their place in the cinematography and editing of Xaver Schwarzenberger's filmic adaptation (1983). This analysis examines the drive towards scopic mastery manifest in both versions, incorporating a consideration of the power structures inherent in the principles and techniques of visual anthropology. Combining a Foucauldian account of power, knowledge and the scrutinizing gaze with psychoanalytic conceptions of voyeurism, this chapter explores the redistribution of power which occurs in the filmic adaptation and considers its implications for the dominant understanding of the urban/rural opposition in Austrian literature.

The subsequent consideration of Elfriede Jelinek's use of *Sprachwitze* in *Die Ausgesperrten* (1980) brings to the fore the issues at stake in the transfer from the verbal

---

[134] Peter Brooks, *Reading for the Plot: Design and Intention in Narrative* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1984).

to the visual medium. Making use of Freudian and Lacanian theories of comedy, this chapter examines the pleasurable position created for the reader within the novel and its basis in the exertion of social power. The loss of Jelinek's linguistically entertaining narrator in Novotny's adaptation and its implication for the reader/viewer's pleasure are investigated alongside the structures of visual power which govern the film's economy of pleasure. The disappearance of the narrator gives rise to a reassessment of Jelinek's function within the text, investigating her role as implied author in the creation of narrative pleasure and considering this within the wider context of Jelinek scholarship, which accords a central role to the author as a literary personality.

Analysing the structural affinities between *mise en abyme* and Freudian dream-work, the final chapter investigates the politics of pleasure at work in Robert Schindel's *Gebürtig* (1992) and its adaptation by Lukas Stepanik in 2002. Beginning with a Brooksian analysis of plot, this chapter considers to what extent the works' schema of pleasure may be explained by the 'drive towards the end' identified in previous chapters. The second part of this analysis will then propose an alternative conception of narrative desire, more suited to the postmodern text. Drawing on Barthes's dualist model of textual pleasure, this chapter suggests the need to expand the theoretical perimeters of this thesis in order to deal adequately with the complexities of more experimental forms of literature. Ontological instability in novel and film will be shown to belong to a wider problematisation of narrative and narration in the context of post-Shoah memory, which calls into question the representability of the Holocaust and its aftermath.

Drawing on the findings of these five case studies, this thesis seeks to ascertain the revelatory function of adaptation and explore its potential significance within the field of Austrian studies. It will be argued that adaptation is uniquely positioned to hold up a mirror to literary texts, reflecting their concerns not through the filters of established grand narratives and generic taxonomies but through their creative, cinematic reworking of the novels. In challenging those assumptions that have become commonplace within Austrian literary history, this study calls for a more nuanced approach to literature of the Second Republic and proposes adaptation as a productive means by which this may be achieved. In approaching literature through the filmic medium of adaptation this study makes a unique contribution to the study of post-war Austrian culture, which suggests that critical scholarship may move beyond the constraints of written secondary sources as a means of understanding texts.

A psychoanalytic approach to film and literature exposes underlying matrices of identification, pleasure and power often overlooked in literary history, revealing the texts to be subject to more universal structures than those proper to their medium. Situating the works within their socio-political contexts, this study seeks to historicise the more widely applicable findings of psychoanalysis, adapting their insights to suit a specifically Austrian backdrop. By taking into account the social, political and (literary) historical events and institutions that have shaped the Second Austrian Republic, these psychoanalytically inflected readings allow a more differentiated counter-narrative of Austrian literature to emerge. With adaptation forming its point of departure, this study is able to question the validity of the literary historical classifications, such as the *Anti-Heimat* genre or the restoration/rebellion dichotomy of the 1950s, which would otherwise provide the foundation for literary analysis. In offering an alternative mode of approaching literature, this study aims to facilitate a self-reflexive discussion within the study of Austrian culture that is conscious of the limits of the written medium.

CHAPTER I: 'DIE LEERE MITTE': NARRATIVE DESIRE AND LOSS
GERHARD FRITSCH AND GEORG LHOTZKY'S *MOOS AUF DEN STEINEN*

'Die Zeit nach dem Zweiten Weltkrieg ist in Österreich durch den Versuch einer Restauration gekennzeichnet.'[1] Wendelin Schmidt-Dengler's assessment of an attempted political, cultural and literary regression typifies the dominant narrative in literary history of the Second Republic, which relies almost exclusively on the 'Tradition und Kontinuität' dyad to characterise the 1950s. Within this discourse Gerhard Fritsch's literary debut, *Moos auf den Steinen*,[2] is accorded a paradigmatic status as '*das symptomatische Werk der literarischen Nachkriegsgeneration*',[3] deemed to reflect the 'Sehnsucht nach einem Anschluss an die altösterreichische Tradition'.[4]

The novel's subject matter would hardly seem to contradict this view. Set in the crumbling remains of Schloss Schwarzwasser, *Moos auf den Steinen* depicts the emerging love triangle between the 'Schlosstochter', Jutta Suchy-Sternberg, her soon-to-be fiancé Mehlmann and the writer Petrik. Guiding the development of this romantic constellation are Mehlmann's plans to convert the decaying palace into an ultra-modern 'Kulturzentrum' and Jutta's implicit objection to this radical renovation. Her increasing affection for Petrik, a rather wistful poetic figure, culminates in their temporary elopement. However, this romance is cut short by the untimely death of Petrik in a road accident, following which Mehlmann abandons his plans of marriage and renovation.

First published in 1956, Fritsch's novel enjoyed immediate success and was received well by public and critics alike. Robert Menasse attributes the novel's popularity to its appeal to 'ein allgemein verbreitetes sentimentales Verhältnis zum untergangenen alten Österreich und den Stolz auf die vergangene Größe und Schönheit' and to the reviewers' reluctance to look critically at the novel's formal elements.[5] Critical response to M*oos auf den Steinen* often follows Menasse in dismissing Fritsch's earliest novel as a naïve, nostalgic portrayal of post-war Austria, forming the 'Höhepunkt seiner

[1] Wendelin Schmidt-Dengler, 'Pathos der Immobilität: zur österreichischen "Nationalliteratur"', in *Österreich zum Beispiel*, ed. by Otto Breicha and Reinhard Urbach (Salzburg: Residenz, 1982), pp. 343-52 (p. 346).
[2] Gerhard Fritsch, *Moos auf den Steinen* (Lausanne: Editions Rencontre, no date). Further references to this text will be given in parentheses in the main body of the text, identified as *Moos*.
[3] Herbert Eisenreich. Cited in Walter Weiss, 'Literatur', in *Das neue Österreich: Geschichte der Zweiten Republik*, ed. by Erika Weinzierl and Kurt Skalnik (Vienna; Graz: Styria, 1975), pp. 277-311 (p. 295).
[4] Walter Weiss, 'Die Literatur der Gegenwart in Österreich', in *Deutsche Gegenwartsliteratur: Ausgangspositionen und aktuelle Entwicklungen*, ed. by Manfred Durzak (Stuttgart: Reclam, 1981), pp. 602-19 (p. 608).
[5] Robert Menasse, 'Die Ohnmacht des Machers im Literaturbetrieb: zu Tod und Werk von Gerhard Fritsch', in Menasse, *Das war Österreich* (Frankfurt a. M.: Suhrkamp, 2005), pp. 209-24 (p. 218).

emotionalen Regression in die Welt des alten Österreich'.[6] The novel has long been regarded as an anomaly within his oeuvre, on the grounds that its (ostensibly) traditional subject matter and narrative form jar with the radicalism of his later works, *Fasching* (1967) and *Katzenmusik* (1974).[7]

Conversely, Hermann Böhm speculates that early reception of *Moos auf den Steinen* chose to see in Fritsch's work a continuation and validation of Austrian literary tradition, with the following result:

> was Fritsch als das Scheitern des Versuchs, an die Traditionen des k.u.k. Reiches anzuknüpfen, erzählen wollte, wird so gründlich mißverstanden und gerade deswegen zu einem Publikums- und Verkaufserfolg, zu einem Paraderoman der 50er Jahre.[8]

The extent to which the popularity of Fritsch's novel may be attributed to the underplaying of its socio-critical aspects can be seen both in its promotion as an 'unpolitische[r] Roman',[9] and in its serialisation in the regional tabloid *Die Kleine Zeitung*.[10] The misplaced popularity of *Moos auf den Steinen* has since formed the basis for the more disparaging tone adopted in later scholarship, which often carries over this interpretation of the novel uncritically and regards its reception as evidence of thematic and stylistic weakness. Thus Stefan Alker observes that '[a]n der Last dieser vermeintlichen Erfolgsgeschichte hatte nicht nur der Autor des Romans hart zu tragen, an ihr trägt der Text in der literaturgeschichtlichen Beurteilung bis heute'.[11]

To what extent, then, may Fritsch's novel be regarded as a victim of its own success, a critical reckoning with Austria's past buried under an avalanche of misplaced admiration? Seeking to investigate the validity of its widespread dismissal as 'das literarische Produkt einer veralteten Konzeption von Erzählen [...], einen besseren

---

[6] Hans Wolfschütz, 'Gerhard Fritsch', in *Kritisches Lexikon zur deutschsprachigen Gegenwartsliteratur* (Munich: Heinz Ludwig Arnold, 1981), p. 5.
[7] Albert Berger, for example, comments on Fritsch's 'Bewußtseinswandel vom Österreich-Mythologen zum Zeitkritiker'. Berger, '*Überschmäh* und *Lost in Hypertext*: eine vergleichende Re-Lektüre von Gerhard Fritschs Romanen *Moos auf den Steinen* und *Fasching*', in *Gerhard Fritsch: Schriftsteller in Österreich*, ed. by Stefan Alker and Andreas Brandtner (Vienna: Sonderzahl, 2005), pp. 57-77 (p. 59).
[8] Hermann Böhm, 'Mythos und abermals Mythos: Praxis und Theorie eines möglichen Österreich-Modells in Gerhard Fritschs Roman *Moos auf den Steinen* und bei Claudio Magris', in *Gerhard Fritsch: Schriftsteller in Österreich*, ed. by Alker and Brandtner, pp. 79-89 (p. 79).
[9] This term was evidently deemed to have positive connotations in the eyes of the Otto Müller Verlag which first published *Moos auf den Steinen* and described it thus on the dust cover. Stefan Alker, *Das Andere nicht zu kurz kommen lassen: Werk und Wirken von Gerhard Fritsch* (Vienna: Braumüller, 2007), p. 66.
[10] This serial novel was published in 1961, five years after the novel's initial publication. Alker, *Das Andere nicht zu kurz kommen lassen*, p. 66.
[11] Alker, *Das Andere nicht zu kurz kommen lassen*, p. 69.

Trivialroman',[12] this chapter will re-read the novel in the light of its 1968 adaptation by Georg Lhotzky.[13] Filmed in under three weeks, using only actors who were prepared to work without pay (the film's composer, Friedrich Gulda, only received expenses and a share of box-office takings),[14] Lhotzky's film typifies conditions of film production in 1960s Austria, when filmmakers were often forced to turn to less conventional means of funding. However, on a thematic and formal level it is evident that Lhotzky's film did not entirely fit the mould. Whilst its subject matter ostensibly corresponds to two trends within contemporaneous Austrian film, which often turned to literary or historical sources for inspiration, especially favouring those dealing with the Habsburg Empire,[15] it is evident that his treatment of Austria's monarchic past was not in the same vein as Ernst Marischka's *Sissi* series.[16] In this sense, both novel and film appear to stand in an ambiguous relationship to their contemporary counterparts, both conforming to yet breaking away from the norms that had rapidly established themselves since the end of World War Two.

By first locating both works in their cultural and socio-political contexts, this chapter will explore their assumed representative function within critical discourse on Austrian literature and film. This will facilitate a further interrogation of the established historical narrative, which posits a transformation in Austrian consciousness between the 1950s and the late 1960s from a 'verklärend rückwärtsgewandten Altösterreich-Nostalgie'[17] to a more enlightened self-reflexive sense of national identity. Concentrating on the dynamics of desire at work in the narrative structures of novel and film, this chapter will then examine the novel's seemingly innocuous content and form to determine whether a more subversive element may not be allowed to emerge. A comparison of the plot/desire nexus in the novel and its adaptation will inform a subsequent re-evaluation of the function of the Habsburg myth in both works, which may indicate a rather more ambivalent stance towards Austria's monarchic past than may be inferred from existing scholarship.

---

[12] Berger, '*Überschmäh* und *Lost in Hypertext*', p. 77.

[13] *Moos auf den Steinen*, dir. by Georg Lhotzky (West-Film, 1968; Edition Der Standard, 2007).

[14] Stefan Winterstein, 'Filmgenuß ohne Schamröte: Georg Lhotzky's *Moos auf den Steinen*', in *Gerhard Fritsch: Schriftsteller in Österreich*, ed. by Alker and Brandtner, pp. 225-35 (p. 234).

[15] Walter Fritz, *Im Kino erlebe ich die Welt...: 100 Jahre Kino und Film in Österreich* (Vienna: Brandstetter, 1997), p. 225.

[16] This series comprised of three films: *Sissi* (1955), *Sissi – Die junge Kaiserin* (1956) and *Sissi – Schicksalsjahre einer Kaiserin* (1957).

[17] Karl Schimpl, *Weiterführung und Problematisierung: Untersuchungen zur künstlerischen Entwicklung von Gerhard Fritsch* (Stuttgart: Heinz, 1982), p. 5.

'STICHWORTGEBER FÜR DAS SELBSTVERSTÄNDNIS SEINER GENERATION'[18]

Gerhard Fritsch's representative role within post-war Austrian literature has frequently formed the basis of critical responses to his work, with much being made of his position as 'eine Art literarischer Seismograph, in dem sich ein Stück lebendiger Literaturgeschichte verkörpert'.[19] Fritsch's main achievement is seen to lie in his ability to form a bridge between generations, maintaining a strong sense of Austrian literary tradition yet not shying away from a promotion of more avant-garde literature.[20] His editorial role in literary reviews such as *Wort in der Zeit* and *Literatur und Kritik* placed him at the forefront of literary development in 1950s and 1960s Austria, to such an extent that it has been claimed that '[k]aum eine Autorin oder ein Autor dieser Generation personifiziert durch Werk und Person so deutlich die Konflikte wie auch die Besonderheit der österreichischen Literatur bis zum Ende der 60er Jahre wie Gerhard Fritsch'.[21] Critics are eager to identify this conflict between traditional and experimental literature in Fritsch's own work, which is deemed to display an extraordinary shift 'von der Verklärung zur Aufklärung',[22] whereby *Moos auf den Steinen* is clearly located on the side of the former.

The novel's specifically Austrian subject matter is repeatedly cited as proof of its conformity to dominant post-war trends and its location within the 'kulturpädagogische[r] Mainstream'.[23] According to dominant discourse, this literary majority endeavoured

> dem Land unter Umgehung der jüngeren und jüngsten Vergangenheit ein
> Österreich-Bewußtsein zu implantieren, das als 'österreichisches Wesen'
> möglichst himmelhoch (transzendent, jenseitig) und möglichst geschichtstief
> (barock, habsburgisch) ausgestattet s e i n sollte, um eine – für
> Wiederaufbauwirtschaft, staatspolitische Zielsetzungen und soziales
> Zusammenleben – halbwegs förderliche kollektive Metaebene zu schaffen.[24]

---

[18] Wendelin Schmidt-Dengler, '"Modo Austriaco": Gerhard Fritsch und die Literatur in Österreich', in *Gerhard Fritsch: Schriftsteller in Österreich*, ed. by Alker and Brandtner, pp. 25-33 (p. 26).

[19] Wolfschütz, 'Gerhard Fritsch', in *KLG*, p. 2.

[20] For further information on Fritsch's editorial work see Alker, *Das Andere nicht zu kurz kommen lassen*, pp. 110-24.

[21] Schmidt-Dengler, '"Modo Austriaco"', p. 25.

[22] This supplies the title for Hans Wolfschütz's article on Fritsch's literary progression. Wolfschütz, 'Von der Verklärung zur Aufklärung: zur Entwicklung Gerhard Fritschs', in *Literatur und Kritik*, 111 (1977), 10-19.

[23] Berger, '*Überschmäh* und *Lost in Hypertext*', p. 57.

[24] Ibid, p. 58.

The focus on 'das Österreichische', which forms a constant throughout Fritsch's work, dominated the post-war literary scene at a time when, without exception, every literary journal contained the words 'Österreich' or 'österreichisch' in its title or subtitle.[25] With its Austro-specific content and apparently traditional narrative style, *Moos auf den Steinen* is deemed to share the representative value of its author as 'bis heute das wichtigste literarische Dokument für die Bewußtseinslage jener damals etwa dreißg Lebensjahre zählende Generation'.[26] The perceived near-iconic status of both author and work within post-war literary production invites an analysis of novel and adaptation within the wider context of the literary, social and political developments in the 1950s and 1960s.

'TRIUMPH DER KONVENTION'[27]

Criticism of *Moos auf den Steinen* focuses frequently on the novel's perceived failure to innovate on a formal and thematic level, regarding Fritsch's work as an exaggerated rehearsal of traditional motifs from Austrian literature, indicative of 'the initial failure of the post-war Austrian novel to break with an oppressive past and confront the new, post-Habsburg world'.[28] Literary history's fixation on a defining continuity in post-war Austria haunts discussions of individual works and authors as well as histories of the wider literary apparatus and its socio-political foundations. Hardly a work from this period escapes the taxonomical drive that seeks to assign literary works to one clearly defined camp or the other. Within this binary conception, novels may either promote a naïve, idealised image of Austria, shaped by Habsburg traditions both ideological and literary, or may set themselves in opposition to this mythologised past through a systematic destruction of linguistic and cultural conventions. The latter, as discussed above, are assigned a strictly oppositional role, portrayed as a small minority in the face of a restorative mainstream. The implications of this discourse are clear: socially critical literature requires an equally radical form, whilst literature founded on conventional thematic and narratological bases struggles to exceed the realms of trivial kitsch.[29]

---

[25] Schimpl, p. 234.

[26] Schmidt-Dengler, '"Modo Austriaco"', p. 26.

[27] Klaus Zeyringer, *Österreichische Literatur seit 1945: Überblicke, Einschnitte, Wegmarken* (Innsbruck: Studienverlag, 2008), p. 92. Further references to this text will be given in parentheses in the main body of the text, identified as *Überblicke*.

[28] Simon Ryan, 'New Directions in the Austrian Novel', in *The Modern German Novel*, ed. by Keith Bullivant (Oxford; Hamburg; New York: Berg, 1987), pp. 36-56 (pp. 37-38).

[29] See Walter Weiss, 'Literatur', in *Das neue Österreich*, ed. by Weinzierl and Skalnik, p. 282.

Klaus Zeyringer's attempt to illustrate post-war literary production through a comparison of Ilse Aichinger and Alexander Lernet-Holenia characterises this dualistic approach, treating their works as binary opposites on the levels of content and form (*Überblicke*, pp. 91-93). Yet Zeyringer himself concedes: 'so deutlich verliefen allerdings die Grenzen nicht, so einfach waren die Konturen nicht immer auszumachen, so klar waren die Felder nicht abgesteckt' (*Überblicke*, p. 93). However, this degree of self-reflection is not to be found in all analyses. Robert Menasse's criticism of *Moos auf den Steinen*, for example, finds two chief weaknesses in Fritsch's work, namely 'dass in dieser sogenannten Aufarbeitung der jüngsten Geschichte Österreichs der Faschismus zur Gänze unterschlagen wurde' and 'das blinde Vertrauen in die simple, schon damals überholte traditionelle Erzählweise'.[30] That these arguments in themselves are questionable will be demonstrated in the following analysis of the novel; however, their barely implicit equation of conventional narrative technique and inadequate political engagement serves here to underline the discourse of duality identified above.

Indeed, despite his endeavours to avoid such a simplistic approach, similar rhetoric is to be found in Zeyringer's account of the period:

> Die in der herrschenden traditionellen Literatur und in den populärwissenschaftlichen Bestsellern der Nachkriegszeit angenommene bruchlose Erzählbarkeit einer Welt und der Wiederaufbau der konventionellen Formen fanden sich so in der zweiten Hälfte der fünfziger Jahre zunehmend gekontert. […] Festmachen läßt sich dieser Wandel, der – schematisch gesagt – Kritisch-Fortschrittliches gegen idyllisch-unreflektiert Restauratives stellt, etwa im zentralen Komplex der Heimat, der Natur. (*Überblicke*, pp. 102-3)

Here a temporal aspect is added to the binary conception, which posits linguistically experimental and socially critical literature as the result of a developmental process beginning in the late 1950s. Taking the 'Wiener Gruppe' as its paradigm, dominant discourse in Austrian literary history depicts the 1960s as a time of radical change, marked by a 'Bruch mit dem unmittelbar vorausgegangenen Traditionsverständnis'[31] and which represented 'einen Modellfall für eine *querelle des anciens et des modernes*'.[32] Peppered with a terminology that insists on an 'Erschütterung' of the status quo,[33]

---

[30] Menasse, 'Die Ohnmacht des Machers im Literaturbetrieb', p. 218.

[31] Weiss, 'Die Literatur der Gegenwart', in *Deutsche Gegenwartsliteratur*, ed. by Durzak, p. 608.

[32] Wendelin Schmidt-Dengler, 'Die unheiligen Experimente: zur Anpassung der Konvention an der Moderne', in *Literatur der Nachkriegszeit und der fünfziger Jahre in Österreich*, ed. by Friedbert Aspetsberger, Norbert Frei and Hubert Lengauer (Vienna: Österreichischer Bundesverlag, 1984), pp. 337-50 (p. 338).

[33] Weiss, 'Die Literatur der Gegenwart', in *Deutsche Gegenwartsliteratur*, ed. by Durzak, p. 602.

whereby literary practice was 'umgekrempelt',[34] existing criticism views this period as a new phase in the interrelationship between literature and society, when a 'neu erwachter Sinn für die Gefahren einer einseitigen Fixierung aufs Vergangene' encouraged a more critical stance amongst Austria's authors.[35] This narrative of change is mirrored in analyses of Fritsch's literary career, which place great import on his development 'vom rückwärtsgewandten Elegiker zum gegenwartsbezogenen Satiriker'.[36] Whilst the limits of this thesis preclude an assessment of Fritsch's later works and potential artistic and ideological development, Hans Wolfschütz's portrayal of his career as a 'vollzogene Wendung vom austriazistischen Traditionalismus zur Traditionskritik und Durchbrechung überkommener literarischer Normen' will come under further critical scrutiny.[37]

Existing scholarship is equally insistent on the intimate relationship between literature and politics of national identity in the 1950s, which was partially engendered by the dominant *Kulturpolitik* of the early Second Republic. Seeking to create a strong sense of national identity, a succession of governments supported, both politically and financially, those works and authors investigating and endorsing the concept of 'das zeitlos Österreichische'.[38] Through subventions and literary prizes, the Austrian state sought to promote an image of Austria founded on 'sein großes kulturelles Erbe',[39] which identified a grand Austrian tradition in all areas of 'high culture' from Mozart to Musil. Condemned in recent criticism as a desperate attempt to construct 'ein republikanisches Museum der Habsburgmonarchie',[40] the official promotion of 'die ewigen Werte' has been explained as a means of escaping the political and historical reality of Austria's less glorious past. This concept of national identity 'demzufolge das Land Österreich viel eher als kultureller und geistiger Begriff statt als politische Einheit zu verstehen sei',[41] exonerates Austria from any political responsibility for National Socialist atrocities, allowing the issue of historic guilt to be covered over with a cultural gloss. Within this *Kulturpolitik*, literature was accorded 'eine tendenzielle Rolle, einen

[34] Wendelin Schmidt-Dengler, *Bruchlinien: Vorlesungen zur österreichischen Literatur 1945–1990* (Salzburg: Residenz, 1995), p. 223.
[35] Weiss, 'Die Literatur der Gegenwart', in *Deutsche Gegenwartsliteratur*, ed. by Durzak, p. 609.
[36] Schimpl, p. 230.
[37] Wolfschütz, 'Gerhard Fritsch', in *KLG*, p. 2.
[38] See Georg Schmid, 'Die "falschen" Fuffziger: kulturpolitische Tendenzen der fünfziger Jahre', in *Literatur der Nachkriegszeit*, ed. by Aspetsberger, Frei and Lengauer, pp. 7-23.
[39] Robert Menasse, 'Die Basis der österreichischen Gegenwartsliteratur', in *Das war Österreich*, pp. 123-31 (p. 123).
[40] Ibid.
[41] Joseph McVeigh, *Kontinuität und Vergangenheitsbewältigung in der österreichischen Literatur nach 1945* (Vienna: Braumüller, 1988), p. 30.

anheimelnden Beweis eines Sieges der Kultur über die Barbarei […] des bodenständigen Österreichischen über die "Anschluß"-Katastrophe zu erbringen' (*Überblicke*, p. 88). Literature, then, was obliged to compensate for Austria's participation in the Holocaust, drawing attention away from the dark shadows of recent Austrian history to a more radiant past in which cultural achievements and monarchic glory shaped national identity.

This socio-historical conception of Austrian literature further stresses Austria's diplomatic position in post-war Europe as a defining factor in the politics of national identity. Bordering on the Eastern Bloc, Austria provided a neutral 'buffer-zone' for Western Europe, a status which is enshrined in the Austrian constitution (although not, as commonly believed, in the 1955 *Staatsvertrag*).[42] The retreat into the past deemed typical of post-war literature has thus been regarded as an extension of Austria's 'immerwährende Neutralität', as a refusal to engage in contemporary political and ideological debate.[43] For years this ostensibly apolitical position in Austrian literature has been the subject of great debate, enjoying scholarly favour in the 1960s and 1970s with the publications of Claudio Magris and Ulrich Greiner,[44] before Schmidt-Dengler could decree in 1982 that 'das Verdikt, die österreichische Literatur sei apolitisch, hat sich in der Zwischenzeit zu einem bedenklichen Klischee ausgewachsen'.[45] Nonetheless, the relationship between literature and politics in the Alpine Republic remains fertile ground for academic discussion, in particular in relation to Fritsch's first novel. Again and again, Fritsch is accused of colluding with the dominant powers in post-war literary production, with *Moos auf den Steinen* functioning as proof that he 'remained faithful to the idealist version of the Great Austrian Tradition' in the 1950s.[46] At the more polemic end of the scale, Fritsch's novel has been attacked as 'ein so blindes wie pathetisches Übereinstimmen mit jener damals staatspolitisch so brachial betriebenen ideologischen Anstrengung, die sich die Produktion eines "neuen Österreichbewußtseins" zur Aufgabe gestellt hat'.[47] The relationship between state politics of identity and the individual work of literature thus appears to be at the centre of the debate surrounding both *Moos auf den Steinen* and the literary generation it is believed to represent.

---

[42] See <http://www.staatsvertrag.at> [accessed 10 March 2010].
[43] Friedbert Aspetsberger, Norbert Frei and Hubert Lengauer, 'Vorwort', in *Literatur der Nachkriegszeit*, ed. by Aspetsberger, Frei and Lengauer, pp. 1-7 (p. 5).
[44] See 'Introduction'.
[45] Schmidt-Dengler, 'Pathos der Immobilität', pp. 343-52.
[46] Ryan, p. 38.
[47] Menasse, 'Die Ohnmacht des Machers im Literaturbetrieb', p. 215.

1968? NICHTS PASSIERT IN ÖSTERREICH?[48]

This representative status may be extended to Lhotzky's adaptation which, despite remaining unavailable on video or DVD for almost twenty-five years,[49] has assumed an almost iconic status within Austrian film history. Described as 'the only true Austrian film of 1968',[50] *Moos auf den Steinen* became the avatar of the New Austrian Film and 'gilt als einer der wenigen Ansätze zu einer österreichischen Neuen Welle',[51] a cinematic trend that, it is argued, combined commercial success with a certain level of artistic merit for the first time in Austrian cinematic history.[52] Lhotzky's adaptation is regarded as a rare 'gelungene Vermittlung' between 'den Polen Kunst und Kommerz',[53] balancing traditional narrative with a 'künstlerisch anspruchsvolle Filmsprache' and 'gewagte Kamerapositionen'.[54] Due to its treatment of the Habsburg legacy, *Moos auf den Steinen* is further regarded as a vital contribution to a more critical self-portrayal in Austrian film, which tackled head-on the thorny subject of Austrian history.[55]

A brief glance at contemporaneous film releases, however, reveals that *Moos auf den Steinen* was not entirely typical of wider cinematic trends in Austria. Whilst the climate of radical change and increased social criticism associated with the 1960s is commonly believed to have found its literary counterpart in the linguistic experimentation of the Wiener Gruppe and the Forum Stadtpark,[56] Austrian film lagged behind in this experimental trend. Unlike the French 'Nouvelle Vague', which drew inspiration from and contributed to the questioning of existing societal structures from the late 1950s onwards, Austrian film remained mired in the idyllicised regression of the *Heimatfilm*, fleeing from contemporary politics into the 'heile Welt' of the Alpine landscape. There were, of course, a few notable exceptions, such as Ferry Radax's *Sonne halt!* (1962), a short film written together with experimental author Konrad Bayer, which

---

[48] This is the title of an interview with historian Karl Vocelka, <http://www.dieuniversitaet-online.at/dossiers/beitrag/news/1968-nichts-passiert-in-osterreich/594.html> [accessed 10 March 2010].
[49] The film was re-released in 2007 as part of the 'Österreichischer Film' series distributed by *Der Standard*.
[50] Robert von Dassanowsky, *Austrian Cinema: A History* (Jefferson: McFarland, 2005), p. 193.
[51] Fritz, p. 268.
[52] For further comment on the foundational role of *Moos auf den Steinen* see Gottfried Schlemmer, 'Das Alte vertreiben!', in *Der neue österreichische Film*, ed. by Gottfried Schlemmer (Vienna: Wespennest, 1996), pp. 9-16 (p. 13).
[53] Bert Rebhandl, 'Nachsaison: zum österreichischen Spielfilm seit 1968', in *Der neue österreichische Film: 1969 – 1984. 15 Jahre einer Entwicklung*, ed. by Reinhard Pyrker and Christine Leinfellner (Vienna: Kulturverband Favoriten, 1984), pp. 17-46 (p. 24).
[54] Rebhandl, p. 22.
[55] Fritz, p. 268.
[56] Weiss, 'Die Literatur der Gegenwart', in *Deutsche Gegenwartsliteratur*, ed. by Durzak, p. 608.

enjoyed considerable critical success.[57] However, the majority followed the aesthetics and thematics of the *Heimatfilm*, carrying titles such as *Hochzeit am Neusiedler See*[58] or *Ruf der Wälder*.[59]

Yet by the mid-1960s, even this lucrative genre appeared to have run its course in mainstream cinema, signalling with its demise the beginning of a slump in film production that would plague Austria for decades.[60] This downturn is commonly attributed to an extreme lack of financial resources and infrastructure within the Austrian film industry. Whilst many other European countries provided a variety of state-sponsored funding programmes as early on as 1950,[61] Austrian filmmakers were offered little or no financial support by the government until the introduction of the *Filmförderungsgesetz* in 1981. Consequently, the Austrian film industry shrank considerably in the 1960s, leading one British critic to comment:

> Last year we reported that 'Austrian film production and cinema attendances are in a state of crisis'. As far as 1968 is concerned, this crisis has been resolved — the patient having died peacefully.... In practice there is no more national film production.[62]

The late 1960s have thus come to represent one of the lowest points in Austrian cinematic history, when Austrian film production had reached its nadir in terms of both quantity and quality and was 'finanziell ausgehungert […] und sowohl ästhetisch wie inhaltlich weit vom Zeitgeist entfernt und daher irrelevant'.[63]

Against this bleak background, Georg Lhotzky's film appears to offer film historians a glimmer of hope. Yet despite its break with the dominant strands of Austrian cinematic production, Lhotzky's adaptation cannot be regarded as an unproblematically oppositional production. Considering the film's position within Austrian cinema, Stefan Winterstein notes that *Moos auf den Steinen* was 'weder dem

---

[57] *Sonne halt!*, dir. by Ferry Radax (Distributor unknown, 1959-62).

[58] *Hochzeit am Neusiedler See*, dir. by Rolf Olsen (Miksch, 1963).

[59] *Ruf der Wälder*, dir. by Franz Antel (Neue Delta, 1965).

[60] Fritz, p. 257.

[61] France, Italy and Britain introduced funding structures in the 1950s, whilst Germany and Switzerland began state funding in the early 1960s. Gerhard Schedl, 'Die österreichische Filmförderung', in *Nahaufnahmen: zur Situation des österreichischen Kinofilms*, ed. by Gustav Ernst and Gerhard Schedl (Vienna; Zurich: Europa, 1992), pp. 177-86 (p. 179).

[62] Goswin Dörfler, 'Austria', in *International Film Guide 1969*, ed. by Peter Cowie (London: Tantivy, 1969), p. 45. Cited in Robert von Dassanowsky, 'Austria's 1960s Film Trauma: Notes on a Cinematic Phoenix', *fipresci*, 3 (2006), <http://www.fipresci.org/undercurrent/issue_0306/dassanowsky_austria.htm#fn9> [accessed 10 March 2010].

[63] Sylvia Szely, 'Vielstimmige Erinnerung: Neubeginn, neu bewertet, *Moos auf den Steinen* (1968)', <http://derstandard.at/fs/2654956/Fuer-STANDARD-Abonnentinnen-und-Abonnenten?_lexikaGroup=17> [accessed 10 March 2010].

Genre des Heimatfilms verpflichtet, noch internationalen Kassenerfolgen nacheifernd, weder konventioneller Spielfilm, noch auch avantgardistischer Underground' and hints that this paradigm of New Austrian Cinema may not have freed itself entirely from the generic shackles of Austrian film.[64] The representative function of Lhotzky's adaptation cannot, then, be located in either its rejection of, or adherence to, cinematic trends but must rather be considered within its broader socio-cultural context.

The relevance of wider societal trends in the discussion of Lhotzky's adaptation is made immediately apparent by its iconic release date. 1968 has become synonymous in Western culture with social rebellion and radical change, conjuring up images of student revolt and widespread civil protest. Whilst students and workers across Europe took to the streets in an attempt to challenge what they regarded as out-dated societal structures and moral principles, however, Austria's boulevards remained conspicuously calm. Due to the absence of mass protests on the scale of France or Germany, Austria's 'zahme Revolution'[65] is commonly regarded as a minority movement restricted to a small number of students led by *Aktionskünstler* such as Hermann Nitsch.[66]

Whilst noting that the student movement attained 'nur eine relativ geringe politische Sprengkraft',[67] Anton Pelinka stresses the long-term influence of the protests, which tore Austria from its isolated position in Europe, dispelling the myth of an 'Insel der Seligen' untouched by wider social change. Reinhard Sieder further charts 1968 as the beginning of the left-wing discourse that dominated the so-called 'Kreisky era', the period from 1970 to 1983 when Bruno Kreisky's government brought prosperity through increased state intervention in all areas of society and economy.[68] Sieder views Austria's 1968 movement as a further development in an already increasing generational conflict, fuelled by criticism of 'die vorangegangenen Prozesse der "Austriafizierung", der Exterritorialisierung des Nationalsozialismus und der Restauration des Patriarchats'.[69] Protests sparked off by anti-Semitic comments expressed by historian and university professor Taras Borodajkewycz in 1965 take precedence over the student

---

[64] Winterstein, p. 234.
[65] Paulus Ebner and Karl Vocelka, *'Die zahme Revolution': '68 und was davon blieb* (Vienna: Ueberreuter, 1998).
[66] Karl Vocelka <http://www.dieuniversitaet-online.at/dossiers/beitrag/news/1968-nichts-passiert-in-osterreich/594.html> [accessed 10 March 2010].
[67] Anton Pelinka, 'Die Studentenbewegung der 60er Jahre in Österreich. 8 Thesen aus politikwissenschaftlicher Sicht', *Schriftreihe zur Lehrbildung im berufsbildenden Schulwesen*, 146 (1993), 87-104 (p. 87).
[68] For a comprehensive analysis of Kreisky's significance in Austrian politics see Günter Bischof and Anton Pelinka (eds), *The Kreisky Era in Austria* (New Jersey: Transaction, 1994).
[69] Reinhard Sieder, '"Gesellschaft" oder die Schwierigkeit, vernetzend zu denken: die Zweite Republik Österreich', *Geschichte und Gesellschaft*, 24 (1998), 199-224 (p. 216).

revolutions of 1968 as the pinnacle of civil protest in an Austrian context in Sieder's narrative of social dissent.[70] The absence of mass demonstrations in 1968, then, is regarded as insufficient evidence of a lack of socio-political change. Austria, it is maintained, did undergo a social revolution comparable to those in the rest of Europe – 'zwar mit Verspätung und abgeschwächt – aber dennoch!'[71]

The desire to attribute to the filmic *Moos auf den Steinen* a symbolic function within Austrian culture may thus be seen to stem from the same impulse that insists on the existence of revolutionary culture in 1960s Austria. On the one hand, it is evident from the film's conspicuously 'arty' cinematography, marked by a preponderance of skewed angles, rapid zoom movements and long descriptive establishing shots, that the adaptation cannot be slotted into the aesthetic mould of mainstream Austrian cinema. On the other hand, however, there are several elements which suggest that the film's thematic distance from the simple, patriotic *Heimatroman* may not be as well-defined as previously assumed. This suspicion is corroborated in particular by the film's plot structure, which diverges significantly from that of the novel. Its related reconfiguration of narrative desire may shed some light on the less conventional aspects of the novel's plot, which are often overlooked in the critics' eagerness to condemn it as 'ein Versuch, die falsche Versöhnung Österreichs mit seiner Geschichte literarisch zu gestalten, [der] künstlerisch scheitern [mußte]'[72] and may enable a reassessment of the function of the Habsburg myth in both versions.

THE HABSBURG MYTH

Critical studies of *Moos auf den Steinen* frequently refer to Claudio Magris's concept of the Habsburg myth, set out in his seminal work, *Der habsburgische Mythos in der modernen österreichischen Literatur*.[73] Magris 'investigates the appeal of an idealised, stable Habsburg past for Austrians writing during the crisis and dissolution of the Habsburg Empire',[74] which has proven a highly congenial framework for those seeking to assess Fritsch's treatment of Austria's historical tradition. Within this debate, critical opinion would have Fritsch's novel conforming, to an almost embarrassing extent, to Magris's

[70] Sieder, p. 216.
[71] Pelinka, 'Die Studentenbewegung', p. 87.
[72] Menasse, 'Die Ohnmacht des Machers im Literaturbetrieb', p. 215.
[73] Claudio Magris, *Der habsburgische Mythos in der modernen österreichischen Literatur* (Vienna: Zsolny, 2000). Further references to the text will be given in parentheses in the main body of the text, identified as Magris.
[74] J. J. Long, *The Novels of Thomas Bernhard: Form and Its Function* (Rochester: Camden House, 2001), p. 159.

definition of the Habsburg myth. Indeed, one critic goes so far as to declare that Fritsch was 'in gewissem Sinne ein Opfer des habsburgischen Mythos'.[75] Critics have been keen to point out that the novel functions almost as a checklist of the key elements of the Habsburg myth, featuring the genre's stock characters, scenery, system of values and symbolism. Thus, for example, the figure of Baron Suchy-Sternberg can be slotted into the line of aging heroes deemed by Magris to be central to Habsburg literature – a literature he describes as 'ein[e] wahr[e] Kultur des alternden Menschen' (Magris, p. 65). Suchy corresponds to the myth not only in his advanced years, 'das bevorzugte Lebensalter für die Personen der österreichischen Literatur' (Magris, p. 29), but because he embodies its values: indecision, hesitancy, immobility, 'Zurückhaltung und Maß' (Magris, p. 27). Fritsch is further deemed to have raided the established catalogue of Habsburg literature in his use of symbolic motifs, as his crumbling Schloss Schwarzwasser may be compared to Friedrich von Saar's Schloß Klostenitz, both symbols of an empire in decline (Magris, p. 234), whilst his persistent use of autumnal motifs is seen to draw heavily on images from Trakl's poetry.[76] Indeed, Schimpl regards Fritsch's use of established symbolism as 'ermüdend, an anderer Stelle sogar peinlich'.[77]

Whilst critical opinion in this area commonly concentrates on the novel's content or thematic concerns,[78] Magris himself was keen to stress that the Habsburg myth could not be reduced to an 'äußerliche thematische Verwandtschaft auf der Grundlage äußerer Kriterien, wie gemeinsamer Motive und Inhalte', but signifies rather 'einen ganz bestimmten kulturellen Humus' (Magris, p. 20). This unifying aspect is to be found, Magris argues, in a common flight from reality, whereby 'eine konkrete Gesellschaft zu einer malerischen, sicheren und geordneten Märchenwelt verklärt wird' (Magris, p. 22). In his reading of Magris, Hermann Böhm equates this escape to an 'Indifferenz der österreichischen Literatur bzw. österreichischer Schriftstellerinnen und Schriftsteller zum politischen Geschehen und zur jeweiligen gesellschaftlichen Zeitsituation'.[79] Thus the Habsburg myth, more than providing a set of thematic and symbolic categories, denotes '[eine] unbezwinglich[e] Sehnsucht und ein[e] Suche nach

---

[75] Albert Berger, 'Die austriakische Restauration', in *Österreichische Literatur seit den 20er Jahren*, ed. by Friedbert Aspetsberger (Vienna: ÖVB, 1979), pp. 68-80 (p. 71).

[76] See Antal Mádl, 'Zum Gedenken an Joseph Roth und Gerhard Fritsch', *Literatur und Kritik*, 247 (1990), 335-39.

[77] Schimpl, p. 31.

[78] A notable exception to this critical tendency is to be found in Hermann Böhm's comparative reading of *Moos auf den Steinen* and *Der habsburgische Mythos*. Böhm, 'Mythos und abermals Mythos' in *Gerhard Fritsch: Schriftsteller in Österreich*, ed. by Alker and Brandtner, pp. 79-89.

[79] Böhm, p. 82.

der verlorenen Zeit' (Magris, p. 297) which serve as a substitute for a truly critical discussion of Austrian national identity, past and present.

In this respect, critical attempts to isolate specific thematic or symbolic tropes typical of the Habsburg myth in Fritsch's work are evidently limited in their scope and interest. Reading *Moos auf den Steinen* in the light of the Habsurg myth pigeonholes it as 'ein Werk der Selbsttröstung' (Magris, p. 300), which seeks to compensate for historical loss by recourse to a cosy, mythologised past. However, a reading of the novel that takes as its critical tool Lhotzky's filmic adaptation may reveal a more complex relationship to the Habsburg myth. By exploring the constitutive role of desire in Fritsch's novel and its adaptation, as well as the complex relationship of desire to the Habsburg myth in both, Fritsch's text may be allowed to emerge as a far more interesting, ambiguous, and critical text than has hitherto been acknowledged.

NARRATIVE DESIRE

The term 'narrative desire' is taken from Peter Brooks's psychoanalytic approach to plot, which posits desire as the central motivating force in narrative literature.[80] According to Brooks, narratives not only tell of desire but in fact use the force of desire as a dynamic of signification (Brooks, p. 37), desire constituting 'that which is initiatory of narrative, motivates and energizes its reading, and animates the combinatory play of sense-making' (Brooks, p. 48). In both versions of Fritsch's work the dynamics of desire clearly fulfil this double function. Besides forming the central focus of the works' plots, narrative desire also serves to motivate and sustain the story by engaging the reader/viewer and facilitating his insertion into the narrative. The enactment of these desires is further entwined with the works' preoccupation with the end of the Habsburg Empire, since Austria's historical loss stands at the centre of the erotic and socio-economic desires of the central characters, forming the constitutive absence around which their desires operate.

The crucial function of desire may best be introduced through an examination of one of the more marginal aspects in the novel and its adaptation, – the relationship between Jutta and Karl – which exposes in miniature the interweaving of the Habsburg myth into the works' matrices of desire. Identified by Menasse as one of the pillars of

---

[80] Peter Brooks, *Reading for the Plot: Design and Intention in Narrative* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1984). Further references to this work will be given in parentheses in the main body of the text, identified as Brooks.

Habsburg ideology,[81] the illusion of a harmonious relationship between ruling and ruled classes plays a significant role in the Habsburg myth, which draws attention to the recurring motif of the 'treuer Diener' and the 'tiefe Liebe' between servant and master (Magris, p. 58). This affectionate relationship becomes erotically charged in Fritsch's novel. In the friendship between Suchy's daughter and heir, Jutta, and the family's unofficial servant, Karl Bauer, a relationship that stretches back to their childhoods, mutual desire is both expressed and suppressed by means of historical role-play and the concept of chivalry (*Moos*, p. 43). The intensity of their adolescent emotions is further impressed upon the reader who is informed that 'damals waren sie sogar ineinander verliebt gewesen' (*Moos*, p. 43).

The possible continuation of this desire into the narrative present is hinted at in Jutta's reminiscing, rendered in narrated monologue. This narrative technique, identified by Dorrit Cohn, shares several characteristics with *erlebte Rede*, conveying characters' thoughts in the third person, using the character's idiom and omitting all verbs of perception, thus blurring the boundaries between the character's inner life and the external events of the narrative, 'fusing outer with inner reality'.[82] Here Jutta concludes her fond memories of their shared childhood with the question 'Und jetzt?' (*Moos*, p. 43), questioning the potential viability of this relationship in the present. This element of nostalgia throws up parallels to Magris's conception of the Habsburg myth as a form of 'Heimweh nach der Kindheit, nach den Düften und Farben, die jene Atmosphäre unauslöschlich dem Gedächtnis eingeprägt hatten' (Magris, p. 20), and is further underlined by Jutta's wistful remark that '[d]amals gab es Hoffnungen, Freuden, man konnte ausgelassen sein. Man glaubte an etwas, wenn man auch nicht sagen konnte, an was' (*Moos*, p. 43). This longing for an idealised past, which is bound up inextricably with a desire that is both shared and unfulfilled, reinforces the illusion of hierarchical harmony propagated by the Habsburg myth. Yet at the same time the reader is left with an overwhelming sense of loss, arising from the class identity of the pair that renders impossible a revival of this childhood love in adulthood.

Lhotzky's film dispenses entirely with this element of desire, dismantling the erotic aspect of the relationship between Jutta and Karl and reducing it to a question of class difference. The filmic Karl (Johannes Schauer) is rendered a doubly unsuitable

---

[81] Robert Menasse, 'Die Herausbildung sozialpartnerschaftlich-ästhetischer Strukturen in der österreichischen Literatur', in *Das war Österreich*, pp. 173-205 (p. 181).

[82] Dorrit Cohn, *Transparent Minds: Modes of Presenting Narrative Consciousness in Fiction* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1978), p. 103.

love-object for Jutta, firstly through the age difference created in the adaptation (Fritsch's Bauer is only a few years older than Jutta, whilst Schauer was in his forties when filming *Moos* and is clearly meant to look older still) and secondly through the process of 'idiotisation' to which this figure is subjected.[83] In stark contrast to the novel's portrayal of Bauer as a strong, honest, hard-working young man (*Moos*, pp. 40-41) who enjoys Jutta's confidence, the filmic Karl is a rather simple, intellectually underdeveloped figure. Whilst Jutta frequently turns to the literary Karl for comfort and advice, his filmic counterpart is a character of limited linguistic competence whose discourse is mumbled almost unintelligibly and receives little attention from the film's main protagonists.

Karl's change of status is underlined by the fact that the viewer of the film is given no insight into Karl's inner life. Within the novel, narrated monologue is employed to convey Bauer's contempt for Mehlmann and suggest his feelings for Jutta: 'Er dachte nicht mehr daran, daß ihn der Dicke gestern Josef genannt hatte. Was war das auch wichtig. Er dachte nicht darüber nach, ob Jutta diesen Dicken wirklich heiraten würde' (*Moos*, p. 41). Through this insight into Bauer's emotions, conveyed in his own idiom ('der Dicke'), the reader finds himself aligned with Karl's desires and is made sensitive to the threat posed to his idealised childhood romance by Mehlmann's invasive presence.

This alignment finds no filmic equivalent in Lhotzky's adaptation, which consistently positions Karl as the object of the camera, at no point aligning the cinematic gaze with his perspective. The film's cinematography, furthermore, maintains a constant distance between the camera and this figure, portraying him through a series of medium and long shots, often from a high angle 'looking down' on him from above. This combination of distance and superiority in height is exemplified in the viewer's introduction to Karl, where the first shot of him, driving his cart through the village, is taken from such a height that he appears only as a small, insignificant element of the scene and thus of little interest to the spectator. Visually associating him with an out-dated form of transport, the film also marks him as a hangover from an already transcended past, creating a further imaginary temporal distance. The film's refusal to align the viewer's gaze with that of Karl or even to grant Karl full subjectivity renders him insignificant within the narrative's matrix of desire, as the lack of insight into his

---

[83] Bauer is not the only figure to undergo this process; his female counterpart, Kathi, is equally transformed from a loyal servant and integral part of the family to a senile old lady whose presence is more of a burden than a blessing.

emotions reduces him to one-dimensionality, a caricature of the simple peasant. This reconstitution of the novel's dynamics of desire thus dismantles one of the cornerstones of Habsburg ideology, which sought to propagate the myth of a certain class equality underlying its strict social hierarchy. Returning to the novel in the light of this alteration, the reader's attention is inevitably drawn to the idealised nature of the relationship between Karl and Jutta, which would appear to confirm critical dismissal of the novel as a naïve 'Österreich-Elegie'.[84]

DEVELOPING DESIRE

Moving beyond this limited example, Brooks's conception of desire as both subject matter and driving force of narrative finds wider relevance in the love triangle between Jutta, Petrik and Mehlmann, which plays a central structural role in novel and film. In the latter, this distribution of desire is first introduced visually through the film's *mise-en-scène*, which has the three protagonists line up on the palace stairs, Mehlmann initially placed in the middle forming the linking point between the characters, only to be relegated to the margin of the group as Jutta moves forward to greet Petrik. Brooks argues that 'desire as a narrative thematic, desire as a narrative motor, and desire as the very intention of narrative language and the act of telling all seem to stand in close interrelation' (Brooks, p. 54), a claim that *Moos auf den Steinen* would seem to corroborate. In the triangular constellation of Petrik, Mehlmann and Jutta, the erotic tension between the protagonists serves in both versions to drive forward the narrative by instilling in the reader/viewer the desire for resolution of the situation through the transfer and eventual satisfaction of desire at the level of the diegesis.

Following on from Barthes's analysis of plot structures in *S/Z*, Brooks identifies in more detail the exact nature of desire awakened in the reader, defining Barthes's *passion du sens* as 'both the passion *for* and the passion *of* meaning: the active quest of the reader for those shaping ends that, terminating the dynamic process of reading, promise to bestow meaning and significance on the beginning and middle' (Brooks, p. 19). Of particular interest to Brooks is Barthes's 'hermeneutic code'.[85] The typical narrative, Barthes argues, proceeds by posing an enigma and then working towards its resolution.[86] Brooks's interest lies in the psychic implications of the *delay* between the

---

[84] Berger, 'Die austriakische Restauration', p. 74.
[85] Roland Barthes, *S/Z: An Essay*, trans. by Richard Miller (New York: Hill and Wang, 1974), p. 19.
[86] Ibid, p. 84.

establishment of the enigma and its resolution and gives prominence to the 'pleasuring in and from delay' experienced by the reader (Brooks, p. 103). Drawing on Freud's theory of desire set out in *Jenseits des Lustprinzips*, Brooks compares the reader's wish for signification to the pleasure principle's search for the 'gratification of discharge' (Brooks, p. 102), proposing that, in fictional narratives, the reader seeks relief from the tension engendered by unresolved or, in Freudian terms, 'uncathected' narrative elements.[87] The achievement of (narrative) discharge is, however, accompanied by a state of quiescence, the inorganic state towards which the death drive strives, working in concert with but simultaneously against the pleasure principle. The delays of the narrative text are thus analogous to

> the self-preservative instincts [which] function to assure that the organism shall follow its own path to death […] In other words, 'the organism wishes to die only in its own fashion.' It must struggle against events (dangers) that would help it to achieve its own goal too rapidly. (Brooks, p. 102)

Hence narrative desire depends on the establishment and maintenance of a necessary degree of tension, which must then be resolved in a way that is at once pleasurable for the reader whilst signalling the death of the narrative that had brought about that pleasure.

Within Fritsch's novel the tension constitutive of narrative desire emerges largely through the disparity in emotion revealed to the reader through shifts in focalisation. Thus, potential disharmony between Mehlmann and Jutta is hinted at in the reader's introduction to the former: 'Da ist er wieder: Rotblond und dick' (*Moos*, p. 22). Fritsch's use of narrated monologue to convey Jutta's opinion of Mehlmann is clearly at odds with the unrestrained enthusiasm for their planned marital union that he expresses a few pages earlier (*Moos*, p. 13). This discrepancy is further connected to the novel's treatment of the Habsburg myth through Mehlmann's use of the antiquated k.u.k. greeting: 'Er küßte ihr die Hand, weil sie ihm ihren Mund entzogen hatte' (*Moos*, p. 23), which places the Habsburg tradition in a substitutive role, through which he seeks to compensate for his frustrated erotic desire. Thus the reader is presented with 'a tension, a kind of irritation, which demands narration' (Brooks, p. 103). The disparity between the couple's desires serves as a narrative motor, driving the narrative and its reader towards resolution.

---

[87] Sigmund Freud, 'Jenseits des Lustprinzips', in Freud, *Studienausgabe*, ed. by Alexander Mitscherlich, Angela Richards and James Strachey, 10 vols (Frankfurt a. M.: Fischer, 1975), III: *Psychologie des Unbewußten*, pp. 213-72 (p. 240).

The privileged insight into this less-than-harmonious relationship finds its filmic equivalent in Jutta's attempts to conceal herself from Mehlmann, seeking refuge from his advances in Karl's greenhouse. Here the film's *mise-en-scène* aligns the viewer with Jutta's perspective (as is frequently the case), as the camera remains at medium distance, simultaneously revealing Mehlmann's head bursting through the window and the object of his search, who remains crouched in the lower right-hand side of the screen. Whilst the absence of a point-of-view shot precludes any literal alignment of view, the shared knowledge of Jutta's concealed presence enables an identification with Jutta along epistemic lines. The 'mutual implication of narrator and narratee' (Brooks, p. 233) is transformed here into the complicity of camera and viewer in Jutta's deception of Mehlmann. This scene thus exposes the conflicting desires operating in their relationship whilst consistently aligning the viewer more closely with those of Jutta, activating desire in the viewer for the resolution of this tension between the engaged couple.

The reader's desire for a satisfactory end to this problematic constellation of desire that may bestow retrospective meaning on the text (Brooks, p. 19) is further strengthened by the budding relationship between Jutta and Petrik in these opening sections. Tension builds steadily as the development of the protagonists' desires and their plans to act upon them are conveyed to the reader, whose pleasure comes to depend on the consummation of their relationship. Insights into the figures' inner lives range from subtle indications of potential desire to explicit statements of intention, each of which is intended to augment the reader's hope of a satisfactory ending in the form of romantic (sexual) union. To the former belongs Petrik's wish to communicate with Jutta through romantic statements:

> Er hätte gerne etwas von der Kraft der Erde gesagt, oder davon, daß er nun spüre, wie auch dieses Schloß noch lebe und Kraft sei – aber er konnte dann seiner Begleiterin nur zunicken auf eine Weise, in der er all dies auszudrücken glaubte. (*Moos*, pp. 26-27)

Petrik's recourse to this idealising mystification of nature and the Habsburg Empire (in the form of Schwarzwasser) foregrounds the inextricable link between his longing to return to a mythological ideal and his erotic desire for Jutta.

The reader's anticipation is further increased by Petrik's explicit plans to kiss Jutta, which are once again connected to Habsburg tradition, this time in his reference to the operetta, the theatrical genre most frequently associated with nineteenth-century

Austria: 'Als er wieder klar vor sich blickte, wußte er, daß er sie heute noch küssen werde [...]. Er fühlte, daß seine Rolle in der Operette dieses Abends bedeutender wurde' (*Moos*, p. 97). This clear statement of Petrik's intent, combined with indications that his feelings may be reciprocated,[88] connects him to the Balzacian heroes identified by Brooks as the 'desiring machines whose presence in the text creates and sustains narrative movement through the forward march of desire [...] through scenarios of desire imagined and then acted upon' (Brooks, pp. 39-40). The reader's access to Petrik's inner thoughts, then, not only tells of desire but further constitutes a driving force within the narrative of *Moos auf den Steinen*. Against this backdrop of suppressed yet mutual desire, the novel's structures of focalisation raise the reader's expectations that this initial arousal will result in a full satisfaction, encouraging him to read on to the end of the novel for the moment of resolution in the form of sexual gratification.

Lhotzky's film provides equally tantalizing moments, offering the 'stimulation into a tension' (Brooks, p. 103) that hints towards a future resolution of the love triangle in Petrik's favour. Whilst the film as a whole contains an unconventionally high proportion of establishing long shots and medium shots, which set the viewer at a distance from the profilmic events, those scenes depicting the growing intimacy between Petrik and Jutta are marked by a conspicuous preponderance of close-up shots and zoom movements. The scene depicting Petrik's welcome disruption of Jutta's quiet contemplation of nesting herons abounds with close-up shots of both characters, where the camera zooms in and out in alternation between Jutta and Petrik. Whilst these zoom shots cannot be aligned with the viewpoint of either character, this relatively unusual use of zoom as a means of shot transition connects the characters visually in advance of their physical meeting, creating a discernable sense of intimacy between them.

The spectator's position, however, is not unequivocally pleasurable. Through the frequent use of zoom shots, the viewer's attention is inevitably drawn to the presence of a third gaze operating within this scene, which cannot be located within the fiction. The multiple locations of this viewpoint further imply a certain omnipresence and, potentially, omnipotence. Thus, the scene stages the initial part of the suturing process, 'whereby the inadequacy of the subject's position is exposed in order to facilitate (i.e. create the desire for) new insertions into a cultural discourse that promises to make good that lack'.[89] However, the second stage, which involves 'attributing to

---

[88] Jutta's favourable opinion towards Petrik is repeatedly expressed in the lead-up to this episode (*Moos*, pp. 23, 52, 85).

[89] Kaja Silverman, *The Subject of Semiotics* (New York; Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1983), p. 231.

characters within the fiction qualities which in fact belong to the machinery of enunciation',[90] does not take place immediately. The viewer is given no sustained opportunity to identify himself with the perspective of either of the protagonists, as the camera's movements, angles and distance clearly detach it from the protagonists' perceptual gazes. The spectator, then, must seek a different form of pleasure, in order to find an alternative means of suturing himself into the film's narrative. This satisfaction offers itself on the level of plot in the developing (sexual) tension between Jutta and Petrik, highlighted in this scene by the former's initial unwillingness to reveal herself. Narrative desire functions here to replace the suturing effect principally associated with a film's cinematography. The spectator's wish for narrative resolution coincides with the protagonists' scarcely concealed desire for each other, allowing him to identify with the characters on the basis of a shared longing. Thus the initial threat posed by the conspicuous camera is overcome and the spectator is sutured into the narrative, not on the basis of perceptual alignment but of desire.

The film's setting of this developing intimacy against the background of childhood loss, however, places the protagonists' desire in a substitutive function. Thus, the first indications of increasing intimacy coincide with Jutta's return to the *Jagdschloss*, the site of military aggression during the Second World War, where SS troops executed the two deserters whom Jutta and her father had been concealing. Here the development of their relationship in the diegetic present alternates with Jutta's flashback to the final weeks of the war, to a time when harsh historical reality invaded the idyll of Schwarzwasser. This flashback is conveyed primarily in the form of an auditory hallucination, in which the unmoving camera remains focused on Jutta in the diegetic present, whilst the sound of marching, gunfire, screaming and church bells are heard off-screen. Although this cacophony of sounds is undoubtedly evocative of the horrors of war, Lhotzky's decision not to synchronise sound and image has wider-reaching implications for the film's treatment of historical loss.

In *The Acoustic Mirror*, Kaja Silverman identifies the synchronisation of the visual and auditory channels as an integral component of conventional cinema's striving to cover over the 'absent real' with a simulated reality.[91] By concealing the presence of the cinematic apparatus, which determines exactly what the viewer sees and hears,

---

[90] Silverman, *The Subject of Semiotics*, p. 232.
[91] The term 'absent real' finds its origin in Christian Metz's *The Imaginary Signifier*, which posits absence as the dominant characteristic of cinema. Metz, *The Imaginary Signifier: Psychoanalysis and the Cinema*, trans. by Celia Britton, Annwyl Williams, Ben Brewster and Alfred Guzzetti (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1974), p. 63.

conventional film strives to restore an imaginary plenitude within the viewer, who may then continue to believe himself to be in control of the cinematic images.[92] The incongruence of image and sound in the *Jagdschloss* scene, however, exposes the illusory nature of this mastery. Thus the sense of loss instilled in Jutta by the memory of her disrupted childhood is recreated in the viewing experience, encouraging the spectator to search within the structures of desire for compensation. Petrik's arrival on screen marks the end of Jutta's auditory hallucination and reinstates the synchronization of sound and image, consequently making good both the loss suffered by Jutta and the temporary sense of lack experienced by the viewer. The representation of desire in Jutta and Petrik's developing intimacy comes to serve as a substitute for loss inflicted by the past, fulfilling a compensatory function replicated in the viewer's temporary loss and subsequent recovery of imagined cinematic mastery.

AMBITION – 'ARMATURE OF PLOT'[93]

The complex relationship between the two works' structures of desire and their treatment of Austria's historical identity is most obviously embodied in the figure of Mehlmann, whose complex organisation of erotic and socio-economic desires provides the impetus for narrative progression in both novel and film. The mutual dependency of these desires is stressed throughout the novel, where his courtship of Jutta is inseparable from the ambitious renovation plans, which he regards as the key to social recognition and financial advantage. Thus, in both novel and film, Jutta becomes almost an extension of Schwarzwasser in Mehlmann's eyes, the literary Mehlmann describing his desire for Jutta thus: 'sie gefällt mir ausnehmend, ich erfahre, daß sie in einem alten Barockschloß da unten wohnt [...] eine echte Baronesse' (*Moos*, p. 13). He further announces that they are to be engaged 'obwohl dieses ganze Schloß Schwarzwasser nur mehr eine zerfallende Ruine ist' (*Moos*, p. 13), thereby strengthening the suspicion that his 'love' for her is bound up with specific socio-economic considerations.

The connection between Mehlmann's economic and erotic desires is equally evident in the filmic adaptation. The viewer's introduction to Jutta places her in a quasi-filial relation to Schwarzwasser, with Mehlmann referring to her as 'die Tochter von dem Schloß'. This description follows Petrik's question about Jutta's appearance, 'eine

---

[92] Kaja Silverman, *The Acoustic Mirror* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1988), p. 45.
[93] Brooks describes ambition as 'an armature of plot which the reader recognises, and which constitutes the very "readability" of the narrative text', Brooks, p. 39.

Blondine?' to which he receives the incongruous reply: 'Nein, eine Baronesse!', exposing the divergence between Mehlmann's socio-economic aspirations and Petrik's more conventional interest in Jutta's physical attractiveness. The dominance of economic desire exposed in this conversation is further underlined by the visual background against which it set: The camera remains at a low angle outside the car in which the protagonists are seated, with the result that two-thirds of the screen is filled with the vehicle's 'Porsche' logo. The visual dominance of this very modern signifier of prosperity makes clear the affluence already attained by Mehlmann and exposes his wish to display publicly the material manifestations of economic success. The juxtaposition of his expression of desire for Jutta with this ostentatious display of wealth further implies that the Habsburg tradition, with which she is connected through her (anachronistic) title, represents for Mehlmann merely another status symbol, a commodity to be acquired.

At the same time, however, this conflation of erotic and economic desire comes into conflict with Habsburg values, thereby increasing the reader/viewer's perception of tension within the narrative. In both novel and film, Jutta's refusal to consummate her relationship with Mehlmann provokes an act of violence against her. In the novel, Suchy condemns this by invoking bygone standards of gendered behaviour: 'Zu meiner Zeit hat man sich entschuldigt, wenn man ein Wesen des anderen Geschlechts niedergeschlagen hat' (*Moos*, p. 120). Mehlmann's intended renovation of Schwarzwasser is equally subjected to criticism throughout both works, where the execution of his plans would see the palace 'gewaltsam konserviert' (*Moos*, p. 164), with Petrik noting somewhat ironically that 'er wird alles endgültig zerstören, wenn er es wieder aufstellt' (*Moos*, p. 129). The paradoxically destructive effect of Mehlmann's renovations finds its filmic depiction in the 'Rundgang' he undertakes with Suchy and the architect Wöber, where the latter not only destroys the peace with his loud (and largely unamusing) jokes but actually causes physical damage to the building when he violently removes fragments of crumbling stonework. The alternation of this scene with the intimate meeting between Petrik and Jutta in her secret room, where both display the utmost care when handling Jutta's childhood toys, reveals the two possible approaches to the conservation of the Habsburg legacy and highlights their antagonistic nature. On the one hand, the evident sexual attraction between Petrik and Jutta endows their careful and private preservation of the past with a positive value within the film's matrix of desires. Jutta's ultimate rejection of Mehlmann, on the other hand, is coupled

with the negative portrayal of his socio-economic ambition and hints towards the unlikely fulfilment of either desire.

However, Mehlmann's ambitious plans not only tell of his desire within the narrative but play an equally crucial role in the establishment and maintenance of the reader/viewer's desire for meaning. Brooks identifies ambition as one of the central catalysts of narrative desire, a 'force that drives the protagonist forward, assuring that no incident or action is final or closed in itself until such a moment as the ends of ambition have been clarified through success or else renunciation' (Brooks, p. 39). He thus makes clear the independence of the reader's satisfaction from the fulfilment of desire within the narrative, as the former hinges purely on the resolution of tension and the establishment of the 'retrospective meaning' promised to him by the narrative's beginning and middle (Brooks, p. 66). In this light, the reader/viewer of *Moos auf den Steinen* may be seen, somewhat ironically, to experience the satisfaction of his desire at the very moment when Mehlmann is forced to renounce his own ambitions. Consequently, the viewer comes to regard the failure of Mehlmann's plans in an altogether more positive light, as the means by which the viewer's own desires for resolution are satisfied. Narrative 'discharge' is predicated here on an acceptance of lack, as the reader/viewer may only experience satisfaction through Mehlmann's recognition and acceptance of loss.

This mobilisation of frustrated erotic and socio-economic desire in the service of the reader's pleasure emerges through the positioning of Mehlmann's thwarted desire in the works' storylines and in the system of (Habsburg) values. Thus the film's plot sees the failure of Mehlmann's plans run parallel to the promise of Jutta and Petrik's sexual fulfilment: as they plan their elopement, Jutta comments: 'er wird ein anderes Schloss renovieren'. The mutual exclusivity of Petrik and Mehlmann's desires and the unequivocally positive value attributed to the former, along with the final scene's overall optimism, encourage the viewer to regard Mehlmann's failure as an ideal outcome, in the sense that it facilitates Jutta and Petrik's satisfaction. Here, the resolution of tension in Petrik and Jutta's relationship compensates for Mehlmann's loss, allowing the viewer to enjoy the satisfaction of the end unhindered by the threat of lack.

The literary Mehlmann equally realises the futility of his plans in the final pages of the novel, renouncing his desires in the light of Petrik's death:

> Die Beute gehört seit drei Tagen ihm, dem Sieger Mehlmann, aber sie ist nichts. Er begehrt sie nicht mehr. Nicht das Schloß und die Zukunftspläne, die sich realisieren ließen, und nicht Jutta, auch sie begehrt er nicht mehr. (*Moos*, p. 285)

To a certain extent, the explicit resolution of all desires created around Mehlmann may correspond to Brooks's account of narrative endings, for it is through Mehlmann's renunciation that the novel's previous events receive the retrospective meaning desired by the reader. However, the lack and loss upon which this 'meaning' is founded are foregrounded in the novel, as Mehlmann qualifies his decision with the comment 'die Welt ist leer, gespenstisch leer [...] sie ist leer' (*Moos*, p. 285). The reader is thus placed in a paradoxical relation to the narrative, since his desire for narrative meaning is satisfied at the cost of Mehlmann's desires within the fiction, whose conclusion further fails to make good the lack which characterises the preceding narrative. The problem of lack in both works and its relation to the structures of narrative desire may be most usefully approached by returning to a Brooksian analysis of plot, which once again points to a more nuanced reading of novel and film.

PERVERTED ROUTES OF DESIRE

Brooks's analysis of the mechanism of plot places particular emphasis upon the progression towards the end. The reader's desire for signification and resolution of tension is contradictorily combined with an awareness of the 'paradox of narrative plot', whereby the reader's 'consumption' of the plot inevitably leads to its diminishing (Brooks, p. 52). Thus, 'narrative desire is ultimately, inexorably, desire *for* the end' (Brooks, p. 52), an end which is comparable to the return to an inorganic state that Freud identified as the object of the death drive. This desired end, the anticipation of which moves the narrative forward, must, however, be the 'right death, the correct ending' (Brooks, p. 103). Just as humans seek to return to an inorganic state in an appropriate manner and at a proper time, so the narrative must reach a satisfying conclusion through a series of necessary delays. Hence every narrative is constantly marked by 'the danger of reaching the end too quickly, of achieving the im-proper death' (Brooks, p. 104). Given the formative function of plot within the structures of narrative desire, it is significant that this aspect of the novel undergoes the most radical transformation in the filmic adaptation, and it is at this level that a gulf opens up between the works' treatment of historical loss.

Having constructed a fairly traditional triangular constellation of desire, and with it a certain degree of tension to drive forward the plot, Fritsch departs from the well-trodden path of conventional narrative desire, challenging the reader's expectations of satisfaction through a premature (and partial) fulfilment of desire. Up to this point, about two-thirds of the way through the novel, the plot appears to follow narrative conventions, working through the problem established at the outset with the promise of a 'meaningful' and 'proper' end: the substitution of the sensitive Petrik for the avaricious Mehlmann as Jutta's fiancé and heir to Schwarzwasser. Yet, as the narrative progresses and veers away from traditional structures, it becomes ever more doubtful that the reader's hopes for pleasurable resolution will be satisfied, most significantly in the context of Petrik and Jutta's relationship. Following narrative convention,[94] this love story should develop slowly over the course of the novel to reach its climax and resolution at the end of the narrative, thus offering the 'summing-up, the coming to completion of a fully predicated, and readable, sentence' (Brooks, p. 96) requisite for the gratification of the reader's desires.

However, this moment arrives prematurely in the novel, with Petrik and Jutta eloping at the half-way point. The passages describing this episode comply in their portrayal of love with traditional literary concepts of romance to such a degree as to border almost on cliché. The relationship is repeatedly linked with idealised images of nature, as Petrik's thought that 'die Welt war so leer ohne Jutta' (*Moos*, p. 154), for example, is closely followed by 'die Sonne hat die Welt verlassen' (*Moos*, p. 159). The absence of Jutta referred to here is merely a playful game of hide-and-seek, which separates her from Petrik for a matter of minutes, exposing the somewhat hyperbolic nature of their love and its metaphorical description in the novel. These traditional elements, however, lose something of their established currency in the context of the novel's plot, since the premature satisfaction of the protagonists' desire eliminates one significant aspect of the reader's desire for the end.

This ostensible short-circuiting of narrative desire and the consequent denial of a timely satisfaction for the reader is coupled with a diegetic denial of fulfilment, since the narrator insists upon the 'pure' nature of their love, and their relationship remains unconsummated, the night 'unversehrt und geheiligt' (*Moos*, p. 166). The refusal to satisfy the libidinal drives of the characters converges in this instance with what seems

---

[94] Brooks identifies narrative conventions as an essential component of a 'transindividual and intertextually determined desire as a reader, including his expectations for, and of, narrative meanings'. Brooks, p. 112.

to be a premature satisfaction of the reader's desire, which thereby loses its power as a motivating force of plot. Indeed, in light of the narrator's insistence on the young couple's chastity, it appears highly problematic to interpret this passage as offering any real resolution of desire. Jutta and Petrik's romantic encounter thus, in some ways, constitutes a premature 'ending' in the development of narrative desire; yet it is an ending robbed of its expected force *as* an ending by the protagonists' sexual abstinence. The perversion, on the level of content and form, of the conventional routes of desire may be seen here to reverse the 'contradictory desire of narrative, driving toward the end which would be both its destruction and its meaning' (Brooks, p. 58). However, both elements of the reader's desire (desire for meaning and desire for the end) are perverted in *Moos auf den Steinen*, since the reader is denied both the pleasure of narrative 'discharge' and the 'postcoital quiescence' (Brooks, p. 51) conventionally supplied by the end of the narrative, which refuses here to disappear or 'die' at the appropriate moment.

DEATH AND DISAPPOINTMENT

Whilst this episode may represent only a partial reduction of the reader's desire, still leaving certain elements of tension unresolved in order to preserve something of this motivating force, the random death of Petrik one hundred pages later destroys any hopes the reader may have had that the novel will reach a satisfying and 'proper' end. This unexpected twist in the narrative, which occurs almost fifty pages before the end of the novel, has a profound effect on the dynamics of the plot. On one level, Petrik's untimely death signals the novel's refusal to resolve the love triangle in a predictable way, thwarting the reader's desire for narrative discharge. The positioning of Petrik's death, which occurs on p. 262 of 307 pages, further denies the conventional convergence of the death of a major character with the end of the narrative. The situation of the text's conclusion beyond both the failed sexual union and Petrik's death severs the ending of the narrative from the two events which would conventionally provide the models of diegetic fulfilment that satisfy the reader's desire for the proper end.

The reader's uneasiness is extended and heightened in the three chapters which follow Petrik's accident, where the plot continues to refuse to satisfy the reader's desire for resolution, breaking with many narrative conventions to create a distinctly uncomfortable reading experience. Fritsch's introduction of new protagonists in the

penultimate chapter could in itself be regarded as a significant contravention of established narrative practices. Yet it is the manner in which these new characters are presented which unsettles most the reader's expectations. Remaining nameless throughout,[95] Petrik's sister is nevertheless elevated to the status of a significant character towards the end of the novel, as the reader is granted access to her thoughts and emotions:

> Petriks Schwester hatte Jutta den Platz hinter dem Sarg überlassen. Sie fragte nicht, es war ihr gleichgültig, was dieser Schielenden ihr Bruder bedeutet hatte. Nun würde also Michaels Kabinett endlich frei werden […] Er war ein komischer Kerl, man hat sich nie mit ihm ausgekannt. Eigentlich auch ein armer Teufel, aber er war selber schuld. (*Moos*, p. 280)

The slippage from psychonarration, where the protagonist's consciousness is conveyed through narratorial discourse,[96] to narrated monologue places the reader in a highly awkward position in this passage. Suddenly he finds himself privy to the inner life of a character in whom he has invested nothing until now, leaving an uncomfortable impression of eavesdropping or intruding upon highly personal thoughts. This sense of emotional voyeurism is heightened by the protagonist's desire to keep this information private: 'Es tat ihr sehr leid, daß sie schon einen Teil [von Petriks Manuskripten] verbrannt hatte. Aber das glaubte sie nicht erwähnen zu dürfen' (*Moos*, p. 288). Moreover, her portrayal of Petrik undermines the positive view developed in the remainder of the novel, repainting his romanticised writer's lifestyle as a selfish whim that created a financial burden for his family.

Analogous responses are generated by the spotlighting of previously secondary characters, to whom the introduction of narrated monologue once again accords an elevated narrative status. Having appeared only briefly in the novel's middle section, the publicist Schallerbach and his assistant Dr. Hecht form the main focus of the novel's penultimate chapter.[97] Here the reader is granted access to Schallerbach's contemplations upon the death of Petrik and his reaction to the transformed

---

[95] Seymour Chatman examines the process of naming in narrative, concluding that 'the proper name […] is precisely the identity or quintessence of selfhood property […] It is a kind of ultimate residence of personality'. Chatman, *Story and Discourse: Narrative Structure in Fiction and Film* (Ithaca: Cornell, 1980), p. 131.
[96] Cohn, pp. 21-57.
[97] Whilst forming the penultimate chapter of the novel as a whole, the eleventh chapter could be viewed as the final section of the plot, since the twelfth chapter, which spans less than a page, provides only the reflections of the narrator rather than any description of events, characters or setting.

Mehlmann: 'Mehlmann war völlig verändert. Ein Schock saß ihm in allen Gliedern. Also doch empfindsamer, als man dachte. Wir sind alle empfindsamer, als wir glaubten, fühlte Schallerbach' (*Moos*, p. 294). The regular shift in these passages between tagged and untagged thought, where the presence of a mediating narrator is alternately revealed and concealed,[98] serves as a constant reminder of the reader's intrusion on the protagonists' hidden emotions. This insight draws attention once again to the reader's previously limited knowledge of these secondary protagonists and highlights the unusual and somewhat uncomfortable situation engendered by this newly gained awareness, which places the reader in the uneasy position of unwilling emotional voyeur.

Common to all of these cases is the emphasis placed upon a process of transformation within the characters. In the case of Petrik's sister this conversion takes place within the space of a few pages, when her cold-hearted assessment of the pragmatic implications of his death, such as the vacation of his rented room, gives way to more conventional feelings of regret and bereavement (*Moos*, p. 287). On one level this inner transformation, also visible in more central figures such as Mehlmann, appears to correspond to Brooks's concept of the 'same-but-different', whereby a significant process of development marks the end of a narrative. However, the reader's previous emotional distance from these protagonists renders these changes somewhat arbitrary, since their motivation remains unexplained on both psychological and narratological levels, as the reasoning behind Fritsch's provisions of these details remains entirely obscure. This is particularly manifest in Dr. Hecht's unmotivated gift of a wood-carving to Mehlmann, whose crucifixion motif suggests a certain symbolic value (*Moos*, pp. 297-98). The previous absence of any meaningful relationship between the two characters, however, voids this object of any intelligible significance. This gesture thus remains an unmotivated enigma whose lack of meaning signals a refusal to satisfy the reader's desire for resolution at the novel's conclusion.

The incomplete fulfilment of the reader's desire in the concluding section of the novel is further underlined by the final chapters' repeated insistence on loss, where various manifestations of lack highlight the failure of desire to cover over the wounds of the past. In addition to the inevitable centrality of loss during and following Petrik's funeral, lack equally finds its expression in the injuries sustained by Suchy, whose

---

[98] For definitions of narrative perspective, interior monologue and tagged/untagged thought see Chatman, pp. 181-94.

involvement in the road accident necessitates the partial amputation of his left leg (*Moos*, p. 265). Similarly, the mysterious disappearance of the innkeeper, Kovacz, who leaves behind the contents of his home without explanation, generates a deep sense of loss in the Russian soldier Wassilij, who feels abandoned '[b]etrogen und grenzenlos allein in diesem fremden Land' (*Moos*, p. 302), and puts an end to Suchy's fantasy of spending his remaining years in the inn's garret.

Encumbered by a deep sense of lack, the novel's protagonists seek to return to the imaginary safety of the past, reflected in a pronounced element of stasis and regression in the final chapters. Jutta's forced optimism in the penultimate chapter, where she attempts to convince herself that 'nichts zerstört war, daß auch der Tod letztlich nichts zerstört hatte, denn unversehrt war ihre Liebe' (*Moos*, p. 306), is contradicted by the formal aspects particular to this section, which create an overriding sense of stasis and expose the illusory nature of a possible progression into the future. The emphasis on the 'pure' nature of her love for Petrik in Jutta's repetition 'denn unversehrt war ihre Liebe, unversehrt war die Reinheit ihres Leibes, die ihr diese Liebe zurückgegeben hatte' (*Moos*, p. 306), further reveals this ostensible optimism to be founded on lack and absence, as the failure to consummate their relationship is transformed, rather implausibly, into a virtue.

The prevailing impression of immobility that accompanies these chapters is achieved primarily through Fritsch's repetition of entire sentences and phrases, which recur over and over again within the space of a short passage. The repetitive nature of the narrative is particularly obvious in the description of Petrik's funeral, in which the rituality of the event is emphasised by lexical and syntactic repetitions reminiscent of Stifter:[99] 'und Mehlmann trug den Sarg […] Er trug einen Sarg […] Und Karl Bauer trug den Sarg […] So trugen sechs Männer […] den Sarg' (*Moos*, pp. 280-81). With this repetition, which clearly lacks the therapeutic value often attributed to religious rituals, Fritsch allows a sense of stasis to pervade the entire section, slowing the pace of the narrative to a near standstill. This repetition is further mirrored in Lichtblau's description of Vienna as 'kein guter Ort,' repeated no less than four times in one page (*Moos*, p. 288) and in Suchy's interior monologue from his hospital bed in Vienna, which alternates with the funeral scenes. Notable within these monologues is the recurrence of certain motifs, in particular 'der Nebel,' viewed by Schimpl as a symbol for uncertainty,

---

[99] For an analysis of repetition in Stifter, see Helena Ragg-Kirby, *Stifter's Later Prose: The Mania for Moderation* (Rochester: Camden House, 2000), in particular pp. 47-64.

a 'Bild des Vergessens',[100] which dominates many of Suchy's sentences and paragraphs: 'Jutta wird aufrecht durch den Nebel gehen. Aufrecht bis zuletzt. Bis auch sie der Nebel überwältigt. Und vielleicht, vielleicht gibt es ein Land hinter dem Nebel' (*Moos*, p. 287). Whilst passages of this kind function as a means of emphasis, highlighting respectively the negative contrast of the city with the idyll of Schwarzwasser and the uncertainty of the future, they have an equally important effect on the progression of the narrative, the repetition of certain symbolic motifs creating an atmosphere of stasis that seems to confirm Jutta's claim that all life has ceased after the death of Petrik (*Moos*, p. 275).

Indeed, Fritsch not only creates a sense of stasis within the narrative present but further suggests a certain regression or retreat into the past. This is explicitly articulated in the narrator's description of Suchy and Lichtblau living 'in dem Lande, in dem sie ihre Toten eingeholt hatten' (*Moos*, p. 305). 'Sie waren eingezogen in ihr Vaterland, das sie sterben gesehen hatten und das doch unsterblich war' (*Moos*, p. 304), writes the narrator, and this retreat into the past would appear to testify to the eternal nature of the Habsburg Empire, which lives on in spirit in its representatives. This sense of regression also manifests itself on a formal level in the frequent use of the pluperfect tense in the novel's concluding chapters. Thus the meeting between Schallerbach, Lichtblau and Mehlmann is narrated retrospectively by Schallerbach, shifting the action from the narrative present into the past: 'Da war also Lichtblau bei ihm gewesen. Und Mehlmann hatte ihn begleitet' (*Moos*, p. 294). This retrospective narrative, along with the reader's removal from the narrative present, gives a clear impression of a narrative stuck in the past which, following the death of one of its central characters, cannot find its way into the future. Here, it is particularly significant that a meeting with Schallerbach, a representative of the urban press and modern Austria, should be narrated in this way. In a value system reminiscent of the city/province dialectic in the *Heimatroman*,[101] Schallerbach's busy office in Vienna unites two of the novel's negatively connoted emblems of modernity: the city and the press.[102] The narrating of this episode in the pluperfect thus suggests a profound disconnection from modernity and the present. The reader leaves the present 'behind' and in fact never returns to it in the narrative, for this is the final passage involving Schallerbach, Mehlmann and the city.

---

[100] Schimpl, p. 41.

[101] See Karlheinz Rossbacher, *Heimatkunstbewegung und Heimatroman: zu einer Literatursoziologie der Jahrhundertwende* (Stuttgart: Klett, 1975), p. 144.

[102] Helmut Bartenstein connects both the city and journalism to the negative attributes 'laut', 'schnell', and most importantly 'modern'. Bartenstein, *'Wo ist der Strand der Zukunft?' Eine Strukturanalyse des Romans* Moos auf den Steinen *von Gerhard Fritsch* (unpublished masters thesis, University of Salzburg, 1999), p. 119.

This atmosphere of stasis and regression thus functions as a critical reworking of the Habsburg myth. This myth, as a form of regression through which post-war Austrian society sought to compensate for the gap left by the Habsburg Empire, a 'Flucht aus einer turbulenten Gegenwart' (Magris, p. 290), finds its re-enactment in the flight of the novel's protagonists into an imaginary world isolated from the reality of modern Austria. However, the context within which this retreat is placed leaves exposed the lack which it attempts to conceal, as the wounds of the past remain open and unhealed. The repeated denial of satisfaction within the novel suggests that, whilst the Habsburg past, spatially represented by Schwarzwasser, has disintegrated, no modern substitute can fill the gap which it leaves behind. Recourse to a mythologised Habsburg past is revealed as a deeply inadequate defence mechanism that leaves the reader with an overwhelming sense of loss. Thus, the regression and stasis that dominate Fritsch's conclusion prove themselves incompatible with 'der utopische Versuch, die Zeit anzuhalten, den Lauf der Geschichte zu stoppen' proposed by Ulrich Greiner as a defining characteristic of Austria's apolitical literature.[103]

SUNRISE ON THE SECOND REPUBLIC

The denial of satisfaction to the reader becomes all the more conspicuous when set against the film's 'happy ending'. Departing from the ultimately pessimistic atmosphere of the novel, Lhotzky's adaptation strives to conceal the gap left by the Habsburg Empire, relocating the resolution of the love triangle to the film's conclusion in order to achieve the maximum level of satisfaction for the spectator. This relief of tension follows a scene depicting the invasion of modernity – in all its destructive power – into the sanctuary of Schwarzwasser, when Jutta's secret room is discovered and occupied by a group of raucous revellers. Seeking refuge from the party downstairs, Jutta escapes to this private space, only to find it violated by several guests, who scream, shout and grimace at her entry. Jutta's deep sense of alienation engendered by this intrusion finds its expression in the jerky shot transitions which follow her entry into the room. Here, the camera cuts rapidly between close-ups shots of the guests' contorted faces, where the skewed angle of the shots contributes further to the confusion and disorder of the scene.

---

[103] Ulrich Greiner, *Der Tod des Nachsommers: Aufsätze, Porträts, Kritiken zur österreichischen Gegenwartsliteratur* (Munich; Vienna: Hanser, 1979), p. 26.

The hectic movement of the camera is mirrored in the scene's sound-track, which presents the viewer with snatches of conversation that provide no coherent whole. This creates a double sense of unpleasure in the spectator, who is both disturbed by the unpleasant sounds of screaming and shrieking and plunged into a state of sensory disorientation. The viewer's lack of aural mastery within this scene once again exposes the presence of an Absent Other controlling the cinematic experience. In order to overcome this sense of unpleasure, the viewer is required to identify with an intradiegetic perspective in order that 'the appearance of a lack perceived as a Some One (the Absent One) is followed by its abolition by someone (or something) placed within the same field'.[104] The shot/reverse-shot sequences employed here, which align the skewed angle shots both visually and psychologically with Jutta's perspective, enable the spectator to regain his sense of control, suturing over the absence revealed by the incoherent sound with Jutta's presence on screen. The silence which accompanies Petrik's arrival, along with the visible expression of relief on Jutta's face, once again posits him as capable of compensating for her loss, as he returns to her the sense of security violated by the revelers. Through the viewer's identification with Jutta's perspective, Petrik further functions as a guarantor of the spectator's pleasure, his arrival removing those elements that had threatened the illusion of cinematic mastery.

The viewer is offered further satisfaction in the form of a timely relief of tension, bringing about the 'gratification of discharge' sought throughout the narrative. In time-honoured fashion, the film's unequivocal resolution of its romantic complications takes the form of a kiss between Petrik and Jutta, the representation of which contrasts greatly with the novel's efforts to de-eroticise their love.[105] The repositioning of this embrace at the end of the narrative works alongside a complex symbolic network to produce pleasure within the viewer and to align this positivity with the film's thematic concerns. Thus the loud and aggressive atmosphere of the party is replaced by a calmer depiction of the morning-after, where Lhotzky employs colour (for the first time within an otherwise monochrome film) and music to create a sense of calm, easing the tension established in the previous scene. The harmonious unification of past and present, evident in the k.u.k. fancy-dress costumes still worn by the guests, is underlined by the introduction of contemporary music into the film, as one of the

---

[104] Jean-Pierre Oudart, 'Cinema and Suture', *Screen*, 18 (1977-78), 35-47 (p. 37).

[105] Stefan Alker notes that Petrik and Jutta are at pains 'die Liebe als gänzlich unkörperliches Glücksempfinden zu leben und einander so wiederum fern bleiben'. Alker, *Das Andere nicht zu kurz kommen lassen*, p. 80.

guests plays a guitar melody reminiscent of Bob Dylan. In contrast to the novel, where modernity is associated with 'der lauten Hektik der Zeit'[106] and the past is presented as a time of peace, quiet and calm, the selection of music within the film would seem to attribute very different values to each.[107] The dissonant and almost slurred music of the greater part of the film, provided by maverick Austrian pianist Friedrich Gulda, contributes greatly to a sense of unease and tension, since its volume exceeds that of conventional background music and frequently overpowers the diegetic sound. In contrast, the ballad played as the guests awake has a peaceful, calming air and yet is clearly linked to popular culture. Its 'contemporary' nature finds clear expression in its integration into the diegesis since, unlike Gulda's music, it is played on-screen by one of the guests and is thus placed firmly in the narrative present.

Guy Rosolato's theory of film music, in particular his assertion that 'music finds its roots and its nostalgia in an originary atmosphere, what might be called a sonorous womb',[108] points towards its potentially comforting role: it offers the subject the possibility of an imaginary return to the protection of the womb. Conceiving of music as the imaginary fusion of mother and child, Rosolato contends that

> the deployment of harmony and polyphony can perhaps be understood as a succession of tension and release, of unity and divergence of parts, which arrange themselves into chords, which are then resolved into their simplest unity. It is thus the dramatization of these separated and reunited bodies that harmony supports.[109]

According to this model, the introduction of euphonious music at this point in the narrative thus offers the viewer/listener a return to the sanctuary of the womb, making good the loss instilled by the jarring polyphony of the film's extradiegetic music. The connection of this returned plenitude to an aspect of contemporary culture consequently encourages a more positive reading of modernity. In its less aggressive aspect, the film suggests, modernity may offer an alternative to the gap left in Austrian society by the Habsburg Empire, allowing both past and present to exist in harmony with one another.

---

[106] Berger, 'Die austriakische Restauration', p. 72.
[107] For further comment on the *Lärm/Stille* opposition in *Moos auf den Steinen* see Schimpl, pp. 196–97.
[108] Guy Rosolato, 'La voix: entre corps et langage', *Revue francaise de psychanalyse*, 37 (1974). Cited in Kathryn Marie Kalinak, *Settling the Score: Music and the Classical Hollywood Film* (London; Madison: University of Wisconsin, 1992), p. 37.
[109] Rosolato. Cited in Kalinak, p. 37.

This harmonious unity of past and present is further evident in the Sleeping Beauty motif which results from the film's sudden shift into colour. The unnatural aspect of the colours, perhaps heightened by their unexpected appearance after over an hour in black-and-white, lends a fairytale air to the final scenes of the film, where previously sombre aspects now appear in an almost 'Disneyfied' glow. This is particularly manifest on the lovers' return to Schwarzwasser, when sleeping guests gradually awake from their slumber, moving slowly and serenely in contrast to the hectic and at times aggressive revelry of the previous evening. This switch into colour as a formal endorsement of the film's message is equally apparent as the lovers leave behind the black-and-white palace and drive into a bright and colourful landscape, whose warm, golden colours herald the dawn of a new era full of potential and hope. This sense of optimism is strengthened by their choice of transport – an open-topped sports car, a symbol not only of modernity and the technological age, but equally of a concomitant prosperity typical of the *Wirtschaftswunder* in contemporary Germany and Austria. This embracing of modernity is further reflected in Petrik's casting off of his k.u.k. costume, with which he then clothes a nearby scarecrow, which Winterstein regards as a clearly liberating gesture, demonstrating a rejection of the constraints of the past in favour of a more positive future. [110] Through this symbolism, the protagonists' restored lack is located within the wider context of post-war Austria, and the complex relationship between modernity and Austria's Habsburg legacy is worked through to produce an ultimately optimistic outcome.

The relocation of resolution to the hours of sunrise, made possible only through the switch into colour, sheds retrospective light on the literary equivalent of this scene. In the novel, Petrik and Jutta's temporary elopement is set against the backdrop of sunset, the close of day conveying a sense of ending. Here, the repeated references to the 'rötlich-gelben Schein der Sonne' (*Moos*, p. 157) and the narrator's insistence that 'die Sonne hat die Welt verlassen' (*Moos*, p. 159) suggest at the very beginning of their relationship that their desire is destined to remain unfulfilled. The film's final scene further focuses attention on the representative function of their relationship in the works' treatment of Austrian national identity. Both novel and film contemplate their union against the backdrop of Austria's borders with Slovakia,[111] clearly linking their fate with that of post-Habsburg Austria: 'Sie saßen lange auf dem äußersten Rand ihres

---

[110] Winterstein, p. 232.

[111] Interestingly, the bordering country is never named directly, contributing further to a mythicised conception of 'Altösterreich'.

Vaterlandes und sahen hinein in die andere Welt, die vor gar nicht langer Zeit noch zu diesem Vaterland gehört hatte' (*Moos*, p. 157). Within the novel a refusal to satisfy fully their desire combines with a distinctly sombre atmosphere to place the focus primarily on historical loss and the uncertain status of post-war Austria. Narratorial comments such as 'ihr Vaterland war ungeschützt. Es lag hinter ihnen. Eine riesige Wiese voller Herbstzeitlosen' (*Moos*, p. 157) create a matrix of contradictory values around the collapsed empire, at once implying its enduring, 'timeless' quality whilst highlighting its relegation to the past that is temporally 'hinter ihnen'.

In contrast, the film's conclusion encourages an unequivocally positive consideration of the recently-imposed boundaries. The cut between the shot of the lovers' Hollywood-style kiss to the image of a watch-tower, bathed in golden colours and presented in soft focus, depicts the Iron Curtain in a romantic light, against which the lovers' union appears to transcend any politically-imposed divides. Satisfactory fulfilment of desire within the film is thus connected to a sense of optimism regarding the position of post-war Austria. In its romanticised portrayal of the new borders, the film presents the collapse of the Austro-Hungarian Empire not as an end to be mourned but rather as a new beginning, and places emphasis not on the sun setting on the Habsburg Empire but rather on the sun rising above the Second Republic. Here the film makes a clear reference to Austria's new role within Europe, attaching a positive value to her position as barrier between East and West. In contrast to the novel's recourse to regression, then, Lhotzky's film successfully posits desire as a sufficient substitute for the loss suffered by post-war Austria, as its focus on the possibilities offered by the present serve to suture over the void left by the Habsburg Empire.

Yet Lhotzky does not choose to conclude his film thus, electing instead to provide what could be considered an epilogue to this work, analogous in this sense to the novel's twelfth chapter. However, this final scene diverges from the novel's summarising narrative, which merely recounts again the novel's events in condensed form, for it contains a revelation which retrospectively alters the viewer's interpretation of one key aspect of the film (and its literary source). The film's final shot zooms in on the copy of Suchy's 'novel', which its author discards, exposing for the first time its entirely blank pages. Whilst Fritsch's novel makes clear from the outset the unlikelihood of its completion, as the reader is informed seven pages in that '[er hat] in dreißig Jahren noch kein Kapitel fertiggebracht' (*Moos*, p. 13), there are numerous scenes in the film which lead the spectator to believe that Suchy is reading aloud from his novel. Indeed,

one of the first scenes containing Suchy begins with an off-screen voice speaking in a rather lyrical tone,[112] which is coupled with a close-up shot of Suchy's shoes. As the camera tilts upwards the speaker is revealed to be Suchy, who glances intermittently at an open book, which remains in the frame for the entire scene, clearly implying a connection between the spoken words and the book visible in the shot.[113]

Whilst the novel's explicit description of Suchy's failure encourages the reader to view his unfinished 'Österreichroman' as a further symptom of the irreconcilability of past and present, the empty pages of the film's final shot appear rather as a *tabula rasa* for future generations, since it is unclear whether the novel remains entirely unwritten or whether it is only its conclusion which has yet to be written. This more optimistic interpretation, engendered in part by the positive mood created in the preceding scenes, is cemented by Suchy's accompanying monologue, in which he encourages the future generation to 'spielts Wirklichkeit, Kinder', clearly entrusting the treatment of history to the next generation. The positioning of this revelation at the very end of the film's narrative provides the viewer, in a sense, with a second conclusion, thereby heightening his sense of satisfaction. Within the context of the film's first unambivalently optimistic conclusion, the inconclusive nature of the epilogue cannot be interpreted as a lack of closure or evidence of 'die Skepsis des Films,'[114] as this is an ending which foresees future beginnings, encouraging both protagonists and viewers to look towards the future whilst remaining conscious of the past.

CONCLUSION

The dynamics of desire in the novel and its filmic adaptation offer two very different means of coming to terms with the loss induced by the end of the Habsburg Empire. Turning once again to Brooks, the wider implications of the works' diverging plot structures may be elaborated in the light of his assertion that plot activates both

> the drive to make the story of the past present – to actualize past desire – and the countervailing pressure to make the history of this past definitively past: to make an end to its reproductive insistence in the present, to lead the [subject] to understanding that the past is indeed past, and then to incorporate this past, as

---

[112] Here, Suchy recites a passage from Fritsch's novel beginning 'das Moos auf den Steinen, auf den zerbröckelnden Steinen der Donaumonarchie […]'. *Moos*, p. 31.

[113] The 'existence' of the novel is made more explicit later on in the film when Suchy says to Kovacz 'ich les' euch ein bißchen 'was vor' and again refers to the book he is carrying.

[114] Winterstein, p. 233.

past, within his present, so that the life's story can once again progress. (Brooks, p. 228)

Working through the past in order to incorporate it, in an appropriate form, into the present thus emerges as a key concern in Lhotzky's adaptation, one which finds its ultimate realisation in the final shot of Schloss Schwarzwasser. Here the camera focuses on the steps leading to the palace on which are strewn the discarded garments of the guests, who have returned to their contemporary clothing. This powerful image of casting off the past makes reference to a comment made by Petrik when first confronted with the decaying ruin of the palace: 'man müsste eigentlich jetzt über diese Treppe in Samt und Seide hinaufgehen.' The visual metonymy of the 'Samt und Seide', which provides the link between the two scenes, renders manifest the transformation of the initial metaphor of a resurrection of former Habsburg glory. The resulting 'same-but-different' metaphor reveals the ultimate 'meaning' of the narrative, suggesting that the Habsburg past may play a part within contemporary Austrian society, yet warns that an attempted return to, or revival of, this era is not merely undesirable but ultimately impossible.

The progression of Austria's 'life story,' enabled by the relegation of the Habsburg tradition to the past, is further cemented by the film's closing words, in which Suchy urges the younger generation to turn their back on the past and 'Lasst wachsen das Moos'. This final reference to the film's title gives retrospective significance to the work as a whole, as moss functions here to conceal the void left by the Habsburg Empire, enabling the past *qua* past to live on in the present in a hidden form beneath the surface. Against the backdrop of blossoming romance and idyllic sunrise, the spectator is left with an unmistakable sense of optimism. The Second Republic is a land that has liberated itself from the shackles of the past and may now look forward to a successful and prosperous future.

The reader of Fritsch's novel is offered no such comfort. The failure of the novel's protagonists to progress beyond the grips of the past, mirrored by the stagnation of the plot, reveals a deeply critical stance towards the instrumentalisation of the Habsburg myth in post-war Austria. The continuation of the plot long after any conventional element of narrative desire has been eliminated functions alongside the repeated evocation of a wish to return to the sanctuary of the past to reveal a society trapped within its own historical legacy. Just as the novel fails to progress after the death of Petrik so, it is implied, Austria remains fettered to the Habsburg past, unable to

'make an end to its reproductive insistence in the present' (Brooks, p. 228). The deep sense of lack that marks the reader's ultimate experience of the novel suggests that the gaping wound inflicted by the 'death' of the Habsburg Empire cannot be sutured over by Austria's growing prosperity and espousal of modernity.

The retroactive re-reading of *Moos auf den Steinen* facilitated by its filmic adaptation thus casts a more critical light on the position accorded to Fritsch's novel in the post-war canon. Through its reworking of the original plot, the film enables the novel's long ignored element of social criticism to emerge, revealing its ostensibly traditional subject matter and style to be a façade, behind which lies an altogether more subversive element. This concealed critique of Austria suggests that it may be necessary to revise the superficial equation of non-experimental narrative form with a naïve, regressive stance. Fritsch's criticism of the restrictive nostalgia at work in post-war Austrian society is patently at odds with his depiction as an 'Österreich-Mytholog[e]',[115] which has long held currency within Austria's critical establishment. A critical re-assessment of Fritsch's first novel may thus indeed expose it as 'Traditionskritik anstelle von Traditionsverklärung',[116] as the invocation of the Habsburg myth consistently fails to conceal the void at the centre of post-war Austrian society.

If, as established scholarship would have it, these works are to be understood as representative of the wider discourse surrounding national identity in 1950s and 1960s Austria, this critical re-evaluation of novel and film further poses several challenges to the dominant cultural fiction. The criticism levelled against a restorative Austrian society in Fritsch's novel clearly stands at odds with the alleged dominance of an 'Österreich-Ideologie', which promoted uncritically a return to Austria's former glory as a bastion of cultural greatness. The semi-concealed nature of Fritsch's critical assessment, easily overlooked on first reading, which lurks below the novel's surface, consistently undermining its apparent idealisation of the Habsburg past, lends weight to the suspicion that subversive voices have simply been erased from (literary) histories of the 1950s. Those who expressed their dissent less publicly have found themselves time and again subjected to misinterpretation or relegated to obscurity. Perhaps, as this reading of Fritsch's novel suggests, it is time to abandon the dualistic conception of the 1950s as a period of 'Kontinuität und Bruch' in favour of a more nuanced historical understanding of this key period in the development of the Second Republic.

---

[115] Berger, '*Überschmäh* und *Lost in Hypertext*', p. 59.
[116] Böhm, p. 80.

The film's more optimistic approach to Austrian identity, which belies a desire to promote a harmonious coexistence of past and present in modern-day Austria, in turn casts critical light on the dominant fiction of radical social change in 1960s film production. Whilst the Sixties may have heralded the decline of the *Heimatfilm*, this by no means signalled the demise of its ideological impetus. The idealised image of a grand Austrian tradition undoubtedly undergoes critical reworking in Lhotzky's film. However, it continues to occupy centre stage in this cinematic treatise on Austrian identity and maintains its key role in Austria's collective self-apprehension. In this sense, the filmic *Moos auf den Steinen* can be seen, conversely, to validate those elements of established historical discourse, which insist on a delayed social revolution in Austria. Confirming Pelinka's view that the change in collective attitudes, in particular towards Austria's past and present identity, was a gradual process that spanned over a decade, Lhotzky's film corroborates the denial of 1968 as a caesura in Austrian society. Both novel and film, then, suggest that the politics of identity attributed to 1950s and 1960s Austria were not as clear cut as previously asserted and may benefit from more balanced reassessment.

CHAPTER II: FOCALISATION, IDENTIFICATION AND POWER

FRANZ INNERHOFER AND FRITZ LEHNER'S *SCHÖNE TAGE*

Franz Innerhofer's semi-autobiographical novel, *Schöne Tage*, has received a great deal of critical acclaim for its exposure of the appalling living conditions experienced in 1950s rural Austria.[1] Critical response to the novel frequently refers to the work's ability to 'give a voice' – to its main protagonist, Holl, to Innerhofer and to a whole class of rural worker – exemplified in Lüdke's claim that '[s]prachloses Leiden hat er zur Sprache gebracht'.[2] The novel's emotional power is considered to derive primarily from its strong appeal to the reader's sympathy, who is called upon to empathise with the main protagonist, Holl, and follow his progression from childhood to adolescence. Reinhard Baumgart's comment that 'wer dieses Buch liest, der stößt ja nicht nur auf Druckseiten und Sätze, er stößt sehr fühlbar auf einen Menschen' epitomises this tendency to emphasise the reader's emotional response.[3] The critical focus placed on the novel's affective appeal to the reader clearly suggests that the process of identification is key to understanding the novel's power.

Writing in 1974, Franz Innerhofer is frequently located at the intersection between two significant literary movements: the *Anti-Heimat* sub-genre and *Neue Subjektivität*, most commonly associated with Peter Handke. Indicative of a wider 'Dezentralisationsprozeß, also weg und los von Wien',[4] the *Anti-Heimat* novel is deemed to represent a renewed literary interest in rural Austria as a reaction, in part, to increased mobility to and from the more remote corners of the Republic. Zeyringer points to a 'Landflucht' in the 1970s as the source of fascination with rural structures, as dialogue between city and province led to 'ein verstärktes Interesse für das Landleben, das man nicht nur hinter Ansichtskarten versteckt sehen wollte'.[5] The urban desire for increased insight into provincial life was coupled with an 'entscheidend[e] sozial[e] Umschichtung' in rural communities as a result of technological modernisation and improved education, which further engendered 'eine große Nachfrage nach harten Bildern aus den

[1] Franz Innerhofer, *Schöne Tage* (Munich: dtv, 1993). [First edition Salzburg: Residenz, 1974]. Further references to the novel will be provided in parentheses in the main body of the text identified as *ST*.
[2] W. Martin Lüdke, 'Franz Innerhofer', in *Kritisches Lexikon zur deutschsprachigen Gegenwartsliteratur* (Munich: Heinz Ludwig Arnold, 2002), p. 2.
[3] Reinhard Baumgart, 'Auf dem Lande: Menschenfinsternis', *Süddeutsche Zeitung*, 12 October 1974.
[4] Wendelin Schmidt-Dengler, *Bruchlinien: Vorlesungen zur österreichischen Literatur* (Salzburg: Residenz, 1995), p. 222.
[5] Klaus Zeyringer, *Innerlichkeit und Öffentlichkeit: österreichische Literatur der achtziger Jahre* (Tübingen: Francke, 1992), p. 133.

vorgeblich früheren Tiefen des Landes'.[6] On a slightly different note, Greiner claims that Innerhofer demonstrated the movement from city to an idealised province in reverse, challenging a widespread view of rural lifestyle as a favourable alternative to urban social structures.[7]

Whether responding to an existing desire for critical insight or reacting to idealised images of an idyllic province, *Anti-Heimat* literature is commonly regarded as a 'kritische Reaktion' to the established depictions of rural life offered by the *Heimatroman*.[8] Represented in Austria by authors such as Peter Rosegger and Karl Heinrich Waggerl, the *Heimat* genre enjoyed considerable popularity in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, providing a comforting portrayal of simple country life as an antidote to the pervasive social and economic change of modernity.[9] Writing in 1975, Walter Weiss further posits this 'Problematisierung des Heimatromans' as 'die kritisch- gestaltende Antwort der österreichischen Autoren auf die besonderen gesellschaftlichen Probleme des heutigen Österreich',[10] namely the atmosphere of consensus created by the *Sozialpartnerschaft*, which was seen to stifle any critical discussion of social inequalities. Providing a vital contribution to this 'neue kritische bis agitatorische Volkstümlichkeit',[11] *Schöne Tage* is regarded as an archetype of the sub-genre, as Koppensteiner exclaims: 'Ein Heimatroman als alpine Schauergeschichte! Das hat es bisher noch nicht gegeben.'[12]

Narrative perspective is accorded great significance within discussions of *Anti-Heimat* literature,[13] which repeatedly highlight the crucial function of the individual's point of view within the works' social criticism. Along with Peter Handke, Innerhofer assumes a paradigmatic role in this literary 'Reise ins eigene Ich',[14] which came to be known as 'Neue Subjektivität'. Discounting claims that the movement was symptomatic of an apolitical trend in Austrian literature, Zeyringer argues that this 'Flucht ins Private' in no way precludes social criticism, contending that political battles were displaced into

---

[6] Ibid, p. 134.

[7] Ulrich Greiner, *Der Tod des Nachsommers* (Munich: Hanser, 1979), p. 109.

[8] Andrea Kunne, *Heimat im Roman: Last oder Lust? Transformationen eines Genres in der österreichischen Nachkriegsliteratur* (Amsterdam; Atlanta: Rodopi, 1991), p. 12.

[9] Karlheinz Rossbacher, *Heimatkunstbewegung und Heimatroman: zu einer Literatursoziologie der Jahrhundertwende* (Stuttgart: Klett, 1975), p. 31.

[10] Walter Weiss, 'Literatur', in *Das neue Österreich: Geschichte der Zweiten Republik*, ed. by Erika Weinzierl and Kurt Skalnik (Vienna; Graz: Styria, 1975), pp. 277-311 (p. 302).

[11] Ibid, p. 311.

[12] Jürgen Koppensteiner, 'Anti-Heimatliteratur: ein Unterrichtsversuch mit Franz Innerhofers Roman *Schöne Tage*', *Die Unterrichtspraxis/Teaching German*, 14 (1981), 9-19 (p. 12).

[13] See Kunne, p. 155.

[14] Zeyringer, *Innerlichkeit und Öffentlichkeit*, p. 91.

the private realm of the family, stressing that: 'Es ist damit das "Private" nicht mehr vom "Öffentlichen" getrennt.'[15] Innerhofer's semi-autobiographical novel, then, is deemed to deploy his own individual story in the service of a wider critique of the inequalities at the core of rural society.

From the reception of *Schöne Tage*, it is evident that both the novel and its filmic adaptation carry in them a considerable potential to activate identification with subjects who do not normally conform to the societal ideal. The insistence in critical discourse on the novel's ability 'einer Bevölkerungsgruppe, die jahrhundertelang sprachlos gehalten wurde, den Knechten und Mägden, den Kindern und Behinderten, eine Sprache [zu geben]'[16] reveals an extraordinary belief in the novel's capacity to raise the public consciousness that might bring about social change. Since its publication, Innerhofer's work has been assigned a social function which far exceeds the conventional limits of a single work of fiction, charged with the formidable task of bringing appalling living conditions in rural Austria to wider public consciousness. Critics have been particularly keen to ascribe almost philanthropic/anthropological motives to its author, characterised by Ulrich Greiner's assertion that 'ein wichtiges Motiv für ihn war, das hinter der ländlich-proletischen Sprachlosigkeit Verborgene ausfindig zu machen'.[17] Innerhofer's function as a 'Sprachrohr' for the misery of an oppressed rural underclass thus becomes the central criterion by which to judge his work. Against this backdrop, his father's attempts to ban the book, its condemnation by the Catholic Church and its unavailability in certain rural areas all serve to corroborate its function as an exposition of human suffering.[18]

Reception of Fritz Lehner's 1981 adaptation[19] places equal importance on its perceived attempts to return to a disenfranchised rural population 'die eigenständige Seh- und Erzählweise'.[20] Lehner's use of amateur actors, 'real-life' farmers and farmhands is frequently cited as proof of the film's authenticity[21] and its 'halb-dokumentarisch' style deemed to reinforce the adaptation's 'erschütternde Qualität'. [22] Significantly, the reviews further allude to the alignment of the viewer with the

---

[15] Zeyringer, *Innerlichkeit und Öffentlichkeit*, p. 217.
[16] Frank Tichy, *Franz Innerhofer: auf der Suche nach dem Menschen* (Salzburg: Residenz, 2004), p. 146.
[17] Greiner, p. 105.
[18] See Tichy, pp. 156-60.
[19] *Schöne Tage*, dir. by Fritz Lehner (ORF: 1981).
[20] Eckhart Schmidt, 'Tag der Qual', *Süddeutsche Zeitung*, 7 September 1982.
[21] K. W., 'Karge Kindheit unter strenger Herrschaft des Vaters', *Kieler Nachrichten*, 4 September 1982.
[22] Schmidt.

perspective of 'Franzi', as Holl is renamed in the adaptation,[23] noting that 'der Zuschauer ist auf seine Fähigkeit zu sehen angewiesen – wie der kleine Franzi'.[24] Mirroring critical response to the novel, identification with the oppressed protagonists is once again placed at the centre of the film's reception. Yet, despite its centrality within both works' reception, the exact mechanics of the identificatory processes have long been ignored, with existing scholarship concentrating on the effects of identification rather than its genesis. However, the film's redistribution of identification across a wider group of protagonists draws attention to the textual structures of sympathy in a manner that calls into question the assumption that the novel represents a voice of empowerment for the rural underclasses. The transfer to the visual medium further draws attention to the function of the novel's third-person narrator, whose mediatory position in the creation of identification with the protagonists is frequently overlooked.

In order to assess the extent to which Innerhofer's novel accords the rural underclass the voice denied to them by the patriarchal structures of agricultural life, it must first be determined how and with whom the reader is aligned. Making use of Kaja Silverman's typology of identification, in particular her concept of productive identification, this chapter sets out to assess the extent to which Innerhofer challenges and alters the dominant fiction surrounding rural Austria. A comparative reading of novel and film will place under careful scrutiny the narrative mechanisms employed to encourage identification, considering especially the function of narrative perspective and focalisation within the works' identificatory structures. Whilst many critics have noted the crucial role played by focalisation in aligning the reader with Holl's point of view,[25] regarding this as central to the reader's identification with the protagonist,[26] the assumed correlation between focalisation and identification remains unexplored. By scrutinising the fashion in which the reader/viewer engages in identification, this discussion of *Schöne Tage* seeks to illuminate the extent and nature of the link between the works' methods of representing consciousness, their modes of focalisation, and the forms of identification which they activate. This analysis will form a critical base from which to

---

[23] This renaming evidently strengthens the autobiographical nature of *Schöne Tage*.

[24] A. K., 'Alptraum von Landleben', *Stüttgarter Zeitung*, 7 September 1982.

[25] See Paul Kruntorad, 'Das Drängen nach Mitteilung', *National-Zeitung*, Basel, 8 March 1975; Anton Thuswaldner, 'Angst vor dem großen Wort', *Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung*, 7 January 2003; M. K., 'Befreiung von der Sprachlosigkeit', *Neue Zürcher Zeitung*, 5 May 1975.

[26] Joachim Hoßfeld, 'Schöne Tage', *Literatur und Kritik*, 94 (1975), 251-52.

question the foundation of the novel's (almost)[27] unanimously positive reception and examine what precisely is at stake in the assertion that Innerhofer speaks for Austria's disenfranchised rural other.

IDENTIFICATION AND SOCIAL CHANGE

Freud's 'Massenpsychologie und Ich-Analyse' provides the most obvious starting point for any psychoanalytic discussion of identification.[28] Here, Freud offers his most comprehensive treatment of the identificatory structures that shape the individual's intersubjective relationships and argues the central importance of identification for the process of subject-formation. Establishing its key function within the Oedipal process, Freud proposes that the identificatory relationships established in this phase serve as a model for all subsequent identifications, which fall into two categories: the 'glatt sexuelle Objektbesetzung' of the mother, on the one hand, and the 'vorbildliche Identifizierung' with the father, on the other.[29] Identification, Freud argues, is marked by ambivalence, signifying both an expression of affection and a desire to eliminate the object of affection, as the child seeks to replace the father through identification with him. Thus, identification is marked as an incorporative process, whereby the subject introjects the identificatory object, its qualities and behaviours with the aim 'das eigene Ich ähnlich zu gestalten wie das andere, zum "Vorbild" genommene'.[30] This argument finds its logical conclusion in the totem meal, where the sons ingest the body of the father in the hope of assuming his (sexual) potency and authority.[31]

Freudian conceptions of identification form an indispensable foundation for Kaja Silverman's investigation of the identificatory structures that form Western society, which provides the main theoretical impulse for this discussion of *Schöne Tage*. In her most comprehensive analysis of identification to date, *The Threshold of the Visible World*,[32] Silverman repeatedly stresses the revolutionary potential of identification to adjust the dominant cultural values which shape the subject's everyday judgements. The necessity

---

[27] Ulrich Greiner notes that only one review (in the *Deutsche Zeitung*) took a more critical stance towards *Schöne Tage*, accusing Innerhofer of 'Schwarz-Weiß Malerei' with leftist undertones. Greiner, p. 113.

[28] Sigmund Freud, 'Massenpsychologie und Ich-Analyse', in Freud, *Studienausgabe*, ed. by Alexander Mitscherlich, Angela Richards and James Strachey, 10 vols (Frankfurt a. M.: Fischer, 1975), IX: *Fragen der Gesellschaft. Ursprünge der Religion*, pp. 61-134 (p. 102).

[29] Ibid, p. 98.

[30] Ibid, p. 99.

[31] Freud, 'Totem und Tabu', in Freud, *Studienausgabe*, IX: *Fragen der Gesellschaft. Ursprünge der Religion*, pp. 287-444.

[32] Kaja Silverman, *The Threshold of the Visible World* (London; New York: Routledge, 1996). Further references to this text will be given in parentheses in the main body of the text, identified as *Threshold*.

of altering existing structures of identification, Silverman argues, stems from the subject's tendency to repeatedly seek out certain objects of identification to the detriment of others. Referencing Freudian conceptions of narcissism, Silverman proposes that conventional processes of identification generally follow one of two patterns, either obeying the dictates of the normative ego, which seeks identification with subjects similar to itself, or activating an alignment with culturally valorised subjects, whose qualities the subject wishes himself to possess.[33] According to Freud, this object-choice finds its foundation in the 'primary narcissism' of the infant, who initially takes itself as love-object before (partially) transferring this love to an external object.[34] Subjects whose object-choice continues to be dominated by primary narcissism are unable to love others as separate subjects in their own right and instead incorporate the other into their own self-love. The first model proposed by Silverman, that of the normative ego, finds its foundation in the principle of self-sameness, 'the refusal on the part of the normative subject to form an imaginary alignment with images which remain manifestly detached from his or her sensational body, and his or her stubborn clinging to those images which can be most easily incorporated' (*Threshold*, p. 24). This normative identificatory process rejects alterity outright, precluding any form of 'cross-identification'[35] (between genders, races, social classes etc.), which is crucial in the re-valorisation of socially repudiated subjects.

Yet the ability to identify with a subject different to oneself, identified in Silverman's second model, does not necessarily result in a radical change to existing social values. Whilst the subject is undoubtedly capable of forming identifications with subjects who bear it no resemblance, Silverman signals that these identifications are equally restrictive, limited by the boundaries set by the social 'screen'. Standing between the gaze and its object, the Lacanian screen is 'the repertoire of representations by means of which our culture figures all those many varieties of "difference" through which social identity is inscribed' (*Threshold*, p. 19), determining how the subject sees and is seen. This catalogue of images determines which subjects are culturally valorised and which are excluded from the ideal. The subject's aspiration to embody this ideal may thus lead to an identification with subjects deemed to possess those qualities valued within a particular culture, in order to incorporate them into her own ego. Following

---

[33] See Freud, 'Zur Einführung des Narzißmus', in Freud, *Studienausgabe*, III: *Psychologie des Unbewußten*, pp. 37-68 (p. 56).

[34] Ibid, p. 43.

[35] This term is borrowed from Diana Fuss, *Identification Papers* (London; New York: Routledge, 1995), p. 8. Further references to this text will be given in parentheses in the main body of the text, identified as Fuss.

Freud, Silverman refers to these perfect qualities as the 'ego-ideal',[36] noting that subjects are capable of positing others radically different to themselves as their ego-ideal, identifying with subjects of different gender, class, race etc. (*Threshold*, p. 34). Whilst the concept of the ego-ideal permits the subject to identify with dissimilar subjects, however, 'it does not necessarily imply either an acceptance of corporeal heterogeneity, or identification outside the narrow limits of what is culturally valorized' (*Threshold*, p. 72). Thus, in 1950s America for example, a black man may have put a white man in place of his ego-ideal but, under the strictures of the contemporary cultural screen, an identificatory transaction in the other direction would have been unlikely (*Threshold*, p. 72).

A radical restructuring of the identificatory process is thus required if one is to alter the set of cultural values that shape the cultural screen. Silverman's work, which strives to rehabilitate the function of identification within fiction,[37] proposes certain criteria which must be fulfilled if identification is to be productive in the struggle for social and political change. First, she calls for a 'heteropathic' identification with subjects different to oneself, an 'excorporative' process which does not seek to swallow up the object of identification but maintains instead a certain distance (*Threshold*, p. 23).[38] This 'identity-at-a-distance' is dependent upon a recognition of the subject as other, placing emphasis on difference rather than attempting to assimilate the other into one's own ego (*Threshold*, p. 15). Essential to this acceptance of difference is a recognition of the other's subjectivity, the 'perception of the other as a subject, rather than an object, and as separate from, rather than an extension of, the self' (*Threshold*, p. 74). Through an identification with the socially devalued other, which recognises her status as a subject and does not attempt to reduce the distance between the two identifying subjects, nor deny or reject her difference, Silverman believes that an 'appetite for alterity' may be created (*Threshold*, p. 182), potentially enabling a re-valorisation of those subjects repudiated by dominant society.

Activated in a specific form, Silverman contends, identification may 'facilitate our leap out of "difference" and into bodily otherness' (*Threshold*, p. 37), enabling us to 'put ourselves in a positive identificatory relation to bodies which we have been taught

---

[36] Freud, 'Massenpsychologie und Ich-Analyse', p. 102.
[37] Silverman notes that identification has fallen out of favour with many theorists, who side with Brecht in his rejection of easy identification, regarding it as the means by which the (ideological) apparatus seeks to interpellate the reader/viewer and conceal its presence. *Threshold*, p. 84.
[38] Silverman borrows these terms from Max Scheler's *The Nature of Sympathy*, trans. by Peter Heath (Hamden: Archon, 1970).

to abhor and repudiate' (*Threshold*, p. 79). Since identification takes place, however, on the level of the unconscious, we require textual (verbal or visual) or artistic intervention to '"light up" dark corners of the cultural screen' (*Threshold*, p. 81). Silverman explains the text's ability to bring about change on a conscious level through its (re)construction of the images that constitute the cultural screen. Referencing the Benjaminian notion that 'in the creative process, the conscious and unconscious faculties "lose their mutual exclusiveness" and become amenable to mutual influence' (*Threshold*, p. 100),[39] Silverman argues that changes apprehended on a conscious level may subsequently affect the collective subject's unconscious identifications. Following this argument, both versions of *Schöne Tage* carry the potential to alter the conscious attitudes of the reader/viewer to the socially repudiated rural working class through an activation of unconscious identifications that challenge the dominant fiction.

CINEMATIC IDENTIFICATION

Since the adaptation's reconfiguration of identification provides the impetus for this re-evaluation of *Schöne Tage*, this study seeks its theoretical basis within the field of film studies, whose distinction between primary and secondary identification may illuminate the identificatory structures at work in both works. Literature's division between the unidentified narrator at the narrative's helm and the protagonists as narrative objects, is remarkably reminiscent of the filmic split between the invisible cinematic apparatus and the cast of on-screen characters. A great deal of critical attention has been devoted to the distribution of the identificatory potential between the latter two, informing various psychoanalytical approaches to film.[40] Surprisingly, however, the scope of this discussion has not been extended to the literary medium, where analogous distinctions between these identificatory processes remain relatively unexplored. However, the study of the identificatory relations which the reader forms with the novel's narrator(s) and protagonist(s) may benefit greatly from the insights offered by film theory's account of the viewer's double identification with camera and characters.

---

[39] Silverman quotes here from Walter Benjamin, 'Some Motifs in Baudelaire', in *Illuminations*, trans. by Harry Zohn (New York: Norton, 1977), p. 160. Whilst this claim evidently requires further critical attention, such an analysis falls outside the scope of this study.

[40] Theorists such as Jean-Louis Baudry, Mary Ann Doane, Christian Metz and Kaja Silverman have developed various and varying theories of the role played by identification in the cinematic experience.

Expanding on Jean-Louis Baudry's basic model of cinematic identification,[41] Christian Metz proposes that film invites the viewer to identify both intra- and extradiegetically, aligning herself both with the characters within the fiction and with their invisible and unidentifiable source, the cinematic apparatus and its more specific manifestation, the camera. Although Metz concedes that all identifications are necessarily secondary, following the subject's primary identification during the mirror stage, he argues that the secondary identification activated within cinema may itself be divided into a primary and secondary activity.[42] Metz insists on the crucial importance of identification for the process of cinematic signification, claiming that the spectacle that did not activate identification 'would become incomprehensible, considerably more incomprehensible than the most incomprehensible films' (Metz, p. 46). Yet, on-screen characters or the actors representing them, who would appear to provide the most obvious identificatory objects, cannot alone explain the phenomenon of cinematic identification, since a film will continue to 'make sense' even when there are no human forms on the screen with whom the spectator could identify (Metz, p. 47). This leads Metz to the conclusion that identification must take place on a different level, anterior to that with the film's protagonists and upon which the latter depends.

This primary identification appears to occur within the subject itself, as 'the spectator *identifies with himself*, with himself as a pure act of perception' (Metz, p. 49). Identifying with herself as the source of the gaze, Metz contends, 'the spectator can do no other than identify with the camera too' (Metz, p. 49) with the result that the spectator believes herself to be the 'all-seeing capacity' that controls the images on the screen. Commenting on Metz's work, Silverman notes that 'primary identification also implies a vision which is exterior to time and body, and which yields an immediate epistemological mastery' (*Threshold*, p. 126), suggesting that spectatorial pleasure derives primarily from the viewer's belief in this imagined mastery, to which she lays claim through identification with the true source of perception, the camera. Whilst there exists no critical consensus on the exact nature of the spectator's alignment with the camera,[43] Metz's theory of cinematic identification may nevertheless serve as a useful tool in this discussion of *Schöne Tage*, shedding light on the reader's dual identification with the

---

[41] Jean-Louis Baudry, 'Ideological Effects of the Basic Cinematographic Apparatus', trans. by Alan Williams, *Film Quarterly*, 28 (1974-1975), 39-47.

[42] Christian Metz, *The Imaginary Signifier: Psychoanalysis and the Cinema*, trans. by Celia Britton, Annwyl Williams, Ben Brewster and Alfred Guzzetti (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1982), p. 47. Future references to this work will be given in the main body of the text in parentheses, identified as Metz.

[43] For a detailed discussion of the various factions within this debate, see Silverman, *Threshold*, pp. 126-28.

novel's narrator and its protagonists. Since common usage of the term tends to associate identificatory activity with the narrative's protagonists, rather than its narrator, the structures of secondary identification at work in *Schöne Tage* will form the first object of study. Considering how and to what effect the reader/viewer's perspective is aligned with that of the protagonists, this discussion derives its impetus from the concept of focalisation, now indispensable in any study of narrative perspective.

FOCALISATION

Coined by Gérard Genette in 1972, focalisation refers to the process by which a narrative account is filtered through the perspective or consciousness of one or more characters. Genette uses the term to distinguish between narration, who is 'speaking', and perspective, who is 'seeing'.[44] This distinction, very often collapsed in more superficial readings of *Schöne Tage*, requires a transparent differentiation between narrator and focaliser along with a clear typology of the various forms of focaliser. Shlomith Rimmon-Kenan divides focalisers into two categories, the 'narrator-focaliser' and the 'character-focaliser', where the former remains external to narrative events, whilst the character-focaliser is located within the story.[45] The reader of *Schöne Tage* is never in any doubt that her perspective is closely tied to that of the main protagonist, Holl, whose point of view dominates in the novel, clearly indicating a correspondence with Rimmon-Kenan's character-focaliser. However, the sporadic appearance of a third-person 'narrator-focaliser' at various points in the narrative suggests a more complex framework of narrative perspectives, whose relationship to each other and to the narrated events may offer a key to understanding the identification processes initiated in the novel.

Both narrator- and character-focaliser may perceive from 'within,' with access to characters' thoughts and feelings, or from 'without,' providing a view of events which remains on a superficial level (Rimmon-Kenan, p. 76). The varying degrees of access to the inner lives of the 'focalised' (the objects of focalisation) exert great influence over the reader's selection of identificatory object, shaping the relationship between Holl, the narrator and the remainder of the novel's figures. Finally, the 'degree of persistence', by

---

[44] Gérard Genette, *Figures III* (Paris: Edition du Seuil, 1972), p. 203.
[45] Shlomith Rimmon-Kenan, *Narrative Fiction: Contemporary Poetics* (London, New York: Routledge, 1996), p. 74. Future references to this work will be given in the main body of the text in parentheses, identified as Rimmon-Kenan.

which Rimmon-Kenan judges the number and nature of the shifts in focalisation in order to identify the dominant perspective(s) (Rimmon-Kenan, pp. 76-77), will play an equally significant role in our understanding of the function of focalisation in the novel's identificatory structures and the changes to which this is subjected in the filmic adaptation.

SECONDARY IDENTIFICATION

Holl's presence throughout the narrative, whether as an active protagonist physically present at events or as the agent through whose perception they are retrospectively narrated, clearly marks him as the dominant focaliser. This is reinforced by the novel's system of naming, which designates all characters according to their relationship to Holl. Thus his mother and step-father are referred to exclusively through their familial relationship to him, the reader never learning their forenames. Holl's positioning as the centre of consciousness contains the further implication that the significance within the novel of the remaining protagonists depends entirely upon their relationship to him. Thus, in contrast to the *Knechte* and *Mägde*, each of whom is named individually regardless of the extent of their role within the novel, those workers with whom Holl has little contact are reduced to their function in agricultural life, such as 'der Melker', 'die Viehhüter' and 'die Viehhändler', who remain unnamed throughout.[46]

Rimmon-Kenan designates naming as one of the verbal indicators by which the reader may identify the text's focalising agent, noting its further capacity to signal a shift in attitude towards the named object (Rimmon-Kenan, pp. 82-3), a function which Innerhofer exploits in the naming of Holl's father and step-mother. From the outset naming is established as part of a wider linguistic regime, through which Holl is to be inserted into the patriarchal structure which governs rural life, as Holl is forced to call the Bauer 'Vater', a demand reinforced by physical violence (*ST*, p. 12). Holl's internalisation of this linguistic imperative is mirrored in the narrative's adoption of these markers by which the farmer and his wife are exclusively referred in the first third of the novel. However, as Holl's distance from his enforced family increases, the frequency of the familial indicators decreases, their gradual replacement by 'der Bauer' and 'die Bäuerin' clearly signalling Holl's emotional detachment. Holl's focalisation determines not only the naming of these characters but further indicates their role

---

[46] This system of naming follows a tradition within the *Heimat* genre, which designates characters as representatives of a particular rural class, rather than individuals. See Rossbacher, p. 183.

within the narrative, exposing the family as a linguistic construct determined by the exchange of familial signifiers. Holl's rejection of these signifiers imposed from without, mirrored in their near absence from the narrative, thus signals his refusal to insert himself into the discourse of the family, a linguistic act of filial rebellion.

To identify accurately the focaliser of any particular passage, one must further consider the ways in which the narrator's language may be influenced or 'coloured' by the perceptions of the focaliser, an analysis which in turn requires a nuanced understanding of the 'narrative modes for presenting consciousness in fiction'.[47] Here, as with focalisation, an (over)abundance of theoretical terms offer themselves to the critic, and the failure in critical reception of *Schöne Tage* to define terms precisely and to employ them consistently may be held largely accountable for a certain confusion and inadvertent obfuscation of the argument.[48] To avoid such pitfalls, this study relies on Dorrit Cohn's three categories – 'psycho-narration', 'quoted monologue' and 'narrated monologue' – to provide a firm foundation for a discussion of the narrative methods employed to denote focalisation and their effects on the nature of the reader's identification with Holl.

A great proportion of the miscomprehension surrounding the precise role of focalisation within the novel appears to stem from a characteristic inherent to focalisation itself, namely that '[t]he overall language of a text is that of the narrator, but focalisation can "colour" it in a way which makes it appear as a transposition of the perceptions of a separate agent' (Rimmon-Kenan, p. 82). This 'colouring' of the narrator's discourse corresponds closely to Cohn's 'narrated monologue', often referred to elsewhere as free indirect discourse/*style indirect libre*/*erlebte Rede*.[49] Narrated monologue uses the third-person to convey characters' thoughts in the tense of the surrounding narration, employing the character's idiom, whilst omitting all verbs of perception and thought. Thus the boundaries between the protagonist's internal perspective and the external events of the narrative remain indistinct, 'fusing outer with inner reality' (Cohn, p. 103). Cohn further asserts that narrated monologue both

---

[47] Dorrit Cohn, *Transparent Minds: Narrative Modes for Presenting Consciousness in Fiction* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1978). Future references to this work will be given in the main body of the text in parentheses, identified as Cohn.

[48] Thus 'narrator' and 'author' are often used interchangeably with no consideration of perspectival nuances. See, for example, Werner Ross, 'Der Bauer als Bösewicht. Neue Schollenliteratur: Franz Innerhofers Roman *Schöne Tage*', *Deutsche Zeitung*, 31 January 1975.

[49] Cohn is at pains to distinguish her narrated monologue from *erlebte Rede*, a term frequently used in connection with *Schöne Tage*'s narration, stressing that narrated monologue is in no way restricted to verbalised thought, as the German term would imply but rather presents a special case within the narration of consciousness [Cohn, p. 109].

'supremely enhance[s]' the narrator's identification with the protagonist and implicates the reader in the character's emotions, activating a certain identification with her' (Cohn, pp. 112 and 123).

To further aid the reader to identify the focalising agent in any given passage, Rimmon-Kenan proposes various 'facets of focalisation' (perceptual, cognitive and emotive), which allow a distinction to be made between narrator-focaliser and character-focaliser and the level of knowledge each may offer (Rimmon-Kenan, p. 77). Turning first to the question of perception, it is evident that the bulk of sensory information offered to the reader of *Schöne Tage* emanates from Holl's perspective, encouraging her to see, hear and smell the environment through him, to taste the rustic cuisine with the same disgust and to feel the physical pain inflicted upon him by others. Thus, Holl's first journey to his father's farm is presented as a list of sights and sounds, which follow each other in rapid succession, mirroring Holl's progression towards his new 'home':

> Durch den Markt.
>
> In den Zug.
>
> Das Tal wurde weiter.
>
> [...]
>
> Sie gingen durch ein Dorf, über eine Brücke, fremde Gesichter schauten her und sofort wieder weg, Kühe brüllten, Scheunentore flogen auf, knarrten, ein Fuhrwerk da, ein Fuhrwerk dort, dann allmählich hohes Gras und Zäune. (*ST*, p. 10. Original line breaks preserved)

Here, the spatial indication offered by 'fremde Gesichter schauten her', which locates the centre of consciousness as the object of the strangers' gaze, identifies Holl as the focalising agent. Considering the creation of subjectivity through discourse, French structural linguist Emile Benveniste notes the significance of linguistic markers such as the deictic adverb 'here' (used here as a separable prefix), which only assume meaning in relation to the speaker.[50] In the same way that the signification of 'I' and 'you' is only activated within discourse, adverbs such as the 'her' of 'herschauen', can only designate a place in relation to the position of the speaker. The use of 'herschauen', then, indicates a subjective position occupied by the focaliser of this phrase, which the surrounding narrative suggests to be Holl. Thus, the reader is encouraged to place herself in Holl's

---

[50] See Kaja Silverman, *The Subject of Semiotics* (New York; Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1983), p. 44.

position, according to which these faces are unknown and 'fremd',[51] presenting a distinctly intimidating welcome to the village.

The auditory element of this new environment equally positions Holl as the dominant focaliser, whose attention is drawn to the 'brüllen' of the cattle and the 'knarren' of the barn doors, both of which have negative connotations – 'knarren' through its implication of an unpleasant sound caused by the dilapidated state of the buildings; 'brüllen' through the association with aggression or distress which it assumes when employed in the context of human speech or cattle respectively. Furthermore, the syntactical structure of this passage with its fragmented, verbless sentences and long list of images, clearly recreates the immediate sensory impressions of the main protagonist as he moves through the landscape. Through this use of narrated monologue the reader follows Holl on his journey, experiencing the environment as alienating and threatening, thereby identifying with both his sensory and emotional perspective.

Similarly, Holl's return to Haudorf after his failed escape to his mother reveals an obvious filtering of perception, beginning with the comment that '[d]er Zug fuhr viel zu schnell' (*ST*, p. 45). Whilst this statement is not attributed explicitly to Holl, the qualifier 'zu' signals the subjective nature of the subsequent account, leading the reader to understand it not as objective fact provided by a neutral agent but rather as an indication of Holl's mental state. Hence further descriptions of the journey that refer to the 'enge Gasse' and the 'holprigen Weg' (*ST*, p. 45) are assumed to reflect Holl's feelings of discomfort as he approaches the farm. Since no alternative description of the village is offered, the reader is encouraged to identify with Holl's experience of the landscape as claustrophobic and hostile, thus preparing the way for its portrayal as a 'großer Kerker mit einer eingebauten Foltermaschine' (*ST*, p. 92). In these passages the reader is forced to abandon any illusion of 'perceptual mastery', as her perceptions are limited and coloured by those of the main protagonist. To compensate for this renunciation of all-seeing power, however, the reader is rewarded with a deeper understanding of Holl's consciousness, giving the reader a sense of epistemological mastery on a different level. This alignment of knowledge and perception forms the foundation for a subsequent identification with Holl.

This identification on cognitive and perceptual lines finds its cinematic equivalent in the first shots of *Schöne Tage*, which opens with a medium close-up of Franzi, whose face fills the entire screen. The dominance of the main protagonist is

---

[51] The adjective 'fremd' further suggests a subjective narrative position, as 'strangers' are so only in relation to an other, in this case Holl.

strengthened by a series of shot/reverse-shot sequences that encourage the spectator to identify Franzi as the source of the gaze. Thus the initial shot of Franzi's face, which shows him looking up slightly to the left of the frame, is followed by a shot of his mother seen from a low angle to the right of the frame. This positioning of the camera works within cinematic conventions, which state that 'the reverse shot represents the fictional owner of the glance corresponding to shot one',[52] to establish Franzi as the focaliser of this shot. The following shots extend this filtering from a purely perceptual perspective. Once again, the camera cuts from Franzi's face, this time to a shot of water slowly dripping onto a hot stovetop. After cutting back to an image of Franzi, now smiling, the camera returns to the stovetop, depicted this time in close-up. Since Franzi is shown to have remained seated, this enlarged shot of the water beads cannot reflect his physical perception. Instead, it must be assumed, this shot represents the child's fascination with the water sizzling and evaporating on the stove, a process which gives him demonstrable pleasure. As discussed elsewhere, the shot/reverse-shot sequence encourages the viewer to identify with a character within the fiction as the source of the gaze in order to conceal the threatening presence of the Absent Other, whereby 'the appearance of a lack perceived as a Some One (the Absent One) is followed by its abolition by someone (or something) placed within the same field'.[53] Identification with Franzi, then, occurs on a conscious emotional level, where the spectator shares the innocent pleasure to be gained from the simple physics of evaporation, and on an unconscious level as a means of denying the lack inherent in the act of cinematic spectatorship.

COGNITION

The degree of knowledge to which the reader is given access forms the centre of focalisation's cognitive facet, and is possibly the area where the gap between *Schöne Tage*'s character- and narrator-focalisers is at its most manifest. Following Rimmon-Kenan's theory, the focaliser's knowledge of narrated events is once more dependent on her position relative to the story, with an external narrator-focaliser enjoying unlimited knowledge whilst the internal character-focaliser's awareness is 'limited by definition' due to her involvement in narrated events (Rimmon-Kenan, p. 79). The two focalising agents central to Innerhofer's novel, Holl and the unidentified third-person narrator,

---

[52] Daniel Dayan, 'The Tutor-Code of Classical Cinema', *Film Quarterly*, 28 (1974), 22-31 (p. 29).

[53] Jean-Pierre Oudart, 'Cinema and Suture', *Screen*, 18 (1977-78), 35-47 (p. 37).

represent both ends of the cognitive scale, as the juvenile miscomprehension of the character-focaliser stands in stark contrast to the historical detail provided by his external counterpart. At various points throughout the narrative, the reader is obliged to renounce her access to the privileged knowledge she gains through the narrator-focaliser (see below), and identify with the limited viewpoint of Holl.

Already in the novel's opening passages the reader is struck by the nescience of the dominant focaliser when confronted with a noticeable lack of concrete detail in descriptions such as:

> Zwei Hände packten ihn und setzten ihn auf die Bank zurück, wo er weinte, weg wollte und wieder herunterfiel, so daß es den Frauen, die seinetwegen von der Arbeit weg mußten, oft zuviel wurde, sie ihn packten und schlugen. (*ST*, p. 5)

The vague references to 'zwei Hände' and 'den Frauen' denies the reader an overview of the protagonists, which may usually be expected in the introductory sections of traditional novels, leading to a sense of confusion and alienation. The explanation a few lines later that 'eine mußte er Mutter nennen und eine Großmutter' (*ST*, p. 5), in itself a rather bizarre statement, exposes the restriction of the reader's knowledge to that of the small child, as Holl's gradual understanding of the situation provokes an analogous cognitive development in the reader. Through these frustratingly vague descriptions, which abound in the opening section, the reader shares Holl's sense of confusion, as her own reading experience alienates her from the traditional narrative model, which insists that the introductory section provide the reader with some orientating information. Once again the reader is compelled to renounce her illusion of mastery, this time cognitive, in order to identify with Holl, thus placing herself in the position of the devalued subject. Indeed, Holl may be regarded as doubly devalued in this context, as his position of lack within the diegesis is underlined by his dislocation from the site of narrative privilege, engendered by his juvenile nescience. Focalisation, then, would appear to mark Holl as the chief identificatory object, suggesting that the novel may indeed activate a productive form of identification with the potential to challenge the reader's view of the socially devalued subject.

CORPOREAL IDENTIFICATION

However, Holl's physical manifestation on the cinematic screen forces the reader to

reassess her identification with his literary counterpart, posing challenges retroactively to the novel's structures of sympathy. Whilst Holl's physical appearance plays no significant role within the novel, which is marked by an absence of physical description in general, the shift in medium in the novel's adaptation alters the role of the body significantly. The reader is not directly confronted with a different corporeal structure which may pose a challenge to her own bodily ego,[54] ensuring that the principle of self-sameness is not violated on the level of physical appearance. However, the inherently visual nature of film renders it impossible to maintain this 'silence' surrounding Holl's appearance without straying into the realms of non-realist cinema. Thus a potential obstacle is placed in the way of the spectator's identification with Franzi/Holl, one which ultimately challenges the system of valorisation established in the novel.

Whilst the younger Franzi (Andreas Umnig), who occupies the first section of the film, conforms to the cinematic ideal of the vulnerable, loveable child who arouses the viewer's deepest sympathy, the elder Franzi (Martin Fritz) breaks with conventional cinematic representation and is unassimilable to any of the traditional 'heroic' moulds. This shift from vulnerable infant to sulky adolescent is made all the more disruptive by the manner in which the spectator is first introduced to the latter. In this scene, the camera slowly moves across Franzi's bedroom towards his bed, before coming to rest on a medium shot of his head from behind. Within the dark room it is impossible to discern any features that may alert the viewer to the change in actor. Thus, it comes as a shock to the spectator when the 'new' Franzi slowly turns around to face the camera. This introductory shot poses a threat to the viewer on multiple levels. Most obviously, the shadows cast across Martin Fritz's face lend a rather sinister air to his appearance, marking him as a potentially menacing figure. At the same time, his direct look into the camera challenges the viewer's sense of mastery, which rests on the one-sided nature of the gaze that should not be returned by a figure inside the fiction.[55] From the outset, then, the viewer comes to associate the adolescent Franzi with a sense of threat and unpleasure, hardly facilitating a later identification. Moreover, the shift from endearing child to the sullen adolescent Franzi creates a sense of loss within the viewer, who is robbed of an object with whom she may identify immediately on the basis of cinematic ideals.

---

[54] Whilst Silverman provides no concrete definition of the bodily-ego, it would appear from her usage of the term that it is intended to designate the corporeal elements of the ego, including physical appearance and the proprioceptive.

[55] See Metz, p. 63.

The body and its physical appearance play a crucial role in Silverman's conception of identification, since 'culturally constructed and enforced distinctions come into play at the level of the bodily ego' (*Threshold*, p. 10). Silverman repeatedly emphasises the role of outward appearance in activating identification, arguing that the body is 'far from being a biological given' but rather represents as much a social construct as any other aspect of human subjectivity (*Threshold*, p. 13). Any discussion of Franzi's appearance, then, must take into account the culturally constructed nature of both his body and the viewer's reception of it, as it is clear that the viewer is confronted with an image which breaks radically with the aesthetic norm of the cinematic hero.

Heroic or likeable male figures in Austrian cinema tend to fall into one of two physical moulds: the stereotypically handsome protagonist who corresponds closely to the Hollywood ideal of beauty or the 'Kumpel' type, generally middle-aged, rather rotund males with a preference for traditional *Tracht*. Franzi clearly does not fit into either category, excluded from the latter by his age and slim physique and from the former by his unappealing appearance. Unlike the well-coiffeured heroes in the mould of *Heimatfilm* star Hansi Hinterseer, Franzi's rather 'ungepflegt' appearance encompasses an unflattering 'bowl' hairstyle, worn-out clothes,[56] as well as an almost constant scowl, the result of deep-set eyes and heavy eyebrows. The cultural screen, which defines how the subject perceives itself and others and attributes values to these perceptions, thus distances Franzi from the privileges associated with classical beauty, creating a gulf between his character and the cultural ideal. On a physical level, identification with the filmic Franzi is thus precluded on the principles of self-sameness and ideality, as the cultural screen prevents the viewer from immediately attributing positive qualities, in the way that she might when confronted with a more conventionally attractive figure. This diminished identification with the 'filmic Holl' may thus create the critical distance necessary to approach the structures of identification erected around his literary counterpart, shedding light on its more problematic aspects.

EXTERIORISATION

Upon closer examination, several aspects of the identifications encouraged by Innerhofer's novel emerge as symptomatic of problems inherent in the identificatory process itself and its potential to act violently upon its object. One of the major pitfalls

---

[56] Although not in themselves an unequivocal signifier of unattractiveness, within the matrix of associations created by his overall appearance they lose any potential to arouse sympathy.

of identification is its tendency to perform the double action of incorporation and exteriorisation, assimilating the desirable qualities of the identificatory object into one's 'self', whilst projecting one's own shortcomings onto others. Silverman regards this as a form of *méconnaissance*, where the subject fails to recognise the correct self/other relationship, operating contrary to the potentially productive recognition of 'the otherness of the despised self, and the familiarity of the despised other' (*Threshold*, p. 170). Throughout the novel, Innerhofer's use of focalisation engenders an exteriorisation of lack, which corresponds to the process of projection set out by Freud in his 1911 essay 'Psychoanalytische Bemerkungen über einen autobiographisch geschriebenen Fall von Paranoia'.[57] Freud identifies the process as a defence mechanism, whereby the subject protects herself from her own threatening lack by displacing it onto others or, as Freud states in a later essay, 'sie projizieren nach außen auf andere hin, was sie im eignen Inneren nicht wahrhaben wollen'.[58] This defence mechanism is of crucial importance to an understanding of the functioning of identification within *Schöne Tage*, as it presents a possible explanation for the reader's otherwise incomprehensible alignment with the socially devalued subject, Holl. Whilst this identification endangers the reader's sense of imaginary mastery, threatening to destabilise her position of narrative privilege, the projection of Holl's lack onto other, peripheral protagonists means that the reader does in fact identify with the most 'privileged' figure within the novel's moral structures.

Throughout the novel the reader is presented with numerous descriptions of acts of cruelty and violence carried out around Holl and very often directed towards him. These include, but are by no means limited to the constant taunting of Moritz (*ST*, p. 56), violence towards Church dissenters (*ST*, p. 28), the institutional violence used as a pedagogical method in school (*ST*, pp. 84, 129-30) and Holl's father's notion of 'discipline' (*ST*, pp. 12, 15, 27, 43, 60). Indeed the novel's contemporary reception in the press focuses almost solely on these acts of violence, presenting them as symptomatic of the degeneracy of rural life, as one critic asserts that 'Roheit, Haß, Sadismus bestimmen das Verhalten der Landarbeiter, deren Leben eine einzige Schinderei ist'.[59] Reviewers furthermore posit this brutality as grounds on which to sympathise with Holl, citing the ubiquity of violence and the fact that 'die Brutalität kommt nicht nur

---

[57] Freud, 'Psychoanalytische Bemerkungen über einen autobiographisch geschriebenen Fall von Paranoia', in *Studienausgabe*, VII: *Zwang, Paranoia und Perversion*, pp. 133-203 (pp. 186-89).
[58] Freud, 'Über einige neurotische Mechanismen bei Eifersucht, Paranoia und Homosexualität', in *Studienausgabe*, VII: *Zwang, Paranoia und Perversion*, pp. 217-28 (p. 222).
[59] Hans Esderts, 'Stimme der Sprachlosen', *Bremener Nachrichten*, 25 January 1975.

"von oben"' as contributing factors in Holl's misery.[60]

However, it is evident that Holl is not entirely blameless, as he himself is depicted on several occasions as capable of violence, particularly towards animals. Yet the novel's representation of these episodes seeks to absolve Holl of any personal blame, displacing responsibility and guilt onto other characters or society at large. Through structures of focalisation, which offer the reader the access to Holl's thoughts and emotions during these episodes of brutality, Innerhofer preserves an otherwise unsustainable identification with an undesirable character. Thus, for example, the drawn-out nature of Holl killing a grass snake 'er wartete, bis sie mit der Zunge seinen Zeigefinger berührte und ließ sie fallen und zerquetschte ihr mit einem Stein den Kopf' (*ST*, p. 100) would at first appear to be an unnecessary display of cruelty. However, his seemingly sadistic hesitation is immediately explained to the reader as a period of deliberation, as 'er überlegte, ob er sie dem Schneider bringen oder töten sollte' (*ST*, p. 99), removing any suspicion of unmotivated sadism. His cruelty towards his half brothers, whom he leads into the woods at dusk in order to frighten them (*ST*, pp. 64-5), is equally extenuated in the reader's mind by the insight into Holl's emotions given in the paragraph preceding this episode. Here, the reader is informed that Holl feels excluded from the family and bullied by the brothers, for 'die Brüder wußten, daß Holl ihnen ausgeliefert war, daß er nie bei ihren Eltern Gehör suchen würde' (*ST*, p. 63). By granting the reader access to Holl's emotions, the narrative offers her the possibility of exculpating him from his cruel actions, as focus is shifted onto his ongoing suffering at the hands of his brothers, projecting onto them the burden of guilt and marking them as representatives of moral lack.

This exteriorisation of guilt is further facilitated by the structures of alignment themselves, which accord Holl the privileged position of dominant focaliser. In the course of several interviews, Innerhofer has repeatedly stressed his intention to move beyond the individual suffering of Holl to present a wider understanding of the shocking social conditions which affected a whole class of rural workers, claiming that 'meine Geschichte war mir zu wenig'.[61] This intention is frequently regarded as the motivation behind the enormous cast of characters who populate the novel.[62] Whilst

[60] Norbert Schachtsiek-Freitag, 'Ein Bauernroman als Anti-Idylle', *Deutsches Allgemeines Sonntagsblatt*, 5 January 1975.
[61] Tichy, p. 145.
[62] Johannes Birgfeld counts over 200 figures mentioned within the novel, of which 150 may be considered 'significant' characters. Birgfeld, *Franz Innerhofer als Erzähler: eine Studie zu seiner Poetik* (Frankfurt a. M.: Peter Lang, 2002), pp. 91-92.

this abundance of figures undoubtedly enables Innerhofer to provide a panorama of rural life, it has the concomitant effect of dividing the reader's attention between these numerous characters, whose individual significance within the narrative is consequently relatively minor. This de-individualising tendency is played out in the novel's focalisation structures, which challenge the reader's potential identification with these characters by limiting her insight into their inner lives.

The exteriorising implications of this concentration of identification become evident in a comparison of the representation of Holl's acts of cruelty with those of others. Thus, for example, Konrad's violence towards Maria is depicted with no explanation offered as to why he feels compelled to abuse her: 'Ein paar Schritte vor der Toreinfahrt, wo Moritz vor einem Jahr unter dem Wagen gekommen ist, ging Konrad auf Maria los und schlug sie blutig' (*ST*, p. 77). Konrad's emotions and motivations remain entirely opaque, preventing the reader from aligning herself with him and ultimately encouraging a more judgemental stance. In contrast, Holl's cruelty towards his loyal friend, Leo, whom he refuses to select as a friend in a game conceived by their teacher, is accompanied not by an insight into Leo's reactions to this callous act but rather to Holl's thoughts and emotions. Holl's action is described in the passive form 'da passierte Holl etwas Dummes. Er gab seine Stimme einem Dorfschreihals' (*ST*, p. 155), exteriorising his guilt as something that happened to him. Regret and remorse thus come to dominate this passage, underlined by the final sentence 'zusammen gingen sie nach Hause, und Holl machte ständig einen weiten Bogen um sich' (*ST*, p. 155). His vague consciousness of guilt serves paradoxically to free him from blame, as it is implied that some other force than Holl's consciousness is at work here. Thus this episode, which clearly testifies to undesirable qualities within Holl, in fact functions to strengthen the reader's identification with him through exteriorisation of his guilt and the constriction of access to Leo's inner life.

This valorisation of Holl at the expense of others conforms to Murray Smith's concept of 'relative desirability', whereby Smith explains the reader/viewer's identification with a morally dubious character, such as a gangster or drug dealer, through the position of this figure in the work's moral hierarchy.[63] Whilst Smith is at pains to distance himself from psychoanalytic theories of identification, the concept of 'relative desirability' is essentially based on process of projection, as the reader/viewer is encouraged to exteriorise the lack of the central identificatory object onto other less

---

[63] Murray Smith, *Engaging Characters: Fiction, Emotion and the Cinema* (Oxford: Clarendon, 1995), p. 194.

desirable characters. Thus it would be mistaken to claim that Innerhofer's novel encourages a positive process of cross-identification, engendering a re-valorisation of socially devalued subjects, as the reader's identification with Holl occurs only at the expense of the remaining characters.

MULTIPLE IDENTIFICATIONS

The narrow focus of the novel's identificatory structures becomes truly apparent in comparison with Lehner's adaptation, which encourages the viewer to follow a very different identificatory path, activating a more diffuse set of identifications with a wider group of protagonists. Whilst 'Franzi' undoubtedly remains the film's main protagonist, around whom the majority of narrative events revolve, Lehner's adaptation widens the scope for identification, positioning several other characters as potential identificatory objects. This is particularly evident in the diverging portrayals of Maria, the twelve-year-old *Magd* whose unplanned pregnancy and critical attitude to the Church mark her as an outsider in the rural community. Within the novel's structures of focalisation, the reader is frequently denied access to Maria's thoughts at moments when her inner life would be of greatest interest. Thus the announcement of her pregnancy occurs without the least insight into her emotions, as the reader is informed solely of the legal implications of her situation 'Maria war von Loferer schwanger und brauchte deshalb in keine sogenannte Besserungsanstalt' (*ST*, p. 131). The framing of this passage between two relatively insignificant, yet comprehensively narrated, episodes in Holl's life stresses the primacy of his perspective.

The film's repositioning of Maria, however, breaks the identificatory exclusivity encouraged by the novel. The spectator is encouraged, for example, to align herself with Maria's response to the tradition amongst the farmhands which dictates that 'wenn irgendwo im Freien eine Magd beim Jausnen von einem Knecht das Taschenmesser nahm, konnten die anderen annehmen, daß er noch am selben Abend bei ihr im Bett lag' (*ST*, p. 22). Whilst a voice-over explains this custom (see below), the camera cuts between close-up shots of various *Knechte* and *Mägde* laughing at Maria's apparent acceptance of a pocket-knife. Each of these shots cuts back to a close-up of Maria's face, revealing each time anew her irritation at their juvenile responses, which can still be heard off-screen whilst the camera remains focused on her. The *mise-en-scène* at the start of this episode, which places Maria in the centre of the frame, along with the

increased length of the shots of her face, clearly encourages the spectator to align herself with Maria and to feel sympathy for her humiliation at the hands of the sniggering workers.

This diffusion of narrative perspective is not restricted to Maria but rather marks the film as a whole, which repeatedly encourages the viewer to align her perspective with various different characters. Even the most minor protagonists find a place in this identificatory restructuring, as seen in the insight the spectator is given into the secret passion for music shared by two farmhands. The viewer is first drawn into intimacy with these unnamed figures through the visual alignment of perspective, where an initial shot of the farmyard is presented through the bars of the window, indicating a concealed point of observation. A reverse shot aligns this view with one of the farmhands, who appears to be looking out to ascertain the departure of the others before cautiously removing a record-player from its hiding-place. The secrecy under which this activity takes place cements the viewer's identification with these figures, drawing her into complicity with their actions. The evident enjoyment they gain from this simple pleasure, revealed in a series of static medium shots focused on their smiling faces, provides further gratification for the viewer, who is only too happy to exchange the film's otherwise relentless misery for a brief moment of cheer.

The film's diffusion of identification has the concomitant effect of deflecting attention away from its main protagonist. Nowhere is this more evident, than in the depiction of Franzi/Holl's 'Züchtigung' by his father. These episodes of excessive parental violence are narrated at great length in the novel and are invariably presented from Holl's perspective: 'Schulbeichte nicht nachgeholt. Schrecken. Aufspringen des Vaters. Resignation. Holl in die etwas höher liegende Speisekammer gestoßen. Hose herunter. Mit Riemen zugeschlagen […] Schmerz. Holl schämte sich' (*ST*, p. 43-44). The fragmented syntax of this passage, which clearly conveys Holl's sense of dislocation (presumably a defence mechanism), transfers this feeling onto the reader, whose experience of the passage is inevitably disjointed, encouraging further identification with his plight.

The film's depiction of this scene, however, shifts the focus from Holl onto a multitude of characters. Following introductory shots of Franzi's beating, the camera cuts to a series of close-up shots of Maria, Konrad and Moritz listening to his ordeal from various locations around the farm. United by a common oppression by the rural hierarchies of power, these protagonists display their reaction to this brutality, each of

which is marked by a distinct sense of detachment. Lehner's use of close-up here serves to create a sense of intimacy with these characters, encouraging the viewer to sympathise with them in their shared subjugation. Throughout this scene Franzi's cries continue to resound, one the one hand reminding the spectator of his presence, whilst drawing attention, on the other, to his visual absence on screen. The filmic 'Holl' clearly no longer enjoys the privilege of sole focaliser; in fact, it would be difficult even to claim that he is the main focaliser here. The depiction of the others' reactions to his punishment widens the implications of this violence, highlighting their equal status as victims. Franzi's suffering thus comes to stand in metonymically for the misery experienced by many others and, in the process, loses its element of individuality. Lehner's adaptation, then, would appear to realise Innerhofer's stated intention 'auch die Leute, die unter diesen Zuständen zu leiden hatten, möglichst gut herauszuarbeiten'.[64]

PRIMARY IDENTIFICATION

Yet the film's panoramic tendencies meet with resistance from within, as the redistribution of identification places the viewer in a less pleasurable position than that of the reader, one which threatens to disrupt her own identity. Since identification is often considered the wish to *be* the other (Fuss, p. 11), Fuss posits the possibility that a series of multiple identifications poses a serious threat to the subject's identity, since 'the astonishing capacity of identifications to reverse and disguise themselves, to multiply and contravene one another, to disappear and reappear years later renders identity profoundly unstable and perpetually open to radical change' (Fuss, p. 2). Viewing this instability in a more positive light, Silverman holds the ontological uncertainty of identity to contain identification's key potential to bring about social change, by challenging the stasis offered by identity (*Threshold*, p. 189). Yet this potential for change is undoubtedly met with less enthusiasm by the endangered subject whose identity is under attack. Since the ego mainly seeks to preserve the status quo, protecting the psyche against anything which may threaten its (imaginary) cohesion, its negative reaction to the challenge posed by multiple identifications is almost inevitable. Within *Schöne Tage* this resistance manifests itself within the confines of identification, as the viewing subject seeks to conserve its unity through the activation of a more constant

[64] Franz Innerhofer. Cited in Tichy, p. 145.

identification, one which will underpin all subsequent identifications.

The more diffuse nature of the film's identificatory structures leaves the viewer's identification with the camera as the only point of stability. Returning to Metz's concept of primary and secondary cinematic identification, it is possible to discern several similarities between the role of the camera in Lehner's adaptation and that of Innerhofer's third-person narrator. Both camera and narrator remain unidentified throughout, invisible forces controlling the narrative in their respective media. Furthermore, both narrative agents are in possession of a knowledge far superior to that of any single character. This knowledge manifests itself within the film in the camera's autonomy from the perspective of any one character, as demonstrated above. Throughout the film, the apparatus flexes its impressive epistemological muscle, furnishing the spectator with privileged insight into protagonists and events. Konrad's sabotage of the *Bauknecht*'s sickle, for example is revealed in a series of close-ups and extreme close-ups, whose restrictive nature emphasises the others' ignorance of his plans, culminating in a close-up of the iron peg thrust into the ground to obstruct the *Bauknecht*. The alternation of these shots with extreme long shots of the workers in the landscape highlights the distance between protagonists, demonstrating to the viewer that this knowledge would exceed their perceptual limits, and further gives the impression of an almost God-like narrator, both omniscient and omnipotent. Narrative perspective in the film, then, becomes a means by which the camera-narrator[65] marks itself as the privileged source of the narrative.

The viewer's primary identification with the camera is regarded by Metz as an attempt to create an illusory sense of plenitude by aligning oneself with an idealised subject.[66] This view of the camera as an agent capable of providing a sense of cohesion is underlined in *Schöne Tage*, where the fragmentation of the protagonists' bodies is repeatedly contrasted with the unifying power of the camera-narrator. The film's use of extreme close-ups, which dismember and fragment the bodies on screen, clearly points towards the Lacanian mirror stage as a model for understanding identification. Lacan argues that the child's apprehension of itself in a reflective surface engenders a sense of imaginary unity, which compensates for its sense of motor incapacity and bodily fragmentation:

The *mirror stage* is a drama whose internal thrust is precipitated from

---

[65] My use of the term 'camera-narrator' to describe the cinematic apparatus behind *Schöne Tage* emanates in part from the film's employment of voice-over to supplement the visual narrative, discussed below.
[66] Metz, p. 45.

insufficiency to anticipation – and which manufactures for the subject, the succession of phantasies that extends from a fragmented bodily image to a form of its totality.[67]

In order to overcome the sense of lack associated with fragmentation, the child must identify with its specular mirror image which possesses the unity missing in the child's fragmented body. Throughout its life, then, the subject is required to 'close the gap between [the idealizing image] and the sensational body, so as to assert the unity of the self' (*Threshold*, p. 42).

The extreme close-ups of *Schöne Tage*'s protagonists may thus be seen to re-create the sense of lack that precipitates the mirror stage. In particular, Lehner selects to foreground the protagonists' hands, interrupting shots of Moritz's face, as he shows Holl his collection of watches, with an extreme close-up of his gnarled fingers. Similarly, the scenes depicting the harvest which recur throughout the film are marked by an alternation of medium shots of the workers and extreme close-ups of their hands holding their various tools. The connection of this fragmentation to manual labour further suggests that the protagonists' lack may be related to the nature of their work and the social subordination it implies. Thus the film, somewhat ironically, plays out the power structures identified in the novel, which restrict the workers' identities to their labour activities 'weil man sich die Menschen vor lauter Handgriffen nicht mehr ohne Handgriffe denken konnte' (*ST*, p. 58).

The threat posed to the viewer's sense of imaginary plenitude by the protagonists' fragmented bodies consequently encourages an identification with the camera in order to compensate for this lack. In aligning herself with the camera, the viewer is able to deny her own fragmentation in the face of others', identifying instead with the agent whose look re-unites the dismembered limbs, frequently moving from extreme close-up to medium or long shots of the characters, which reveal the 'whole' body and position it in its surroundings. The fragmentation caused by the film's cinematography thus reflects the film's wider identificatory structures, with the camera-narrator providing a point of stability for the spectator threatened both by the visually dismembered bodies and by the diffuse nature of identifications. This attribution of unity to the camera is underscored by Lehner's employment of voice-over, which at once anthropomorphises the cinematic apparatus and posits it as the ideal image.

---

[67] Jacques Lacan, 'The Mirror Stage as Formative of the Function of the I as Revealed in Psychoanalytic Experience', in *Écrits*, trans. by Alan Sheridan (London: Tavistock, 1977), pp. 1-7 (p. 4).

VOICE-OVER

Contrasting greatly with the lack of insight into the main protagonist's inner life, a perspective commonly associated with voice-over, the discourse of an unidentified voice provides the viewer with explanatory comments on narrative events, all of which are taken from Innerhofer's novel.[68] The disembodied voice, which cannot be located within the diegesis, further dissociates itself from the on-screen protagonists through its literary register, which stands in stark contrast to the sometimes impenetrable dialect of the film's characters.[69] Whilst the use of dialect is not uncommon in Austrian film, it by no means constitutes the norm or the ideal, especially in such extreme forms. Just as physical appearance is attributed a value by the prevailing cultural screen, so language is judged according to social norms, as certain forms of speech occupy a position of ideality above others. This employment of *Hochdeutsch*, then, linguistically establishes the invisible narrator as an ideal subject, whose level of education and knowledge may activate identification in a range of viewing subjects. On the one hand, the educated viewer may identify with the camera-narrator on the basis of self-sameness, recognising qualities in the disembodied voice-over that she believes herself to possess. The less-educated viewer, experientially closer to the film's protagonists than to its narrator, may, on the other hand, enter into an idealising identification, whereby the narrator comes to represent those attributes that the spectator wishes to possess.

The authority implied by the register of the voice-over is supported by its content, which provides the viewer with contextualising historical information in an analogous manner to the novel's narrator. Thus, for example, shots of the workers are accompanied by an explanation of their historical disenfranchisement, 'es hat Bauernaufstände gegeben aber keine Aufstände der Dienstboten, obwohl diese mit geringen Abweichungen überall den gleichen Bedingungen ausgesetzt waren'.[70] The narrating voice-over equally provides an explanation of the events depicted visually, which would otherwise remain opaque, such as the shot of Maria accepting the pen-knife of one of the *Knechte*, discussed above, which is accompanied by the words: 'Wenn eine Magd beim Jausnen von einem Knecht das Taschenmesser nahm, konnten die

---

[68] The voice-over's speeches are taken from *Schöne Tage*, pp. 7, 20, 22, 23, 28, 76 and 90.

[69] Several (German) critics have commented on the difficulties posed by the film's use of dialect. The *Kölner Stadt-Anzeiger* comments that 'von dem äußerst kargen Dialog [ging] auch noch manches verloren'. F.R., 'Eindrucksvolle Wahrhaftigkeit', *Kölner Stadt-Anzeiger*, 7 September 1982. Hans-Dieter Seidl also notes the 'harten Klang der Stimmen' of the amateur actors. Hans-Dieter Seidl, 'Ein Davonmüssen von sich selbst', *Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung*, 7 September 1982.

[70] Taken from *Schöne Tage*, p. 22.

anderen mit Gewissheit annehmen, daß er noch am selben Abend bei ihr im Bett lag.'[71] Here the viewer's understanding of the visual information is entirely dependent on the explanation provided by the voice-over, underlining his position of superior knowledge.

The positioning of the voice-over within the narrative further suggests a certain control over events, as his comments often precede the actions they describe. Thus the scene in which Holl's tongue becomes stuck on a frozen metal fence is introduced by the voice-over's narrative whilst the camera remains on the empty station building, only slowly panning round to reveal Holl in the position described by the voice-over. This disembodied voice appears to exercise a control over the depiction of narrative events, which is demonstrated to exceed that of the camera. The association of the film's voice-over with the camera, then, confers upon the latter a further aspect of ideality, suggesting an even greater plenitude than that conventionally attributed to the camera, which here exceeds its visually descriptive purpose through supplementary verbal explanations.

This conflation of camera and voice-over evidently constitutes a further form of *méconnaissance*, closely related to the identificatory process described by Silverman as 'passive idealisation' (*Threshold*, p. 71). Here the viewer can be seen to attribute an ideality to the camera which only exists through the creative imagination of the viewing subject. Silverman stresses the problematic nature of such idealisations, which mistake for essence what is in fact the product of the viewer's own psyche, insisting that the subject must idealise actively and consciously, seeking to '*confer* ideality, not to *find* it' (*Threshold*, p. 71). Only in doing so can the viewing subject free herself from the 'restrictive mandates of the cultural screen' by acknowledging their role in shaping the ideality she confers (*Threshold*, p. 71). By unconsciously equating the visual power of the camera with the linguistic mastery of the voice-over, the viewer of *Schöne Tage* undertakes a passive idealisation of the cinematic apparatus, failing to recognise the essential role played by herself and by cinematic conventions in the creation of this ideality. Hence the viewing subject enters into an identification with an illusory 'narrator,' to whom she attributes those qualities deemed most valuable by the screen of cinematic convention: omniscience and visual mastery.

Returning to Metz's theory of primary identification, it is evident that both the reading and the viewing experiences are marked by a common sense of absence. Just as the spectator is aware, on some level, that the images on the screen are controlled by an

---

[71] Taken from *Schöne Tage*, p. 22.

invisible 'absent other', so the reader knows that her 'view' of the narrative is mediated. Theoreticians of suture have repeatedly stressed the unpleasure engendered by this awareness of an unidentified other, who 'has all the attributes of the mythically potent symbolic father: potency, knowledge, transcendental vision, self-sufficiency, and discursive power'.[72] The power embodied by this invisible other reveals to the viewing subject her own lack of scopic control. Paralleling the initial stage in primary cinematic identification, the reader's awareness of a mediating agent engenders the loss of perceived epistemological power, leading to the reader's attempt to recuperate her illusionary sense of unity by aligning herself with the omnipotent literary gaze. The identificatory relationships in Innerhofer's novel, then, may be seen to mirror Metz's cinematic model, with the reader identifying primarily with the perceived 'source' of the narrative, the narrator, and subsequently with the character(s) within the fiction. As in the adaptation, the reader's identification with Innerhofer's narrator-focaliser is founded principally upon the process of idealisation, as the unidentified narrator embodies many of the qualities valorised within narrative conventions, to which the reader traditionally aspires.

Seeking to explain the process of suture, Silverman highlights the key role played by the structures of mastery established within the spectatorial experience. The camera's total control over the narrative, its ability to determine and limit what the viewer may see, stands at the centre of cinematic signification, motivating narrative progression and sustaining spectatorial pleasure. Silverman refers to this display of narrative potency as the film's 'castrating coherence', arguing that 'we must be shown only enough to know that there is more, and to want that "more" to be disclosed'.[73] To a significant extent, then, the spectator's pleasure is dependent upon her confidence in the ultimate omniscience (and omnipotence) of the camera and in the belief that she may herself possess this potency by aligning herself with its gaze. The 'omnipotent and coercive gaze'[74] thus finds its literary equivalent in the unidentified third-person narrator, whom narrative conventions endow with the power of omniscience. Noting that 'covert narrators must know How Things Will Turn Out',[75] Seymour Chatman highlights the pleasure the reader takes from the narrator's all-knowing stance as a re-

---

[72] Silverman, *The Subject of Semiotics*, p. 204.
[73] Ibid, p. 205.
[74] Ibid, p. 232.
[75] Seymour Chatman, *Story and Discourse: Narrative Structure in Fiction and Film* (Ithaca; London: Cornell University Press, 1978), p. 212.

assuring point of stability in the narrative.[76] It is understandable, then, that the reader would seek to align herself with the source of epistemological power.

Analogous to the Lehner's camera-narrator, whose ideality was established above, Innerhofer's narrator holds knowledge far superior to that of any single character within the fiction. This manifests itself primarily in the retrospective nature of his narration, which enables the narrator to summarise events and place them within a certain, albeit vague, chronology. In contrast to the confusion demonstrated by Holl, the third-person narrator has the power to condense and summarise substantial lengths of time, drawing discrete events into relation with one another. Thus the outer manifestations of Holl's despair are condensed into one paragraph, whose linking of unrelated events encourages the reader to interpret his individual actions as indications of a deeper psychological disturbance:

> Er ging zu einer tiefen Schlucht, wie in einem Selbtsbedienungsladen. Er bekam Lust, giftige Schlangen am Schwanz zu halten, und sie dann in unmittelbarer Nähe wieder fallen zu lassen. Er kletterte auf Hochspannungsmaste [...] Er besuchte die Gräber der Selbstmörder. Da wurde plötzlich alles zum Spiel. (*ST*, p. 52)

Innerhofer's use of iterative narration here clearly testifies to the control the narrator exercises over the narrative, discreetly signalling to the reader his ability to shape and order narrative events and thus to direct the reader's interpretation of the text. Remaining unidentified throughout the text, Innerhofer's narrator falls into Chatman's category of the 'covert narrator', whose voice informs of events, characters etc. whilst 'its owner remains hidden in the discoursive [sic] shadows'.[77] Its implicit mediating presence and lack of discernible identity render it comparable to the invisible cinematic apparatus, whose presence is also constantly implied but never explicitly revealed.

The novel's narrator is further endowed with knowledge which exceeds the parameters of the main diegesis, mirroring the privileged position of the adaptation's voice-over. Throughout the novel, the reader is provided with short snippets of historical information, which enable her to locate the novel's events within a wider socio-historical landscape, a power which is denied to the characters within the fiction. Thus, the narrator places the Church processions, in which Holl is obliged to participate, within a wider historical context, commenting that 'lange vor dem Bauernaufstand und der von einem Erzbischof veranstalteten gewaltsamen Vertreibung

---

[76] Chatman, *Story and Discourse*, p. 217.
[77] Ibid, p. 197.

der protestantischen Bauern aus den Salzburger Gebirgstälern sind von den Fahnenspitzen schon Menschen verletzt worden' (*ST*, p. 117). The narrator's evocation of peasant uprisings and the Reformation in the banal context of minor injuries suffered during these processions evidently suggests a more sophisticated grasp of narrative events which far exceeds that of the protagonists involved.

Whilst the narrator appears to offer an alternative history, focusing on those usually ignored and overlooked by the grand cultural narrative, his access to this information clearly places him on the side of the symbolic, as only those aligned with dominant cultural values are in a position to question them. This rather Foucauldian knowledge/power nexus is underlined by the general ignorance of the farm workers, as

> Die meisten Dienstboten wußten von einander nicht einmal wieviel beziehungsweise wie wenig sie verdienten, obwohl sie gemeinsam aßen, arbeiteten und in Gemeinschaftsräumen schliefen, an Sonn- und Feiertagen gemeinsam den Kirchengang zurücklegten, nicht wie die größeren Bauern in der Kirche einen Stuhl hatten, nicht wie die Bauern sich auf dem Kirchenplatz versammeln durften, nicht auf dem Kirchenplatz ihre Interessen vertreten durften. (*ST*, p. 67)

Here the relationship between knowledge and power is further linked to the economic situation of the workers, as their ignorance leads to the financial inferiority that denies them the social and political privileges afforded to the farmers. Following the path of cinematic identification, then, the reader of *Schöne Tage* seeks to identify with the invisible narrator, whom he perceives to be the source of the narrative and thus the agent of greatest epistemological power, a position valorised by narrative convention.

An inevitable by-product of this mode of identification, however, is the side-lining of the novel's intellectually inferior protagonists. It is clear from its mode of address, its use of *Hochdeutsch* and its incorporation of historical information, that the novel is aimed at an educated, probably urban, readership. Interestingly, this discrepancy between implied reader, 'the audience presupposed by the narrative',[78] and the novel's protagonists is characteristic of the *Heimat* genre whose accounts of rural life were primarily read by the city-dwelling petty bourgeoisie eager to hear about an idyllic rural life.[79] In the context of Innerhofer's work, however, the gap between reader and characters has clear implications for the novel's identificatory structures and the resultant position of the rural underclass portrayed here. Closer scrutiny of the specific

---

[78] Chatman, *Story and Discourse*, p. 150.
[79] Rossbacher, p. 98.

ways in which the reader is brought into identificatory relationships with the protagonists may thus reveal an implicit hierarchy of power inherent in the narrative itself.

'AT THE BASE OF EVERY IDENTIFICATION LIES A MURDEROUS WISH: THE SUBJECT'S DESIRE TO CANNIBALIZE THE OTHER'[80]

Far from encouraging the social recognition of a 'despised' subject, the form of identification with Holl activated within the novel may, in fact, pose a great threat to the subjectivity of the main protagonist. Following Henri Wallon's rethinking of the mirror stage, Kaja Silverman differentiates between heteropathic or excorporative identification and its ideopathic, incorporative opposite, clearly positioning the former as the ideal identificatory model (*Threshold*, p. 23). The ideality of this form of identification resides in its promotion of what Silverman designates 'identity-at-a-distance', identification with a subject radically different to the self, which is founded upon 'a recognition of the other as an other (*Threshold*, p. 43). Thus heteropathic identification avoids the trap of self-sameness, accepting the distance between the self and the other and consequently recognising the other as a subject whose being is inevitably founded upon lack (*Threshold*, p. 78). Incorporative identification, however, seeks to deny or destroy this separateness, assimilating the idealised object of identification into the self, thus ultimately stripping it of its subjectivity (*Threshold*, p. 42). On the surface, the stylistic and linguistic distinctions between Holl and the narrator would appear to create a clear distance, a gulf of education and superior linguistic abilities separating the two, which may point towards a heteropathic identification.

However, the specific form of narrative perspective activated within the novel clearly points towards a model of identification based on incorporation, one which eradicates the distance necessary for the preservation of Holl's subjectivity. The relationship between the narrative mode employed to represent Holl's inner life and the form of identification which it encourages further points towards one of the novel's main thematic concerns: the function of linguistic structures in the patriarchal oppression of the rural underclass and Holl's resulting search for liberation from his linguistic disenfranchisement. To shed light on this relationship and its connection to the language/power nexus at work in the novel's narrative structure, it is necessary to return to Dorrit Cohn's exploration of the various possibilities of presenting

---

[80] Fuss, p. 93.

perspective, more specifically to her concept of 'psycho-narration'. Cohn locates the essence of her typology in an exploration of the degree of mediation through the narrator, essentially assessing the relationship between the narrator and the novel's characters (Cohn, p. 15). Thus her analysis of the various modes of focalisation progresses from that which she judges to be the most mediated form, the process of psycho-narration, to the least mediated, the narrated monologue, discussed above. In psycho-narration the protagonist's thoughts and emotions are conveyed to the reader through the narrator's narrative, introduced by verbs of perception. This method shifts the reader's attention onto the narrating agent, whilst ironically offering the greatest insight into the inner lives of the characters, as 'psycho-narration may be regarded as the most direct, indeed the unique, path that leads to the sub-verbal depth of the mind' (Cohn, p. 57), given the narrator's superior knowledge of the characters' inner thoughts, which far exceeds their self-awareness (Cohn, p. 29).

Closer scrutiny of *Schöne Tage* reveals psycho-narration to be the most dominant mode of representing Holl's consciousness, with significant consequences for the novel's identificatory structures. Whilst the novel certainly focuses its attention almost exclusively on Holl and awards the reader unlimited access to his inner life, strategies essential to the identificatory process, the manner in which this is achieved suggests that this identification is not necessarily to be viewed favourably. Insights into Holl's emotions, such as 'in diesen ganz und gar verzweifelten Zuständen der Selbsbezichtigung dachte er oft an seine Leidensgenossen' (*ST*, p. 39), evidently mark Holl as the main focaliser and encourage sympathy within the reader for his suffering, facilitating identification with Holl and enabling the reader to align herself with his point of view. However, this identification comes at a price. Whilst Holl may embody the privileged source of consciousness, it is only through the mediation of the third-person narrator that he is able to be positioned as such, as Holl is stripped of his capacity to tell his own story in his own words. This is clearly the case in the statement cited above, where Holl's self-disgust and attempted solidarity with others are described in a language in no way assimilable to the idiom of a six-year old child. The terms 'Leidensgenossen' and 'Selbstbezichtigung', whilst clearly reflecting Holl's perspective, are unlikely to belong to his juvenile lexicon, pointing instead to the narrator's linguistic intervention.

This is equally evident in the syntactical structure of 'Holl dachte an die vom Großvater herbeigeführten Zustände, für das der Alte nicht einmal die Mutter ein paar

Tränen hätte weinen lassen, als es mit sieben Jahren gestorben war' (*ST*, p. 150). Whilst the use of 'der Alte' to designate Holl's grandfather is plainly intended to reveal Holl's emotional distance from his family, the extended adjectival phrase 'die vom Großvater herbeigeführten Zustände' suggests a written account in a register unattainable for a child of Holl's age. Thus it is through the narrator's language that the reader is awarded one of the most intimate and most upsetting insights into Holl's inner life, his desire to take the place of the dead infant and so escape the brutality to which he is subjected. Positive emotions, too, are conveyed to the reader in an idiom unassimilable to the consciousness of an ill-educated adolescent. Holl's reaction to Helga, the temporary employee who exposes the inhumanity of his surroundings, is depicted in a manner that suggests a certain degree of literary construction: 'Holl wäre am liebsten in die Frau gesprungen, um neu aus ihr herausschlüpfen zu können, und gleichzeitig schlürfte er den Anblick löffelweise in sich hinein' (*ST*, p. 149). Both the metaphorical language, interestingly suggestive of incorporative identification, and the play with linguistic signifiers in the eye-rhyme of 'schlüpfen' and 'schlürfen' draw attention to the presence of a narrator versed in the techniques of literary description. These passages correspond manifestly to Cohn's concept of psycho-narration, as Holl's thoughts and emotions are reformulated in the narrator's more sophisticated idiom.

Further reflection may also reveal the use of narrated monologue, which appeared to enable Holl briefly to speak his own words, to be complicit in this process of incorporation. Within the portrayal of consciousness, the degree to which the narrator distances herself from the characters may vary greatly, from the dissonant narrator, who maintains her own syntax and vocabulary to transmit the characters' thoughts (Cohn, p. 29), to the consonant narrator whose language is tinged to varying degrees by the characters' idioms (Cohn, p. 33). Thus several passages that appear to be rendered in narrated monologue may actually deny Holl his own language, as his story is incorporated into the narrative of the third-person narrator. This is, for example, the case in the description of the Bäuerin's exposition of Holl as a bed-wetter, described as 'eine große Gemeinheit. Es war ja schon eine Gemeinheit, daß Holl sein Gewand nicht in der Stube haben durfte' (*ST*, p. 38). The repetition of 'Gemeinheit' indicates a childish response to this injustice in language which would appear to belong to Holl, an impression which is strengthened by the use of the Austrianism 'Gewand' to refer to clothes. However, this outburst is both preceded and followed by language clearly to be attributed to the narrator, such as the metaphoric description of his situation: 'obwohl

er die Stiege hinunterging, kam es ihm vor, als würde er mit einer schweren Last einen immer steiler ansteigenden Berg hinaufgetrieben' (*ST*, p. 38). This framing of 'Holl's' speech suggests that the reader is confronted, not with narrated monologue using Holl's own words, but rather with a case of consonant narration, where the narrator incorporates elements of Holl's language into his own discourse.[81]

The specific forms of psycho-narration and narrated monologue employed to reveal Holl's inner life consequently cause his story to be 'swallowed up' by the narrator's discourse and incorporated into his narrative. Far from representing the 'identity-at-a-distance' idealised by Silverman, the novel's narration of Holl's finds closer correspondence with the incorporative model of identification flagged up by both Silverman and Fuss as extremely problematic. Turning to the Freudian model of identification, Fuss emphasises the potentially violent aspect of identification based on a cannibalistic oral sadism (Fuss, p. 34). In reference to 'Totem und Tabu', Fuss contends that 'all active identifications, including positive ones, are monstrous assassinations: The Other is murdered and orally incorporated before being entombed inside the subject' (Fuss, p. 34). Unlike heteropathic identification, which accepts the difference between the subject and the other, the incorporative nature of *Schöne Tage*'s identificatory structure denies Holl his own subjectivity, involving 'a degree of symbolic violence, a measure of temporary mastery and possession' (Fuss, p. 9). The narrator hereby assumes a certain 'mastery' over Holl, as the incorporation of the figure into his narrative negates Holl's status as a subject, rendering him the perpetual object of the narrator's discourse. It is thus only in this capacity as an object that Holl is presented to the reader, preventing any possibility of inter-subjective identification with this protagonist.

The form of identification encouraged by the novel may further be seen to follow a Hegelian dialectic, seeking both to preserve and destroy the main protagonist through his incorporation into the narrator's discourse. Hegel identifies in an early work the *Herr/Knecht* relationship as a means of explaining human interaction and locates subjectivity or 'Selbstbewußtsein' in the recognition the subject receives from the other.[82] As both subjects struggle to assert themselves, their relationship is shaped by the fact that 'sie sich selbst und einander durch den Kampf auf Leben und Tod

---

[81] Cohn notes the difficulty in distinguishing between these two narrative modes. Cohn, p. 33.

[82] Georg Wilhelm Friedrich Hegel, *Werke*, ed. by Eva Moldenhauer and Karl Markus Michel, 20 vols (Frankfurt a. M.: Suhrkamp, 1970), III: *Phänomenologie des Geistes*, p. 145.

bewähren'.[83] In this conception of subjectivity, the subject (*Herr*) finds itself paradoxically dependent on the destruction of the other (*Knecht*) and on its simultaneous preservation, otherwise 'the survivor, unable to be "recognized" by the dead adversary, cannot realize and reveal his humanity'.[84]

Whilst making no explicit reference to Hegel, Jessica Benjamin's concept of identification draws on his conception of a simultaneous negation and incorporation, suggesting that 'the loved one is continually being destroyed, but its survival means that that we can eat our reality and have it too'.[85] The paradoxical simultaneity of destruction and preservation of the object, which has informed several psychoanalytic approaches to identification,[86] is thus played out in the novel's narrative structures, as Holl is incorporated into the narrative and consequently negated as a subject. Fuss further notes the colonialist tendencies of this form of identification, claiming that 'Identification [...] is in itself an imperial process, a form of violent appropriation in which the Other is deposed and assimilated into the lordly domain of Self' (Fuss, p. 145). Thus the narrator may be considered to 'colonise' Holl's subjectivity with all the connotations of violence implied by this historical process.

This further manifests itself in the widespread absence of the first person, patently at odds with conventions surrounding the autobiographical project. Whilst Innerhofer has vehemently rejected readings of his novel as pure autobiography,[87] the clear grounding of his work in his own childhood experiences has unsurprisingly led critics to assign *Schöne Tage* to this genre. Indeed, a great proportion of the novel's reception is preoccupied with the question of the novel's authenticity, 'ob die Schilderung, die der Landarbeitersohn Franz Innerhofer von den ländlichen Verhältnissen […] auch stimmt'.[88] Renate Lachinger stresses the significance of narrative perspective in the creation of this 'hochgradig autobiographischer Neorealismus', which she identifies as a sub-genre of the *Anti-Heimat* novel, arguing that

> durch die Verlagerung des 'point of view' ins Innere des Romanhelden wird ein
> wichtiges Instrument der Sympathiesteuerung betätigt, das für den

---

[83] Ibid, p. 148.

[84] Alexandre Kojève, *Introduction to the Reading of Hegel: Lectures on* Phenomenology of the Spirit, ed. by Allan Bloom, trans. by James H. Nichols, Jr. (Ithaca; London: Cornell University Press, 1969), p. 8.

[85] Jessica Benjamin, *Like Subjects, Love Objects: Essays on Recognition and Sexual Difference* (New Haven; London: Yale University Press, 1995), p. 45.

[86] Fuss comments on the influence of Hegelian dialectics on psychoanalytic and existentialist conceptions of identification. Fuss, p. 145. Lacan himself, despite his ambiguous relationship to Hegelian philosophy, states that psychoanalysis is indebted to Hegel's phenomenology, Lacan, 'The Function and Field of Speech and Language in Psychoanalysis', in *Écrits*, pp. 30-113 (p. 80).

[87] See Tichy, p. 145.

[88] Ross, 'Der Bauer als Bösewicht'.

Rezeptionsvorgang wesentlich ist. Die personale Erzählsituation begünstigt auch die Wirkung jenes gelegentlich als "hochgradig autobiographischer Neorealismus" bezeichneten Alltagsrealismus, der schockiert und desillusioniert.[89]

The obvious focus placed on the novel's autobiographical basis in its contemporary reception appears to confirm Lachinger's contention, yet gives rise to further questioning of its refusal to convey the 'personale Erzählsituation' through a first-person narrative.

Whilst not entirely absent from the novel, the use of the first-person is extremely restricted, occurring only sporadically. Although there are twenty-two instances of first-person narration in the novel, the vast majority of these are limited to a single phrase or sentence, embedded in the narrator's discourse and functioning, in effect, as quoted monologue:

> Seitdem mußte er jedesmal, wenn er sie sah, daran denken, daß er an jenem Morgen geglaubt hatte, das ist niemand anderer als der Teufel […] und im nächsten Augenblick, wann habe ich das letzte Mal gültig gebeichtet? Und so fuhr er mit dem Milchschlitten auf das zottige Gestalt los. (*ST*, p. 100)

Indeed, in most cases, the use of the first-person reveals itself to be tagged thought, introduced or followed by a verb of perception: 'Selbst wenn es mir herunten spät wird, denkt er, traue ich mich immer noch in den obersten Stall' (*ST*, p. 82). The impression of Holl 'speaking out', expressing his own thoughts, is thus tempered by the constant presence of the narrator, reminding the reader of his ultimate control over the narrative.

Moreover, there appears to be little inherent logic in its application, as there is nothing that could be seen to unite these episodes thematically or psychologically. Thoughts rendered in the first-person range from worries about unfinished homework (*ST*, p. 78) through angry reflections on his betrayal by society (*ST*, pp. 144-46) to patricidal intention (*ST*, p. 105). The switch into the first person thus appears largely unmotivated, preventing its equation with, for example, heightened emotion or an increased self-awareness. Far from encouraging identification with Holl, the irregularity of these passages may in fact distance the reader from him, as the appearance in the novel appears to disturb the otherwise consistent flow of the narrator's discourse. This sensation is reinforced by Holl's unsophisticated idiom, which contrasts greatly with the

---

[89] Renate Lachinger, *Der österreichische Antiheimatroman: eine Untersuchung am Beispiel von Franz Innerhofer, Gernot Wolfgruber, Michael Scharang und Elfriede Jelinek* (unpublished doctoral thesis, University of Salzburg, 1985), p. 209.

narrator's more literary register. Thus the most sustained passage in the first-person conveys Holl's frustration with the injustice of rural society in a highly repetitive, unsophisticated manner:

> Ich werde ihr alles sagen, alles […] das mit dem Arzt sage ich, das von Bedoschick sage ich und daß sie immer gesagt haben, ich dürfte einmal in die Hauptschule gehen, und dann hat er auf einmal gesagt, Hauptschulen sind nichts. Und das mit dem Gänseteich und das vom Taufpaten sage ich. (*ST*, p. 144)

This cumulative structure and the repetition of 'und das mit […] sage ich' give the clear impression of a child so overwhelmed by his emotions that he is incapable of giving clear expression to them. Clearly contrasting with the eloquence of the narrator, then, the novel's use of the first-person serves, in fact, to reinforce the superiority of the narrator, confirming his ideality in the mind of the reader.

The reader's identification with Holl is thus a troubled one, forcing the reader into a paradoxical situation whereby she is encouraged to identify with both the oppressed character and his linguistic oppressor, the narrator. This identificatory structure thus prevents the reader identifying with Holl 'at a distance', as she is encouraged to align herself with the narrator and his identificatory object as one. The concept that the novel's activation of identification with a socially devalued subject functions to challenge dominant cultural values must thus be regarded as a deceptive falsity, as the 'despised' subject is neutralised through his assimilation into the reader's self. Far from providing Holl and his social contemporaries with a voice, the novel's narrative may be seen to repeat the power structures enacted at the diegetic level, separating the oppressed characters from the privileges of the symbolic order through the imposition of a linguistic disenfranchisement.

LINGUISTIC DISENFRANCHISEMENT

The language/power nexus is repeatedly exposed in Innerhofer's novel as a guarantor of patriarchal mastery over the linguistically disenfranchised. The rural workers' lack of access to language is frequently highlighted and their misery is seen to stem from the fact that 'sie hatten keine Worte, keine Sprache, um [ihr Elend] auszudrücken' (*ST*, p. 22). The involuntary nature of this silence finds its roots in an unspoken prohibition imposed by the *Bauer*, who himself claims linguistic hegemony 'weil er ihnen durch

seine bloße Anwesenheit einfach die Sprache verschlug' (*ST*, p. 138).[90] Thus the servants must content themselves with impotent gestures and outbursts of violence, whilst the Bauer uses language to give orders, admonish/discipline the workers and spread vicious gossip about his adversaries. The violent nature of this linguistic power is further stressed, as it is revealed as a further means of oppression against which the workers have no weapon: 'obwohl sie jetzt zu fünft dem Bauer gegenüberstanden, schlug er sie mit bloßen Worten auseinander' (*ST*, p. 18). The interchangeability of verbal and physical violence is particularly evident in the relationship between Holl and his father. Indeed, as the novel progresses and Holl gains in physical strength, the Bauer relies exclusively on verbal attacks (*ST*, p. 174), which prove to be more effective, '[denn] was konnte Holl gegen eine solche Sprechweise ausrichten?' (*ST*, p. 171). Thus language is established as a means of oppression, whereby those in power make use of language to control and suppress their subordinates, denying them equal linguistic rights.

The formation of a linguistic hierarchy at both a diegetic and a formal level is further revealed to be a key factor in maintaining the powers of the symbolic order. At the level of the diegesis the representatives of the symbolic order, the wealthy farmer and his wife, the priest, the teacher and headmaster etc., have greater access to language than others, as their discourse is present throughout the novel. The underlying linguistic inequality is highlighted in Holl's indignation at Father Brunner's long tirades in which he laments his difficult life, as Holl notes bitterly that neither he nor the other workers have the right to indulge in such discussions, although their complaints would be infinitely more justifiable (*ST*, p. 135). This linguistic hegemony is reinforced through the narrative presentation of their discussions. Whereas Holl is denied his own language, instead being swallowed up by the narrator's discourse, the novel's most powerful figures are permitted to speak in their own words through direct and indirect speech. Direct speech itself is relatively rare within the novel and is almost exclusively reserved for the farmer and his wife. Here it manifests itself most frequently in the form of orders '"Da bleibst! Du wirst heut arbeiten. Zur Strafe"' (*ST*, p. 51) or in the humiliation and linguistic subjugation of Holl '"Gell. Was hat die Lehrerin in der zweiten Klasse in dein Zeugnis geschrieben?" Darauf die Antwort zu verweigern hätte Handgreiflichkeiten zur Folge gehabt, also sagte er lieber, was die Lehrerin in sein Zeugnis geschrieben hat' (*ST*, p. 62). Here the shift from the *Bäuerin*'s direct speech to

---

[90] The violent undertones of 'verschlagen' are unmistakable.

the reported reply of Holl underlines his lack of linguistic power, as his language is controlled and regulated by those in authority as a means of maintaining his subordinate status.

Far more common, indeed often commented upon by critics,[91] is the use of indirect speech which peppers the novel's narrative. Again, this form of discourse is dominated by those representatives of symbolic power, confirming Holl's assertion that 'alle, die Besitz und Ansehen hatten, redeten wie der Bauer und gaben überall den Ton an' (*ST*, p. 171). Thus, the policemen's intimidation of Holl into giving a statement implicating one of the more sympathetic farm workers in a petty theft is rendered through indirect speech (*ST*, pp. 182-3), whilst the priest (*ST*, pp. 134-5) and the *Bäuerin* (*ST*, p. 25) are equally permitted to express themselves in this manner. In addition to this conventional use of indirect speech which does not exceed more than a few lines, there are also extended passages of reported speech whose length marks a clear departure from narrative conventions. These passages are exclusively attributed to the *Bauer*, the only character to enjoy such verbal freedom, as he repeatedly recounts episodes from his own life and malicious gossip about others. In stark contrast to Holl's enforced silence, the *Bauer* is able to narrate his own life, in his own words, placing him in a position of linguistic superiority over the others, who merely figure as listeners (*ST*, p. 166).

Thus the structures of focalisation, which engender an incorporative identification with Holl, rest on a denial of his linguistic liberty and consequently separate him from the privileges of the symbolic. Lacanian theory repeatedly insists on the centrality of the acquisition of language in the subject's formation, without which she may not enter into the symbolic. To deny Holl the ability to speak for himself, is therefore to refuse him full access to the symbolic and thus to prevent his recognition as a valid subject. Through her identification with Holl the reader is thus forced into complicity with the novel's oppressive forces which seek to deny him subjectivity, 'aus ihm einen vollkommen willenlosen Menschen zu machen' (*ST*, p. 120). Identification across class fails here to bring about the re-valorisation of the devalued subject, promoted by Silverman as the greatest potential of identification. Instead it serves to reinforce Holl's separation from linguistic and therefore symbolic power, underlining his lack of autonomy and freedom.

---

[91] Paul Kruntorad comments that 'Wo andere sich am Dialog oder inneren Monolog versuchen würden, greift er zur Technik der indirekten Rede.' Kruntorad, 'Das Drängen nach Mitteilung'.

CONCLUSION

Schöne Tage and its filmic adaptation seem, on the surface, to run two very different identificatory trajectories. The restriction of focalisation in Innerhofer's novel appears to posit Holl as the sole identificatory object, who absorbs all the reader's attention. By contrast, Lehner's adaptation apparently extends identification beyond the main protagonist, shedding light on the inner lives of a multitude of characters. Yet closer examination of the film's structures of alignment, informed by psychoanalytic accounts of cinematic identification, exposes a narrowing of the identificatory process, which works retroactively to reveal a more problematic aspect in its literary source. The film's activation of a single identification with the camera, which overrides any secondary identification with the film's on-screen protagonists, draws attention to the problem of narrative mediation in both versions, which contains wide-reaching implications for the novel's purported social function.

Forcefully contradicting Ulrich Greiner's claim that 'das Erstaunliche ist, dass ein Erzähler gar nicht in Erscheinung tritt: die Geschichte erzählt sich selber',[92] the narrator of *Schöne Tage* reveals himself not only to be present but, indeed, to be the main focus of the reader's identificatory investments. Koppensteiner's remark that 'eine Identifikationsmöglichkeit mit dem Romanhelden [ist] auch amerikanischen Studenten möglich, ganz gleich ob sie aus einem ländlichen oder städtischen Erfahrungsbereich kommen'[93] inadvertently reveals a tendency noted elsewhere. Both Greiner and Tichy have drawn attention to public (and critical) fascination with Innerhofer and his semi-autobiographical protagonist, founded on the allure of the 'foreign', exotic element of their experiences.[94] Yet, as Tichy notes, this response to the novel stands in the way of Innerhofer's wish 'ein Panorma gesellschaftlicher Verhältnisse darzustellen',[95] detracting from the work's attempted social criticism. The reader's pleasure, then, appears to be dependent on a simultaneous activation of distance and proximity. Innerhofer's third-person narrator fulfils both functions admirably, at once providing intimate access to the world of the rural underclass, whilst offering himself up as an alternative, superior identificatory object. In aligning herself with the narrator, the reader assures herself of her own cultural value, guaranteed by the access to symbolic power that the narrator embodies. In terms of Silverman's concept of the re-

---

[92] Greiner, p. 114.
[93] Koppensteiner, p. 11.
[94] Greiner, p. 113.
[95] Tichy, p. 154.

valorisation of culturally repudiated subjects, the identificatory structures of both versions may be judged somewhat lacking, as any challenge to the value system of the cultural screen is negated by the viewer's ultimate identification with the camera/narrator.

Lehner's adaptation compels a reassessment of the many claims that Innerhofer's novel 'bringt [die Wirklichkeit] zur Sprache, gibt dem Leiden Ausdruck, dem Schweigen Worte'.[96] Whilst the novel clearly sheds light on the shocking living conditions experienced by generations of agricultural labourers, it is doubtful whether this 'Dokument einer individuellen Befreiung vielleicht auch einen Anstoss für eine kollektive zu geben vermag'.[97] In both novel and film, language emerges not as key to emancipation but as weapon of further oppression. Innerhofer's 'allerpersönlichste[s] Hochdeutsch', praised by Karin Struck as a means of politicising the novel's critique of society,[98] perpetuates the widespread (linguistic) disenfranchisement of rural Austria, denying rather than according a voice to its underclasses.

The desire to attribute a wider social function to literary and filmic representations haunts reception of the *Anti-Heimat* sub-genre. Zeyringer, for example, contends that 'in dem Anti-Heimatroman der siebziger Jahre […] wird für die sprachlose, unterdrückte unterste soziale Schicht Partei ergriffen',[99] positing a philanthropic impetus behind the movement, which far exceeds the limits of literary representation. Connecting the sub-genre to the increased movement between Austria's rural and urban populations frequently attributed to the 1960s and 1970s, Weiss is equally eager to emphasise 'der positive Aspekt der Befreiung von dämonischen Zwängen und der Befreiung zu einer von der Zukunft geforderten größeren Mobilität' as the greatest contribution made by *Anti-Heimat* literature.[100] Innerhofer's novel, re-read in the light of Lehner's adaptation, casts doubt on the positive performative function attributed to this genre, forcing the reader (and viewer) to question the basis of her interaction with the texts.

[96] Lüdke, p. 3.
[97] M.K., 'Befreiung von der Sprachlosigkeit'.
[98] Karin Struck, 'Für die Arbeit gezeugt', *Der Spiegel*, 9 December 1974.
[99] Zeyringer, *Innerlichkeit und Öffentlichkeit*, p. 230.
[100] Weiss, p. 302.

CHAPTER III: THE VIOLENCE OF VISUAL ANTHROPOLOGY
GERHARD ROTH AND XAVER SCHWARZENBERGER'S *DER STILLE OZEAN*

Critical discourse has repeatedly sought to locate Gerhard's Roth's novel, *Der Stille Ozean*,[1] within the city/province dialectic deemed to be at the heart of *Heimatliteratur* and its post-war manifestation, the *Anti-Heimatroman*. Identified by Karlheinz Rossbacher as a key characteristic of the *Heimat* genre, the division between urban and rural space belongs to a wider system of ideals, whereby the former assumes an unequivocally negative value in the traditional *Heimatroman*.[2] Whilst the city is associated with moral depravity, poverty and cold anonymity, the rural village represents 'Geborgenheit, Geschlossenheit, Weite und Gewachsenheit, Ganzheit und Selbstversorgung'.[3] From the 1960s onwards, however, literary depictions of rural Austria have been seen to expose this myth of the province as a 'heile Welt', destroying the image of an idyllic landscape and revealing 'eine Anti-Gemeinschaft als soziales Gefängnis, in dem die Unterdrückten hoffnungslos in der von Geburt an festgesetzten Rolle gefangen sind'.[4]

The city/province dichotomy further informs the so-called 'Ingroup'/ 'Outgroup' formation, in which the rural community constitutes the positively connoted 'Ingroup', with any outsiders, frequently of urban origin, forming the 'Outgroup'.[5] Rossbacher describes the 'Weg eines Fremden zum Dazugehörenden' in the *Heimatroman* as a long and difficult process, commenting that 'seine Stationen sind: Aneignung von Sitte, Brauch, Geschichte des Dorfes'.[6] In other words, the urban outsider must assimilate himself to the culture and values of the rural community in order to be accepted into the 'Ingroup'. Various possible outcomes present themselves: the stranger may be successfully integrated into the community; he may return to the city with a more enlightened view of the world, or he may simply upset the rural order, for which he is inevitably punished.[7] Roth's novel plays down the antithesis conventionally associated with these oppositions, for the antipathy between the urban outsider and the rural community into which he enters is largely absent in *Der Stille*

---

[1] Gerhard Roth, *Der Stille Ozean* (Frankfurt a. M.: Fischer, 1980). Further references to the novel will be provided in the main body of the text in parentheses, identified as *SO*.
[2] Karlheinz Rossbacher, *Heimatbewegung und Heimatkunst: zu einer Literatursoziologie der Jahrhundertwende* (Stuttgart: Klett, 1975), p. 144.
[3] Ibid.
[4] Klaus Zeyringer, *Österreichische Literatur seit 1945: Überblicke, Einschnitte, Wegmarken* (Innsbruck: Studienverlag, 2008), p. 135.
[5] Rossbacher, pp. 182-84.
[6] Ibid, p. 197.
[7] Ibid, p. 187.

Ozean, where the main protagonist, Ascher, is met with general acceptance. The lack of antagonism between Ascher and the villagers he encounters, along with his seeming acceptance into the Ingroup have frequently and contradictorily been cited as proof of the novel's adherence to both *Heimat* and *Anti-Heimat* principles. Whilst Andrea Kunne regards Ascher's ultimate decision to remain in the village as a parallel to the rehabilitation of the city-dweller typical of the more optimistic *Heimatroman*,[8] Cramer points to his suicide in *Landläufiger Tod*, a sequel of sorts, as evidence of a failed attempt to 'heal' himself.[9]

Roth's refusal to provide a simplified attribution of positive and negative values to these poles prevents a definite location of the novel within either the *Heimat* or the *Anti-Heimat* genre. Voigt's contention that *Der Stille Ozean* 'hat wenig mit zeitgenössischer Heimat- oder Antiheimatliteratur zu tun'[10] typifies the confused response to the novel, which accepts the impossibility of any clear classification whilst nevertheless seeking its taxonomical terminology almost exclusively within the *Heimat/Anti-Heimat* opposition. In his attempt to categorise this work Wendelin Schmidt-Dengler, not usually known for his hesitancy in forming judgements, compares the novel not only to the *Heimatroman* and the *Anti-Heimatroman* but further posits its similarity to the *Bildungsroman* and the crime novel.[11] Resistant as it is to simple generic analysis, then, *Der Stille Ozean* invites a different methodological approach, one which may relocate those elements reminiscent of *Heimat-* and *Anti-Heimatliteratur* in a more productive discourse.

Roth himself describes *Die Archive des Schweigens*, the cycle of works to which *Der Stille Ozean* belongs, as an attempt to provide Austria with an 'alternative history' which would counteract the collective amnesia characteristic of the Second Republic: 'Ich schreibe ja keine neue österreichische Geschichte, sondern ich schreibe […] gegen die österreichische Geschichtsschreibung'.[12] This reaction against dominant historical thinking in Roth's work involves three distinct, yet interrelated methodological

---

[8] Andrea Kunne, *Heimat im Roman: Last oder Lust? Transformationen eines Genres in der österreichischen Nachkriegsliteratur* (Amsterdam; Atlanta: Rodopi, 1991), p. 241.

[9] Sibylle Cramer, 'Das Gedächtnis ist die letzte Instanz von Moral und Recht: zu dem Zyklus *Archive des Schweigens*', *Text und Kritik*, 128 (1995), 110-21 (p. 115).

[10] Friedrich Voigt, 'Gerhard Roth', in *Kritisches Lexikon der Gegenwartsliteratur* (Munich: Heinz Ludwig Arnold, 2002), p. 11.

[11] Wendelin Schmidt-Dengler, *Bruchlinien: Vorlesungen zur österreichischen Literatur* (Salzburg: Residenz, 1995), pp. 414-15.

[12] Günther Fisher, 'Ein Werktagsgespräch mit Gerhard Roth', *Text und Kritik*, 128 (1995), 3-9 (p. 5).

approaches, which the author describes as archaeological excavation,[13] scientific dissection[14] and ethnographic investigation.[15] Whilst all three of these approaches may be detected within *Der Stille Ozean*, the novel's basis in Roth's own observations and photographs of his time in rural Austria renders particularly pertinent the role of ethnography, and in particular visual ethnography.

Drawing heavily on Roth's own experience in rural Styria, the novel combines autobiographical detail[16] with the fictional account of Ascher, a doctor from Graz who seeks refuge in the village of Obergreith after a case of medical malpractice, of which he has been acquitted. Introducing himself as a biologist in order to avoid detection, Ascher lives amongst the rural inhabitants, observing their everyday life and listening to their personal histories. The work's combination of fiction with Roth's personal experiences of Obergreith, where he lived from 1977 to 1986, finds further inspiration in the photographic record of his stay, published in edited form in the first volume of the cycle, *Im tiefen Österreich*.[17] Several critics have identified Roth's photographic study as the source of 'die Schärfe [...] der Beobachtungen'[18] and the 'präzise, detailbessessene Beschreibungen' in *Der Stille Ozean*.[19]

A dual reading of the two works does indeed reveal many of the novel's verbal images to correspond to photographs from *Im tiefen Österreich*. Thus, for example, the description of the fox:

> Es war ein noch junger Fuchs. Sein Fell leuchtete rot, der Bauch und die Schnauze waren weiß, auf den Läufen und Ohren hatte er schwarze Flecken. Seine Zunge hing aus dem Maul wie eine große Himbeere. (*SO*, p. 62)

corresponds in every detail to the photograph on page 175 of *Im tiefen Österreich*, which depicts in close-up a young fox killed during a hunt. An ekphrastic quality is further

---

[13] See Walter Hinck, 'Literarische Archäologie Österreichs: zu dem Zyklus *Archive des Schweigens*', *Text und Kritik*, 128 (1995), 97-109 and Cramer, pp. 110 and 112.

[14] Gerhard Roth : 'Ich wollte in den Landstrich hineinsehen, in jede Zelle wie durch ein Mikroskop.' Interview with Robert Weichinger, 'Anatomie des österreichischen Gehirns: Gerhard Roth im Gespräch mit Robert Weichinger', in *Materialien zu* Die Archive des Schweigens, ed. by Uwe Wittstock (Frankfurt a. M.: Fisher, 1992), pp. 67-81 (p. 72).

[15] Gerhard Roth, 'Reise durch das Bewußtsein: Ein Monolog von Gerhard Roth über *Die Archive des Schweigens*, aufgezeichnet von Kristina Pfoser-Schweig', in *Materialien*, ed. by Wittstock, pp. 82-94 (p. 83).

[16] 'Autobiographisch nicht im Sinne einer direkten Schilderung des eigenen Lebens, sondern des Ausdrucks selbst erfahrener Irritationen, Ängste, Wünsche und Fantasien.' Voigt, p.2

[17] Gerhard Roth, *Im tiefen Österreich* (Frankfurt a. M.: Fischer, 1990). Further references to the text will be provided in the main body of the text in parentheses, identified as *TÖ*.

[18] Voigt, p. 9.

[19] Helga Schreckenberger, 'Mit der Kamera erzählen: Xaver Schwarzenbergers Verfilmung von Gerhard Roths Roman *Der Stille Ozean*', *Modern Austrian Literature*, 34 (2001), 79-87 (p. 80).

discernible in a wide variety of the novel's descriptions, whose subjects range from the landscape (*SO*, p. 63/ *TÖ*, p. 175), to the frost and snow (*SO*, pp. 80, 98/ *TÖ*, pp. 179-81) and to the descriptions of the villagers themselves (*SO*, pp. 35, 72, 146/ *TÖ*, pp. 126, 95, 135). The obvious link between the two works, along with their subsequential ordering within the cycle, endows these verbal images with an element of authenticity, encouraging the reader to regard Roth's own quasi-ethnographic enquiries as the real-life basis for the novel. Despite the novel's claim that 'Bei den Figuren des Romans handelt es sich nicht um die tatsächlichen Personen der angegebenen Orte', then, the work's paratextual context clearly points to an ethnographic foundation to the novel.

In her analysis of Xaver Schwarzenberger's 1983 adaptation,[20] Helga Schreckenberger comments that the prevalence of the visual in Roth's novel almost demands 'eine visualisierte Nacherzählung', noting with some relief that the director selects to avoid this route.[21] However, as Schreckenberger herself points out, the film is 'unverkennbar der Film eines Kameramanns',[22] manifestly retaining the thematisation of looking central to its literary source.[23] As with the novel, it is possible to discern several features within the film which correspond to practices common to the ethnographic discipline. However, its transformation of the triadic relationship between observer, subject, and reader/viewer forces a re-evaluation of the anthropological discourse at work in the novel, in particular the power structures inherent in the ethnographic project. Before approaching the works themselves, it may be useful to consider briefly the major theoretical preoccupations of (visual) anthropology, in order to explore the relation of the ethnographer to the study's subjects, the power structures at work in these relationships and the role of the visual in establishing and cementing these systems of power.

VISUAL ANTHROPOLOGY

Tracing its roots back to the very beginnings of cinema with Lumière's footage of workers leaving the factory, visual anthropology has undergone many theoretical and methodological changes whilst struggling to position itself within the wider

---

[20] *Der Stille Ozean*, dir. by Xaver Schwarzenberger (ORF, 1983).

[21] Schreckenberger, p. 80.

[22] *Der Stille Ozean* was Schwarzenberger's directorial debut. He had found previous acclaim as cinematographer to Rainer Werner Fassbinder, to whom this film is dedicated.

[23] Schreckenberger, p. 80.

anthropological field. Given the great variations in approach to ethnographic filming,[24] it would be impossible to refer to visual anthropology as a stable, consistent mode of study. However, a consideration of current anthropological theory may provide an overview of the characteristics and formal features that define the discipline and flag up the power relationships encoded in its visual representations.

It may perhaps appear somewhat self-evident to state that the most significant feature of visual anthropology is its departure from the written form. This shift in medium from the essay form of traditional anthropology, however, is decisive in determining many of the discipline's most significant characteristics. Thus, critical discussions of visual and written ethnography frequently refer back to an essential difference assumed to exist between the two. The former, it is believed, profits from the aptitude of the visual medium to provide (a surplus of) detail, yet lacks the capacity of the latter to expand abstract concepts and create theoretical structures based on the ethnographic information gathered.[25] Whilst anthropological monographs have conventionally selected evidence in order to explore, for example, the laws of kinship and the distribution of wealth, visual anthropology concerns itself more with an abundance of detail, focusing on the more concrete elements of gesture, costume and language.[26] W. G. Sebald's comment on Roth's work 'daß es weniger darauf ankommt, Problemkomplexe reduktionistisch auf einen Begriff zu bringen, als sich ein Denkbild von ihnen zu machen' suggests parallels between *Der Stille Ozean*'s mode of enquiry and the ethnographic project.[27]

The surplus of detail in ethnographic film feeds into a wider theoretical impulse that encapsulates the aims of the discipline, namely its insistence on a 'non-selective approach' to ethnographic recording. Non-selectivity has become the mantra of visual anthropology, whose practitioners proclaim that '[o]ne must "surrender to the data", avoiding selective emphases and preconceptions about what is important'.[28] Under these strictures, any form of intervention is regarded as counter-productive to the

---

[24] For a detailed discussion of the genesis of visual ethnography see Anna Grimshaw, *The Ethnographer's Eye: Ways of Seeing in Modern Anthropology* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2001).
[25] See for example Jean-Dominique Lajoux, 'Ethnographic Film and History', in *Principles of Visual Anthropology*, ed. by Paul Hockings, 3rd edn (Berlin; New York: de Gruyter, 2003), pp. 163-80; David MacDougall, 'Beyond Observational Cinema', in *Principles of Visual Anthropology*, ed. by Hockings, pp. 115-32 (p.122).
[26] Mark McCarty, 'McCarty's Law and How to Break It', in *Principles of Visual Anthropology*, ed. by Hockings, pp. 69-75 (p.74).
[27] W. G. Sebald, 'In einer wildfremden Gegend: zu dem Roman *Landläufiger Tod*', in *Materialien*, ed. by Wittstock, pp. 164-79 (p. 169).
[28] John H. Weakland, 'Feature Films as Cultural Documents', in *Principles of Visual Anthropology*, ed. by Hockings, pp. 45- 67 (p. 55).

ethnographic project and is often described in correspondingly pejorative terms: 'audiences, even without the benefit of any real technical knowledge, sense the possibilities for bias, even fraud, in this selectivity'.[29] This rejection of selectivity finds its expression in the formal features of ethnographic film, which is marked by a preponderance of long shots and deep focus, providing a maximum level of visual detail and enabling the viewer to place the ethnographic subjects within their socio-geographical context. Combined with long stretches of unedited footage, these cinematographic elements seek to minimise the intervention of the ethnographic filmmaker or, indeed, efface his role altogether.

The dangers of positing an 'unnarrated' filmic document should be apparent from previous chapters and its problems have not escaped the notice of anthropological theoreticians. Since the 1970s, critical enquiry into visual anthropology has been concerned with establishing the role of the ethnographer within the power structures implied by a filmic mode of enquiry. Increasingly aware of the implications of the discipline's scopic regime,[30] visual anthropologists gradually expressed a desire to redress the balance of power which tips decisively in favour of the ethnographer-filmmaker. This theoretical unease found its practical counterpart in the transition from 'observational cinema' of the 1970s, a term coined by Colin Young to describe his approach to ethnographic film,[31] to later 'participatory cinema', which saw a transformation in the relationship of the ethnographer to the film's subjects.

The central disparity between observational and participatory cinema resides in the role of the ethnographer within the filming process, his level of involvement and interaction with the film's subjects. Whilst both theoretical camps insist upon the ethnographer's immersion into the studied culture as a prerequisite for adequate understanding of the subjects,[32] critical opinion diverges on the position of the ethnographer in the film itself. Observational cinema has come under repeated attack for the perceived absence of the ethnographer-filmmaker and the separation from the

---

[29] Paul Hockings, 'Conclusion: Ethnographic Filming and Anthropological Theory', in *Principles of Visual Anthropology*, ed. by Hockings, pp. 507-29 (p. 516).

[30] The term 'scopic regime' was coined by Christian Metz to designate an imposed visual order that determines how one sees and is seen. For example, within cinema's scopic regime the spectator's relationship to the observed is determined by 'the absence of the object seen'. Christian Metz, *The Imaginary Signifier: Psychoanalysis and the Cinema*, trans. by Celia Britton, Annwyl Williams, Ben Brewster and Alfred Guzzetti (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1982), p. 61.

[31] Colin Young, 'Observational Cinema', in *Principles of Visual Anthropology*, ed. by Hockings, pp. 99-113. This article was first published in 1975.

[32] Three months is commonly considered to be the minimum period before filming. See Timothy and Patsy Asch, 'Film in Ethnographic Research', in *Principles of Visual Anthropology*, ed. by Hockings, pp. 335-60 (p. 344).

film's subjects which this is believed to engender.[33] Addressing this issue, David MacDougall suggests that an approach which foregrounds the role of the ethnographer, rendering visible the filming process and the driving force behind it, could counteract the inherent scopic power of the filmmaker and empower the film's subjects by enabling them to enter into a communicative exchange with the ethnographer.[34] The divide between observational and participatory approaches to ethnographic film is thus reduced to a question of presence and absence, visibility and invisibility, where each term carries its own implications of power. In the context of *Der Stille Ozean*, then, the extent to which the reader/viewer can locate and identify with the source of the ethnographic gaze is of crucial importance and it is in this particular respect that Schwarzenberger's adaptation may shed light on the novel's ethnographic component.

FOCALISATION AND NON-SELECTIVE DESCRIPTION

Both works contain formal and thematic elements that suggest a proximity to the non-selective 'observational' approach, which seeks to efface the position of the ethnographer within the written/filmic account. Yet the structures of focalisation and the alignment of the reader/viewer's gaze in novel and film accord very different values to these efforts. This non-selectivity finds its most obvious expression in the novel's lengthy descriptions of the villagers and the surrounding landscape, which contain little in the way of guiding commentary. In particular, the introductory descriptions of the villagers display a marked similarity to the use of photography and film in the microanalysis of kinesics-based anthropology.[35] These descriptions are characterised by a great attention to detail, as the character's physical appearance and tics are subjected to close scrutiny:

> Ascher warf einen verstohlenen Blick auf Hofmeister […] Wenn Hofmeister sprach, arbeitete sein Körper automatisch mit. Beim Lachen krümmte er sich, bei Fragen hoben sich die Augenbrauen, wollte er jemandem stummes Einverständnis bezeigen, schloß er die Augen und nickte rasch hintereinander, beim Beschwichtigen zog er die Augenbrauen herunter, senkte den Kopf und stellt ihn etwas schief, dachte er nach, stand er kreuzhohl und streckte seinen

---

[33] MacDougall, p. 121.
[34] Ibid, p. 125.
[35] See Martha Davis, 'Film Projectors as Microscopes: Ray L. Birdwinstell and Microanalysis of Interaction (1955-1975)', *Visual Anthropology*, 17 (2001-2002), 39-49.

Spitzbauch heraus, um plötzlich beim Sprechen seinen Körper zu verbiegen. (*SO*, p. 9)

Yet these preliminary observations of the protagonists' physical traits are not accompanied by any explanatory commentary, leaving the reader to draw his own conclusions about their possible significance. In this respect, the novel deviates from Clifford Geertz's model of 'thick description', which combines ethnographic data with 'scientific imagination to bring us into touch with the lives of strangers'.[36] Geertz stresses the importance of the ethnographer's interpretative role, dismissing the unmediated presentation of data as 'thin description' that promotes a misleading image of anthropology as 'rather more of an observational and rather less of an interpretative activity than it really is'.[37] The lack of explicit interpretation in the novel's character sketches thus appear analogous to the (illusionary) effacing of the ethnographer in 'non-selective' description, as the observer's mediating role is concealed from the reader. This impression is strengthened by the latter's ignorance of Ascher's physical appearance, which remains unspecified throughout the novel, clearly marking Ascher as the invisible observer.

The privileging of visual information over abstract concepts typical of visual anthropology is closely connected with supposedly unmediated description in the novel's depiction of the landscape. Confirming critical opinion that Ascher 'ist derart [vom Wahrnehmungszwang] "besetzt", daß die Reflexion dabei verdrängt wird',[38] the work's portrayal of the Styrian countryside is suggestive of a silent, invisible observer. The sheer length of these descriptions frequently obscures any awareness of mediation, allowing the passages to assume an objective air:

Hühner gackerten. Neben einem Holzschuppen standen zwei Fässer mit rotgestrichenen Eisenreifen. Die Wiese um das Maisfeld war voll von Klee. Im Bauernhof hingen die Hosen an den Stulpen aufgehängt zwischen den Bäumen, von den Hemden baumelten die Ärmel herunter. Rund um das Haus standen kahle Apfelbäume, aber die Äpfel hingen noch an den nackten Zweigen. (*SO*, p. 30)

---

[36] Clifford Geertz, 'Thick Description: Towards an Interpretative Theory of Culture', in Geertz, *The Interpretation of Cultures: Selected Essays* (New York: Basic Books, 1973), pp. 3-30 (p. 16).

[37] Geertz, p. 9.

[38] Cegenias De Groot, *Arme Menschen: zur Darstellung der existentiellen und gesellschaftlichen Position des Menschen bei den österreichischen Autoren Gerhard Roth, Michael Scharang und Gernot Wolfgruber* (Hildesheim; New York; Zurich: Olms, 1988), p. 82.

The simple syntax of this passage points to a further facet of the novel's non-selective approach. Identifying the 'bescheidenen-schulaufsatzmäßigen Charakter' of the novel's language, Schmidt-Dengler comments that 'es ist so, als sollte sich nichts zwischen ihn [Ascher] und die beobachtete Materie, das heißt Landleben schieben.'[39] The avoidance of a more sophisticated idiom, then, serves to conceal further the mediating presence of the ethnographer.

However, Roth's persistent employment of verbs of perception enables the reader to easily identify Ascher as the observer of the scene, through whose consciousness all descriptions are filtered (e.g. SO, pp. 8, 10, 24, 34-5, 40, 73). Thus the passage above is introduced by a brief insight into Ascher's unease: 'Alles kam Ascher richtig vor, nur er selbst empfand sich als Störung. Er gehörte nicht hierher' (SO, p. 30). The shift to narrated monologue in the second sentence strengthens the reader's belief that he is gaining direct insight into Ascher's inner thoughts, encouraging him to regard the description that follows as a product of Ascher's observation. This assumption represents a conflation of perceptual and cognitive perspectives, against which French narratologist François Jost has warned. Jost proposes a theory of focalisation based on cinematic conceptions of looking that differentiates between ocularization, 'the relation between what the camera shows and what the characters are presumed to see' and focalisation, which designates 'the cognitive point of view adopted by the narrative'.[40] From the passage's focalisation and its resultant revelation of Ascher's mental processes the reader is led also to infer a subsequent ocularization, aligning the reader's gaze with that of the main protagonist on the initial basis of shared knowledge.

In a similar manner to *Schöne Tage*, Roth's novel presents its main protagonist as the sole diegetic focaliser, through whom all information is filtered. The reader is at no point awarded access to the inner lives of the remaining protagonists, relying exclusively on Ascher to provide details of their histories. In this function, Ascher appears to approximate more the role of the participant ethnographer, departing from an entirely non-selective stance. Unlike the more detached style of observational cinema, participatory ethnography is founded upon close interaction between the ethnographer and his subjects and, perhaps more significant for this discussion, between the ethnographer and the audience, since the role of the ethnographer remains visible

---

[39] Schmidt-Dengler, *Bruchlinien*, p. 415.

[40] François Jost, 'The Look: From Film to Novel. An Essay in Comparative Narratology', in *Companion to Film and Literature*, ed. by Robert Stam and Alessandra Raengo (Oxford: Blackwell, 2004), pp. 71-80 (p. 74).

throughout. Whilst the lack of true dialogue in the novel has been noted by critics,[41] it is nevertheless clear that the somewhat monologic oral histories provided by the rural protagonists are always directed towards an interlocutor, Ascher. It is through Ascher's interaction with the villagers that the reader is provided with ethnographic information which spans almost a century.[42] The emphasis placed on these oral histories, along with Ascher's mediating role, would thus seem to conform to Grimshaw's assertion that 'central to the new [participatory] style of film-making was the notion of conversation' whereby the ethnographer renounced his detached position in favour of a more intimate relationship with the study's subjects.[43]

His role nevertheless maintains a certain opacity, as the narrator repeatedly omits to provide Ascher's personal comment on even the most shocking of accounts, such as the treatment of the mentally ill (*SO*, pp. 43-44) or the appalling living conditions of the *Knechte* which persisted into the twentieth century (*SO*, pp. 73-4). This lack of interpretation in these passages highlights once more the novel's divergence from 'thick description', obscuring the mediating role of the focaliser *qua* ethnographer through its ostensibly observational form. The rendering of these oral accounts in indirect speech 'verstärkt den Eindruck des Protokollarischen',[44] as extended passages of reported speech replace potential dialogue, further effacing Ascher's position as ethnographer. Endowed with connotations of objectivity, the report form implies that characters are cited verbatim, an impression which is further reinforced by the sparing use of verbs of locution. The length of these passages, which frequently contain only a single marker of speech, clearly minimises Ascher's role as the source of the ethnographic gaze. Thus the wartime memories of one villager are introduced by a short passage of direct speech "'Aber glauben Sie mir", ereiferte er sich, "nach dem Kriegsende bin ich noch ein Jahr aus meinen Träumen aufgeschreckt […]"', followed immediately by a lengthy monologue in indirect speech which spans almost half a page (*SO*, p. 151). The reader is reminded of Ascher's role as interlocutor, and implied recorder, only at the end of this passage, when brief reference is made to the questions he poses.

Yet the reader is not entirely unaware of Ascher's linguistic intervention. In addition to the indicators of perception which introduce those descriptive sections, the

---

[41] See, for example, Kunne, p. 243 and Schreckenberger, p. 80.
[42] See, for example, *Der Stille Ozean*, pp. 33-35, 41-43.
[43] Grimshaw, *The Ethnographer's Eye*, p. 138.
[44] Kunne, p. 243.

reader is reminded of a controlling agent at various points in the narrative, which appear as 'lapses' in the non-selective approach. Thus one villager's account of a double suicide is revealed to be linguistically censored: 'Die beiden Töchter hätten, als sie "ledigerweise" schwanger geworden seien, Gift genommen (er sagte, sie hätten sich "abgefüttert"), weil die Männer nichts mehr hätten von ihnen wissen wollen' (*SO*, p. 43). Distance is created from the villager's speech first in the placing in inverted commas of '"ledigerweise"' and by the explicit admission of censorship, where the villager's informal expression is 'corrected' by a linguistically superior narrator. The predominance of Ascher's view throughout the novel leads the reader, here, to identify the main protagonist as the agent controlling the narrative's presentation, implying a complex relationship between narrator and focaliser.

Whilst there is no evidence within the text to suggest that Ascher is the novel's narrator, the distinction between narrator and focaliser is in no way as clear cut as that in *Schöne Tage*, for instance.[45] Roth's main protagonist, unlike Innerhofer's ill-educated child, possesses many of the qualities associated with a conventional third-person narrator. He is educated to a high degree, implying a developed linguistic ability; he observes the novel's remaining characters from a distance and has access to knowledge beyond their comprehension, demonstrated through his medical understanding of rabies. Whilst these qualities do not amount to omniscience, they do close the gap between the elevated position of the narrator and the novel's sole diegetic focaliser. Whilst it may be tempting to draw parallels between the invisible third-person narrator and the effaced non-selective ethnographer, the novel's constant focus through Ascher reminds the reader that it is he who sees (and hears) at all times. The absence of any narratorial commentary comparable, for example, to the historical information provided by *Schöne Tage*'s narrator, renders almost invisible the role of Roth's narrator, locating Ascher as the source of the gaze and of the narrative.

The identification of Ascher as the sole supplier of information is underscored by his omnipresence in the novel, for he is present and observing in all episodes belonging to the narrative present. Furthermore, the periods in which Ascher returns to the city represent a narratorial ellipsis, the narrative resuming only upon his return to the village, introduced by an indication of his absence: 'als er nach einer Woche

---

[45] Günter Blöcker views this blurring of narrator and focaliser as one of the novel's shortcomings. Blöcker, 'Ein kundiger Protokollant seelischer Irritationen: zu dem Roman *Der Stille Ozean*, in *Materialien*, ed. by Wittstock, pp. 135-38 (p. 136).

wiederkam' (*SO*, p. 79), 'als Ascher zwei Wochen später wiederkam' (*SO*, p. 195). The reader is thus aware of his compete dependence on Ascher's presence for the progression of the narrative and, indeed, for representation *per se*. Through this exclusivity of focalisation the reader finds his gaze persistently aligned with that of Ascher, encouraging an identification with this figure.

Constant focalisation through, and subsequent identification with one fictional character have been identified by Kaja Silverman as a form of literary suture, whereby the means of production (i.e. the writing process and the implied author behind it) are concealed.[46] In a manner similar to cinematic suture, Roth's use of the third person renders the reader aware of an unknown force which filters and controls the information provided in the novel, exposing non-selectivity as an illusion and disrupting the reader's imaginary sense of plenitude. However, the almost simultaneous location of this controlling gaze within the fiction permits the reader to identify with the observer, Ascher, and share in his scopic mastery. Within the power structures of the novel's ethnographic enquiry, the reader may thus be said to align himself with the ethnographer's gaze, profiting from the knowledge and power it offers.

NON-SELECTIVE SELECTIVITY?

In establishing Ascher as its predominant focaliser, the film also appears to encourage the spectator to align himself with this figure. Whilst his interaction with the villagers is sparse, Ascher frequently failing to answer their questions or merely providing monosyllabic answers, the viewer is aware that it is his participation in village life that motivates the observed subjects to disclose intimate information. Indeed, this interrogative ethnographic role is often explicit in its functioning, as Ascher poses the questions which then inspire monologues analogous to the oral histories provided in the novel. However, these ethnographic interviews are not highlighted on a cinematographic level by a conventional shot/reverse shot sequence, classic cinema's traditional means of implying conversation. During Ascher's conversation with the widow Egger, the camera cuts from a shot of the woman back to Ascher, reminding the viewer that he is the interlocutor whose questions have triggered these memories. However, as the camera returns to the widow, it rotates slowly round her face in close-

---

[46] Kaja Silverman, *The Subject of Semiotics* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1983), p. 244.

up, precluding a direct alignment of the ethnographic gaze with Ascher's visual perspective. The final shot in this sequence places the widow in the foreground of the frame with Ascher out of focus in the background, simultaneously reminding the spectator of his catalytic role and yet excluding him from the source of the gaze. Thus, the film mirrors the novel's use of brief conversation as a catalyst for a monologic account of the subjects' lives, yet does not replicate the identificatory structures of the novel, encouraging the viewer to locate the source of the ethnographic gaze outside the fiction.

This relocation of the gaze is further evident in the film's treatment of the landscape. In one regard the adaptation's aesthetic foundation could be seen to recreate the impression of non-selectivity generated by the novel's long descriptions. Whilst it must be remembered that the film is not a piece of ethnographic cinema but rather a work of fiction, it is evident that several elements of its cinematography correspond to the principles of non-selectivity. Thus the novel's extensive descriptions of the rural landscape find their filmic counterpart in the large number of establishing shots used by Schwarzenberger, where long shots from a static position establish in the viewer's mind the context in which the observed subjects operate. In her description of current ethnographic practice, Grimshaw indicates the importance accorded to the adequate portrayal of the surrounding landscape, which is believed to enable a deeper understanding of the subjects' characters and actions.[47] Thus, the viewer is introduced to Zeiner's wife in a long establishing shot, which places her in front of the farmhouse in the middle-ground of the frame. In the foreground lies a large pile of pumpkins, which Zeiner's wife is deseeding as Ascher and Zeiner emerge from the background. This positioning of Zeiner's wife firmly establishes the rural context in which she and her husband operate, highlighting the significance of manual labour and agriculture for their lives. At the same time, the static nature of the camera deflects the viewer's attention from its mediating presence and the associated element of selectivity.

The frequent use of deep focus in the film, conventionally associated with cinematic realism, further functions as a sign of minimal intervention. Writing in 1967, André Bazin praised depth of focus as a means of presenting the spectator with a form of filmic realism, contrasting it with traditional montage which 'only calls for him to follow his guide, to let his attention follow along smoothly with that of the director who

---

[47] Grimshaw, *The Ethnographer's Eye*, pp. 75-6.

will choose what he should see'.[48] Deep focus enables Schwarzenberger to reveal simultaneously several diegetic elements and suggest a particular relationship between them, without appearing to restrict the cinematic image through selection of characters or setting. In the scene depicting the hunters' return after the shooting of a healthy stray dog, Schwarzenberger employs deep focus to demonstrate the villagers' indifference towards violence. The quotidian nature of their aggression is revealed by the contrast between the shooting of the pumpkin scarecrow in the foreground, whose flesh spatters over the camera to horrific effect, and the jovial scene of the hunters enjoying refreshments in the background. The juxtaposition of their light-hearted mirth and sinister, unnecessary violence against an anthropomorphic figure suggests a latent aggression lurking beneath the amiable surface of the villagers.

The use of deep focus here not only functions pragmatically to enable this juxtaposition, but further serves to deny its cinematic construction. Presented with this image, the spectator believes that he himself has reached this judgement of the villagers, ignoring the arrangement of the pro-filmic elements by an invisible source. In the context of visual anthropology, this corresponds to MacDougall's conception of ethnographic cinema, in which '[b]y seeking to render faithfully the natural sounds, structure and duration of events, the filmmaker hopes to provide the viewer with sufficient evidence to judge for himself the film's larger analysis.'[49] In psychoanalytic terms, this evokes the sense of imaginary plenitude created to ensure the viewer finds pleasure in these images, believing himself to be the source of the gaze, unmediated by any controlling agent. In effacing the selective role of the invisible apparatus, then, Schwarzenberger creates for the viewer the illusory sense of mastery essential for his spectatorial pleasure.

A further component of the film's apparent adherence to non-selective description is to be found in its lengthy shot durations, corresponding to visual anthropology's unedited stretches of observation, considered necessary in a scientific analysis of the ethnographic subjects.[50] Whilst the location of the film within the conventions of fictional cinema may prevent Schwarzenberger from reproducing the extremely long takes of ethnographic cinema, there are a significant number of shots

---

[48] See André Bazin, *What is Cinema?*, trans. by Hugh Gray (Berkley; Los Angeles: University of California Press, 2005), p. 36.
[49] MacDougall, p. 116.
[50] Margaret Mead, 'Visual Anthropology in a Discipline of Words', in *Principles of Visual Anthropology*, ed. by Hockings, pp. 3-10 (pp. 9-10).

within the film, which exceed the 'normal' shot length of conventional feature films and the economic demands of narrative presentation.[51] This is evident in the scene depicting Ascher's return from the *Wirtshaus* following the warning that he is under constant observation. Here, the duration of the take appears excessively lengthy, as the camera remains static for over twenty-six seconds, during which time Ascher walks from the right of the frame and exits frame left, followed by a tractor which drives slowly along a parallel road. Schwarzenberger's framing places Ascher at the centre of three diagonal lines, created by the contrast of the light road against the darker outline of the surrounding fields. The narrowing of these lines to a point at the edge of the frame effectively traps Ascher between them, the *mise-en-scène* highlighting Ascher's sense of unease. The slow tempo of this shot combined with the length of the take evokes, as far as the conventions of narrative cinema will tolerate, the non-selective approach of ethnographic film.

However, in remaining focused on one area long after Ascher and the tractor are no longer visible, the camera draws attention to the open frame: 'the fact that the shot is only a partial viewpoint of a much larger environment'.[52] Paradoxically, then, the 'non-selectivity' implied by the static camera exposes those areas outside the frame to which the viewer is denied visual access, marking the frame itself as the agent of selectivity. In the same moment as he is offered a sense of mastery, the viewer is reminded of his restricted viewpoint and 'the triumph of his former *possession* of the image fades out'.[53] Upon becoming aware of the frame, the spectator 'discovers that the camera is hiding things, and therefore distrusts it',[54] realising that the mastery he believed to possess was only partial and that the real power resides with the Absent Other.

Robbed of his sense of scopic mastery, the viewer finds himself in the same position as Ascher at this point in the film, who has been advised in the previous scene that 'Sie werden gesehen […] Sie können allein durch den Wald gehen, und wir wissen es … über jede Wiese können Sie gehen, über jeden Acker, wir werden alles erfahren'. Although this episode replicates a passage in the novel (*SO*, p. 39), its consequences

---

[51] The average shot length in American feature films of the past ten years lies between 2.5 and 3.3 seconds. <http://www.swivel.com/data_columns/spreadsheet/4895482 > [accessed 29 March 2010]. Whilst commercial American cinema may not be an ideal point of comparison, data for comparable European film does not exist at present.

[52] Peter Ward, *Picture Composition for Film and Television* (Oxford: Focal Press, 2003), p. 85.

[53] Daniel Dayan, 'The Tutor-Code of Classical Cinema', *Film Quarterly*, 28 (1974), 22-31 (p. 29).

[54] Dayan, p. 29.

here are very different. Whilst nevertheless of a threatening nature in the novel, Ascher's continuing visual mastery undermines this revelation, since his perspective remains dominant whilst the villagers continue to serve as objects of observation. However, the film's juxtaposition of this episode with a clear challenge to the viewer's sense of visual control renders the previous scene all the more threatening to both Ascher and the viewer. The latter becomes aware of the limits to Ascher's visual mastery and that he therefore cannot rely on identification with him to provide the sense of plenitude he desires. Non-selectivity, then, is exposed as a fallacy in both novel and adaptation. Yet, whilst the reader may locate the ethnographic gaze within the fiction, the spectator is left with an uneasy awareness of an Absent Other controlling what he sees. Schwarzenberger's realignment of the gaze exposes a crucial difference between novel and film, one that raises many pertinent questions about the nature of scopic power within the novel, inviting closer scrutiny of Ascher's position vis-à-vis the villagers and the reader.

THE CLASSIFYING GAZE

The problematics of power associated with the ethnographic gaze are central to the many debates surrounding visual anthropology. Anthropological theory clearly recognises the power exerted by the ethnographer over his subjects, admitting that 'every time a film is shot, privacy is violated',[55] and acknowledges the vulnerability of the filmed subject.[56] Indeed, Young proposes a potentially aggressive and violent relationship between ethnographer and subject, comparing visual anthropology to a 'form of homicide on the screen'.[57] David MacDougall's critique of observational cinema offers an explanation of the origins of the power dynamics bound up with a visual approach. Attacking the detached position of the ethnographer, MacDougall forms an essentially Foucauldian argument, connecting vision, knowledge and power:

> The self-effacement of the filmmaker begins to efface the limitations of his own
> physicality. He and his camera are imperceptibly endowed with the power to
> witness the TOTALITY of an event. Indeed they are expected to. Omniscience

---

[55] Jean Rouch, 'The Camera and the Man', in *Principles of Visual Anthropology*, ed. by Hockings, pp. 79-98 (p. 88).
[56] Davis, p. 45.
[57] Young, p. 111.

and omnipotence.[58]

Contained in this assertion are several key issues not only pertinent to the study of power relationships within the field of ethnography, but which may equally be applied to structures inherent in all visual relationships, including cinema. These concerns may be identified as the visibility/invisibility of the observer, the connection between vision and knowledge and the subsequent link to power, all of which point clearly in the direction of Foucault's panoptical model of observation.

In his exploration of the structures of power at the heart of the judicial and penal systems, Foucault repeatedly asserts the circular relationship between knowledge and power, as '[p]ower and knowledge directly imply one another; there is no power relation without the correlative constitution of a field of knowledge, nor any knowledge that does not presuppose and constitute at the same time power relations.'[59] Whilst this connection of knowledge and power, which Foucault identifies in the methods of classification and categorisation that assumed increasing importance in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, may be applied to the field of ethnography as a whole, it is his study of the role of the gaze in these power structures which renders his argument particularly pertinent to this discussion of *Der Stille Ozean.*

To illustrate the function of the gaze in power structures Foucault analyses Jeremy Bentham's Panopticon, a circular prison based around a central tower from which the prisoners may be placed under constant observation. A manipulation of lighting and blinds ensures that prisoners remain constantly visible to the officers in the tower, whilst concealing the tower's occupant(s) and preventing communication between cells. The Panopticon thus gives the impression of constant surveillance by an invisible and unverifiable power to which the prisoner must submit.[60] Significantly, the power of this controlling gaze stems from its one-sided nature and the invisibility of the observer, as the observed subject 'is seen, but he does not see; he is the object of information, never a subject in communication'.[61] Foucault's connection of the unidirectional gaze to an exertion of power over the observed may usefully be applied to the power relationships of observational cinema exposed by MacDougall, who asserts that the ethnographer's invisibility and perceived omniscience render the camera

---

[58] MacDougall, p. 120.

[59] Michel Foucault, *Discipline and Punish: The Birth of the Prison*, trans. by Alan Sheridan (London: Penguin, 1991), p. 27.

[60] Ibid, p. 201.

[61] Ibid, p. 200.

a 'secret weapon in the pursuit of knowledge'.[62]

In the course of the novel the power inherent in Ascher's role as ethnographer becomes apparent. His constantly probing gaze raises issues of control and power, implying an inequality inherent in the relationship between ethnographer and studied subjects. This troubled relationship manifests itself most clearly in the voyeuristic mode of looking often associated with Ascher's gaze, which takes two forms within the novel. First, the reader is presented with images where the objects of the gaze are unaware that they are being observed. Thus Ascher's use of binoculars to observe farmers at work is presented to the reader as a detailed physical description of the observed to whom he remains invisible (*SO*, pp. 72, 129-30). This voyeurism takes on a more sinister air in Ascher's observation of the hunters, where he appears to take an almost sadistic pleasure in the violence and bloodshed of the hunt and only abandons his observation when the hunters move out of view (*SO*, p. 130).

This sinister aspect is further apparent in the second form of voyeurism, which sees Ascher share in the villagers' scopophilia, finding fascination in the observation of crime scenes. Thus he rushes to join Golobitsch in his visit to the house of an alleged paedophile, who has recently been arrested, and is equally keen to view the site of the murders at the novel's conclusion. Here Ascher's voyeuristic stance is compounded by a lack of moral commentary, as he fails to provide the reader with any criticism of the villagers' somewhat outrageous claims that the paedophile 'ist kein schlechter Mensch' (*SO*, p. 87), refusing to comment on the mentality which could condone such behaviour. The lack of critical insight into these events prevents any explanation of Ascher's curiosity as deriving from an ethnographic interest, marking it as a purely scopophilic act where observation serves the pleasure of the viewer rather than any scientific purpose. Freud's identification of scopophilia as a source of sexual pleasure stemming from a perceived sense of mastery over the observed renders evident the implications of this voyeurism for the novel's scopic regime,[63] as the villagers are forced into a passive, and thus impotent role by Ascher's voyeuristic gaze.

Ascher's drive towards scopic mastery is at its most manifest in the recurring microscope motif within the novel and film. Unearthing his collection of specimens and his histological atlas, Ascher spends many hours dissecting, examining and cataloguing

---

[62] MacDougall, p. 120.

[63] Sigmund Freud, 'Drei Abhandlungen zur Sexualtheorie', in Freud, *Studienausgabe*, ed. by Alexander Mitscherlich, Angela Richards and James Strachey 10 vols (Frankfurt a. M.: Fischer, 1975), V: *Sexualleben*, pp. 37-145 (p. 98).

insects, snowflakes and animal cells. The connection between Ascher's scientific classification and his relationship to the villagers is revealed through the positioning of these passages within the novel, which uncovers parallel power structures in both scopic regimes. Ascher's repeated return to the study of specimens may be understood as an attempt to reassert his visual control at moments when he may have had reason to doubt it. Thus he counteracts his fear that he may lose critical distance towards his ethnographic subjects by turning to the specimens and it becomes increasingly unclear whom Ascher is observing when he remarks that '[s]ie waren ganz nah, enthüllten immer mehr ihre wahre Gestalt, und doch waren sie gleichzeitig unendlich fern' (*SO*, p. 54). Ascher's scientific observations thus reveal clear parallels to his mode of ethnographic enquiry, as he seeks to penetrate the surface through intense visual observation whilst maintaining a safe distance. His microscopic studies mirror the separation created by the ethnographer's camera, which provides the ethnographer and his audience with a safe mode of entry into a foreign world, where one can observe without being seen.[64] These parallels are further to be found in the comparisons which Ascher himself makes between the two subjects of his observation:

> Sie bogen von der Straße ab und holperten an einem aufgelassenen Bauernhaus vorbei, dessen Verputz abgefallen war. Fensterläden hingen schief in den Angeln, die Ziegel waren braunrot 'wie der Tropfen unter dem Mikroskop', fiel es Ascher ein. (*SO*, p. 23)

Through these analogies both implicit and explicit, the symbolic value of Ascher's microscopic activities emerges, as they come to represent his drive towards mastery over the subjects through observation and scientific classification.

The advantages of remaining invisible vis-à-vis one's subjects are heightened in Ascher's case by his fear of being exposed and his true identity discovered. The sheltered position as unseen observer that he enjoys behind the microscope is repeatedly revealed as an attempt to regain control and assert the identity he has created for himself as biologist. Thus Ascher seeks safety and comfort in the observation and classification of snowflakes following an episode in which he suspects he may have given himself away. Detailed descriptions of preserving chemicals are interspersed with narrated monologue, as Ascher questions his behaviour:

---

[64] MacDougall, p. 121.

> Foraminiferen (Globigerinen) Indischer Ozean, 4000 Meter, las er. Cyanea Lamarquii (Qualle), Tentakel, quer, Nordsee …, Plankton, Holländische Küste, Spongien, Kieselnadeln … er hatte die Preparate in der Mikroskopischen Gesellschaft in Wien eingetauscht […] Hatte er sich verraten? (*SO*, p. 143)

Here the protective power of the unidirectional gaze ensures that Ascher remains invisible and therefore undetected, reasserting his position of superior knowledge, as the subjects of his observation are denied analogous access to his secrets. His scopic mastery is thus accompanied by an epistemological power, gained at the villagers' expense.

The metaphorical relationship between Ascher's histological and ethnographic studies emerges in the relationship between observer and observed. In similar manner to Foucault's panoptical model of vision, Ascher remains the unseen observer of his specimens which, as inanimate or deceased objects, are evidently incapable of returning his gaze. Ascher himself exposes the power relationships implied in this unidirectional gaze, as he comments on his ability to transform the observed objects through the act of looking, certain 'daß er alles, was er wahrgenommen hatte, verwandelt hatte' (*SO*, p. 76). The transforming power of his gaze and the mastery over the observed object which it implies are closely connected to a process of scientific classification. His drive to classify and categorise the objects of his observation clearly exposes the parallels between Ascher's mode of seeing and the potentially problematic role of the ethnographer, both of which are tied up with Foucault's conception of observation as a source of power through knowledge.

In *The Order of Things*, Foucault establishes classification as a process of 'grouping and isolating, of analysing, of matching and pigeon-holing concrete contents' according to a pre-existing order.[65] With reference to natural history, Foucault stresses the privileged position of the visual as the sense 'by which we perceive extent and establish proof',[66] yet notes that the extension of this power through microscopic lenses entails a renouncement of the other senses as sources of knowledge. Thus Ascher, in repeatedly returning to his microscopic examinations, arguably strives to negate the significance of other, more intimate sources of knowledge, those which depend on intersubjective communication. Ascher's studies further replicate botany's tendency,

---

[65] Michel Foucault, *The Order of Things: An Archaeology of the Human Sciences* (London; New York: Routledge, 2002), p. xxi.
[66] Ibid, p. 144.

identified by Foucault, to draw analogies between specimens and other objects in order to render the former intelligible to the recipient of botanical knowledge.[67] Thus 'der unvollständige Querschnitt durch eine menschliche Luftröhre glich einem violetten Regenbogen' (*SO*, p.19), whilst 'die Ohrentrompete schien ein Ausschnitt aus dem Mosaik einer arabischen Moschee zu sein' (*SO*, p. 20). This passage reveals an inversion of the ocularization/focalisation relationship discussed above, as the reader's knowledge that Ascher is seeing these microscopic images informs his belief that he must also be processing them mentally, rendering Ascher the source of these analogies.

Foucault contends that this taxonomical drive, this desire to classify through observation and analogy, has as its ultimate goal the transmission of information to another 'well enough for us to articulate it into a description acceptable to everyone'.[68] Thus the role of the reader is inscribed in the very act of comparative description. His understanding of the images is dependent on the cognitive agility of the observer, rendering the latter essential for signification. The reader of *Der Stille Ozean* finds himself largely dependent on Ascher's classifying gaze, thus encouraging a full identification with this figure. From the reader's perspective, then, Ascher's microscopic studies recreate his ethnographic observations both of which encourage alignment with Ascher as the source of the narrative, attributing to this character privileges conventionally associated with an omniscient narrator.

The voyeuristic gaze discussed above, in combination with the recurring microscope motif, thus points towards a mode of looking within the novel which places the observed in an inferior position, subordinated to the classifying gaze of the ethnographer. The prominent role of binoculars and microscope within his scopic regime further points towards another mediating instrument which remains conspicuously absent in the novel: the (video) camera. Yet the objectifying lens of the ethnographer's camera, to a certain degree, finds its literary equivalent in the descriptive passages of *Der Stille Ozean*, equally denying subjectivity to the objects of their observation, who are unable to return or escape from Ascher's ethnographic gaze. Through identification with Ascher, the reader becomes an active participant in this voyeuristic act, aligning himself with the voyeuristic gaze and, in turn, collaborating in the subjugation of the ethnographic subjects.

---

[67] Foucault, *The Order of Things*, p. 147.
[68] Ibid, p. 146.

village doctor's speech towards the end of both works, which stresses a lack of socio-economic development and points towards the dichotomy between the 'modernes Leben' of the city and rural poverty which separates the villagers from their urban counterparts: 'da sie an das Geld glauben, ist es umso schmerzlicher, weniger zu haben als die Menschen in der Stadt' (*SO*, p. 176). Their separation from the phallus manifests itself further in their lack of medical understanding, evident in their over-reaction to the rabies outbreak, and their subordination to an external source of legal power, demonstrated in the arrival *en masse* in the film of heavily armed police from outside the village, who present a much stronger force than the local policemen at the scene of the murders.

In contrast to the socio-economic impotence of the villagers stands Ascher, whose profession and social status align him with the 'cultural privileges' of the phallus. Thus he is in possession of medical knowledge, has benefited from Austria's educational system and evidently possesses sufficient financial means to afford a period of extended vacation. Here again the microscope assumes a metaphorical value, representing Ascher's mastery of technology which the villagers cannot share. This becomes manifest in Zeiner's clumsy, and ultimately unsuccessful, attempts in the film to look through its lens and his questioning of the power of the instrument, asking Ascher if it may be used to identify rabies in a mouse. In contrast to the numerous shots of Ascher looking through the microscope, frequently followed by microscopic images of specimens, blood cells etc., Zeiner can only hover above the apparatus unable to harness its visual power. Even the claims of medical malpractice levelled against Ascher cannot undermine his alignment with the phallus, as his acquittal firmly places him on the side of the law, allowing him to continue to identify with the dominant institutions of the symbolic. This hierarchy of power finds its replication in the works' scopic regimes, as the members of the rural community remain the objects of Ascher's observation, denied the power of vision. Just as the novel contains no passages which may be identified with the focalisation of the villagers, the film's viewer is rarely provided with a point-of-view shot from the perspective of the villagers, as Ascher remains the sole character within the fiction whose gaze is consistently aligned with that of the camera.

The presence of this voyeuristic unidirectional gaze, reminiscent of the problematic look of the observational ethnographer, leads back to Mulvey's theory of cinematic strategies for coping with perceived lack. Mulvey's argument that female

characters' perceived lack activates castration fear within the male viewer finds its relevance here in the relationship between the phallic lack of the villagers and the reading/viewing subject's fear of a similar 'castration'. In order to overcome this source of unpleasure for the viewer, cinema may adopt two strategies, either re-enacting the original trauma of loss through an investigation and ultimate identification of guilt with the lacking subject, or disavowing the castration through the substitution of a fetish object.[75] Within both film and novel it is possible to identify a deployment of the former, as the villagers' lack is placed under the voyeuristic scrutiny of the camera and its literary equivalent.

Mulvey associates the investigation of guilt with voyeurism and sadism, as an act which places the observer in a position of sadistic power over the passive object of observation and through which the observer gains a certain pleasure from ascertaining its guilt. Both versions of *Der Stille Ozean* place great emphasis on the undercurrents of violence which flow beneath the surface of the rural community, graphically depicting several hunting scenes, the shooting of two domestic dogs and the slaughtering of a pig 'for fun' (*SO*, pp. 90, 102, 199, 132). Through the compulsory shooting of stray dogs Roth exposes a latent fascism lurking under the surface of rural life, as references to 'Pflicht' and 'Vorschriften' imply an unquestioning subjugation to an unnamed authority. This is coupled with an attempt to deny any individual responsibility when the barber reveals the relationship between power and violence in his bitter observation that hunters' own dogs are never shot. Zeiner's response "'Ich habe damit nichts zu tun'" (*SO*, p. 120) echoes the collective denial of guilt in post-war Austria, when the entire nation claimed no influence over National Socialist violence, externalising guilt onto invisible structures of power. Thus the violence exposed beneath the surface assumes a representative value, standing in metonymically for the current of *Alltagsfaschismus* that Roth believed to exist still in 1980s Austria.[76]

The prominence of violence towards animals within novel and film is further connected to the villagers' rejection of scientific explanation offered by Ascher, as the shooting of foxes and dogs is legitimised by the exaggerated threat of rabies. Thus the villagers' lack of knowledge and understanding of science is shown to be interconnected with a latent violence whose brutal nature marks the villagers as unsympathetic

---

[75] Mulvey, 'Visual Pleasure and Narrative Cinema', p. 21.
[76] Roth repeatedly draws attention to the 'Modellcharakter' of life in Obergeith in his essay on his photography. Roth, 'Eine Expedition ins tiefe Österreich: über meine Fotografie', in *Materialien*, ed. by Wittstock, pp. 23-32.

characters, guilty of ignorance and aggression. Through this explanation of the villagers' culpability, the reader/viewer is placed in a position of judgement over the observed, aligning him with the symbolic order and providing an assurance that this lack is the product of the characters' collective guilt and is therefore not applicable to the viewing subject. In this regard both novel and adaptation place the reader/viewer in a position of moral superiority, where the detached observation of the villagers enables the viewing subject to ascertain their guilt and distance himself from them and their lack. Thus the voyeuristic gaze in the novel duplicates dominant cultural values which insist that non-industrialised rural communities lack the phallus, and present this lack as the result of deviancy inherent to such people. However, a shift in these power structures in the novel's adaptation into film draws attention to the fragile nature of Ascher's position, relocating the source of the gaze and challenging the spectator's alignment with this figure.

THE OBSERVER BECOMES THE OBSERVED

The problematic gaze of the ethnographer is equally evident in Schwarzenberger's adaptation. Within the film, the gaze which holds ultimate control over the viewer's look possesses many attributes of the voyeur, spying on others whilst remaining itself invisible. Many of the shots seen from this perspective are partially concealed by doorways, walls, window frames etc., drawing attention to the voyeuristic element of this gaze, which appears to spy on the villagers. This is first apparent in the initial hunting scene where the gathered hunters are shot from a variety of angles, all of which suggest a voyeuristic stance, as high-angles combine with long shots, zooming in from behind barn doors or farm equipment, to create the impression of a concealed observer watching the villagers from an invisible point-of-view. The predominance of the zoom lens in these shots heightens this sense of voyeurism. Identifying the zoom lens as being 'more like a voyeur who watches and notes details from atop a distant perch', Jean Rouch deems this technique to be incompatible with the interests of ethnographic cinema, pointing to the superiority of the camera which it implies.[77] Thus the scopic hierarchy inherent in the novel's gaze finds its replication in the film's voyeuristic aesthetics.

---

[77] Rouch, p. 89.

However, Ascher's voyeurism becomes a more complex issue within the film, which repeatedly questions the authority of his gaze. On first glance, many of the novel's voyeuristic moments appear to be reproduced within the film, in particular Ascher's observation of the hunters through his binoculars. In these instances the viewer is presented with an extended shot/reverse shot formation which alternates between frontal shots of Ascher and a masked point-of-view shot of the hunters. The masking effect, which recreates the view as seen through a telescopic device, corresponds to François Jost's concept of 'primary internal ocularization' – a look anchored within the fiction which may be attributed to a particular protagonist.[78] Its 'primary' aspect derives from the indexical nature of the image 'which allows spectators to establish a link between what they see and the camera which has captured or reproduced the real, through the construction of an analogy with the spectator's own perception'.[79] Masking effects are one means of creating a 'subjective' shot, along with, for example, out of focus or doubled images to imply a state of inebriation.[80] Yet the form of this masking in *Der Stille Ozean* prevents a direct alignment of the voyeuristic gaze, since the frontal shots of Ascher looking through binoculars are followed by shots of the villagers framed by a *single* telescopic lens, which cinematic convention would attribute to a different apparatus, a telescope, for example. In order to protect his identification with the voyeur's scopic mastery, the spectator is thus forced to align himself with this invisible apparatus, temporarily renouncing his identification with Ascher. In contrast to the novel, where the wound caused by the invisible third person narrator is sutured over entirely by constant focalisation through Ascher, the film places the viewer in a less pleasurable situation, repeatedly calling to his attention the presence of another controlling gaze that cannot be situated within the diegesis.

This re-alignment of the gaze and the resulting challenge to the viewer's identification with Ascher occur at several points throughout the film, when the viewer is first presented with what appears to be a point-of view shot from Ascher's perspective. In these shots, the viewer is presented with a familiar perspective, such as the view from Ascher's window, which raises the viewer's expectations that the gaze belongs to Ascher, since similar shots emanating from the same position have previously been aligned with his gaze through shot/reverse shot sequences. Thus, for example, a static shot from inside Ascher's room provides a typical descriptive scene,

---

[78] Jost, p. 75.
[79] Ibid.
[80] Ibid, p 75.

shot in deep focus, with a solitary child in the foreground, the villagers harvesting corn in middle-ground and Zeiner moving from the background towards the camera. The positioning of the camera, which previous shots of Ascher's living space enable the viewer to locate behind Ascher's desk, a perspective often associated with Ascher's point-of-view, leads the viewer to believe that the gaze in this shot equally emanates from Ascher. This view echoes several earlier shots, both in perspective and form (deep focus, long static take) where the gaze is identified with the protagonist as he observes the villagers and the landscape. However, in this instance, the camera pans rapidly to the left after nine seconds to reveal Ascher in another part of the room, gazing out of a different window. The viewer is therefore made aware that the first shot could not have been directed by Ascher's gaze, whose position in the room would offer a completely different perspective, but must rather be attributed to an invisible Other.

The distance placed between Ascher and the source of the gaze is further to be found in the film's use of voice-over. Although expressing Ascher's inner thoughts, the voice does not belong to actor Hanno Pöschl, who plays Ascher, but rather to Xaver Schwarzenberger, the film's director. Cuts between close-up shots of Ascher's face and his hands in the process of writing, suggest the content of these voice-overs to be the letters he sends to his wife, which are filled with intimate details of his fears and worries. Robert Weichinger regards this non-identity of protagonist and voice-over as one of the film's weaknesses, complaining that 'da Schwarzenberger diese Gedanken in manierierten Larmoyanz spricht, konterkariert er unfreiwillig die Darstellung des Protagonisten.'[81] Moving beyond a qualitative judgement of this shift in narrator, the voice-over may be viewed as a further challenge to the spectator's sense of mastery, which is dependent on a full identification with the perceived source of the narrative. In disidentifying Ascher from the site of narrative privilege, Schwarzenberger reveals to the viewer the invisible apparatus in its manifestation as voice-over. In dis-embodying the 'embodied or diegetically anchored voice-over',[82] Schwarzenberger draws the spectator's attention to an invisible Other, whose authority exceeds that of the protagonist, exposing the site of production to which the viewer is denied access.

Indeed Ascher himself becomes the object of another voyeuristic gaze, one which the spectator cannot locate within the fiction. Unlike the novel's voyeurism,

[81] Robert Weichinger, 'Menschen unter einem Himmel aus Eis: zu den Filmen im Umkreis der *Archive des Schweigens*', in *Materialien*, ed. by Wittstock, pp. 207-18 (p. 212).
[82] Kaja Silverman, *The Acoustic Mirror* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1988), p. 52. The concept of the 'embodied' voice-over is elaborated in Chapter Five.

which takes as its object only the members of the rural community, the film repeatedly subjects Ascher to the same voyeuristic mode of observation, thus altering the power structures significantly. Throughout the film the viewer is presented with images of Ascher, shot either from behind or from a distance, often with objects obstructing a clear view. This is evident in the first shot of Ascher at his desk. Filmed from behind, the camera rapidly zooms out to a position outside the door, where it remains for several seconds. At the same time as the rapid zoom again highlights the intrusive camera, the framing of Ascher in the door reminds the viewer of that other frame constantly determining what he sees. Stephen Heath argues that awareness of the frame is deeply disruptive to spectatorial pleasure, as

> the space which, just before, was the pure extent of the spectator's pleasure becomes a problem of representation, of being-there-*for* - there for an absent field, outside of the image ('the fourth wall'), for the phantom character that the spectator's imagination poses in response to the problem: 'the absent one'.[83]

Here, the viewer's sense of visual mastery is challenged by the intrusion of the apparatus, whose control of the frame underlines the inadequacy of the spectator's look.

The viewer's identification with Ascher as the predominant focaliser thus becomes a source of unpleasure, as the viewer is made aware of a more powerful gaze, capable of subjecting even Ascher to its scrutiny. In such instances the viewer undergoes a double castration, first through his identification with a castrated Ascher, stripped of the phallus by an unlocatable gaze and second, through the unpleasurable intrusion of the Absent Other, whose presence is clearly indicated through exaggerated camera movement. Schwarzenberger, however, offers the viewer another path towards spectatorial pleasure, one which is clearly intended to compensate for the loss of scopic power. Deviating from the novel's 'handlungsarme' structure, the adaptation provides the viewer with a clear plot built on conventional elements of tension and suspense.

SCHWARZENBERGER'S NARRATIVE DRIVE

The absence of a discernible plot has fuelled vehement criticism of Roth's novel, one reviewer condemning it as 'ein Rückfall in die ödeste Beschreibungsliteratur'.[84] However, this complaint that 'nothing happens' finds its counter-argument in the anti-

---

[83] Stephen Heath, 'Notes on Suture', *Screen*, 18 (1977-78), 48-76 (p. 57).
[84] Blöcker, p. 136.

narrative drive of ethnography, where 'the details of [the] films must be a substitute for dramatic tension, and the film's authenticity must be a substitute for artificial excitement'.[85] Rather than representing a weakness in Roth's work, the immense attention to detail at the expense of an action-driven plot enables the novel to foreground its ethnographic elements and allows the reader to follow the ethnographer's eye 'always tracking between panorama and close-up'.[86] This anti-narrative drive is only replicated to a certain extent within its adaptation, where clear attempts to increase a sense of suspense are undertaken by Schwarzenberger. This move towards a more conventional plot structure is most evident in the development of the murder sub-plot and in the film's treatment of the murderer Lüscher. Whilst the novel provides no introduction to Lüscher before the three murders at the end of the novel, providing explanatory biographical detail only after the event, this figure is visible as an enigmatic and somewhat threatening presence from the film's outset.

Schwarzenberger's altered depiction of Lüscher invites comparison with Barthes's hermeneutic morphemes, those elements of a narrative which institute its motivating enigmas and delay their resolution until an appropriate point.[87] Hence, the establishing of Lüscher's outsider status through his location in the shadows at various village events may be understood as *thematisation*, defined by Barthes as 'an emphasizing of the object which will be the subject of the enigma'.[88] The viewer's attention is drawn towards Lüscher from his initial appearance in the adaptation, where the camera pans slowly following Ascher's arrival at the hunting meet. Passing by many of the film's minor characters, the camera then stops abruptly at the figure of Lüscher who remains in profile in the foreground for a few seconds, according him a privileged narrative position over the remaining (as yet unnamed) characters. This use of abrupt camera movement and editing is repeated when Ascher visits the corpse laid out in the empty house. The tension of this already morbid scene is heightened by the sudden cut from the body to a shot of Lüscher staring in from outside the window, which is accompanied by a short burst of dramatic music. Thus Lüscher is once more associated with death and elevated out of the largely anonymous group of villagers as a significant narrative element with an air of mystery and threat. Furthermore, Schwarzenberger attributes to Lüscher one of the more bizarre roles within the novel, the villager who

---

[85] Young, p. 108.
[86] Grimshaw, *The Ethnographer's Eye*, p. 12.
[87] Roland Barthes, *S/Z: An Essay*, trans. by Richard Miller (New York: Hill and Wang, 1974), p. 85.
[88] Ibid, pp. 209-10.

gains pleasure from looking at the recently deceased (*SO*, p. 41). Whilst this character remains anonymous in Roth's work, the film's transference of this trait onto the character of Lüscher serves to increase the viewer's sense of unease engendered by this character.

The *proposal of the enigma*,[89] Barthes's second hermeneutic morpheme, occurs in Ascher's conversation with the widow, who provides information about Lüscher's dispute with his family and the impending court case, adding that 'seitdem lässt er sich einen Bart wachsen'. The significance of this last detail becomes apparent in a later scene, when Lüscher orders the barber to shave off his beard. The news supplied by a village policeman that he has lost his lawsuit represents a *formulation of the enigma*,[90] when interpreted in conjunction with the widow's description of him as a 'Gerechtigkeitsfanatiker'. The term, also used in the novel (*SO*, p. 206), serves not as an explanation of his action but rather, due to its placing before the murders, as a hint towards future action. Thus an enigma is created around Lüscher, exciting the viewer's curiosity and providing a dramatic sub-plot to the relative narrative inertia of the main story.

This dramatic tension is increased in the scenes following the discovery of the murders, as Lüscher becomes a very real threat to Ascher, who discovers the fugitive hiding in his barn. The framing and lighting of this scene place Ascher in a vulnerable position, increasing the viewer's sense of unease. Thus Ascher stands in full view in the doorway, his dark shadow highlighted against the light background outside, marking him as a clear target for Lüscher. The former, meanwhile, remains almost entirely concealed behind a number of wooden beams that form bars across the screen, blocking Ascher's and the spectator's view of him. Schwarzenberger's use of lighting further emphasises the threat, exposing only the gun and Lüscher's left eye, stressing the inequality of vision and implying a connection to violence. In this context, the focus is shifted from the psychological and social conditions which may have driven Lüscher to murder to the drama and sensation of the act itself and its consequences, moving away from the novel's ethnographic interest towards a plot-driven atmosphere of suspense.

The restricted nature of the spectator's gaze further reactivates the sense of inadequacy already created by the revelation of the open frame earlier in the film. Once again the spectator is aware that what he presumed to master himself, the cinematic

---

[89] Barthes, *S/Z*, p. 210.
[90] Ibid.

image, is in fact controlled by the invisible cinematic apparatus.[91] However, unlike classic instances of suture, identification with a gaze located within the fiction cannot relieve this sense of lack, since alignment with Ascher here means sharing his restricted vision and the vulnerability it implies. Schwarzenberger's creation of suspense, then, cultivates in the viewer an intense desire for narrative resolution, which may put an end to the tension in which he is implicated. In order to transform the spectator's initial unease into pleasure, the film must offer a satisfactory conclusion to the narrative, Brooks's 'proper end'.[92]

This ending is provided for the spectator, and yet it only partially corresponds to Barthes's final morpheme, the *disclosure*.[93] On the one hand, the viewer is offered no indication of Lüscher's fate, leaving him to speculate whether he escapes or not. However, Ascher's departure resolves any threat posed to him by Lüscher. Deviating from the open-ended nature of the novel, which concludes with Ascher's (somewhat unmotivated) decision to remain in Obergreith, Schwarzenberger's final scene offers a convincing sense of closure, presenting the viewer with a mirror image of the film's opening scene. The symmetry of beginning and end, emphasised by the almost identical long shots of the station and Ascher on the platform, creates a hermetically sealed narrative with no sense of possible continuation. Silverman notes that 'because the hermeneutic code moves towards disclosure, […] it projects a stable subject about whom things can ultimately be discovered […] a subject, in short, who can be defined and known'.[94] Thus the sense of instability and lack instilled in the viewer by his problematic identification with Ascher is made good by the resolution of the narrative. The coincidence of Ascher's departure with the end of the film further strengthens Ascher's status as the main focus of the film, consequently reducing the villagers to mere extras, who only gain significance as objects of Ascher's (and the viewer's) gaze. In this sense, the film's narrative must be understood to create pleasure for the viewer at the expense of the ethnographic subjects, whose individual significance is consistently sidelined in the spectator's quest for satisfaction.

CONCLUSION

Commenting on literary trends of the late 1970s, Klaus Zeyringer highlights the relative

---

[91] See Silverman, *The Subject of Semiotics*, pp. 203-4.
[92] Peter Brooks, *Reading for the Plot: Design and Intention in Narrative* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1984), p.104.
[93] Barthes, *S/Z*, p. 210.
[94] Silverman, *The Subject of Semiotics*, p. 262.

freedom enjoyed by authors in this period, who benefited from 'ein deutlich erweiterter Zugang zur Öffentlichkeit und den Instanzen des Feldes Literatur, zudem ein diversifizierter und in seiner kritischen Perspektive nun stärker rezipierter Blick auf die heimischen Zustände'.[95] Zeyringer's appraisal of the *Kulturpolitik* in the Kreisky era follows dominant critical discourse, which regards the late 1970s and 1980s as a period of increasingly public social criticism in Austrian literature. Pointing to political change in the early 1970s, Walter Weiss argues that 'die Bedingungen für die literarische Kritik der gesellschaftlichen Zustände in Österreich oder am Beispiel Österreichs änderten sich dadurch, daß zu Beginn der siebziger Jahre die christlich-soziale ÖVP-Regierung durch die sozialdemokratische Regierung unter Kanzler Kreisky abgelöst wurde.'[96] Joseph McVeigh extends this argument to the cinematic medium, commenting that 'as the conservative political climate changed in Austria during the era of Chancellor Bruno Kreisky in the 1970s, filmmakers took a much more sober – and critical – approach to Austria's history and society'.[97] Roth's novel and Schwarzenberger's adaptation, then, must be located within this discourse of a more manifest social criticism evident in Austrian film and literature of the 1970s.

Transformations of the *Heimat* genre, such as those undertaken by Joseph Winkler, Gernot Wolfgruber and Franz Innerhofer, are frequently cited as typical manifestations of this socially critical literature, Simon Ryan, for example, citing the *Anti-Heimatroman* as 'characteristic' of the new Austrian novel.[98] Zeyringer further identifies the rural origins of many of Austrian literature's celebrities as a defining feature of this generation of authors, noting that

> Die Anfänge der Avantgarde in Österreich wurden in erster Linie von jungen Städtern getragen; hingegen stammten die meisten Schriftsteller, die Ende der sechziger und in den siebziger, auch in den achtziger Jahren bekannt wurden, aus ländlichen Regionen und Kleinstädten.[99]

The provincial perspective is thus believed to have shaped the literary landscape of the Kreisky-era, serving as a partial explanation for the sudden explosion in *Anti-Heimat* literature. Schmidt-Dengler further views provincial Austria as the locus of a new, more

---

[95] Zeyringer, *Österreichische Literatur*, p. 64.
[96] Walter Weiss, 'Die Literatur der Gegenwart in Österreich', in *Deutsche Gegenwartsliteratur: Ausgangspositionen und aktuelle Entwicklungen*, ed. by Manfred Durzak (Stuttgart: Reklam, 1981), pp. 602-19 (p. 613).
[97] Joseph McVeigh, 'Pop Culture in Austria, 1945-2000', in *A History of Austrian Literature 1918-2000*, ed. by Katrin Kohl and Ritchie Robertson (Rochester: Camden House, 2006), pp. 247-63 (p. 257).
[98] Simon Ryan, 'New Directions in the Austrian Novel', in *The Modern German Novel*, ed. by Keith Bullivant (Oxford; Hamburg; New York: Berg, 1987), pp. 36-56 (p. 51).
[99] Zeyringer, *Österreichische Literatur*, p. 134.

'progressive' literary culture, finding it 'bezeichnend, daß neue Impulse nicht aus Wien, sondern aus der sogennanten Provinz kamen'.[100] Rural Austria had emerged from the shadows of a Vienna-dominated literary industry to make its own (critical) voice heard.

The challenge posed to the ostensible provincial emancipation believed to have taken place in 1970s literature must be extended to include this discussion of Roth's work. By abandoning an analysis dominated by the *Heimat/Anti-Heimat* discourse, this study of *Der Stille Ozean* has revealed a relationship between city and province that disputes the purported integration of rural perspectives into the literary canon. Both novel and adaptation place the rural community in a passive, impotent role and inscribe Ascher's superiority over them in the works' scopic regimes. Through their affinity to ethnographic film techniques, Roth's novel and Schwarzenberger's film expose another discourse at work in the provincial thematics of Austrian literature. Here, the external urban observer assumes an implicitly judgemental position, examining the rural 'specimen' and finding it to be lacking.

The film's relocation of the gaze serves to expose this more problematic element in Ascher's relationship with the villagers, ignored until now in the novel's critical reception. Whilst the novel's constant focalisation through Ascher encourages the reader to align himself with this figure and his role as ethnographer, Schwarzenberger's adaptation places several barriers in the way of identification, allowing the viewer to assume a more critical stance towards the protagonist. The presence of the castrating Other's voyeuristic gaze places Ascher in the role of observed, denying him the unlimited scopic mastery he enjoys in the novel. Here the viewer is forced to identify with the gaze of the Other to maintain his role as observer, sharing in its voyeurism in order to circumvent the threat of castration posed by Ascher's lack. Thus the viewer finds himself doubly inscribed in the film's scopic regime, identifying initially with Ascher, then with the gaze of the Absent Other. Yet, whilst the spectator may share this gaze, its source remains invisible and unidentifiable, maintaining its position of scopic superiority.

The relationship between the viewer and the film's Absent Other, then, replicates that between the subject and the symbolic order, of which the subject is part but which always exceeds the individual subject. The spectator is reminded that whilst Ascher may function as its representative, neither he, nor the viewing subject may fully align themselves with the symbolic order. Ascher's power over the villagers is thus

[100] Schmidt-Dengler, *Bruchlinien*, p. 379.

diminished in the viewer's eyes by the realisation that he, too, is subjected to a scrutinising gaze, that he himself is lacking. Reassessing the novel in the light of this revelation, the reader's attention is drawn to those mechanisms that work to deny this lack and legitimise Ascher's superiority over the rural population. The literary Ascher functions as the unquestioned representative of the symbolic order, whose observation of the villagers locates their lack in their own deviance from the cultural norms of industrialised society. Constant focalisation through Ascher and the supposed scientific objectivity of his gaze simultaneously promote an alignment with this ethnographer figure and a distancing from the objects of his study.

The authority attributed to the urban gaze in Roth's novel evidently stands at odds with a literary history that seeks to establish a geographically more inclusive literary landscape. Whilst existing scholarship quite correctly locates the novel's critique of rural structures within a wider discourse of social criticism, it fails to ask two crucial questions: Who is criticising, and with what authority? Roth himself attempts to assert the authenticity of his observations, frequently finding recourse to scientific terminology in order to legitimise his portrayal of rural Austria. Describing his photographic project, Roth claims 'durch meine Arbeit präparierte ich einen Landstrich aus dem Land heraus'[101] and further attributes an anatomical basis to his writing: 'ich legte Gefäße und Nervenbahnen frei und begann ihren Verlauf zu untersuchen. Sie führten in das Herz und in das Gehirn.'[102] Mirroring the ethnographic aspect of *Der Stille Ozean*, Roth's conception of his own observations reduces provincial Austria and its inhabitants to specimens, objects of scientific interest denied access to the phallus and the privileges of the symbolic order. The medical metaphors of the second quotation demonstrate that Roth claims authority not only through ethnographic practice, but also through the discourse of clinical medicine, a further site of the Foucauldian power-knowledge nexus.[103] Were literary history to divert some of its attention from the objects of analysis to the methods of inquiry, it may well arrive at a more fine-grained understanding of the power structures bound up with the treatment of the provincial in Austrian literature. The structural significance of the city-province divide may, in fact, extend beyond the limits of the (*Anti-*)*Heimat* text to include its mode of production, whether literary or cinematic.

---

[101] Roth, 'Eine Expedition ins tiefe Österreich', pp. 31-2.
[102] Interview with Robert Weichinger, p. 72.
[103] See Michel Foucault, *The Birth of the Clinic: An Archaeology of Medical Perception*, trans. by A. M. Sheridan-Smith (London: Tavistock, 1970).

CHAPTER IV: COMEDY, COLLUSION AND EXCLUSION
ELFRIEDE JELINEK AND FRANZ NOVOTNY'S *DIE AUSGESPERRTEN*

Literary history places Elfriede Jelinek at the head of a generation deemed to have made the transition from 'High Priests to Desecrators',[1] reigning as the 'Nestbeschmutzer' *par excellence*. Along with Peter Handke and Thomas Bernhard, she is considered to have introduced an element of dissent into Austrian public discourse, 'stubbornly occupying a position of difference from within a largely homogeneous cultural sphere'.[2] Literary scholarship on this period in Austrian history frequently assigns literature a compensatory role, with its critique of society replacing the democratic process of parliamentary debate:

> Literature has its role in a state like Austria which has an image of itself as a cultured state: we need artists, and in exchange they are assigned certain roles and positions. One of the most important roles is, undoubtedly, that which 'Her Majesty's Loyal Opposition' is said to have in Great Britain.[3]

Jelinek's attacks on patriarchal power structures, historical amnesia and latent fascist aggression in Austrian society are attributed a broader socio-political function, subsequently placing public reaction to her works at the centre of the debate.[4]

Published in the same year as *Der Stille Ozean*, Elfriede Jelinek's novel, *Die Ausgesperrten*,[5] tackles another, more commonly discussed, subject prevalent in Austria's socially critical literature. Following on from a more iconoclastic turn in the seventies, 'the rhetoric of national dissent' within Austrian literature is frequently esteemed to have reached screaming point in the eighties.[6] Considered central to this critical appraisal of national identity, literature's questioning of Austria's involvement in National Socialism forms the basis for many studies of this period in literary history, when 'the focus of Austrian writers increasingly shifted to the country's official historiographical discourse, eventually turning Austria and its handling of the past into

[1] Ricarda Schmidt and Moray McGowan (eds), *From High Priests to Desecrators: Contemporary Austrian Writers* (Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 1993).
[2] Matthias Konzett, *The Rhetoric of National Dissent in Thomas Bernhard, Peter Handke and Elfriede Jelinek* (Rochester: Camden House, 2000), p. 2.
[3] Sigrid Schmid-Bortenschlager, 'From Provocation to Appropriation', in *From High Priests to Desecrators*, ed. by Schmidt and McGowan, pp. 11-24 (p. 14).
[4] This may be seen in the numerous articles dedicated to the reception of her work. See for example, Margarete Lamb-Faffelberger, 'In the Eyes of the Press: Provocation – Production – Prominence', in *Elfriede Jelinek: Framed by Language*, ed. by Jorun B. Johns and Katherine Arens (Riverside California: Ariadne, 1994), pp. 287-302.
[5] Elfriede Jelinek, *Die Ausgesperrten* (Reinbek bei Hamburg: Rowohlt, 1980). Further references to the novel will be provided in the main body of the text, identified as *DA*.
[6] Konzett, p. 11.

their central literary concerns'.[7] Following a period of relative political apathy, so the story goes, Austrian literature underwent a radical 're-politicisation' in the eighties, with increasingly public displays of opposition against Austria's politics of consensus and the continuing silence surrounding the nation's participation in Nazi atrocities. Adhering to this narrative, Zeyringer observes that 'in auffallend vielen Texten der achtziger Jahre wurde der Teppich des Verdrängten gelüftet, wurde ein literarischer und kritischer Blick auf Vergangenheit und Gegenwart des Landes und seine Bewohner geworfen'.[8]

In keeping with this trend, *Die Ausgesperrten* scratches beneath the surface of 1950s Austrian society to reveal continuing fascist tendencies and the social structures which sustain them. The novel, originally created for radio and later adapted for film,[9] centres around a gang of youths whose frustration with their differing social positions finds expression in a series of violent attacks on innocent passers-by, although as one of the gang points out 'keiner ist heutzutage unschuldig' (*DA*, p. 239). The novel comes to its violent conclusion as the gang's self-appointed 'Anführer', Rainer Witkowski, brutally murders his parents and sister in an attempt 'seine narzistische Position [zu] retten' (*DA*, p. 263). This aspect of the novel was based on a real-life crime in 1965 when seventeen-year-old Rainer Maria Udo Wunderer murdered his mother, father and elder brother inflicting more than 180 wounds with a gun, an axe and a bayonet.[10] Through the novel's social and familial constellations Jelinek reveals an *Alltagsfaschismus* that is 'verwaschener und unspezifischer'[11] than that of National Socialism and which lurks threateningly under the surface of the 'new' prosperous Austria.

'EIN KULINARISCHER FILM'

In selecting a director to adapt *Die Ausgesperrten*,[12] Elfriede Jelinek claims to have sought a more commercial approach than the novel's uncompromising social criticism may lead one to expect. For this task, Jelinek enlisted the expertise of Franz Novotny, the *enfant terrible* of New Austrian Film, infamous for his TV adaptation of Otto M. Zykan's

[7] Helga Schreckenberger, 'Suffering from Austria: Social Criticism in Prose Fiction of the Seventies and Eighties', in *Shadows of the Past: Austrian Literature of the Twentieth Century*, ed. by Hans Schulte and Gerald Chapple (New York: Peter Lang, 2009), pp. 107-24 (p. 109).
[8] Klaus Zeyringer, *Österreichische Literatur seit 1945: Überblicke, Einschnitte, Wegmarken* (Innsbruck: Studienverlag, 2008), p. 147.
[9] Elfriede Jelinek, *Die Ausgesperrten: Hörspiel*, dir. by Hartmut Kirste (SDR/BR/Radio Bremen, 1979).
[10] Heinz Sichrovsky, 'Die Ausgesperrten', *A-Z Journal*, 17 November 1979.
[11] Riki Winter, 'Gespräch mit Elfriede Jelinek', in *Dossier: Elfriede Jelinek*, ed. by Roland Bartsch and Günther Höfler (Vienna; Graz: Droschl, 1991), pp. 9-21 (p. 18).
[12] *Die Ausgesperrten*, dir. by Franz Novotny (Wien-Film, 1982).

Staatsoperette (1977),[13] whose satirical reckoning with the First Republic is considered to have put an abrupt end to his ORF career.[14] More than his reputation for unflinching criticism of Austria, Jelinek's decision may have been influenced by the diversity of Novotny's directorial projects, which include several advertisements for mineral water and motorcycles and a promotional film for the SPÖ.[15] Novotny's unconventional combination of social engagement with commercial, not to mention mainstream political, projects largely corresponds with Jelinek's intention to make *Die Ausgesperrten* 'ein kulinarischer Film', aimed at a young audience.[16]

Transforming Jelinek's novel into an 'appetising' experience appears a daunting task, given the text's 'Ästhetik des Ekels',[17] its graphic representation of physical and sexual violence and its almost obsessive detailing of bodily functions and fluids. Yet Jelinek's work itself is not an entirely unpleasurable experience for the reader. Throughout the novel, indeed in many of the text's most repellent episodes, the reader is offered momentary release by the introduction of humour, which temporarily relieves tension. The pleasure resulting from Jelinek's humour is twofold, as her manipulation of language provides aesthetic compensation for the unpleasure of the novel's brutality, whilst the integration of comedic discourse creates a privileged subject position for the reader within the novel's power structures.

In order to explore the function of both mechanisms within novel and film, this discussion combines classic Freudian conceptions of joking, which enable an understanding of the aesthetic pleasure gleaned from wordplay, with a more Lacanian approach, which investigates the relationship between the joke's teller, its listener/laugher and its object/butt. By confronting issues of subjectivity and mastery of discourse, held by both Freud and Lacan to be at the heart of comic interaction, this chapter will examine how the novel's humour creates and sustains a pleasurable subject position for the reader. The novel's reliance upon verbal humour raises obvious questions about the direct transferability of Jelinekian humour to film as a medium in which the visual is, by and large, the privileged sensory channel. A subsequent discussion of the viewer's subject position in Novotny's film extends the question of an

---

[13] *Staatsoperette*, dir. by Franz Novotny (ORF, 1977).

[14] For further comment on the controversy surrounding *Staatsoperette*, see Patrice Blaser, '*Staatsoperette*: ein Film von Franz Novotny und Otto M. Zykan. Chronologie eines Skandals', in *Anschluß an Morgen: eine Geschichte des österreichischen Films von 1945 bis zur Gegenwart*, ed. by Elisabeth Büttner and Christian Dewald (Salzburg; Vienna: Residenz, 1997), pp. 207-20.

[15] See Anon., 'Ein Schöngeist wird zum Bombenwerfer', *Wahrheit*, 15 October 1982.

[16] 'Ein Schöngeist wird zum Bombenwerfer'.

[17] Elizabeth Wright, 'Eine Ästhetik des Ekels', *Text und Kritik*, 117 (1993), 51-59.

economy of pleasure beyond the limits of comic discourse to explore the wider filmic mechanisms activated in *Die Ausgesperrten* to suture the viewer into the filmic narrative.

SPRACHSATIRE ALS SOZIALKRITIK

Jelinek's use of an exceedingly black brand of humour to critique the role of dominant linguistic practices in maintaining oppressive social structures has long formed the focus of critical attention. Literary scholarship is particularly keen to draw analogies to the *Sprachsatire* of Karl Kraus, locating Jelinek within an 'Austrian legacy of language critique',[18] which includes 'Freudian jokes, puns and slips of the tongue, and […] the *Kalauer*'.[19] The reception of *Die Ausgesperrten* presents no exception to this trend, where comments on 'Elfriedes scharfe Schnitte'[20] and her 'pechschwarzen, sprachvirtuosen Sarkasmus'[21] abound. Research into the novel's humour has focused, thus far, on its aspect of social criticism, highlighting Jelinek's exposure of a latent violence concealed by the everyday language and identifying humour as a further weapon in Jelinek's arsenal. Her joking discourse is frequently regarded as another form of attack both on Austrian society and on the reader, since 'Jelineks ausgeklügelte Lautmalerei, ihr Spiel mit den Worten, erzeugen Kalauer, sodass einem das Lachen im Hals stecken bleibt'.[22]

However, the implication that Jelinek's satire functions as an assault on the reader cannot be accepted so unequivocally, at least not in the context of *Die Ausgesperrten*. A closer consideration of the novel's particular form of comedy reveals that, far from being the victim of aggressive humour, the reader is in fact encouraged to collude with the source of linguistic violence in turning the satirical gaze against the novel's protagonists. It is this joking constellation and the power structures it implies, which suggest the necessity of a reassessment of the function of humour in Jelinek's satire. Far from trivialising or concealing its 'serious' content, this approach enables a consideration of humour as an integral component in the novel's structures of pleasure, which may help to clarify the text's socially critical function and the reader's position within this critique.

---

[18] Beatrice Hanssen, 'Elfriede Jelinek's Language of Violence', *New German Critique*, 68 (1996), 79-112 (p. 83).
[19] Ibid, p. 107.
[20] Lutz Holzinger, 'Elfriedes scharfe Schnitte', *Volksstimme*, 23 May 1980.
[21] Reinhold Tauber, 'Das Thema paßt immer', *Oberösterreichische Nachrichten*, 7 July 1980.
[22] Sabine Perthold, '"Klopfen wir sie platt zu Zelluloid!"', in *'Ich will kein Theater': mediale Überschreitungen*, ed. by Pia Janke and others (Vienna: Praesens, 2007), pp. 323-42 (p. 334).

WITZ UND KOMIK

An obvious starting point for a psychoanalytic discussion of humour is Freud's 'Der Witz und seine Beziehung zum Unbewußten',[23] in particular the distinction he draws between the (*Sprach-*)*Witz* and the *Komik* as two very different forms of psychic exchange. In his analysis of the *Witz*, Freud places particular emphasis on its tripartite nature, which requires 'im allgemeinen drei Personen, außer der, die den Witz macht, eine zweite, die zum Objekt [...] genommen wird, und eine dritte, an der sich die Absicht des Witzes, Lust zu erzeugen erfüllt' (Witz, p. 95). The success of the *Witz* depends entirely on the reaction of the listener, who is required to recognise the teller's joking intention and validate it through laughter (Witz, p. 136). In the case of Freudian *Komik*, however, the listener is rendered superfluous, as joking interaction primarily involves the laugher and the object of laughter, the butt. Here, the function of the listener/observer does not extend beyond enhancing and intensifying the laugher's pleasure: 'er verstärkt den komischen Vorgang, fügt aber nichts Neues zu ihm herzu' (Witz, p. 169). To distinguish further between the two categories, Freud insists on the essentially verbal nature of the *Witz*, in contrast to the visually determined *Komik* (Witz, p. 170).

Attempting to locate the source of pleasure in joking, Freud divides the *Witz* into two further categories: the 'harmloser Witz', which has no direct object and the 'tendenziöser Witz', whose humour, directed against a butt, is closely connected to the circumvention of aggressive and sexual 'tendencies'. In fact, it is the tendentious joke that Freud has in mind when he asserts the necessity of three positions in joking. The so-called harmless joke serves no other purpose than to create pleasure in teller and listener through a mutual enjoyment of the mental processes involved in any play on words.[24] Whilst it undoubtedly provides an enjoyable form of entertainment, Freud observes that 'die Lustwirkung des harmlosen Witzes ist zumeist eine mäßige' (Witz, p. 92). By contrast, the tendentious joke may offer a second, more intense, pleasure to both teller and listener due to its complex interrelation with the aggressive and sexual drives.

---

[23] Sigmund Freud, 'Der Witz und seine Beziehung zum Unbewußten', in Freud, *Studienausgabe*, ed. by Alexander Mitscherlich, Angela Richards, James Strachey, 10 vols (Frankfurt a. M.: Fischer, 1989), IV: *Psychologische Schriften*, pp. 9-219. Further references to this work will be given in the main body of the text, identified as Witz.

[24] Freud describes the harmless joke as 'eine Tätigkeit, welche darauf abzielt, Lust aus den seelischen Vorgängen [...] zu gewinnen'. Freud, 'Der Witz', p. 91.

Using the example of ribaldry (*Zote*), Freud demonstrates that tendentious jokes may function as a means of circumventing repression, allowing the satisfaction of otherwise blocked desires. This model may be extended to include repressed aggression, whereby the joking subject satisfies hostile tendencies otherwise blocked by normative societal constraints. Freud notes that in a society where direct verbal and physical abuse is forbidden (both implicitly and explicitly):

> Der Witz wird uns gestatten, Lächerliches am Feind zu verwerten, das wir entgegenstehender Hindernisse wegen nicht laut oder nicht bewußt vorbringen durften, wird also wiederum *Einschränkungen umgehen und unzugänglich gewordene Lustquellen eröffnen.* (Witz, p. 98)

Freud further comments that this form of joking 'bribes' the listener to side with the teller by offering him a share in the joking pleasure.

Common to both forms of pleasure, and central to Freud's conception of joking, is an 'Ersparung an psychischem Aufwand' (Witz, p. 43). In the case of the tendentious joke, the subject is spared the considerable psychic energy involved in repressing those tendencies deemed unacceptable by the preconscious censor (Witz, p. 111 - 112). The energy liberated by the circumvention of internal repression or external suppression may then be discharged in the motor function of laughter, where it experiences 'freie Abfuhr' (Witz, p. 138). Whilst the concept of tendentious joking as 'Ersparung' may appear almost self-evident within a Freudian conception of the psyche, its application in the case of harmless jokes is less immediately apparent. However, Freud argues that the mental processes activated in the telling and reception of wordplay equally enable the subject to save psychic energy by substituting their joking logic for more complex and taxing thought processes. The 'Technik, unsere psychische Einstellung auf den Wortklang anstatt auf den Sinn des Wortes zu richten' (Witz, p. 113), a process at the heart of wordplay, relieves the subject of the more arduous task of uniting concepts through reflective thought. This pleasure is once more related to societal constraints, since the harmless jokes serve to liberate the subject from blocked thoughts, freeing her from the tyranny of reason and critical thought, which may be abandoned in favour of a more playful treatment of language (Witz, p. 121).

Despite its seminal position within theory of comedy, however, Freud's theory leaves unanswered many pertinent questions about the form and function of humour. Whilst focussing heavily on verbal forms of comedy, 'Der Witz' does not provide us with a fully satisfactory account of the precise role of language in joking operations,

which would consider the constitutive role of language in the formation of subject positions. Further, Freud identifies the listener's validation of the joke through his own display of pleasure as decisive in the success of a joking discourse, yet the focus of his argument lies very clearly with the teller, somewhat diminishing its relevance to the reader-based study of textual humour pursued in this chapter. Finally, certain peculiarities in Jelinek's specific form of humour cannot readily be inserted into any of the numerous categories of joke proposed by Freud. In order to arrive at a fuller understanding of the reader's status within the novel's comic discourse, then, it is necessary to turn to a more listener-based theory which fully explores the function of language in the formation of subject positions within the joking constellation.

MASTERING COMEDY

Such an approach may be found in Susan Purdie's *Comedy: The Mastery of Discourse*,[25] whose discussion of humour is heavily influenced by Lacanian and post-structuralist theories of discourse and subject-formation. Collapsing the Freudian distinction between *Witz* und *Komik*, Purdie argues that all joking, including more situation-based comedy, is an essentially linguistic operation, where comic actions function as signifiers in much the same way that words do within wordplay:

> When they are funny, actions (enacted or described) are unusually attended to as sites of conceptualisation, just as where 'pure' wordplay raises laughter we are noticing the form of the words before their designation. (Purdie, p. 58)

This linguistic conception of joking offers a means of approaching comedy which exposes it as the point where discourse, power and subject-formation converge in the service of dominant ideology.

Purdie locates the source of pleasure for both teller and listener in their mutual 'marked transgression' of symbolic Law. Joking, as a linguistic exchange, involves the breach of symbolic Law by both participants, whose joint marking of this transgression reinstates the Law and installs the joker and laugher as 'masters of discourse' – 'as those able to break and to keep the basic rule of language, and consequently in controlling possession of full human subjectivity' (Purdie, p. 5). For Purdie, the foundation of all symbolic Law is to be found in Roman Jakobson's rule of 'same and different' (Purdie, p. 18). Applicable to linguistic and, as Lévi-Strauss demonstrates in *Structural*

---

[25] Susan Purdie, *Comedy: The Mastery of Discourse* (Hemel Hempstead: Harvester Wheatsheaf, 1993). Further references to this work will be provided in the main body of the text, identified as Purdie.

Anthropology,[26] to cultural signifiers, this rule states that meaning is determined by perceiving a sound/word/action as 'significantly the same as certain others belonging to the system, but also as significantly different from them in specific ways' (Purdie, p. 20). Within this system, meaning is generated when 'one semantic space is occupied by one specific element that is immediately present and another specific element that the first "brings to mind"' with the further stipulation that there be no doubling of elements in one semantic space, in other words, that only one signifier may be attached to one signified (Purdie, p. 21).

Punning, which attaches more than one signified to a single signifier, thus represents a clear breach of this fundamental law. For example, in the statement 'If Satan lost his hair, there would be hell toupee', 'toupee' refers both to the hairpiece necessitated by the Devil's alopecia and recalls through homophony the common phrase 'there will be hell to pay'. Humour arises here, according to Purdie, from the listener's recognition that the 'same and different' law has been transgressed, marking the pun as an example of 'improper speech'.[27] The pleasure to be gained from transgressing linguistic norms in joking is engendered by a convergence of identification, discourse and its frequent concomitant, power. In conveying a pun, the joker elicits the listener's transgression of the Law, since the latter's understanding of the joke depends on her also attaching two signifieds to the one signifier.[28] Through this mutual breach, the listener aligns herself in a relationship of collusion with the teller, identifying with her through a shared experience of transgression.

This collusion is further connected to a sense of power. By mutually recognising and marking this transgression, teller and listener confirm themselves as subjects capable of breaking, but also of upholding symbolic Law, as 'those who master discourse in defining as well as producing the usages which conform to it' (Purdie, p. 30). Following a Lacanian concept of subject-formation, Purdie then concludes that the act of joking establishes both teller and listener as being in 'controlling possession of full human subjectivity' (Purdie, p. 5), where the 'tacit exchange' between joker and laugher acts as a confirmation that both are 'Lawfully meaning', that both are operating successfully as subjects within signification (Purdie, p. 30). Through this joking

---

[26] Claude Lévi-Strauss, *Structural Anthropology*, trans. by Clare Jacobson and Brooke Schoepf (New York: Basic Books, 1963).

[27] Humour here is also due in part to the sheer absurdity of the suggestion that Satan, a powerful figure in Christian belief, would wear a wig, a common signifier of age and accompanying impotence.

[28] The 'toupee' joke would make no sense at all if the listener accorded only one signified to 'toupee', as becomes obvious if 'hairpiece' is substituted for 'toupee'.

transaction, symbolic Law is paradoxically strengthened, since the marking of its violation as humorous robs it of any truly violatory powers, thus reinstating the Law as unbreakable (Purdie, p. 36). It is this interrelationship of discourse, power and the symbolic in Purdie's conception of comedy that renders her approach particularly interesting in the context of *Die Ausgesperrten*. Combining Purdie's reflections upon the role of comedy in establishing a sense of full subjectivity with Freud's analyses of the exact mechanisms of various joking forms, this chapter provides a dual investigation of the functioning of humour in *Die Ausgesperrten* and its role in the creation of a pleasurable subject position for the reader.

FREUDIAN WORDPLAY AND NARRATORIAL COLLUSION

Whilst wordplay in Jelinek's text may rarely be said to be 'harmless', examples abound of joking where satisfaction appears, at first glance, to be derived purely from aesthetic pleasure. Significantly, the majority of these linguistic jokes are to be found in descriptions or comments that may be attributed to the novel's third-person narrator. In Freudian terms, these jokes fall into one of two categories, founded either on a 'mehrfache Verwendung des nämlichen Materials',[29] a form of joking based on the full or partial repetition of words, or on the author's employment of 'Doppelsinn', of which punning is merely one example.[30] Repetition of words, or more commonly of parts of words, forms an important aspect of joking discourse in *Die Ausgesperrten*, where wordplay often recalls the examples cited by Freud to a remarkable degree.

Thus, the narrator's description of Sophie's residence: 'Sophie ist echt Biedermeier eingerichtet. [...] Im Gegensatz zu bieder und Meier stehen Sophies Wünsche, eine ganz harte Frau zu werden' (*DA*, p. 60), corresponds clearly to Freud's first sub-category of 'mehrfache Verwendung'. This term designates jokes founded on a repetition of a word, initially present in its full form then divided into its constituent parts, whereby 'seine Silben einen gewissen anderen Sinn haben' (Witz, p. 34). The repetition of 'Biedermeier' exposes a fallacy at the centre of Austrian class consciousness through the indirect denigration of a recognisable symbol of middle-class wealth. Biedermeier furniture, representative of the rise of the bourgeoisie in the

---

[29] See Freud, 'Witz', p. 34.

[30] For a summary of the various Freudian categories and sub-categories of jokes, see Freud, 'Witz', p. 42.

nineteenth century, is stripped down to its true essence as a combination of negatively connoted conservatism ('bieder') and social climbing, implied by 'Meier'.[31]

By breaking down 'Biedermeier' into its constituent parts, the joke relieves the reader of the need to formulate any criticism or judgement for herself, since 'beides ist im Namen selbst schon gegeben' (Witz, p. 44). Joking repetition, in this case, facilitates a form of social criticism which demands little or no psychic effort on the part of the reader. The reader is thus provided with a double source of pleasure, stemming both from the 'Ersparung an psychischem Aufwand' and from the superiority which the reader asserts over the object of criticism. Here reader and narrator not only share a mutual transgression of the symbolic law of 'same and different' by attributing more than one signified to each signifier but further unite to assert their dominance over Sophie. Within the novel's wider system of values, which emphatically rejects the class divide in Austrian society, Sophie's claims to superiority based on class difference are thus revealed to be as 'transgressive' as the word play used to describe it.

Jelinekian humour is further connected to another sub-category of the 'mehrfache Verwendung des nämlichen Materials', namely the use of a word in its 'volle' and 'abgeblaßte' senses. Freud notes that '[es] gibt Worte, welche in gewissen Verwendungen die ursprüngliche Bedeutung eingebüßt haben, deren sie sich im anderen Zusammenhang noch erfreuen' and posits joking as a discursive exchange which may restore 'full' meaning to 'die abgeblaßten Worte' (Witz, p. 36). This comic form is prevalent in Jelinek's work and may, in fact, be seen to lie at the heart of her *Sprachsatire*, as she reveals the 'lost' meaning concealed by clichés and *Phrasen*. Thus, Rainer's defensive boasting that his lack of physical fitness is due to '[z]uviel Alkohol, zuviel Zigaretten, prahlt Rainer und will über Camus debattieren, um sich ins rechte Licht zu setzen' is immediately followed by the narrator's comment that 'Sophie will sich ins echte Licht setzen, um zu bräunen' (*DA*, p. 95). This joking statement combines a repetition 'mit leichter Modifikation' and a repetition of 'dieselben Worte voll und leer', generating pleasure from two psychic processes.

First, following Freudian theory, repetition engenders a childish pleasure in the nonsensical (Witz, p. 121). By privileging the sound of the word over its meaning, or further by implying a correspondence between the two, the joke confirms the primacy

---

[31] In the mediaeval period, *Meier* designated a 'grundherrlicher Verwaltungsbeamter als Vorsteher eines Fronhofs und Leiter des Hofgerichts' who had often risen to this position from the status of *Knecht*. For further information about their legal and social status, see *deutsches Rechtswörterbuch online*, <http://drw-www.adw.uni-heidelberg.de/drw/> [Accessed 29 March 2010].

of sound and perpetuates the treatment of words as objects (not concepts) 'welche der Heiterkeit des Kindes ähnlich die kritische Hemmung aufhebt' (Witz, p. 122). Explaining this in terms of 'Ersparung', Freud suggests that the relation through homophony, exemplified by 'sich ins **echte**/sich ins **rechte** Licht setzen', liberates the listener from the constraints of reason, allowing her to play with the words in her mind as if they were objects. Freud further notes that it requires considerably less psychic energy to deal with objects than concepts, thus engendering the 'Ersparung an psychischem Aufwand' deemed essential for joking pleasure (Witz, p. 119).

Yet the primary source of pleasure in this example may be located in the psychic shortcut facilitated by the repetition, which allows the reader to make a connection between Rainer's unhealthy existence and braggart desperation, and Sophie's healthy, yet superficial, outdoors lifestyle. This unification of opposites is closely connected to the second source of pleasure, which resides in the joke's implicit social criticism. The ironic contrast between Rainer's attempts to impress Sophie through displays of mental prowess and the latter's clear lack of interest forms much of the novel's humour. Whilst this source of humour will form the focus of the next section, it is pertinent here to flag up the crucial role of language in satirising Rainer's relationship with Sophie, since it is through the recurrence of the signifier that the chasm between their worlds is simultaneously revealed and satirised.

Moreover, the evident sense of superiority generated by this joking relationship points towards Purdie's conception of a mutual assertion of authority by teller and listener over the butt of the joke. Here the reader is again encouraged to collude with the narrator in attributing more than one meaning to 'sich ins (r)echte Licht setzen' and is further invited to align herself with the narrator's implicit judgement. Thus, the double satirical swipe at Rainer's aspirations and Sophie's superficial preoccupations excludes the protagonists from the teller-listener relationship and 'reciprocally confirms the collusion of these two positions as masterful jokers' (Purdie, p. 58). By entering into the linguistic joking transaction with the narrator, the reader is therefore automatically set at a distance from the protagonists and is brought into alignment with the narrator as a 'master of discourse'. This collaboration at the expense of the novel's figures finds its clearest expression in a further form of humour identified by Purdie: the 'negative quotation'.

NEGATIVE QUOTATION

Although accorded relatively little importance in Purdie's theory itself, the concept of negative quotation is key to a psychoanalytic understanding of Jelinek's *Sprachkritik* as a source of pleasure for the reader. Purdie connects this aspect of joking with perceived (linguistic) superiority on the part of the reader, since 'negative quotation says that "someone else – ineptly – speaks like this"' (Purdie, p. 55), marking the butt of the joke as an incompetent linguistic exchanger, someone who uses 'improper language'. The reader's recognition of 'improper speech' in an other engenders identification with the 'author ego', whom she regards as a 'proper speaker':

> We construct a 'proper' language in which [the author ego] speaks 'for' us, even though the text is marked as 'improperly' excessive, because the language is constructed not directly as 'the author's' but as negatively quoted. (Purdie, p. 49)

In short: the comic content of negative quotation relies on a perceived discrepancy between the author ego and her protagonists and/or narrator.

Whilst Purdie does not provide a clear definition of the 'author ego', it may be inferred from her statements that this persona is to be aligned with the author's intent, as posited by the reader. The author ego corresponds in many respects to Wayne Booth's 'implied author', identified by Seymour Chatman as a figure 'reconstructed by the reader from the narrative'.[32] Chatman further distinguishes the implied author from the narrator, positing the former as 'the principle that invented the narrator, along with everything else in the narrative'.[33] The image the reader creates of the implied author determines how she reads the narrative, what values she imputes to it and in turn to its protagonists, events and narrator(s). At the latest since Roland Barthes declared the death of the author in 1967, however, authorial intent has been a thorny subject in literary discourse. In his essay, Barthes argues against the notion of an author that pre-exists the book, maintaining that 'the modern scriptor is born simultaneously with the text, is in no way equipped with a being preceding or exceeding the writing'.[34] Barthes's contention that 'it is the language that speaks, not the author; to write is […] to reach that point where only language acts, "performs", and not "me"'[35] is remarkably

---

[32] Seymour Chatman, *Story and Discourse: Narrative Structure in Fiction and Film* (Ithaca; London: Cornell University Press, 1978), p. 148.

[33] Ibid, p. 148.

[34] Roland Barthes, 'The Death of the Author', in Barthes, *Image – Music – Text*, trans. by Stephen Heath (London: Fontana, 1977), pp. 142-48 (p. 145). [The article was first published in *Aspen*, 5-6 (1967)].

[35] Ibid, p. 143.

reminiscent of recurrent personifying tendencies in analyses of Jelinek's language. Comments such as 'die Sprache [lacht sich] selbst aus'[36] and 'das Sprichwort, die Redensart, der Volksmund [geben ihre] verhüllten Aussagen preis',[37] clearly attribute to language a quasi-autonomous status, minimising the authorial role and positing language itself as the agent in Jelinek's social criticism and not merely its tool or object.

However, critical reception of Jelinek's works indicates that the author (ego) plays a crucial role in understanding her texts and it has been claimed on more than one occasion that 'das Trennen der eigenen Person von ihrem Werk [ist] nicht möglich'.[38] With numerous articles and monographs dedicated to her involvement in Austrian politics,[39] her outspoken support of feminism and her reception by the Austrian public,[40] it is difficult to disagree with Pia Janke's description of Jelinek as 'eine Reizfigur ersten Ranges'.[41] Jelinek herself, in her discussion of pornography, has highlighted the pivotal role of authorial intent, arguing that the classification of a work as 'pornographic' must take into account the intention of the author in her depiction of female subjugation.[42] From Jelinek's statement Beatrice Hanssen concludes that she 'locates the *anti*pornographic consciousness-raising force of her work in the gap that separates representation, or image, from intent'.[43] Evidently there is a certain irony in citing the beliefs of an author in a debate on authorial intent. However, the relationship between author ego, protagonists and narrator of *Die Ausgesperrten* suggests that the role of the author ego is inscribed in the work itself. To speak of an author ego in *Die Ausgesperrten*, then, does not mean to refer to Elfriede Jelinek *qua* individual but to recognise that perceptions of her intentions, (political) beliefs and literary style shape the reader's experience of the novel.

Purdie confers a privileged status upon the 'author ego', according her a position of linguistic, epistemological and moral superiority in comparison to the novel's protagonists. Indeed, the author ego, in her mastery of language and (joking)

---

[36] Yasmin Hoffman, '"Hier lacht sich die Sprache selbst aus": Sprachsatire – Sprachspiele bei Elfriede Jelinek', in *Dossier: Elfriede Jelinek*, ed. by Bartsch and Höfler, pp. 41-55 (p. 41).

[37] Perthold, p. 327.

[38] Guido Scholl, *Selbstinszenierungen einer Autorin: Elfriede Jelinek als literarische Figur* (Norderstet: Grin, 2004), p. 94

[39] See, for example, Jay Julian Rosellini, *Haider, Jelinek and the Culture Wars* (California: Create Space, 2009).

[40] See Pia Janke and others (eds), *Die Nestbeschmutzerin: Jelinek und Österreich*, (Salzburg; Vienna: Jung und Jung, 2002).

[41] Ibid, p. 7.

[42] 'Die Frage ist, ob die Erniedrigung der Frau, ihre Verfügbarkeit als Hure beabsichtigt oder gerade eben kritisiert wird'. Elfriede Jelinek, 'Der Sinn des Obszönen', in *Frauen und Pornographie*, ed. by Claudia Gehrke (Tübingen: konkursbuch, 1989), pp. 101-3 (p. 101).

[43] Beatrice Hanssen, *Critique of Violence: Between Poststructuralism and Critical Theory* (London; New York: Routledge, 2000), p. 219.

condemnation of those who are found lacking, may be considered analogous to the Lacanian *Name-of-the-Father*, the symbolic instance of authority and Law. In his discussion of psychosis, Lacan establishes the mother's recognition and promulgation of his authority as essential to the functional development of the infant subject and stresses the role of language in this operation:

> We should concern ourselves not only with the way in which the mother accommodates herself to the person of the father, but also with the way she takes his speech, the word (*mot*), let us say, of his authority, in other words, of the place that she reserves for the Name-of-the-Father in the promulgation of the law.[44]

Just as the symbolic Father cannot be equated with any real person, always exceeding the individual paternal figure,[45] so the author ego must not be confused with the 'real' author, the person who physically created the narrative.[46] Nor may she be confused with her creation, the narrator. Whilst the narrator may function as the representative of the author ego, this alignment is by no means the rule, nor even the norm as the abundance of unreliable narrators manifestly demonstrates.[47] The author ego can thus be seen to function as the representative of symbolic power, perceived by the reader to possess full linguistic mastery, which she in turn may, or may not, confer to the narrator.

The potential for pleasure in negative quotation, then, is clearly embroiled in complex power structures potentially common to all narratives, whereby the reader seeks to align herself, through identification with the narrator, with the invisible author ego as representative of symbolic power. By attributing any 'improper language' within the narrative to its protagonists, the reader imputes linguistic superiority to the author ego, placing her in a position of ultimate authority, and seeks to align herself with this position of power. Significantly, both aspects of this joking discourse depend upon the simultaneous exclusion of a third party, the butt of the joke, who is deemed linguistically 'improper' and 'reciprocally conforms the collusion of those two positions [teller and audience] as masterful jokers' (Purdie, p. 58). Thus the reader's pleasure is

---

[44] Jacques Lacan, 'On a Question Preliminary to Any Possible Treatment of Psychosis', in Lacan, *Écrits: A Selection*, trans. by Alan Sheridan (London: Tavistock, 1977), pp. 178-225 (p. 218).

[45] Ibid, p. 199.

[46] The sheer inadequacy of the gender limitations placed on symbolic power by Lacan are evident here, yet fall outside the scope of this study.

[47] Chatman notes that 'What makes a narrator unreliable is that his values diverge strikingly from that of the implied author's', adding that '[t]he implied author establishes the norms of the narrative […] the real author can postulate whatever norms he likes through his implied author'. Chatman, p. 149. Note again the masculine gendering of the 'real' author.

founded upon an assertion of mastery, not only over language, but over its improper users, the symbolic *Ausgesperrten.*

Jelinek's text has frequent recourse to a joking exchange based on collusion between reader and author ego and their joint assertion of superiority over an excluded third party. Quoting 'negatively' both the individual protagonists and the society which has shaped them, *Die Ausgesperrten* abounds with transgressions of linguistic and symbolic laws, whose unmarked nature (in contrast to the joker's marked transgression) identifies the transgressors as lacking subjects with no claim to symbolic mastery. This element of Jelinek's comedy is reliant on a nuanced understanding of narrative perspective in *Die Ausgesperrten*, which allows the reader to differentiate between the views of the author ego, the protagonists and the third-person narrator.

FALSE EXCHANGES

Turning first to the negative quotation of the novel's protagonists, it is evident that this form of joking is directed primarily at Hans and Rainer. Whilst no figure escapes this treatment entirely, the frequency with which they are 'quoted' and the extent to which these protagonists transgress symbolic Law mark them as the main butts of the joking exchange. Within Purdie's structuralist-inflected conception of comic discourse as a system of exchange, Rainer and Hans typify the 'false exchangers' whose inappropriate linguistic operation denies them the power accorded to those who function 'properly', those mutually self-appointed 'masters of discourse', the teller and her audience (Purdie, p. 93). Purdie draws here on Lévi-Strauss's theory of language as a form of exchange not dissimilar to material transactions, where different linguistic terms are equated following the same socially conditioned logic that may equate one pint of milk with four eggs, or five copper-coloured metal discs with one silver-coloured metal disc (Purdie, p. 98). Success within this discursive exchange is dependent upon the exchangers' mutual recognition of worth, where one must not be seen to offer or accept a false value (Purdie, p. 96). Actions, beliefs and words may be deemed 'false' when their intended recipient does not grant them the recognition demanded by the giver, thus marking her as a 'false exchanger' operating outside the laws of social discourse.

In Jelinek's novel, Hans and Rainer are repeatedly exposed as false exchangers, whose self-perception is clearly incongruous with the status assigned to them by a class-driven society. This status is intimately connected to a discursive ineptitude, since

'whatever kind of "utterance" they direct to others is inappropriate because it does not have the effect they intend and/or – vice versa – it fails in its intention because it is inappropriate' (Purdie, p. 80). In the case of Hans, this element of false exchange is revealed in his desire to improve his intellectual status: 'Hans sagt, er will bildungsmäßig vorwärtskommen' (*DA*, p. 68). The false basis of his aspirations is exposed by the incongruence in linguistic register between this statement and Hans's normal speech, typified by his claim that 'er hat schon einmal drei Liter Bier auf einmal getrunken, uiweh, da war ich vollfett, habedehre' (*DA*, p. 195). Rather than experiencing admiration for his ambition, sympathy for his social struggle or any other form of emotional implication, the reader feels only amusement at Hans's intended intellectual betterment and its almost inevitable failure.

The comic effect is further heightened by the uncertainty of the origin of 'bildungsmäßig vorwärtskommen', presented as indirect speech, yet so at odds with Hans's usual idiom as to raise suspicion. Here it is entirely plausible that the narrator is, in fact, placing her own words into Hans's mouth in order to ridicule him further. This assertion, however, is entirely dependent on a clear conception of authorial intent, since these words may only assume a mocking tone if this is believed to be the objective of the author ego. It is only by placing these remarks within the wider discourse of the novel and its portrayal of Hans that the reader may discern their derisory tone and regard it as a product of the implied author's sarcasm. Thus, earlier descriptions of Hans's language inform the reader's impression of the narrator's linguistic superiority: 'Scheiße (Hans), mit diesem ordinären Ausdruck will er sagen, er hat sich sein Hemd zerrissen' (*DA*, p. 11). In these instances it is almost impossible to distinguish between the narrator and the author ego, who are both marked as the legitimate owners of symbolic language. The reader, then, is offered a pleasurable sense of superiority over the protagonist, gained through a collusive relationship with the novel's narrator/author ego, which engenders a mutual recognition of subjectivity based on the shared identification of Hans's speech as transgressive.

Purdie's quasi-economic conception of linguistic exchange finds its most literal expression in Rainer's boasting about non-existent wealthy relatives (*DA*, p. 65), possessions which he does not own (*DA*, p. 67) and holidays he has never experienced (*DA*, pp. 67, 161). The presentation of these lies renders transparent the dual process of collusion and exclusion that structures the quadripartite relationship between reader, protagonist, narrator and author ego. These claims are frequently denounced in explicit

narratorial comment as 'Angeberei' (*DA*, p. 161) or introduced in a similar manner: 'Rainer gibt an, indem er sagt, wenn sein Vater nach New York fliegt […]' (*DA*, p. 54). In other instances the mendacity of his assertions is exposed immediately: 'Sein Onkel in England (den er nicht hat) spielt Golf' (*DA*, p. 65). Here the narrator's intervention destroys his claim at both an epistemological and a linguistic level, since Rainer's speech is literally spliced in two by the narrator's interjection. The narrator's assertion of authority over Rainer renders manifest the negotiation of power at work in the novel, which condemns the protagonist to a position of discursive impotence. The exaggerated, outrageous nature of Rainer's lies and the reader's broader knowledge of his various inferiority complexes encourages her to assign an authorial quality to the narrator's statements and hence to regard the narrator as the representative of the author ego. Through her laughter at Rainer's outrageous lies, then, the reader aligns herself with the narrator and shares in her (borrowed) power, rendering Rainer the object of their joking discourse and excluding him from full subjectivity. Hence Rainer's attempts to assume a false value within a system of linguistic and economic exchange[48] result in social exclusion on the level of the diegesis and in symbolic exclusion within the wider narrative.

This transgressive communication further finds its linguistic expression in Rainer's incessant, and often inappropriate, use of poetic and academic language, as he smatters his speech with quotations and ostensibly intellectual concepts in an attempt to achieve a higher social status. The intended compensatory function of this elevated form of speech is revealed in the students' discussion of their recent sexual exploits, where Rainer retreats into pseudo-philosophical reflection in order to avoid admitting his lack of experience:

> Rainer erklärt gleich los, daß die Wollust eine Art Extase ist (????). Wißt ihr, das Bewußtsein ist in dieser Extase nur noch Bewußtsein des Körpers und daher reflexives Bewußtsein *von* der Leiblichkeit. Wie bei dem körperlichen Schmerz gibt es auch in der Lust so was wie einen Reflex, der dafür sorgt, daß man auf die Lust sehr intensiv achtgibt. (Waaas? Ich versteh kein Wort.) (*DA*, p. 21)

The use of unmarked direct speech exemplifies explicitly the element of 'negative quotation', as Rainer is allowed to reveal his own shortcomings. The inclusion in parentheses of his classmates' reactions underlines the absurd inadequacy of his social interaction, leaving the reader in no doubt as to how to interpret his statements. This

---

[48] His lies often form an attempt to woo Sophie or impress financially superior classmates.

example also serves to align the narrator of the previous passages with mainstream opinion, whose exact source (Rainer's classmates) may only be inferred from the surrounding narrative. Whilst the alignment of the narrator with popular opinion in this instance poses no challenge to her identification with the author ego, it flags up a potentially problematic relationship between narratorial and wider social discourse in the novel, which will be explored further below.

In these passages, Rainer's register is clearly out of kilter with dominant student discourse, leading to a rejection of his linguistic offerings by their intended recipients, primarily the other members of the gang and his wider group of classmates:

> Die Schulkameraden gehen immer gleich weg, wenn sie Rainers ansichtig werden, denn dann wissen sie: eine langweilige Rede erwartet mich, und ich selbst komme nicht zu Wort. Dieser Kerl ist tödlich fade. (*DA*, p. 200)

Their rejection of him, once again rendered in unmarked speech, stands comically at odds with the statement a few lines later that 'Rainer ist eine Führernatur, was jeder gleich sieht' (*DA*, p. 200), a spurious claim whose origin must evidently be sought in Rainer's deluded self-perception. Focalised through Rainer's consciousness, this statement reveals his internalisation of the fascist idealisation of authority, which previous revelations of his sexual inexperience suggest may correspond to a form of *Ersatzbefriedigung.*

In *Massenpsychologie des Faschismus*, Wilhelm Reich exposes the crucial role of sexual repression in the rise of fascism:

> Die Sexualverdrängung stärkt die politische Reaktion nicht nur durch den beschriebenen Vorgang, der die Massenindividuen passiv und unpolitisch macht; sie schafft in der Struktur des bürgerlichen Menschen eine sekundäre Kraft, ein künstliches Interesse, das die herrschende Ordnung auch aktiv unterstützt.[49]

Reich argues that repressed sexual desires increase interest in sadism and aggression, to which the National Socialists added the extra allure of fetishised uniforms, erotically charged parades and exhibitionist military displays.[50] Moreover, Reich's contention that 'je hilfloser das Massenindividuum aufgrund seiner Erziehung in Wirklichkeit ist […] desto mehr verkleidet sich das kindliche Anlehnungsbedürfnis in die Form des Sich-mit-dem-Führer-eins-Fühlens',[51] finds evident resonance in Rainer's situation, as he

---

[49] Wilhelm Reich, *Massenpsychologie des Faschismus* (Cologne: Kiepenhauer und Witsch, 2003), p. 52.
[50] Ibid, pp. 52-3.
[51] Ibid, p. 99.

seeks to compensate for both his lowly social status and his sexual inexperience through an identification with a 'Führergestalt'. This thread of self-delusion and resultant recourse to Nazi ideology runs throughout the novel, exposing Rainer's need to compensate for glaring inadequacy through claims of dominance. Thus his attempts to woo Sophie, which invariably end in rejection, are peppered with declarations of greatness and authority, with claims such as 'Ich bin eher so ein Führer und will zum Beispiel auch dich in Zukunft führen, mein Liebes' (*DA*, p. 129) demonstrating the compensatory function of Rainer's identification with authority.

In these instances it is Rainer's thoughts that are subjected to negative quotation. The uncommented switch to his focalisation renders his self-delusion all the more comic, as the absence of any indicators of subjective opinion reveals the sheer extent of his self-deception. Whilst previous chapters have posited focalisation as a means of activating identification with the focaliser, it is evident here that no such alignment occurs. His contemporaries' response to his frequent 'lectures' signals to the reader that they are to be interpreted not as the sensitive response of an intellectual at odds with his milieu, as Rainer's focalisation would have her believe, but rather as the comically pompous ravings of a would-be existentialist. Thus, the reader is spared any identificatory relationship with Rainer and is encouraged to undertake a more distanced assessment of the protagonist.

This lack of identification with Rainer highlights one of Purdie's central criteria for the designation of quotation as comic: the absence of 'affective implication', determined to a large extent by responses of other characters (Purdie, p. 79). Following Purdie's argument, the reader's perception of Rainer's speeches as comic utterances depends entirely on her lack of emotional involvement with the protagonist and a refusal to view him as 'an effective entity in our world' whose actions or utterances have reference beyond themselves and may thus be classified as 'full language' (Purdie 78). By denying Rainer any element of verifiable agency within the fictional world, the narrator establishes this figure as a potential joking object, to whom the possibility of full subjectivity is barred.

Moreover, an identificatory relationship with Rainer would oblige the reader to experience an almost constant stream of negative emotions, feeling sympathy with Rainer, anger at his tormentors and frustration with the society from which he is excluded. However, perception of Rainer's social position as comic relieves the reader of this potential unpleasure, by marking his words and actions as humorously 'false'. In

rendering Rainer a figure of fun, Jelinek then opens up the possibility for critical discourse on Austrian *Vergangenheitsbewältigung*, employing this figure to illustrate the continuation of fascist beliefs in the post-war generation. The reader's distance from Rainer and the position of superiority created for her by the novel's comic structures allows her to judge Rainer's recourse to Nazi ideology as 'improper speech', signs of a false relationship to social norms. Yet the moral code he violates in his belief in authoritarian structures evidently does not find its foundation in 1950s Austria, which Jelinek convincingly exposes as a mere facade behind which fascism continues to lurk, for example in Frau Sepp's description of SPÖ-sanctioned violence against striking workers (*DA*, p. 28). Rather Rainer must be seen to transgress the norms established by the reader and the author ego as colluding jokers, who establish and agree upon the values against which he is to be judged.

DOPPELSINN AND FOCALISATION

A non-identificatory form of focalisation is pivotal in a further, and perhaps unexpected, source of humour in the form of Otto Witkowski, the tyrannical father whose affiliation with National Socialism renders him the paradigm of the rehabilitated Nazi. Otto, a former SS officer whose wartime activities have left him with only one leg, provides a stereotypical image of the petty bourgeois who supported the rise of fascism and enabled the rise to power of the Nazis. Confirming Wilhelm Reich's assertion that 'die autoritäre Stellung des Vaters gibt seine politische Rolle wieder und enthüllt die Beziehung der Familie zum autoritären Staat',[52] Otto physically, mentally and sexually abuses his wife, Gretl, and their two children, Anna and Rainer. Details of this abuse are given in horrific detail with repeated emphasis on their foundation in fascism. Thus Otto's sexual relationship with Gretl represents a direct conversion of Nazi war crimes into a private form of fascism, as 'die Prügelei begann angeblich auf den Tag genau, als der Weltkrieg verloren war, denn vorher prügelte der Vater fremde Menschen in wechselnder Gestalt und Form' (*DA*, p. 32). These violent episodes are interspersed with even more repugnant references to the Holocaust, such as Otto's references to the 'Leichenberge aus nackten Personen, auch Frauen' (*DA*, p. 102) and his fond reminiscence: 'ich weiß noch, wie wir in polnischen Dörfern bis zu den Knöcheln unserer Reitstiefl in Blut wateten' (*DA*, p. 17). This interconnection of sexual violence

---

[52] Reich, p. 67.

and National Socialist atrocities evidently forms a potential source of unpleasure for the reader, who is forced to confront several layers of violence in Austrian society.

However, certain joking strategies are employed to diminish the threat of unpleasure, restoring to the reader a more enjoyable reading experience by rendering Otto a figure of ridicule. Although the significance of this strategy must not be overestimated (Otto remains a thoroughly unpleasant and sinister character), the positioning of certain language-based jokes within the novel serves to neutralise temporarily the threat posed by Otto. Thus, the injury he sustained during the war becomes the object of ridicule, when the narrator claims that 'Herr Witkowski war aus dem Krieg einbeinig aber aufrecht zurückgekehrt, im Krieg war er mehr als heute, nämlich unversehrt, ein Zweibeiniger und bei der SS' (*DA*, p. 15). Here the reader is presented with a double case of 'Doppelsinn', where humour arises from the potential double meaning of 'aufrecht' and 'mehr', both of which make reference to Otto's amputated leg.

In the first case, humour arises from the contradiction in meanings, as any description of Otto as physically 'aufrecht' is undermined by his disability, suggesting that meaning has to be sought at the figurative level. However, the revelation that he was a member of the SS equally disqualifies this explanation, since his actions could in no way be considered morally 'upright'. Similarly, the claim that 'im Krieg war er mehr als heute' invites two possible readings, both of which are listed explicitly 'nämlich unversehrt, ein Zweibeiniger und bei der SS'. Here, the essential role of the narrator becomes apparent, since it is the combination of her lexical choice with Otto's focalisation which renders this passage truly humorous. Whilst the belief that he returned (morally) 'upright' from the war is evidently to be attributed to Otto's perspective, the potentially ambiguous words selected to express his conviction must be ascribed to the narrator.

It is thus possible to identify two transgressive processes at work in this phrase. On the one hand, focalisation through Otto results in an ascription of positive values to his SS career, patently transgressing any standards of acceptable morality. On a linguistic level, the attribution of two signifieds to one signifier represents a breach of symbolic Law, since 'aufrecht' is obliged to signify 'upright' in both its physical sense and its extended moral sense. This transgressive pleasure is evidently heightened by the mutually exclusive nature of these signifieds in the context of the Second World War and post-war cultural memory, since Otto's war-time activity precludes its designation

as morally 'aufrecht'. Thus, the narrator's wordplay undermines Otto's positive view of National Socialism by marking both as transgressive transactions. However, the use of joking discourse in this particular context may be deemed transgressive in itself. Poking fun at attitudes towards the Holocaust presents a clear moral dilemma, given the taboo nature of this topic in comic discourse. Yet Purdie notes that the humorous treatment of taboo subjects provides a great source of pleasure, which 'is not […] formed simply through permitting a forbidden term, but in the public "performance" of this transgressive act' (Purdie, p. 44). Within Jelinek's treatment of *Vergangenheitsbewältigung*, the novel's humorous discourse exploits the public element in joking to provide a forum for open discussion of an otherwise taboo subject in Austria's historical discourse. Over and above the critique of Otto's idealisation of fascism, then, the novel renders enjoyable the literary treatment of Austria's problematic past, marking *Vergangenheitsbewältigung* as a positive and potentially pleasurable activity.

COLLUSION AND EXCLUSION

In laughing at the protagonists, then, the reader establishes herself as a 'proper speaker' whose discursive mastery contrasts with their social and linguistic impotence. Whereas the verbal jokes discussed above confirmed the reader's full subjectivity through her mutual transgression of symbolic Law, the comedy arising from negative quotation arises from the identification of the *other*'s breach of this law. Whilst wordplay created collusion between reader and narrator based on a mutual marking of their own transgression, where the object of fun appeared to be language itself (Purdie, p. 59), this second form of humour occurs at the expense of the protagonists, who are its undoubted butts. The reader's pleasure is thus engendered by her assumption of a position of power within the comic discourse, which marks her as a subject in full control of symbolic power.

Indeed, the reader's sense of power is increased even further by the extension of negative quotation to post-war Austrian society as a whole. In addition to exposing the protagonists' 'improper' language, the novel further reveals the basis of 1950s Austrian culture in inauthentic, aspirational clichés. Here, Purdie's concept of 'negative quotation' assumes a more literal meaning, as intertextual references to popular culture, including the citation of pop music and cinema, constitute the main thrust of Jelinek's joking discourse. *Die Ausgesperrten* is peppered with references to kitsch *Schlager* and low-brow cinema, whose antagonism with the less glamorous reality of post-war Vienna

repeatedly exposes the false exchange encouraged by proponents of the *Wirtschaftswunder*. Just as Rainer and Hans claim access to a social and intellectual status they do not really possess, so 1950s Austria sought to define itself through a borrowed discourse of Hollywood clichés. This frequently manifests itself in the introduction of English words into the text whose incongruity with the reality of the situation creates an undoubtedly comic effect. Thus the amateur jazz musician informs Anna that she is out of place 'hier, wo es hot ist' (*DA*, p. 111), the bourgeois 'Apothekerssohn' comically overlooking his own less than 'hot' background.

The misuse of English is further evident in the language of Anna's would-be lover, Gerhard, who accompanies his pathetic sexual attempts with phrases such as '[e]ine Priese Liebe wäre das allerschönste Geschenk für mich, Baby' (*DA*, p. 56). Comedy functions in this instance both to compensate for the otherwise unpleasant nature of this episode, which abounds with graphic descriptions of bodily functions and fluids, and to confirm the reader's superior discursive position. The appendage of 'Baby' to an already clichéd phrase, alongside his sexual impotence and Anna's unimpressed response 'Halt doch die Goschn' (*DA*, p. 58), exposes a comic element in Austria's enthusiastic adoption of American phrases and ideology. The humour of this situation is heightened by the juxtaposition of Hollywood English with Anna's Viennese dialect: 'mußt du denn so plärren?', 'du Depp' (*DA*, p. 58). Gerhard's attempted display of linguistic and sexual prowess fails spectacularly, exposing the lack of authenticity at the heart of Hollywood discourse, whilst Anna's comments in dialect appear much more fitting in this sordid situation, supporting Schlipphacke's claim that 'Jelinek's works attest to the limits of American universality and the hegemony of the English language'.[53] Neither Gerhard's Hollywood-informed conception of sex, nor Anna's rejection of his advances may be viewed purely as individual responses. The contrast between the two linguistic systems with differing cultural values endows their specific situation with a more representative value, exposing a wider disharmony between the myths propagated by popular culture and the reality of 1950s Austria.

Negative quotation of Austrian society is frequently located in the novel's depictions of sexuality, which poke fun at the infiltration of Hollywood ideology into the collective sexual consciousness. Thus Anna and Hans's sexual encounters are determined by the image of sexuality propagated by the American media, to which they aspire to conform:

---

[53] Heidi Schlipphacke, 'Translating Jelinek: Globalizing the Austrian Province', *Modern Austrian Literature*, 38 (2005), 73-81 (p. 74).

> Es tut Hans weh, was sie macht, und er verzieht gequält das Gesicht, dabei erinnert er sich gleich, daß auch Gary Cooper oft das Gesicht innerlich gefoltert verzieht, wenn er in einer Liebesszene spielt. Man muß aussehen, als ob es einem gegen den Willen geht. (*DA*, p. 89)

Anna reveals the truly absurd extent of this influence in her confusion of cause and effect when she 'macht kurze, zitternde Bewegungen dabei, weil man immer hört, daß es zittrig sein soll' (*DA*, p. 88). The use of the impersonal 'man' potentially serves a double purpose, widening the negative quotation to include both Austrian society as a whole and possibly even the narrator herself. It is impossible here to determine the consciousness through which this statement is filtered, since it could plausibly signify Anna's adoption of this belief, or represent the narrator's comment on it. The absence of any identifiable narratorial remark exposing Anna's behaviour as misinformed underlines the crucial role of the author ego, with whom the reader colludes in her mocking laughter directed at Anna. It is the belief in a disparity between Anna's reported actions and the imagined stance of the author ego that permits the reader to mark the former as 'improper speech' and to align herself with the latter as the proper speaker.

The full significance of the author ego for the novel's comic structures, however, only becomes apparent in a consideration of Jelinek's celebrated *Sprachmontage* and the positioning of the narrator within this narrative device. Frequently paraded as evidence of Jelinek's proximity to Karl Kraus,[54] this technique fills her works with quotations of everyday clichés and phrases, emptied of their ostensible meaning and exposed as inadequate forms of communication. Thus, commonplace phrases, such as 'die Augen sind der Spiegel der Seele' are revealed to be entirely inadequate in the face of the youths' brutality, as Anna's vicious attempts to scratch her victim's eyes is accompanied by the rather platitudinous 'die Augen sind der Spiegel der Seele, der möglichst unbeschädigt bleiben sollte. Sonst glaubt man, die Seele ist hin' (*DA*, p. 7). Humour finds various sources here, stemming at once from the flawed logic that harm to the eyes would equally damage the soul, from the rather absurd notion that one's soul can be 'hin' and, lastly, from the revelation that the novel's third-person narrator is an 'improper speaker'.

---

[54] See, for example, Margarete Sander, *Textherstellungsverfahren bei Elfriede Jelinek: das Beispiel* Totenauberg (Würzburg: Könighausen und Neumann, 1996), p. 82 and John Pizer, 'Modern vs. Postmodern Satire: Karl Kraus and Elfriede Jelinek', *Monatshefte*, 86 (1994), 500-13.

The final source of comic pleasure arises from the perceived discrepancy between the 'speech' of the novel's narrator, who unquestioningly accepts the banal attribution of symbolic function to the eyes and extends this value to a more literal level, and the more critical attitude of the author ego. This raises a number of questions and, no doubt, objections. First, one must address the argument that this statement is expressed by the narrator in a clearly ironic tone. This objection is not without substance: the reader evidently does not believe that she is intended to take the platitude seriously and therefore assigns to it an ironic tone. However, the text provides no indication that it is to the *narrator* that this irony must be attributed, since the latter possesses no discernible features or character traits that may support this view. Irony in a Jelinekian context, then, is more complex than the OED definition: 'A figure of speech in which the intended meaning is the opposite of that expressed by the words used.' In the case of *Die Ausgesperrten*, irony arises from the fact that the narrator expresses views opposed to those the reader believes the *author ego* to hold.

The next point of contention involves stepping into the academic minefield of authorial intent in order to determine to what extent one may know 'what the author is thinking'. As discussed above, the implied author/author ego designates a textual construct or a position is inferred from the text, which may or may not correspond in any or all particulars with the real author. On the one hand, it may be argued that these impressions of Jelinek's author ego are informed by public appearances, interviews, previous works etc. Following this logic, however, full comprehension of the text would require at least a basic knowledge of Jelinek as a literary figure, a precondition which cannot be assumed unproblematically. Claire Colebrook's explanation of literary irony, however, points to a more universally applicable means of grasping the position of the author ego. Colebrook contends that the perception of irony in a text depends on the attribution of positive qualities to the author ego, conditioned by narrative convention: 'in literary irony it is because we assume a recognised great writer *is great* that clumsy, unpalatable or inhuman expressions are assumed to be ironic'.[55] In *Die Ausgesperrten*, this finds its clearest expression in the narrator's assumption of societal norms of 1950s Austria, in particular her replication of gender stereotypes: '[Anna] streichelt ihn ferner und flüstert Liebesworte, ziemlich banale übrigens, da hat sie schon Besseres hervorgebracht, ganz verändert ist sie, es kommt daher, weil sie im Moment nichts als Frau ist und deswegen eher unoriginell' (*DA*, p. 90). The narrator's equation of

---

[55] Claire Colebrook, *Irony*, The New Critical Idiom (London: Routledge, 2004), p. 17.

femininity with lack of (linguistic) originality is clearly not an opinion one would ascribe to a 'great author', and certainly not to Jelinek as a known feminist. Negative quotation, then, where the author ego's views are perceived to differ from those expressed in the novel, may be seen to find its basis in irony.

Colebrook further argues that the reader's awareness of irony relies on a common set of norms and conventions.[56] Thus, the example above may only function ironically if both reader and author ego share a belief in gender equality. Mirroring Purdie's account of collusion between teller and listener at the expense of the butt, Colebrook contends that 'irony allows the speaker to remain "above" what he says, allowing those members of his audience who share his urbanity to perceive the true sense of what is really meant'.[57] Irony is thus a further means of establishing complicity between reader and author ego, allowing the former to share the perceived mastery attributed to the latter by a mutual recognition of the narrator's statements as 'improper speech'. Purdie's assertion that joking is used to neutralise the threat posed by a competent other is particularly pertinent in the context of the novel's third person narrator, a position conventionally endowed with power and narrative privilege. The reader's designation of the narrator as the butt of the joke may thus bring greater pleasure than laughing at the novel's protagonists, since 'the more evident the claim to power, the more probable funniness as a response to their mishap' (Purdie, p. 61). In identifying the narrator's unreflected assumption of commonplace language and beliefs as 'improper speech', by differentiating it from the 'proper speech' of the implied author, the reader asserts her power over the traditional holder of narrative authority, gaining pleasure from her recognition of the narrator's deviation from the norm.

Thus, the reader of *Die Ausgesperrten* believes herself to be in full control of symbolic discourse, and is tacitly enjoined to subscribe to the values which it upholds. Through the related strategies of negative quotation and irony, the novel establishes a set of norms by which to judge the protagonists, coercing the reader into accepting these values through the offer of shared power. By distancing the reader from both protagonists and narrator, the novel's comic structures facilitate a critique of class and gender inequalities, inauthentic Hollywood conceptions of romance and Austria's inadequate *Vergangenheitsbewältigung*. The use of word-play to expose these societal problems further draws attention to the pivotal role of language in maintaining these

---

[56] Colebrook, p. 16.
[57] Ibid, p. 19.

established socio-economic structures, revealing the latent oppressive force of the cliché.

DIE AUSGESPERRTEN: FILMIC HUMOUR

Despite its undoubtedly unpleasant subject matter, then, the reader of *Die Ausgesperrten* may nevertheless find a source of pleasure in the novel's narrative structures. The dependency of this pleasure on the presence of a verbal narrator as both facilitator and butt of joking discourse evidently raises the question of the transferability of this satisfaction to the visual medium. In her study of intermediality in *Die Ausgesperrten*, Allyson Fiddler observes that Jelinek's black humour 'wäre in der Filmform kaum unterzubringen ohne surrealistischen Modus oder unpassenden Slapstick'.[58] Indeed, a great deal of the novel's comic force appears to be lost in its translation into film, where the novel's humorous events, in particular the protagonists' words and actions, are rendered at best pathetic and at worst contemptuous. It would seem that the joking structure does indeed depend on the intervention of the narrator, whose alignment with, or divergence from, the author ego is fundamental to the reader's perception of humour.

Thus, Rainer's pompous speech, a great source of humour in the novel, takes on an almost pathetic aspect in the adaptation, where the substitution of the camera for the narrator threatens to bring the spectator too close to the protagonist. This is particularly evident in his pathetic appeal to Sophie after he discovers her plans to build a bomb with Hans and exclude him from the act. Clearly distressed, Peter (as Rainer's filmic counterpart has been renamed) pleads with Sophie, reminding her that 'wir haben es immer so schön gehabt. Wir haben sogar Camus gemeinsam übersetzt'. The sheer inadequacy of his offer of intellectual stimulation in the face of her fascination with the physicality of Hans clearly replicates a source of repeated amusement in the novel. Yet the lack of narrator to point out the flawed nature of his offer, in effect the absence of a 'quoter', results in a very different reaction from the spectator. Instead of laughing at Peter's attempts, the viewer feels a certain degree of sympathy, as he is pushed to the ground, beaten and urinated upon by Hans.

This sense of pity is heightened by the scene's shifting camera angles, which follow a conventional high angle/low angle sequence to suggest Peter's inferior position

---

[58] Allyson Fiddler, 'Die Ausgesperrten: intermediale Blickpunkte und Hörweisen', in *'Ich will kein Theater'*, ed. by Janke, pp. 307-22 (p. 309).

vis-à-vis Hans and Sophie. Whilst the camera is never visually aligned with Peter or his tormentors, precluding perceptual identification with either, the final shot of this scene sees the camera move to just above Peter's level as the viewer looks through Hans's open calves to see him urinating on Peter. The lowering of the camera to Peter's height along with the close proximity to his face creates a fleeting sense of sympathy with this character, transforming his speech into something more tragic than comic.

Despite these brief moments of 'affective implication', however, it could not be claimed that the adaptation as a whole encourages an identificatory relationship between viewer and protagonists. Even in the absence of a discernible narrator to draw attention to the author ego, the film reconstructs certain key features of the novel's narrative structures, distancing the viewer from the protagonists in order to encourage identification with a third position, here the cinematic apparatus. Reflecting the novel's structuring exclusion of its main protagonists, Novotny's film consistently seeks to distance the spectator from its characters at an emotional and perceptual level. On the surface, this is no mean task given the film's focus on a relatively small group of individuals, their proximity in age to the film's target audience and the relatively universal coming-of-age thematics.[59] However, Novotny employs a number of strategies in order to discourage any traditional form of identification with his figures, carrying over Jelinek's stereotyped portrayal of the group in order to prevent any emotional involvement and further reinforcing this affective distance through a perceptual detachment. Both strategies work together to drive a wedge between viewer and protagonists, sparing the spectator the potential unpleasure of emotional involvement with clearly transgressive characters. Within the film's economy of pleasure, this distance forms an essential component of the viewer's enjoyment, allowing her to insist on her claim to discursive mastery.

DISTANCE AND EXCLUSION

Regarded as an integral element of her social criticism, the exaggerated, stereotyped depictions of Jelinek's protagonists, who represent 'keine gefühlswabbernden Individuen, sondern bewußt verallgemeinerte, extreme Prototypen',[60] encourage emotional detachment from the characters so as to permit critical engagement with their

---

[59] Novotny and Jelinek both place their intended viewer in their twenties. See 'Ein Schöngeist wird zum Bombenwerfer'.

[60] Sigrid Löffler, 'Weltdame, schön böse', *profil*, 27 May 1980.

socio-historical background. Purdie isolates stereotyping as a means of preventing affective implication, noting that 'what is presented as lacking psychological credibility will be constructed as open to joking manipulation as "language"' (Purdie, p. 112). The film applies this form of distancing to almost every figure, each of whom assumes a representative role lacking in any real psychological depth. Thus Peter's emotional turmoil, undoubtedly the result of a severely dysfunctional home life, is ironised by his exaggerated existentialism, encoded visually in his costuming, as he is hardly seen without a black polo-neck sweater and a copy of Camus or Sartre.[61]

This image comes very close to humour in the scene in 'Cafe Sport', where Peter sets out his plans for an 'existentialist attack'. Moving slowly from screen left, the camera scans the bar before coming to rest on Peter, who remains in profile throughout the scene. Almost blending into the dark background, Peter sits in his trademark black jumper, wearing sunglasses that are clearly unnecessary in the gloom of the bar and smoking a cigarette whilst gazing into the distance. This would offer a prototypical image of the Parisian intellectual were it not for his garish blue drink garnished rather superfluously with an extra-large slice of lemon. The frivolity of this drink and its incongruity with Peter's otherwise sombre appearance expose the superficiality of his intellectual facade, preventing the viewer from taking seriously his criminal plans. By rendering ridiculous this character, the film frees the viewer from any affective obligation, be it sympathy for his inner intellectual struggle or fear of his violent anarchic plans. However, to pronounce this scene humorous would be to exaggerate its effect greatly, as his intellectual pretensions may at most raise a smile in the viewer. Whilst it may approximate Freud's conception of the comic as a favourable comparison of self and other (Witz, p. 181), it lacks the necessary extremity to become truly humorous. Hence, the viewer is alienated from Peter, yet is unable to find his depiction truly amusing, since his absurdity is too limited to bring about the discharge of energy normally engendered by the comic.

In the case of Sophie, this stereotyped portrayal is accompanied by an activation of filmic stereotypes and clichéd visual tropes. The spectator is first introduced to Sophie in the context of the schoolroom, where sparse lighting of the space prevents the viewer from clearly discerning the students' faces. As the camera dollies back to reveal row upon row of half-concealed adolescents, the teacher (played by Elfriede Jelinek) asks for the windows to be opened. The execution of her demand coincides

---

[61] The notable exception to this costuming is the slaughter scene at the end of the film, where Peter wears only pyjamas.

exactly with the appearance of Sophie in the frame, bathing her in a warm glow and thus separating her from the gloomy mass of her cohort. The kitsch nature of this lighting effect, which is not diminished by its diegetic motivation, encourages the viewer to regard Sophie as an exaggerated stereotype as inauthentic as the trope with which she is introduced.

This is equally true of the filmic depiction of her home, presented to the viewer in a series of establishing shots, repeated from various angles throughout the film. The clean lines of the building, highlighted by the clear blue sky behind it, along with its warm yellow colour are inevitably reminiscent of Schloss Schönbrunn, the erstwhile home of Kaiserin Sissi and an almost clichéd symbol of Habsburg glory. This connection to a codified portrayal of Austria's monarchic past is highlighted in the shots on the palace's terrace, which encompass several recognisable markers of the 1950s costume drama, including elaborate ball gowns and a string quartet, all shot in soft focus. This echoing of the romanticised *Sissi* aesthetic within an otherwise brutal film encourages the viewer to regard Sophie as a somewhat clichéd representative of a supposedly extinct aristocracy, rather than a complex character with whom one could identify.

The film's depiction of the body plays an equally significant role in distancing the viewer from the protagonists, most notably in relation to Anna. In contrast to the literary Anna, who is 'dünn' (*DA*, p. 58) or even 'dürr' (*DA*, p. 77), a physical manifestation of her oppressed femininity,[62] her filmic counterpart evidently does not suffer from an analogous eating disorder. At various points in the narrative the viewer is confronted with a rather unattractive image of Anna's more corpulent figure, which stands in stark contrast to the idealised media images of the female body which constitute the contemporary cultural screen, where 'certain bodies come to seem worthier of our libidinal affirmation than others'.[63] Her attempt to seduce Hans in the corridor of a Viennese *Kaffeehaus* serves to emphasise her deviance from the corporeal ideal, the lighting of the scene highlighting her flabby body and cellulite. As Anna emerges from the shadows, the light focuses principally on her thighs, leaving the rest of her body and her face in the shadows, inexorably drawing the viewer's attention towards her pallid, flaccid bottom, which remains constantly visible throughout the

---

[62] Sylvia Schmitz-Burgard, 'Body Language as Expression of Repression: Lethal Reverberations of Fascism in *Die Ausgesperrten*', in *Elfriede Jelinek: Framed by Language*, ed. by Johns and Arens, pp. 194-228 (p. 211).

[63] Kaja Silverman, *The Threshold of the Visible World* (London; New York: Routledge, 1996), p. 81.

scene. Anna's distance from the culturally valorised aesthetic ideal represents a significant barrier to the viewer's identification with her character, as Silverman notes that conventional identification restricts itself either to objects similar to the self or to those which represent a move 'upwards', towards an idealised image.[64] Identification with a subject whose (corporeal) status is not socially validated offers no psychic pleasure to the viewer.[65] Thus the camera discourages an identification with Anna based on corporeal difference, firmly placing the cultural screen, defined and activated by Sophie's conventional beauty, between viewer and protagonist.

These distancing strategies find their formal counterpart in the conspicuously low number of point-of-view shots in *Die Ausgesperrten*. Over the course of the film, there are very few shots in which the viewer is encouraged to align her gaze with that of the protagonist, as the camera remains consistently external to events and only rarely presents the viewer with a subjective shot attributable to an identifiable gaze within the diegesis. This absence is most striking in those scenes where the viewer would traditionally expect cinematography to reflect the intimacy between characters, in particular Hans and Anna's sexual encounters. Rejecting the conventional shot/reverse-shot construction typically employed in depictions of intimacy, Novotny's camera remains 'neutral' throughout the scene which sees the commencement of their sexual relationship. In many other aspects, the construction of this scene remains true to conventional cinematic portrayals of sex, as its dimmed, orange-tinged lighting and play of shadows maintains the distinction between direct pornographic depiction and 'tasteful' suggestion, whilst the soft strains of piano music serve to enhance the scene's romantic element.

The camera also plays its part in the creation of a romantic 'ambience', zooming in very slowly as the couple comes together, drawing the viewer into their intimacy. However, the viewer is denied any further access to the protagonists, since the camera remains fixed in this viewpoint throughout. Whilst it may marginally adjust its distance to Anna and Hans, the camera remains firmly exterior to them, as neither protagonist is positioned as the subject of the cinematic gaze. This combination of the intrusive zoom, which previous chapters have identified as an unwelcome indicator of the Absent Other, with a lack of perceptual alignment withholds from the viewer the possibility of suture and the pleasure it would afford her.

---

[64] Silverman, *The Threshold of the Visible World*, p. 72.
[65] Ibid, p. 27.

The viewer's distance from the protagonists is further highlighted by Gretl's entry. Clutching a *Gugelhupf*, she is stopped dead in her tracks by the sight of Hans and Anna's sexual encounter. In a reversal of the Freudian primal scene, Gretl demonstrates clear distress at the realisation that Anna is sexually active and turns to flee, the crumbling cake symbolising the end of her maternal role. Throughout this episode, the camera remains focussed on Gretl in the background, who stares blankly in the direction of the camera, whilst Anna and Hans are barely audible off-screen. Conventional markers of shaking furniture and discreet moans draw the spectator's attention to the sexual act, yet the camera refuses to satisfy her voyeuristic urges, placing her in a position of visual disadvantage. When the camera finally does cut to a shot of the copulating couple, this does not represent a reverse shot from Gretl's point-of-view, as her fixated gaze may have led the viewer to expect. The camera's positioning thus prevents the viewer from aligning herself with any gaze within the diegesis, since the refusal to introduce any point-of-view shots into this scene reinforces the exclusion of the characters from the site of symbolic power, as their unchanging status as objects of the gaze denies them the possibility of full subjectivity. This refusal to align the camera with the protagonists' gaze has significant impact on the viewer's subject position. Since its conception, psychoanalytic film theory has regarded the shot/reverse-shot sequence and other manifestations of point-of-view as crucial to the process of suture, and hence to the viewer's experience of cinematic pleasure.[66] A failure to identify the camera with a viewpoint within the narrative may result, then, in the viewer's increased awareness of the camera as the locus of visual power, upon which the viewer is dependent for her access to and knowledge of the profilmic events.

IDENTIFICATION WITH THE CAMERA

The lack of point-of-view shots in *Die Ausgesperrten*, however, does not automatically result in the viewer's heightened awareness of her subservience to the unidentifiable gaze, since alternative cinematographic methods function to suture the spectator into the narrative. In the course of this study, cinematic pleasure has been consistently associated with the viewer's perception of her own knowledge, her satisfaction growing in proportion to her sense of mastery over the events depicted on screen and the extent to which she believes this to be limitless. This perceived mastery is supported, to a

---

[66] Daniel Dayan designates the shot/reverse-shot sequence as the 'privileged example' of cinematic suture. Dayan, 'The Tutor-Code of Classical Cinema', *Film Quarterly*, 28 (1974), 22-31 (p. 29).

significant extent, in *Die Ausgesperrten* by the film's distancing cinematography, which abounds with long and medium shots of tableaux-esque scenes in which the viewer is clearly allocated a privileged position of knowledge. Used frequently in combination with deep-focus, this distancing camera-work renders all on-screen protagonists visible to the viewer, giving her the impression that she is able to view the complete action at all times. Regarded in terms of cinematic pleasure, this technique may be considered to compensate for a lack of identification with the protagonists, offering the viewer another 'way in' to the narrative through knowledge and identification with the camera-apparatus.

This compensatory function is particularly striking in the first scene of 'intimacy' between Sophie and Hans, where the latter is required to remove all his clothes in order to acquire Sophie's brother's cast-offs. From the outset, this scene illustrates Stephen Heath's conception of suture, first creating the sense of absence identified by Heath as 'the key-moment in the fate of the image', the moment at which the image becomes a signifier in a cinematic discourse.[67] This absence is created here by the apparatus's control over depth-of-field, as the camera that has followed Hans into the lavish parlour of the Pachofen villa remains in the doorway, whilst Hans and Sophie move out of focus into the background. The viewer's awareness of the figures in the background and her interest in the developing sexual tension between the two characters creates an acute sense of absence at the point when the protagonists move out of view. The double framing of this scene, observed through the door frame which remains visible at the edge of the cinematic frame, further reminds the spectator of her restricted view, thus creating a sense of visual loss and absence of mastery.

The illusion of visual potency is, however, returned to the viewer in the next shot and maintained throughout the remainder of the scene, arguably creating far greater pleasure through its compensatory function than it would have done without the initial shot. The cut to a medium shot of Hans, in which his scantily-clad, then naked upper torso fills the frame, grants the viewer privileged vision and restores the spectator's sense of scopic mastery. This pleasure is maintained throughout the scene, where the cinematography functions to ensure that the spectator remains in possession of the most significant and most salient information. Thus, a close-up shot of Hans's facial reaction to Sophie's demand is followed by a medium shot as he begins to undress, ensuring that the viewer is granted full visual access to his naked body.

---

[67] Stephen Heath, 'Notes on Suture', *Screen*, 18 (1977-78), 48-76 (p. 58).

Significantly, Hans is placed in the conventionally female role of exhibitionist, made visually available to the voyeuristic gaze of Sophie. Beyond the very obvious challenge this poses to gendered positions of looking commonly associated with cinema, where woman is usually 'arranged so as to connote "to-be-looked-at-ness"',[68] the positioning of Hans as object implies that power structures may not simply be reduced to a male/potent – female/impotent dyad. The very fact that Hans is stripping in order to gain access to the financial benefits enjoyed by Sophie points towards a power divide along the lines of class that exceeds, and here negates, a gendered allocation of power. Through her elevated social position, Sophie transcends conventional gender roles, adopting the 'male' position, exposing power to be the determining factor in the voyeuristic position rather than gender.

The spectator is encouraged to align herself with this voyeuristic gaze and is, in fact, awarded further visual superiority over all on-screen protagonists, created by a variation on the shot/reverse-shot sequence, as the camera alternates between images of Hans and of Sophie. Unlike the classic shot/reverse-shot chain, however, it is impossible to align the gaze with either of the characters, since the camera position is repeatedly revealed to be incongruous with the protagonists' location within the frame. Thus the images of Hans undressing correspond roughly to Sophie's gaze, yet the spectator is awarded a privileged view as the camera zooms in on his body in a manner which exceeds the physical capabilities of the human eye. By crosscutting to shots of Peter approaching the room towards the end of the scene, the camera further demonstrates its superiority over the protagonists, as the viewer is alerted to his impending presence before Sophie and Hans are aware of his arrival. Thus the spectator gains pleasure through a double position of power over both the object of the gaze and the voyeuristic look itself.

Previous chapters have identified the superiority of the camera's gaze as a source of unpleasure for the viewer, who feels symbolically castrated by cinema's Absent Other. This unpleasure, however, may not be attributed simply to the perceived presence of the apparatus but depends rather on the extent to which the spectator is able to identify with the controlling gaze. Thus, for example, the perception of the unidentifiable Other challenged the primacy of the viewer of *Der stille Ozean*, whose unpleasure arose, to a great extent, from her identification with Ascher as the source of visual potency and the subsequent exposition of the illusory foundation of this belief.

---

[68] Laura Mulvey, 'Visual Pleasure and Narrative Cinema', in Mulvey, *Visual and Other Pleasures* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1989), pp. 14-26 (p. 19).

The spectator of *Die Ausgesperrten*, however, undergoes no such identification with the protagonists. Here the establishment of an omniscient and, by extension, omnipotent Other may be regarded as a support rather than a challenge to the viewer's visual mastery, providing a subject position with which the spectator may identify. In a manner similar to the novel's joking discourse, the viewer is encouraged to identify with an invisible 'authorial' position to the exclusion of the film's protagonists. The presence of a potent camera that repeatedly draws attention to its controlling role may, in fact, offer a source of pleasure to the otherwise alienated viewer, promising a means of access to the narrative, albeit as an external observer. In the scenes examined above lack of visual identification with the protagonists' point-of-view combines with the camera's claim to visual mastery to encourage an alignment with the camera-apparatus. This conception of the film's identificatory structures is corroborated by several further aspects of the film's cinematography, most notably its frequent use of the zoom lens.

The discussion of visual anthropology in *Der Stille Ozean* established zoom shots as particularly problematic in the creation and maintenance of a neutral viewpoint. Ethnographer and filmmaker, Jean Rouch, identified the zoom with a voyeuristic and superior point-of-view, citing this as evidence of the technique's incompatibility with the aims of visual anthropology.[69] More mainstream film theory equates the zoom with an unnatural way of looking since, unlike tracking or dolly shots, it represents a movement physically impossible for the human body.[70] As such, the viewer's attention is drawn to the controlling presence of a camera-apparatus, which observes the entirety of the action with superhuman powers of vision and does so from a fixed vantage point without forfeiting its visual mastery. The zoom lens in *Die Ausgesperrten* thus becomes a weapon in the apparatus's arsenal, through which it asserts its visual control over the on-screen images and creates distance between viewer and protagonists.

This somewhat paradoxical effect of the zoom lens is particularly evident towards the end of the film (once identificatory structures are already firmly in place), at the end-of-year school celebrations and the awarding of the scholarships to America. Throughout the film the viewer has been made aware of the significance of this grant to Anna, who at one point explicitly states 'Ich lebe eigentlich nur für das Amerika-Stipendium.' The announcement that it is Sophie who is to be the final recipient of the

---

[69] Jean Rouch, 'The Camera and the Man', in *Principles of Visual Anthropology*, ed. by Paul Hockings, 3rd edn (Berlin; New York: de Gruyter, 2003), pp. 79-98 (p. 89).

[70] Steven Barclay notes that 'A straight zoom is currently uncommon in most films because of its unnatural effect: a sudden awareness of the camera which tends to detract from a scene.' Barclay, *The Motion Picture Image: From Film to Digital* (Oxford: Focal Press, 2000), p. 102.

scholarship, is accompanied in the film by a zoom in on Anna's face. However, the crushing disappointment evident in her facial expression fails on three grounds to elicit the sympathy which might be expected from such an intimate shot. First, the positioning of this scene within the film renders highly unlikely any spontaneous identification and sympathy with Anna, since the spectator has been set at a distance from her throughout the film. Moreover, the framing of the shot to include two unknown figures in the background discourages the spectator from focusing solely on Anna. Finally, the humorous presence of Otto and Gretl, the very paradigm of embarrassing parents, further deflects attention from her misfortune, with the viewer's laughter at their exaggerated enthusiasm still ringing in her ears as the scholarship is announced.

Whilst the zoom lens undoubtedly functions to draw attention to Anna's reaction, it cannot be said to facilitate identification with her character. The viewer is instead encouraged to align herself with the camera-apparatus, whose asserted omniscience provides a favourable basis for identification. In this sense, the film's identificatory structures mirror those of the novel, rendering impossible identification with the protagonists, who are established as impotent figures within the film's structures of visual power. As the novel's characters are denied status as speaking subjects, so the role of looking subject is barred to the film's protagonists. In order to maintain a pleasurable viewing position, then, the spectator is required to renounce identification with the on-screen characters in favour of an alignment with the camera. The reader's collusion with the joking author ego thus finds its equivalent in the viewer's identification with the camera-apparatus, whose distanced position vis-à-vis the protagonists re-enacts their exclusion from an active participation in the novel's joking discourse.

FRUSTRATED VOYEURISM

Yet identification with the source of the cinematic gaze does not remain uncontested, as the viewer is plagued by an acute sense of frustration at various points throughout the film, where lack of visual mastery prevents a satisfaction of her voyeuristic urges. The connection here to the initial structures of Freud's *Zote* is striking both in the camera's initiation of a strong *Schaulust* in the viewer and the subsequent refusal to satisfy these voyeuristic desires. Unlike Freudian smut, however, Novotny's film offers no

Ersatzbefriedigung, engendering aggression and unpleasure rather than the satisfactory relief of tension. Freud accords the *Zote* a privileged position as the most direct representation of the joke's substitutional function. Directed originally at the object of desire, the 'dirty joke' is initially 'einem Verführungsversuch gleichzusetzten' (Witz, p. 93). The suitor's subsequent rejection transforms the function and the intended object of the *Zote*, which is now directed at a third party who, in Freud's words 'lacht wie ein Zuschauer bei einer sexuellen Aggression' (Witz, p. 93). Thus the initial object of desire assumes the role of butt, with an added element of (sexual) aggression since 'es ist nicht zu bezweifeln, daß die Lust, das Sexuelle entblößt zu sehen, das ursprüngliche Motiv der Zote ist' (Witz, p. 93). Together teller and listener may successfully circumvent the socially imposed obstacles which hinder the satisfaction of their collective voyeuristic desire, overcoming the 'Verdrängungsarbeit der Kultur' to access 'primäre […] aber von der Zensur in uns verworfene Genußmöglichkeiten' (Witz, p. 96).

There are several elements in Freud's conception of ribaldry which find particular resonance in Novotny's adaptation, most notably the privileging of the *Schaulibido* over the *Tastlibido* (Witz, p. 93), the crucial position attributed to the second colluding subject (the teller's so-called 'Bundesgenosse')[71] and the initiatory role of concealed nudity (Witz, p. 93). Two conjoining scenes which foreground the sado-masochistic element of Hans und Sophie's relationship exemplify the possible extension of the Freudian joking structure to the analysis of non-humorous episodes. The first scene, which focuses solely on Sophie, takes place in a hotel bathroom, whilst Hans waits in the adjoining bedroom. The viewer is at first encouraged to occupy the position of voyeur, as the camera remains at mid-height, directing the spectator's gaze towards Sophie's middle section, whilst according no significance to her face. This clichéd positioning of the female protagonist in an exhibitionist role is strengthened by her raising her skirt to reveal underwear, stockings and suspenders. In true strip-tease tradition Sophie is offered to the viewer's gaze. Yet this self-exposure is tantalisingly restricted to a few seconds, as Sophie seats herself with the result that the camera is now level with her torso. This brief visual reference to the female genitalia and their almost immediate re-concealment echoes the initial stages of the Freudian *Zote*, where the teller's *Schaulibido* is first aroused and then refused satisfaction by the object of desire (Witz, p. 94). The product of this rejection is a sexual aggression, which Freud characterises as 'direkt feindselig, grausam' and which 'ruft die sadistische Komponente

---

[71] Freud, 'Witz', p. 95.

des Geschlechtstriebes gegen das Hindernis zur Hilfe' (Witz, p. 94). Thus, the viewer's frustration at the hindered satisfaction of her voyeuristic desires creates a deep sense of unpleasure and aggression for which she must find an outlet. As established above, voyeurism in *Die Ausgesperrten* does not follow conventional gender positions, extracting from the potent gaze its power rather than its masculinity. The viewer's desire here results both from a desire for visual mastery and from Sophie's privileged position in the film as the double object of Hans and Rainer's desires, which combine to arouse voyeuristic interest even in the female spectator.

Unlike the teller of the Freudian *Zote*, however, the spectator of this scene is unable to redirect her thwarted desire, since the potential third term within the joking structure refuses to collude with the viewer, acting instead as accomplice to the object of desire, Sophie. The camera offers the viewer no possibility of *Ersatzbefriedigung*, and indeed serves to increase her aggression by further teasing. Thus, the camera hovers behind Sophie slightly to her left, ensuring that the areas of interest to the voyeuristic viewer remain concealed. As the camera makes a slow move to the left and downwards, the promise of satisfaction is raised once more. This excitement is further increased by the appearance of small tufts of light-coloured pubic hair on the edge of the sink, placed carefully by Sophie's black-gloved hand, which alert the viewer again to the presence of her genitalia out of visual reach. The association of genitalia with the razor blade, which Sophie uses to trim her hairs, serves also as a thinly-veiled castration threat, increasing the viewer's discomfort and providing a further threat to her viewing pleasure. Thus the castration threat that cinema's Absent Other is considered to pose to the viewer, finds its symbolic representation on screen, unequivocally underlining the collusion between Sophie and the camera and the danger this poses to the spectator.

The threat posed to the viewer is further cemented in the scene that follows, which sees the spectator's voyeurism thwarted once more. In this instance, however, it is Hans who is once again coerced into the exhibitionist role by Sophie's demands that he undress and masturbate in front of her. The shift in desired object is accompanied by a transformation in the specific manifestation of voyeurism, which assumes a far greater element of spectacle. Through a carefully constructed *mise-en-scène*, the hotel bedroom is transformed into a stage-like space, using net curtains to dissect the frame into a clear foreground and background and imbuing each with its own theatrical significance. The positioning of Sophie in the foreground, which is more darkly lit than the space behind, creates a viewing position reminiscent of that of a theatre audience, with Hans

illuminated 'on stage' in the background. The use of shallow focus, however, draws the viewer's attention to the audience rather than the spectacle, as Hans remains slightly out of focus throughout.

Focus only changes once Hans has drawn the net curtain, separating himself from Sophie and the camera in the foreground. The spectator's view of Hans is further impeded by Sophie turning off the lamp, plunging the scene into near darkness. Sophie's action, however, is accompanied by an almost simultaneous illumination from the top of the frame. The sudden appearance of a blue spotlight focused on Hans not only adds to the theatrical aesthetic but further points to the intervention of an invisible Other, since the lighting finds no explanation within the diegesis. Thus, the viewer is made aware of the apparatus, whose power to control what she sees extends beyond framing and camera movement to a much more intrusive form of visual manipulation. The spotlight also functions, somewhat paradoxically, to conceal Hans, creating shadows against the curtain which leave only the back of his head exposed to the spectator's gaze. Finally, the subsequent pan of the camera, which follows Sophie to the right of the frame as she takes her seat for the 'performance', underlines once and for all the viewer's visual impotence. The remainder of the scene remains visually focused on Sophie, whilst Hans's masturbatory movements are conveyed only through off-screen sounds. Once again, then, the viewer is at first led to expect and desire nudity only to be denied this source of satisfaction. The spectator's unpleasure in the latter scene is heightened by her awareness that the voyeuristic desires of the on-screen protagonist achieve fulfilment, since the scene concludes with a close-up of Sophie's face gazing beyond the frame in Hans's direction, as she utters the order: 'Sag mir, wenn du kommst. Ich möchte's genau sehen, wenn's rauskommt,' once more stressing her superior position of visual mastery over the viewer.

'JETZT WISSEN SIE ALLES'

Yet the most aggressive attacks on the spectator are connected to the character of Peter, who repeatedly threatens to break down the distance created by the camera-apparatus. At three key points in the narrative, Peter turns to face the camera and looks directly into it, presenting a clear challenge to the unidirectional visual omnipotence of the camera and throwing into question his status as object. Following the gang's most violent attack, the camera cuts to a close-up profile shot of Peter standing half-naked in

his bedroom, positioning his father's photography equipment on a tripod. The camera remains fixed and pans to follow him as he moves across the room, stopping before his bed to strike a pose with a dagger in an attempt to appear intimidating. Positioned in the centre of the frame and bathed in shafts of murky green light emanating from screen right, Peter rapidly turns his head to face the now static camera, looking directly into the lens and holding the gaze for a few seconds. Here, the ominous grey-green lighting and the glinting blade of the dagger combine with Peter's belligerent gaze to create a distinctly menacing atmosphere, as the privileged distanced position of the viewer, in alignment with the camera, is threatened.

This threat, however, is somewhat diminished by the subsequent reverse shot, dominated by the limping arrival of Otto, which reveals that Peter's gaze was in fact directed within the diegesis at his father's camera. The viewer is partially sutured into the action in a manner similar to the shot/reverse-shot sequence, since the source of the first shot is locatable within the fiction. Yet the inanimate form of the gaze and the lack of conventional masking devices traditionally associated with a shot through an intra-diegetic camera lens leave the viewer unable to pinpoint exactly the source of the gaze. This degree of uncertainty diminishes the pleasure to be gained through suture, for the viewer remains unable to align herself fully with the source of the gaze. In the light of this ambiguity, Otto offers himself as the invisible source of the gaze, since previous scenes have clearly identified him as the owner and operator of the camera. Thus, whilst it is Peter who is shown in this scene to assemble the apparatus, his (voluntary) position as its object reconfirms the power implied in his father's ownership, positing Otto as the owner of the photographic gaze. His invisibility in this scene further augments his visual power to an almost panoptical level and simultaneously denies the spectator the possibility of collusion. Unable to align herself with either an intra- or extra-diegetic gaze, the viewer is left visually disenfranchised, excluded from the scene as participant or observer.

Otto's entry into the room further marks his attempt to concretise his visual control, as he immediately coerces Peter into a father-son photograph, forcing Peter into the position of photographic object and compelling filial alignment, as both pose together on the bed.[72] Although it must be noted that Otto himself assumes the status

---

[72] It is interesting to note that Anna, although shown to be present in the room, is entirely excluded from this photographic exchange, as both Peter and Otto prefer to use the automatic timer rather than place Anna behind the camera, demonstrating an obvious reluctance to accord to her the smallest element of visual power.

of object, offering himself up to the gaze of the camera, the established structures of power ensure that he retains a certain crucial degree of control. The location of the filmic gaze slightly to the left of the diegetic camera permits the viewer to reassume her distanced position and creates a double objectification of Peter and Otto, who are subjected to the gaze of both filmic apparatuses. Hence, it could be assumed that the spectator's pleasure resulting from collusion with the camera has been reinstated and, indeed, strengthened by the double objectification of the excluded protagonists.

However, this sequence is merely a precursor to a far greater threat to the viewer's visual mastery in the final shot of this scene. Here, Peter symbolically re-enacts the oedipal battle for power, challenging the paternal gaze represented by Otto's photography. Following his father's departure from the room, Peter slowly approaches the camera until he dominates two-thirds of the frame and looms over the intra-diegetic camera in the foreground. Shrouded once again in a milky grey haze, Peter removes the camera from the tripod and, with a smirk, pulls out the film, exposing the entire roll of film to the light and thus destroying the photographic images. The oedipal resonances of this action, through which Peter annihilates the product of his father's gaze and successfully challenges his visual hegemony, must be considered in relation to the function of the camera within the novel's familial relationships. Following the novel, Otto's camera is intrinsically connected to his post-war 'hobby', the production of pornographic photographs depicting Gretl in various demeaning poses. The camera thus speaks for Otto's 'possession' of his wife, incidentally a much more willing participant than her literary counterpart,[73] in keeping with the traditional oedipal structure. The significance of the destroyed film thus exceeds Peter's rejection of the father-son alignment (and its photographic depiction) and his status as the object of the paternal gaze, further representing a challenge to his father's relationship with his mother. Within this oedipal constellation, then, the camera becomes an unambiguous signifier of patriarchal power, uniting visual mastery with sexual possession, and as such stands at the heart of Peter's rivalry with his father.

Within the film's visual structures, however, there is a fourth term in the oedipal constellation, as the viewer is involuntarily embroiled in the conflict, forced by the film's camera to assume a position in the battle for patriarchal power. When Peter gazes directly into the camera at the end of the scene, he is unarguably reaching beyond the

---

[73] Far removed from the fear imputed to the figure in the novel, Novotny's Gretl responds to Otto's attempts at pornographic violence with near hysterical laughter and appears, at worst, slightly discomforted by his actions.

limits of the diegesis to force an interaction with the spectator. Thus, the damage to the film assumes a secondary metaphorical significance as a direct challenge to the viewer's privileged visual position, with the implication that the spectator has no more control over the cinematic images than Otto over the photographic film. Unpleasure for the viewer, then, arises both from her loss of visual mastery, whose illusionary nature is successfully exposed by Peter, as well as from an unwelcome alignment with Otto. Not only is the spectator revealed to be visually impotent but this impotence subsequently forms the basis for a temporary identification with what is arguably the film's most unpleasant protagonist. Through this gesture of defiance, Peter turns the castration threat back upon his father and, by extension, the viewer, threatening both with visual impotence.

Although the viewer recuperates her sense of power in the remaining scenes, this shot sets the precedence which determines the significance of the film's final shot, retrospectively shaping the spectator's understanding of the film and her position within its visual power structures. Novotny's adaptation concludes with a slow dissolve into the image of Peter in a darkened prison cell. The camera remains fixed as Peter slowly lifts his head until he is looking directly into the viewer's line of vision. With a wry smile, betraying no sense of guilt or regret at the massacre of his family, Peter utters the words taken from the final sentence of the novel: 'Jetzt wissen Sie alles und können daher über mich verfügen.' In the novel, this statement is clearly addressed to the investigating police officer, whose questioning directly precedes it, and follows a quasi-confession to the murders: 'Als der Inspektor zum hundertstenmal fragt, wo ist ihr Pyjama, er muß da sein, Herr Witkowski, antwortet Rainer endlich: er ist mit Blut befleckt und liegt im Kofferraum unter dem Reservereifen' (*DA*, p. 266). The reader, then, is addressed only in an indirect sense and remains separated from the diegetic events.

The viewer of *Die Ausgesperrten* is offered no such distance, since the absence of any police officer or interrogating voice positions the spectator as the direct recipient of Peter's statement. Whilst it could be argued that this places the viewer in a position of relative power over Peter, whom she is invited to judge, there are several factors which deny the viewer this pleasurable position. First, the attitude conveyed by Peter's facial expression and tone of voice recasts the novel's confession as a challenge to the viewer, who feels mocked by his words. This is reinforced by the direct look into camera which emphasises the confrontational atmosphere and further reminds the viewer of the threat

previously posed by Peter, discussed above. Finally, the unexpected brutality of Peter's act and its lack of explicit explanation in the film's narrative clearly stand at odds with his claim that the viewer 'knows everything' and, in fact, highlight the spectator's lack of knowledge. The viewer's lack of mastery over the narrative is finally stressed by the camera's slow pan to the left, where Peter gradually disappears from the frame to be replaced only by darkness. Thus, the spectator is quite literally 'left in the dark' at the end of the film, having been robbed of her distanced position, its implication of privileged knowledge and her perceived control over the image.

CONCLUSIONS

The novel's identificatory structures, then, find their filmic counterpart in the adaptation's distancing cinematography and enticing voyeurism. Both works seek to keep the protagonists at arm's length whilst encouraging identification with an invisible authorial figure, creating a critical and distanced position for the reader/viewer. In remaining emotionally detached from the characters, the viewing and reading subjects are able to appropriate a powerful critical gaze, with which they may examine the protagonists and their actions. Yet the viewer's collusion with the camera-apparatus is by no means a stable or permanent alignment. Whilst often encouraged to identify with the camera as a superior source of knowledge, the spectator is unable to sustain this identificatory position throughout the film. Reminders of the limits of her own visual capacities prevent the viewer from asserting herself as the source of the gaze and consequently undermine any claims to a powerful subject position. Indeed, the impossibility of identification with any of the film's protagonists further diminishes the viewer's potential for viewing pleasure, since there is no ideal figure with whom she can hope to align herself. Thus, the viewer occupies a rather isolated position within the film's identificatory structures, caught somewhere between collusion with the apparatus and failed identification with the excluded protagonists.

In the light of this reduced alignment, the reader must reassess the exact nature of her identification in the novel. Novotny's adaptation would appear to conform to Nobel Prize judge, Horace Engdahl's, contention that 'there is no sympathetic narrator in whom the reader can rest and with whom the reader can identify. It is an awakening from the narcissism of reading.'[74] The reader and viewer of *Die Ausgesperrten* are indeed

---

[74] Horace Engdahl, cited in Schlipphacke, p. 74.

unable to identify fully with a narratorial position. However, very different, even contradictory, reasons lie behind this failed identification. Whilst the inherent visual and epistemological superiority of the filmic camera-apparatus precludes any full alignment with the spectator's position, the novel's narrator is relegated intermittently to the position of butt in the novel's joking discourse. Only by distancing herself from this devalued object, may the reader assert her own identity as a 'fully subjected, "law-abiding" master of discourse' (Purdie, p. 59).

This source of textual pleasure at the narrator's expense apparently stands at odds with the role assigned to the Jelinekian narrator in critical discourse. Lorenz exemplifies a widespread tendency to idealise this narratorial position in her assertion that 'Jelinek's narrator is omniscient in a fundamental way. She is cognizant of all events and not only interprets [the] psychology of the individual characters but also articulates the values of society'.[75] Speaking of *Die Liebhaberinnen* and its parody of dominant societal discourse, Brigid Haines mirrors Lorenz's edifying view of the narrator, contending that 'Jelinek's narrator in *Die Liebhaberinnen* does violence to the discourses that do violence to people through ruthless mimicry'.[76] Both statements, often echoed in Jelinek scholarship, endow the narrators with powers that rightly belong to the author ego, unquestioningly locating the ironic gaze within the narrative. This idealisation of the narrator draws attention to Purdie's conception of the butt as an erstwhile authority figure: 'Butts are precisely degraded from the power to construct and define *us*, within *their* language-making' (Purdie, p. 59). In their conflation of narrator and author ego, then, literary critics ignore the pleasure derived from collusion with the author ego, founded primarily on the exclusion of the protagonists but often reinforced and augmented by the degradation of the narrator.

In according a crucial function to the author ego, however, this study of *Die Ausgesperrten* finds itself in harmony with another element of Jelinek scholarship and broader literary history. Studies of Austrian literature in the eighties frequently focus on the extra-literary activities and statements of authors such as Peter Turrini, Joseph Haslinger, Thomas Bernhard and Elfriede Jelinek, deemed symptomatic of a period when 'immer öfter traten Schriftsteller auch öffentlich als "Mahner" auf'.[77] In his

---

[75] Dagmar C. Lorenz, 'Elfriede Jelinek's Political Feminism: *Die Ausgesperrten*', *Modern Austrian Literature*, 23 (1990), 111-19 (p. 116).
[76] Brigid Haines, 'Beyond Patriarchy: Marxism, Feminism, and Elfriede Jelinek's *Die Liebhaberinnen*', *The Modern Language Review*, 92 (1997), 643-55 (p. 653).
[77] Klaus Zeyringer, *Innerlichkeit und Öffentlichkeit: österreichische Literatur der achtziger Jahre* (Tübingen: Francke, 1992), p. 95.

analysis of 'dissenting' literature in Austria, Matthias Konzett stresses the significance of the author as a public figure and further implies that this became a conscious strategy in writers' attacks on society: 'They [Bernhard, Handke and Jelinek] have purposefully chosen to act as an uncomfortable presence within the Austrian cultural sphere'.[78] This discussion of *Die Ausgesperrten* suggests that the cult of the dissenting author may not be restricted to public appearances or polemical tirades, but may in fact be inscribed in the works' narratorial structures. Jelinek's humour thus fulfils the double function ascribed to it by Fiddler as 'her recipe for provoking thought and asserting her protest'.[79] As the adaptation reveals, the reader's pleasure is partially dependent on the perceived presence of an authoritative author ego with whom the reader may align herself. Remove this figure, or diminish her role and the reader/spectator is left only with a horde of morally repugnant protagonists and a narrator who parrots the platitudes of the society that has shaped them.

---

[78] Konzett, p. 15.

[79] Allyson Fiddler, *Rewriting Reality: An Introduction to Elfriede Jelinek* (Oxford; Providence, Berg, 1994), p. 61.

CHAPTER V: POST-MODERN PLEASURES
ROBERT SCHINDEL AND LUKAS STEPANIK'S *GEBÜRTIG*

Recent literary histories of the 1990s have frequently argued for a 'renaissance' of Jewish literature in Germanophone countries in this period. Justifying the title of his article, 'Renaissance des "jüdischen" Romans nach 1986', Günther Scheidl contends that, with a few notable exceptions (Albert Drach, Friedrich Torberg), literary treatment of specific issues surrounding Jewish identity was absent in post-war Austrian culture until the late eighties.[1] Drawing on Sander L. Gilman and Karen Remmler's work, *Reemerging Jewish Culture in German Life*,[2] Matthias Konzett regards this 'renaissance' as a reaction to the 'tireless self-analysis of German guilt by German authors', arguing that:

> The recent emergence of a distinct Jewish discourse, it appears, paves the way for a corrective of this self-revolving national discourse in German culture. A monolithic aspect of Germany's postwar culture is finally more openly challenged and negated as a myth.[3]

Whilst Konzett's reference to a wider Germanophone debate appears to deny any element of Austrian specificity, he proceeds to provide a fascinating account of the intertwined development of Jewish and Austrian identities from the latter days of the Habsburg Empire to the present, concluding that 'both Jewish ethnic and Austrian national identity never achieved stability in recent Austrian history'.[4] By contrast, the temporal reference in Scheidl's title implies a narrower context in which to examine post-war Jewish identity, taking as a turning point the presidential campaign in 1986.

Scheidl is not alone in identifying Kurt Waldheim's election as the pivotal moment in Austria's literary approach to a failed process of *Vergangenheitsbewältigung*. According to critics, the international scandal surrounding Waldheim signalled a 'waking up from a long hibernation of forgetfulness and seeming mastery over the past',[5] provoking a more critical assessment of Austria's role in National Socialism. In a

---

[1] Günther Scheidl, 'Renaissance des "jüdischen" Romans nach 1986', in *Judentum und Antisemitismus: Studien zur Literatur und Germanistik in Österreich*, ed. by Anne Betten and Konstanze Fliedl (Berlin: Erich Schmidt, 2003), pp. 132-48 (pp. 133-34).

[2] Sander L. Gilman and Karen Remmler (eds), *Reemerging Jewish Culture in Germany: Life and Literature Since 1989* (New York: New York University Press, 1994).

[3] Matthias Konzett, *The Rhetoric of National Dissent in Thomas Bernhard, Peter Handke and Elfriede Jelinek* (Rochester: Camden House, 2000), p. 132.

[4] Ibid, p. 138.

[5] Günther Bischof, 'Founding Myths and Compartmentalised Past', in *Austrian Historical Memory and National Identity,* ed. by Günther Bischof and Anton Pelinka (New Jersey: Transaction, 1997), pp. 302-41 (p. 304).

specifically Jewish context, Konstanze Fliedl posits his election as a potentially positive moment in post-war Jewish identity.[6] Fliedl argues that the increasingly public anti-Semitic discourse that arose, somewhat ironically, in response to national and international criticism of Austria's failed *Vergangenheitsbewältigung*, provided a certain 'Entlastung' for the Second Generation. Stressing its crucial role in Jewish memory, she cites Ruth Beckermann's contention that:

> Das Leben im Land der Mörder und in der Nähe der Toten scheint auch für die nächste Generation gerade in einer antisemitischen Umwelt einen paradoxen psychischem Vorteil zu bieten. Es wirkt wie eine Garantie des Nicht-Vergessens.[7]

Literature, particularly the works of Jewish authors, finds itself at the centre of an emerging collective discourse on Austria's Nazi past, both motivating and criticising specifically Austrian forms of *Vergangenheitsbewältigung*.

Klaus Zeyringer's analysis of post-Waldheim literature establishes a link between the shattering of Austria's mythologised identity as 'Hitler's first victim' and the narrative forms that characterised nineties literature: 'Anfang der neunziger Jahre schienen die seligen Zeiten endgültig vorbei zu sein, erstand eine brüchige Welt in den literarischen Texten, die selbst auf unsicherem Terrain, auf einem doppelten Boden bauten.'[8] The notion of a fragmentary, unstable world repeatedly finds its way into reception of Robert Schindel's novel, *Gebürtig*,[9] which emphasises 'die Fragmentierung der Geschichten, ihre Zersplitterung in einzelne Handlungsstränge und Elemente'.[10] Critics frequently connect the novel's fragmented structure to Schindel's exploration of Jewish identity, one reviewer noting that 'die bruchstückhafte Ästhetik des Romans korrespondiert [...] mit der inneren Zerrissenheit der Protagonisten'.[11]

One crucial component of the novel's 'Verdoppelungs-Struktur', however, is consistently neglected in critical accounts of *Gebürtig*. Whilst the majority correctly identify the figure of Gebirtig as the literary invention of another fictional character, Emanuel Katz, the function of this embedded narrative remains opaque within these

---

[6] Konstanze Fliedl, 'Einleitung', in *Judentum und Antisemitismus: Studien zur Literatur und Germanistik in Österreich*, ed. by Anne Betten and Konstanze Fliedl (Berlin: Erich Schmidt, 2003), pp. 9-17 (p. 15).

[7] Ruth Beckermann, *Unzugehörig: Österreicher und Juden nach 1945* (Vienna: Löcker, 1989), pp. 126-7.

[8] Klaus Zeyringer, *Österreichische Literatur seit 1945: Überblicke, Einschnitte, Wegmarken* (Innsbruck: Studienverlag, 2008), p. 215.

[9] Robert Schindel, *Gebürtig* (Frankfurt a. M.: Suhrkamp, 1992). Future references to the novel will be provided in the main body of the text, identified as *Gebürtig*.

[10] Renate Posthofen, 'Erinnerte Geschichte(n): Robert Schindels Roman *Gebürtig*', *Modern Austrian Literature*, 27 (1994), 193-211 (p. 204).

[11] Elisabeth Grotz, 'Ich hätt' noch gern ein Maul voll Schweigen', *Der Standard*, 6 March 1992.

analyses. Yet this *mise en abyme*, one of many in the novel, plays a key role in the text's self-reflexive discourse and its treatment of Jewish identity. Narrative embedding, of which *mise en abyme* is an interesting sub-variant, lies at the heart of the novel's structure, drawing to the reader's attention the various ontological levels on which fiction operates. In addition to Katz's novel, Schindel's work incorporates many further forms of narrative embedding ranging from diary entries and letters to dreams and hallucinations, all enclosed within the main frame of the surrounding narrative. These myriad narrative forms further strengthen the suspicion that the *mise en abyme* may lie at the heart of Schindel's literary project, rendering manifest the self-reflexive impulse within his text.

The novel centres around the character of Danny Demant and his circle of acquaintances from the Viennese intellectual milieu, exploring the problematic relationships between the Jewish and non-Jewish protagonists and the different constructs of memory which shape these relationships. Within this miscellany of protagonists Emanuel Katz appears to play a rather peripheral role, merely one of many 'Kinder der Opfer' trying to negotiate a stable identity within post-war Austria. However, his literary attempts to deal with the persecution of his family in Auschwitz accord him a privileged position within the novel's narrative structures, for he authors *Gebürtig's* novel-within-the-novel, the story of Hermann Gebirtig, a Jewish Holocaust survivor and émigré. In Katz's novel Gebirtig is persuaded by Susanne Ressel, the daughter of a Communist partisan imprisoned in Ebensee, to return to Vienna to give evidence against a former concentration camp officer, Egger, known as 'der Schädelknacker'. Following the acquittal of Egger, Gebirtig returns to America with an unchanged view of the inadequacy of Austrian *Vergangenheitsbewältigung.*

Gebirtig's story in a certain sense precedes the novel, as it formed the original foundation for a screenplay, which Schindel intended to develop with Axel Corti.[12] In fact, the pair planned to make two films 'entsprechend den zwei Ebenen im Roman', which would deal separately with Gebirtig and Demant's stories.[13] Following the death of Corti, Lukas Stepanik assumed the role of co-director and together with Schindel and his co-writer Georg Stefan Troller, released an adaptation of *Gebürtig* in Graz, where it opened the 2002 'Diagonale' film festival. Schindel's treatment of the problematic issues

---

[12] Robert Schindel. Interview with Karin Schiefer, 2002.
<http://www.afc.at/jart/prj3/afc/main.jart?artikel_id=4507&content-id=1164272180506&rel=de&reserve-mode=active>[Accessed 10 April 2010].
[13] Ibid.

surrounding memory and identity in 1980s Austria and his focus on a specifically Jewish form of *Vergangenheitsbewältigung* in both versions has accorded *Gebürtig* a paradigmatic status within Austrian film of recent years. The film's plot replicates that of the novel to a great extent. However, there is one key difference: the sections concerning Gebirtig are raised to the same ontological level as the rest of the narrative, integrated into the primary diegesis. The removal of this embedded narrative, however, does not mean that *mise en abyme* is not central to the adaptation. This narrative device is also at work in an altered form within the film, which modifies the function of the embedded narrative to suit the filmic medium.

This chapter undertakes a dual study of *mise en abyme* in novel and adaptation, exploring the parallels between embedded narratives and the Freudian conception of 'dream-work' and considering the ways in which the various manifestations of *mise en abyme* either promote or challenge textual pleasure. Considering their relationship to the enclosing narrative, which they both reflect and subvert, this chapter examines the volatile subject positions carved out for the reader/spectator by the works' *mises en abyme*. This profound sense of instability will form the basis for a further investigation of the novel's shaky ontological foundations and their filmic counterparts, which employs the Barthesian distinction between *plaisir* and *jouissance* to explore the relationship between the subject's pleasure and the sense of ontological loss created by the *mise en abyme*. Setting *Gebürtig* within Schindel's wider treatment of Austrian *Vergangenheitsbewältigung*, this discussion will then approach the potentially subversive element of the *mise en abyme* as a mode of narrative self-reflexivity. Before proceeding to a consideration of the novel and its adaptation, however, it may be useful to establish a working definition of the *mise en abyme*, drawing out those elements salient for a psychoanalytic approach to the construction of memory in *Gebürtig*.

DEFINITION OF *MISE EN ABYME*

Stemming from heraldic terminology, whereby a shield is said to be 'mise en abyme' by the presence of a miniature replica of the original shield within itself, this term was first applied to literature by André Gide in 1893, who used it to describe a specific form of narrative embedding. Since then it has been subjected to analysis by numerous literary theorists, who have disagreed, and continue to disagree, on its precise definition. The most useful summary of the nature of the *mise en abyme* is to be found in Brian McHale's

study of post-modernist fiction, which draws out three main criteria. First, McHale notes, it is 'a nested or embedded representation, occupying a narrative level inferior to that of the primary, diegetic narrative world'.[14] This establishes a clear ontological hierarchy, where the textual segment *en abyme* is deemed less 'real' than the surrounding narrative. Peter Brooks underlines this notion in his assertion that 'in the framed tale structure, the outer frame comes to represent "the real", and movement from inner to outer tales suggests the movement of reference, making real'.[15] Considering the potentially subversive function of the *mise en abyme*, McHale identifies this figure as 'one of the most potent devices in the post-modernist repertoire for foregrounding the ontological dimension', a means of drawing attention to the fictionality of the diegesis (McHale, p. 124).

McHale's second criterion stipulates that 'this nested representation *resembles* […] something at the level of the primary, diegetic world', adding thirdly that 'this "something" that it resembles must constitute some salient and continuous aspect of the primary world' (McHale, p. 124). This latter assertion bears striking resemblance to Mieke Bal's insistence that the *mise an abyme* must reflect '*un aspect pertinent et continu du texte, du récit ou de l'histoire*' ['a pertinent and continuous aspect of the text, of its story or its discourse'],[16] both stressing the reflexive function of this device and the scope of its content. In the debate surrounding the latter, Lucien Dällenbach's view that the figure may only be identified 'if this is justified by the text as a whole'[17] complements Moshe Ron's argument that it is essential that 'some effect of closure and totality [come] into play for any impression of *mise en abyme* […] to assert itself'.[18] Whilst he recognises that 'the demand for a quantitative criterion for adequate repleteness is manifestly absurd' (Ron, p. 424), he nevertheless insists on the importance of the appearance of totality within the reflection of the *mise en abyme*. These views coincide both in their insistence on a relationship of dependency between the passage(s) *en abyme* and the embedding narrative and in their emphasis on the reception of the *mise en abyme*, positing the

---

[14] Brian McHale, *Postmodernist Fiction* (London; New York: Routledge, 1989), p. 124. Future references to this work will be provided in the main body of the text, identified as McHale.

[15] Peter Brooks, *Reading for the Plot: Design and Intention in Narrative* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1984), p. 220. Future references to this work will be provided in the main body of the text, identified as Brooks.

[16] Mieke Bal, 'Mise en abyme et iconicité', *littérature*, 29 (1978), 116-28 (p. 125). Future references to this work will be provided in the main body of the text, identified as Bal.

[17] Lucien Dällenbach, *The Mirror in the Text*, trans. by Jeremy Whiteley and Emma Hughes (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1989), p. 50. Future references to this work will be provided in the main body of the text, identified as Dällenbach.

[18] Moshe Ron, 'Restricted Abyss: Nine Problems in the Theory of Mise en Abyme', *Poetics Today*, 8 (1987), 417-38 (pp. 422-23). Future references to this work will be provided in the main body of the text, identified as Ron.

reader's response to the *mise en abyme* as the decisive factor in its identification and definition.

A further characteristic of the *mise en abyme*, not touched upon in McHale's brief overview, is its isolated position within the narrative. Following Bal's argument, the reflective section must constitute 'une unité textuelle isolable, délimitée par une interruption à quelque niveau que ce soit' ['an isolatable textual unit, delineated by an interruption at some level or another'] in order for it to fall into the category of the *mise en abyme* (Bal, p. 128). This assertion that the *mise en abyme* by necessity represents an interruption of the main narrative, on a characterological, narratological or diegetic level, separates Bal's theory from those of Dällenbach and Ron. Indeed Dällenbach states explicitly that 'interruption of the diegesis [is] not [a] feature necessary to the *mise en abyme*' (Dällenbach, p. 53) whilst Ron regards Bal's claim merely as an infelicitous semantic choice, surmising that Bal 'does not really mean that' (Ron, p. 428). Ron cites as an example the reflective function of a painting within the text, which cannot be claimed to constitute an interruption of the diegesis, yet nevertheless may be isolatable (Ron, p. 428). This criticism of Bal appears to stem from a miscomprehension of her argument, which does not limit the interruption to the diegetic level but focuses on the *mise en abyme* as a more general disruption 'à quelque niveau que ce soit'. This qualification implies that the term 'interruption' may encompass any pause in the reader's involvement in the main narrative that encourages him to reflect upon its content or form. Understood in this sense, Bal's conception of the *mise en abyme* corresponds to Ron's own demand that the reflective element must be discernible for the reader, who should be in a position 'to give a verbal description or paraphrase which picks out of the story just that part which resembles the whole' (Ron, p. 429).

However, it is Ron's description of *mise en abyme* as a form of synecdoche that represents its most interesting aspect for this study of *Gebürtig*. Ron argues that the *mise en abyme* functions metonymically, the 'small part carrying "as much" significance as the whole that contains it' (Ron, p. 430). It is this aspect which suggests that a parallel may be drawn between the transformation of the narrative which takes place in the *mise en abyme* and Freud's conception of dream-work. In a similar manner to dream-work, the *mise en abyme* condenses and displaces the 'salient and continuous' aspects of the primary narrative, providing a space for the symbolic fulfilment of the wishes of the embedding narrative. The connection between *mise en abyme* and dream-work, and its implications

for Schindel's portrayal of memory, are best elaborated in an analysis of the novel's fiction-within-the-fiction.

NARRATIVE INTERRUPTED

Mieke Bal's analysis of the *mise en abyme* places great importance on its disruptive function, arguing that is it 'déconcertante, car elle met en question la linéarité du texte' ['disconcerting, for it questions the linearity of the text'] (Bal, p. 116). The disruption to the narrative caused by the *mise en abyme*, a precondition of its 'isolatability', reveals parallels to the status of the dream in the subject's waking life. Freud describes the dream as 'etwas eingeschobenes Fremdes, zwischen zwei vollkommen zueinander passenden und einander fortsetzenden Lebensabschnitten',[19] thus marking it as an isolatable foreign element within an otherwise continuous structure.

Turning to Schindel's novel, it is evident its central *mise en abyme*, Emanuel Katz's fictive novel, fulfils this disruptive function. Its interruptive status within the diegesis is clearly demonstrated on the level of typography, where the passages involving Gebirtig very often constitute a separate segment within the novel's fragmented structure, clearly delineating the *mise en abyme* from the primary narrative. Criticism in press reviews of the absence of distinctive style in the Gebirtig sections clearly highlights the importance of interruption (on a stylistic and diegetic level) for the reception of the *mise en abyme*.[20] However, no validity can be accorded to these objections, since there are numerous references throughout the novel to indicate the double fictionality of these passages. This status is at first only implied, as the reader is informed that Demant is occupied with reading two manuscripts 'das eine ist fad und das andere lästig' (*Gebürtig*, p. 24), the latter being Emanuel Katz's novel 'welches der Welt erklärt, wie wenig die Juden aus den Kazetts herauskommen, falls sie herauskamen' (*Gebürtig*, p. 24). The connection between this manuscript and Gebirtig's story, however, is made patent immediately after the first section *en abyme*, where the primary narrative repeats the last line of Katz's novel and indicates the connection between the two: 'Demant nahm den Stift, macht eine Wellenlinie unter "er wußte es

---

[19] Sigmund Freud, *Studienausgabe*, ed. by Alexander Mitscherlich, Angela Richards and James Strachey, 10 vols (Frankfurt a. M.: Fischer, 1975), II: *Die Traumdeutung*, p. 37. Further references to this volume will be provided in the main body of the text, identified as *Traumdeutung*.

[20] See, for example, Heinz Hartwig, 'Eine Spur für die Wortlosigkeiten', *Kleine Zeitung*, 4 July 1992 and Alfred Pfoser, 'Vergangenheitsbewältigung auf wienerisch', *Salzburger Nachrichten*, 21 March 1992.

nicht'' und daneben ein Fragezeichen' (*Gebürtig*, p. 97). These less than subtle hints evidently enable the reader to identify Gebirtig's story as a novel-within-the-novel, which is clearly distinguishable from the primary narrative.

During these segments on Gebirtig, the reader learns nothing of the protagonists in the primary narrative, their stories remaining suspended until the enclosing narrative resumes. One the one hand, one might expect this insertion of 'foreign' elements to disrupt the reader's pleasure, thwarting his desire for narrative closure. However, Schindel weaves a complex matrix of narrative desires in his novel, within which Gebirtig's story assumes a doubly privileged role. Relationships in the primary narrative are characterised by tension – between Jews and non-Jews, between assimilated and non-assimilated Jews, between First and Second Generation (Jews and non-Jews). At the centre of all these conflicts, sexual, spiritual and linguistic, stands the issue of identity in post-Shoah Austrian society.

Lilian Papenberg identifies the relationship between *Opfer- und Täterkinder* as the novel's 'Grundproblematik', regarding '[die] gegenseitig[e] Anziehung und [die] Unmöglichkeit, diese wirklich zu leben' as the fundamental issue of the novel.[21] All attempts at unification between the children of victims and perpetrators appear doomed to failure in the primary narrative. Thus, Demant's relationship with Christiane Kalteisen, which Demant himself believes to be based on her perception of him as 'ein exotischer Fluchtort' (*Gebürtig*, p. 35), becomes problematic due to her lack of comprehension of the issues at stake when discussing the Holocaust (*Gebürtig*, pp. 157-59). This failure is further mirrored in Katz's relationship with Käthe, whose latent anti-Semitism emerges in a discussion with her brothers (*Gebürtig*, pp. 133-38), and in the highly complex and problematic relationship between Mascha Singer and Fritz Untner, where anti-Semitic sentiments again come to the surface, preventing a harmonious relationship (*Gebürtig*, p. 10).

Throughout the primary narrative the reader is confronted with a vast number of unresolved tensions, each centring on questions of identity and *Vergangenheitsbewältigung*. Schindel's 'buntes Kaleidoskop zerrissener Seelen, von Kindern und Eltern, Nachkommen der Opfer und der Täter',[22] thus awakens within the reader a desire for resolution and reconciliation, one which appears unlikely to be satisfied in the primary narrative. Within the novel's structures of narrative desire, then, the story of

---

[21] Lilian Papenberg, *Filmisches Schreiben* (unpublished masters thesis, University of Klagenfurt, 1998), p. 68.
[22] Anat Feinberg, 'Deutschsprachige jüdische Autoren und der Holocaust', *Text und Kritik*, 144 (1999), 48-57 (p. 56).

Gebirtig *en abyme* fulfils a significant function, postponing the resolution of the narrative and thus increasing the reader's desire. Its interruptive function may be regarded as the 'pleasuring in and from delay' that Brooks perceives to be at the heart of narrative desire (Brooks, p. 103). Corresponding to the Balzacian 'arabesque' (originating in *Tristam Shandy*), Katz's novel provides the necessary detour and digression from the main plot, the 'postponement in the discharge' that may ultimately heighten the reader's pleasure (Brooks, p. 103).

This is particularly evident in Ilse Jakobssen-Singer's harrowing account of life in Theresienstadt, which focuses on the tragic fate of Jewish actress, Sonja Okun. Her description of Sonja's romance with theatre director, Egon Stellein, in itself a form of embedded narrative, is broken off at the key moment of Sonja's return to Berlin in 1938 by a new section on Gebirtig's stay in Vienna (*Gebürtig*, p. 288). Thus the reader's desire for resolution, here his wish to discover Sonja's fate in Nazi Germany, is subjected to a delay, increasing the satisfaction when her story resumes in the following section. However, the pleasure gained through the resolution of the enigma carries with it weighty moral implications, since Sonja's story concludes with her death at the hands of the Nazis. The reader's satisfaction derived from a 'proper end' in narratological terms is thus negated by his profound awareness that this is in no way a 'right end' in a moral and humanitarian sense. Narrative structure and textual desire then stand at odds with horror inspired in the reader by the atrocities of the Holocaust.

Citing William Empson's discussion of sub-plots in the pastoral convention, Brooks notes that 'the sub-plot in the classical novel usually suggests […] a different solution to the problems worked through by the main plot' (Brooks, p. 104), not only delaying the resolution of the primary narrative but further suggesting possible alternatives. Brooks proceeds to observe that the sub-plot 'often illustrates the danger of short-circuit. The sub-plot stands as one means of warding off the danger of short-circuit, assuring that the main plot will continue through to the right end' (Brooks, p. 104). The sub-plot or its more specific manifestation, the *mise en abyme*, very often dramatises the 'wrong' solution to the problems of the main plot, thus ensuring that the primary narrative, freed of these false answers, may continue to a proper, satisfactory conclusion. The novel's *mise en abyme*, whilst certainly providing alternative 'solutions' to the issues raised by the main plot, cannot be seen, however, to fulfil the second of Brooks's criteria. Far from offering a 'wrong' or unpleasant alternative to the primary

narrative, Gebirtig's story in many respects offers a more gratifying reading experience, satisfying the desires aroused by the main plot.

MISE EN ABYME AS WISH FULFILMENT

Within a Freudian conception of the psyche, dreams represent 'die (verkleidete) Erfüllung eines (unterdrückten, verdrängten) Wunsches', placing wish-fulfilment at the centre of the oneiric process (*Traumdeutung*, p. 175). In order to fulfil these wishes, the repressed desires must first be transformed into a suitable form through what Freud refers to as 'Entstellungsarbeit' (*Traumdeutung*, p. 158). Freud's conceptualisation of the dream centres around a distinction between its manifest and latent content. The latter, also referred to as 'dream thoughts', consists of the repressed wishes of the unconscious, which seek access to the dream by connecting with insignificant memories from the previous day to form the dream's manifest content, which is what the subject remembers upon waking up (*Traumdeutung*, p. 280). Dream-work is then the process by which repressed or taboo impulses from the unconscious are transformed in such a way as to make them acceptable to the preconscious censor, 'the operation whereby the dream thoughts are transformed into a dream capable of fulfilling on a symbolic level various wishes which themselves remain hidden and repressed'.[23]

This transformation or distortion is achieved through the processes of condensation (*Verdichtung*) and displacement (*Verschiebung*), identified by Freud as 'die beiden Werkmeister, deren Tätigkeit wir die Gestaltung des Traumes hauptsächlich zuschreiben dürfen' (*Traumdeutung*, p. 307). Where condensation occurs, the qualities of several people (or objects) are distilled into one single entity, which is then over-determined with signification (*Traumdeutung*, p. 286). Condensation further involves the transference of *affect* from an unconscious wish onto a more permissible object (*Traumdeutung*, p. 190). This shift in psychic intensity contains a creative impulse, manifested in the 'Zusammenziehung zu einer *Einheit*, welcher entweder im Traummaterial bereits vorgefunden war oder neu gebildet wird' (*Traum*, p. 318). Here the recipient of the transferred affect is a composite of several dream elements, which are connected only through a 'coincidence' of emotion, that is to say, that all elements of this composite inspire the same unconscious affect in the dreamer's psyche. Freud separates this process of amalgamation into the two sub-processes of 'Identifizierung'

---

[23] Kaja Silverman, *The Subject of Semiotics* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1983), p. 62.

and 'Mischbildung', each of which creates a new unit based on 'Ähnlichkeit, Übereinstimmung, Gemeinsamkeit' (*Traumdeutung*, p. 318). Regardless of the manner in which it is achieved, condensation always results in an overdetermination of signification, whereby 'nicht nur die Elemente des Traums sind durch die Traumgedanken *mehrfach* determiniert, sondern die einzelnen Traumgedanken sind auch im Traum durch mehrere Elemente vertreten' (*Traumdeutung*, p. 286).

Identified by Freud as a sub-category of condensation,[24] displacement involves a similar transfer of qualities and affect, but here there is a simple shift between one object (or person) onto another. In this process, unconscious impulses directed at one taboo object are displaced onto another more acceptable object 'bis anfangs *schwach* mit Intensität geladene Vorstellungen durch Übernahme der Ladung von den anfänglich *intensiver* besetzten zu einer Stärke gelingen, welche sie befähigt, den Zugang zum Bewußten zu erzwingen' (*Traumdeutung*, pp. 189-90). As a rule, the dream thoughts onto which the unconscious wishes are transferred are those which appear the least significant in waking life, as they are the least likely to attract the attention of the censor, thus giving the impression that the dream is '*anders zentriert*' (*Traumdeutung*, p. 305). Through both processes wishes which were previously unacceptable to the preconscious censor are rendered acceptable and may then find symbolic fulfilment in the dream.

Kaja Silverman's interpretation of *Die Traumdeutung* notes that within the process of condensation 'the part stands for the whole',[25] stressing the 'extraordinary economies' brought about by the distillation of several unconscious wishes into one dream element, an acceptable signifier which carries all the psychic intensity of the unconscious impulse yet is capable of escaping censorship. It is in this synecdochic quality that condensation appears to be the parallel *par excellence* between dream-work and the function of the *mise en abyme*. This insistence of the intense signifying value of the *mise en abyme* is further to be found in Bal's consideration of the *mise en abyme* as an iconic sign, as Bal locates the 'forte valeur signifiante' of the *mise en abyme* in its ability to reflect and transform the meaning of the narrative in which it is enclosed (Bal, p. 122). Thus, in a similar manner to dream-work, the *mise en abyme* may be seen to condense and displace the 'continuous and pertinent' aspects of the primary narrative, transferring their psychic intensity onto its own elements.

---

[24] Freud repeatedly refers to displacement as being in the service of the dream's *Verdichtungsarbeit*. Freud, *Traumdeutung*, pp. 295, 335.

[25] Silverman, *The Subject of Semiotics*, p. 91.

This 'Entstellungsarbeit' finds its narrative counterpart in the principal *mise en abyme* of *Gebürtig*, where the central issues of the primary narrative and its unfulfilled wishes find their expression and partial fulfilment. Following Dällenbach's terminology, Katz's novel represents a '*mise en abyme* of the utterance', which 'summarises or quotes the content of a work' (Dällenbach, p. 55). As previously discussed, the primary narrative is replete with problematic relationships between the novel's Jewish and non-Jewish characters, all of which suggest a desire for integration that ultimately proves impossible. This unfulfilled desire to overcome the differences between the *Opfer- und Täterkinder* is reproduced in an altered form in the novel-within-the-novel, where the relationship between Hermann Gebirtig and Susanne Ressel provides a condensed model of the character constellations presented in the primary narrative. Clear parallels can be drawn between the central protagonists of the *mise en abyme* and the characters of the enclosing narrative, as, for example, Susanne Ressel plays the 'fictional' counterpart to the well-meaning but somewhat ignorant Kalteisen. Both are of a similar age, are of non-Jewish heritage and, most importantly, display a certain lack of understanding for the emotional reactions of the Jewish characters to the past. Thus Kalteisen's trivialisation of Holocaust literature as 'Mordgeschichten' (*Gebürtig*, p. 261) finds its equally insensitive counterpart in Susanne's lack of comprehension for Gebirtig's hesitancy to return to Vienna, which leads her to exclaim: 'Nur das jüdische Volk und Ihr eigener Nabel ist für Sie von Belang. Wissen Sie, wieviele deutsche Juden Hitler gewählt hätten, wenn der kein Antisemit gewesen wäre?' (*Gebürtig*, p. 171).

Yet the potential of this 'fictional' figure to satisfy the wishes of the primary narrative clearly resides in her generally more enlightened relationship to the past. Not only does Susanne come from a family background that is '*nicht belastet*' (her father was a Communist partisan) but she further displays a willingness to confront Austria's past. Determined to bring war-criminal Egger to justice, Susanne fights against the convenient amnesia of the Second Republic, thus positioning herself as an agent of *Vergangenheitsbewältigung*. Through the parallels with Kalteisen, and within the context of the myriad failed relationships in the primary narrative, Susanne may be regarded as the means by which the unfulfilled wish of the enclosing narrative is satisfied, as initial tension between her and Gebirtig is transformed into friendship, and ultimately romance (*Gebürtig*, p. 291). Her ability to achieve the primary narrative's unfulfilled wishes for a more understanding relationship between Jews and non-Jews can thus be seen to represent a successfully completed process of displacement, as the wishes of the

primary narrative, created by the reader's desire for a resolution of tension, find their (partial) fulfilment in the *mise en abyme* through a process of transference.

The figure of Gebirtig further testifies to a process of condensation, rendering manifest the distillation of disparate qualities into one composite figure. In Freudian terms, Gebirtig is the product of *Mischbildung*, (*Traum*, p. 318) a process which unites the qualities of several people to create a new unit, the *Mischperson*, for he represents an amalgamation of several of the primary narrative's Jewish characters. Through his profession as playwright, Gebirtig is immediately connected to those characters in the enclosing narrative with connections to literature and theatre such as Peter Adel, the theatre director who conceals his Jewish heritage, or Paul Hirschfeld, a struggling poet and author with a troubled relationship to his Jewish identity. Ironically, Gebirtig may also be regarded as a partial representation of both the receiver and the producer of his story, as his writing activities link him to Demant's work as *Lektor* and Emanuel Katz's attempts to deal with his Jewish heritage through literature.

Gebirtig's sexual relationships further assign to his character an aspect of condensation, distilling all liaisons portrayed in the primary narrative. These are marked by a common attempt on the part of the Jewish protagonist to define his/her identity through, often troubled, relationships with the non-Jewish 'Other'. Gebirtig's author himself harbours 'ein an die Sucht grenzendes Faible für schlanke Riesendamen, je deutscher desto lieber' (*Gebürtig*, p. 27) and gains pleasure from defining himself through difference: 'Emanuel Katz spürte einen aberwitzigen Genuß, hier auf der Nordseeinsel gegenüber diesen fünf Deutschen sich den Judenstern anzuheften' (*Gebürtig*, p. 114). Conversely, it is Danny's recognition that he fulfils a similar function for Susanne that leads to the breakdown of their relationship, when he suspects that 'sie hängt an mir, um den Widerwillen gegen meinesgleichen sich sinnlich zu machen' (*Gebürtig*, p. 262). Gebirtig, however, deviates somewhat from this model, seeking confirmation of his identity not in women of non-Jewish origin but in Polish Jews, whose common experience of the Holocaust forms their sexual attraction for Gebirtig: 'Immer polnische Judinnen […] Die meisten der ihren sind in Polen vertilgt worden, deswegen liegt sie ja neben mir' (*Gebürtig*, p. 89). Thus the problematic search for identity through sex is reproduced in a condensed and altered form in the *mise en abyme*. Here it finds partial solution, since Susanne's relationship with Gebirtig breaks both his own pattern and that of the primary narrative, suggesting a less troubled relationship between Jewish and non-Jewish characters and a move towards an identity which is not

entirely in the grips of the past. Indeed, Andrea Kunne discerns in the novel's *mise en abyme* 'alle Voraussetzungen für ein vorbehaltloses Verhältnis zwischen einem Juden und einer Nichtjüdin', identifying this as 'eine Ausnahme im Roman'.[26]

Through their relationship Gebirtig and Susanne dramatise the reader's wish for *Vergangenheitsbewältigung*, unfulfilled in the primary narrative, and thus complete another important aspect of the dream process. In addition to the distorting processes of condensation and displacement, Freud identifies a third influence at work in the formation of dreams, the 'Rücksicht auf die Darstellbarkeit in dem eigentümlichen psychischem Material, dessen sich der Traum bedient, also zumeist in visuellen Bildern' (*Traumdeutung*, p. 339). The concern with representation stems from one of the central facets of dream-work, which converts abstract concepts, thoughts and wishes into concrete images, which are charged with great sensory and affective value in order to attract the attention of the conscious (*Traumdeutung*, p. 549). This process of regression, which gains its name from its perceived backwards movement along the line of the Freudian psychic apparatus from the preconscious to perception,[27] not only renders visual the abstract concepts of the dream-thoughts and the unconscious wishes but equally dramatises these thoughts, thus transforming an act of thinking into a sensation of experiencing, whereby 'ein Gedanke, in der Regel der gewünschte, wird im Traume objektiviert, als Szene dargestellt oder, wie wir meinen, erlebt' (*Traumdeutung*, p. 511).

However, the wish-thought finds only partial satisfaction within the *mise en abyme*, as the acquittal of the Nazi war-criminal renders worthless any degree of personal *Vergangenheitsbewältigung* Gebirtig may have achieved. Thus the novel's *mise en abyme* as a product of displacement and condensation serves as a key to understanding the construction of memory and *Vergangenheitsbewältigung* in *Gebürtig*. Whilst the figure of Susanne allows a cautious, yet ultimately optimistic, fulfilment of the desire for more understanding in the Second Generation, the composite figure of Gebirtig serves as a reminder that this process of *Vergangenheitsbewältigung* is in no way complete. The reader's position is deeply ambiguous. One the one hand, the *mise an abyme* offers a pleasurable alternative to the primary narrative at the levels of content and form, since the challenging fragmentary structure of the main plot is replaced by a more conventional chronological narrative. This embedded story further follows the enigma-

---

[26] Andrea Kunne, *'Verschwinden. Zwischen den Wörtern': Sprache als Heimat im Werk Robert Schindels* (Vienna: Studienverlag, 2009), p. 255.

[27] For a diagram of Freud's topographical conception of the psychic apparatus, see Freud, *Traumdeutung*, pp. 514-17.

resolution pattern identified by Barthes and Brooks as essential to reading pleasure, supplying a clear answer to the questions it poses: Will Gebirtig return to Vienna? Will his relationship with Susanne develop? Will Egger be convicted? Unlike the primary narrative, which appears to provide neither enigmas nor solutions, the novel's central *mise en abyme* in a certain sense satisfies the reader's 'hermeneutic need and desire' (Brooks, p. 305), thus increasing his enjoyment of the novel. However, the answers offered to the reader leave him with a profound sense of dissatisfaction, as the *mise en abyme* fails to fulfil adequately the wish raised by the primary narrative, since Egger is acquitted and Gebirtig returns to New York, thus ending his romance with Susanne. Moreover, a further parallel between dreams and *mise en abyme* may be found in their disconnection from reality, as both dreamer and reader are aware that what is happening is not 'real'. The doubly fictional status of this segment, then, further sharpens Schindel's critique of Austrian *Vergangenheitsbewältigung*, suggesting at once that it is only possible in fiction (or dreams) and that even here it is merely a wish that is unlikely to be fulfilled, thus painting a very bleak picture of Austrian collective memory.

FILMIC PLEASURE

The film's integration of Emmanuel Katz's 'novel-within-the novel' into the central diegesis, effectively taking this narrative element 'out of the *abyme*', evidently has a profound effect on the development of textual enjoyment. The elevation of Gebirtig's story to the same ontological level as the primary narrative contributes to the film's overall simplification of the novel's chronology. As a result, the film possesses a far more insistent 'drive towards the end' (Brooks, p. 102), relying far more on the pattern of enigma and resolution than its literary source. Whilst the novel restricts this hermeneutic drive to the *mise en abyme*, the concerns of the filmic Gebirtig and Susanne are shared by the protagonists of the primary narrative and develop alongside their own relationships. Thus the principle romantic enigma of the novel's embedded narrative becomes entangled in Demant's life, as Susanne is presented to the spectator as his lover at the start of the film. His subsequent affair with Kalteisen, then, functions as the 'proposal of the enigma', establishing the tension whose resolution the viewer seeks in the remainder of the film. The film's depiction of Susanne's romance with Gebirtig thus offers the spectator far greater pleasure than its literary counterpart, offering to resolve multiple diegetic tensions at once.

In this sense, the film may be seen to correspond to conventional narrative structures whose potential for pleasure derives principally from the enigma and its resolution. In *The Pleasure of the Text*, Barthes identifies this mode of narration with the '*texte de plaisir*' (text of pleasure) and compares it to the strip-tease, where 'the entire excitement takes refuge in the *hope* of seeing the sexual organ (schoolboy's dream) or of knowing the end of the story (novelistic satisfaction)' (*Pleasure*, p. 10). The adaptation's foregrounding of the romantic in Gebirtig and Susanne's relationship further stresses this element of the strip-tease. Thus their first meeting initiates a clear sense of sexual tension both in Susanne's costuming, as her red silk blouse and high heels exude sensuality, and in a series of long lingering glances revealed in various shot/reverse-shot sequences. From the outset, then, undercurrents of desire accompany the enigma surrounding the trial, increasing the spectator's wish for satisfactory resolution of both strands. This desire is increased by their sexual union, which finds a much more direct depiction here than in the novel. Whilst the latter only makes subtle hints towards a developing romance between Susanne and Gebirtig, the film offers an intimate post-coital scene of the two protagonists in bed, clearly fulfilling the strip-tease function attributed to the pleasurable text.

Both novel and film refuse to provide their respective consumers with a diegetically satisfactory resolution to the trial, which ends in the acquittal of Egger. However, the final scene of the film offers the viewer a form of compensation denied to the reader, promising a more pleasing conclusion to the romantic enigma. Departing from the novel's plot, in which Gebirtig leaves both Vienna and Susanne behind for good, the adaptation brings Susanne to New York, offering the spectator a sense of hope. The final scene in which Susanne calls Gebirtig from a telephone box outside his apartment in itself creates a pleasurable tension through the enigma of the ringing telephone. Whilst the spectator does not witness Gebirtig picking up the telephone, he nevertheless receives an answer as the camera cuts to a long shot of Susanne with New York's skyline instantly recognisable in the background. Thus, an element of hope is introduced into the film that is absent in the novel, providing the 'happy ending' desired by the viewer. Here the spectator is confronted with two competing sources of pleasure, as the film's open ending arguably denies the viewer the pleasure of resolution. However, the light switched on in Gebirtig's apartment in the final shot of the film symbolically answers the enigma, permitting the spectator to take away a deep sense of narrative satisfaction.

PLAISIR AND JOUISSANCE

However, the contrasting complexity of the novel's primary narrative clearly suggests that a Brooksian account of narrative desire may only partially explain the textual pleasure created in *Gebürtig*. In the context of the novel's entangled ontological foundations, it may be more fruitful to turn to a theory of narrative satisfaction that moves beyond plot, locating pleasure in those elements that, in fact, run counter to conventional narrative development. Barthes's identification of two types of narrative pleasure in *The Pleasure of the Text* offers such an explanation.[28] Building on his narrative taxonomies established in *S/Z*, Barthes distinguishes here between the '*texte de plaisir*' and the '*texte de jouissance*',[29] proposing a theory of narrative enjoyment that takes into account the attraction of more challenging texts that omit or subvert the 'drive towards the end' of the hermeneutic code. As touched upon above, Barthes identifies the text of *plaisir* as a work that 'contents, fills, grants euphoria, the text that comes from a culture and does not break with it, is linked to a *comfortable* practice of reading' (*Pleasure*, p. 14). The pleasurable text, then, creates a stable subject position for its reader and presents no threat to the culture in which it is produced. Conversely, the text of *jouissance* challenges the reader's subjectivity, for it 'imposes a state of loss', it is a discomforting work that 'unsettles the reader's historical, cultural, psychological assumptions, the consistency of his tastes, values, memories, brings to a crisis his relationship with language' (*Pleasure*, p. 14).

Barthes's use of *jouissance* to describe this pleasure clearly points in the direction of Lacanian psychoanalysis. Indeed, Barthes division of *plaisir* and *jouissance* derives from a similar split identified by Lacan who locates the latter beyond the pleasure principle, exceeding it in its demands for 'the infinitude that brings with it the marks of its prohibition'.[30] In this longing for more intense satisfaction, however, *jouissance* threatens to destabilise the subject and is thus severely limited by the pleasure principle in its constant search for the least disruptive form of discharge. In his interpretation of Lacan's theory of pleasure, Juan-David Nasio is emphatic in his argument that *jouissance*

---

[28] Roland Barthes, *The Pleasure of the Text*, trans. by Richard Miller (New York: Hill and Wang, 1977). Further references will be provided in the main body of the text, identified as *Pleasure*.

[29] *Jouissance* may be translated as bliss or ecstasy, but the term equally contains a sexual element, as it may also refer to orgasm. This study will retain the original French terms *plaisir* and *jouissance*, employing 'pleasure' as a general designation of narrative enjoyment that encompasses the other two.

[30] Jacques Lacan, 'The Subversion of the Subject and the Dialectic of Desire in the Freudian Unconscious', in *Écrits: A Selection*, trans. by Alan Sheridan (London: Tavistock, 1977), pp. 292-326 (p. 319).

may not be regarded as conventional satisfaction: 'Let us be clear: *jouissance* is not pleasure, but a state beyond pleasure; or to use Freud's terms, it is an excessive tension, a maximum tension, while on the contrary, pleasure is a diminution of tension.'[31] The painful nature of *jouissance*, Lacan argues, arises from the separation of the subject, which Martin Thom regards as an inevitable concomitant of *jouissance*:

> This separation is represented in Lacan's writing by an endless oscillation between the truth of the subject's desire and the knowledge he or she has of that desire. Where there is *jouissance*, there is no subject to say 'I am ... enjoying', and where there is knowledge there is no *jouissance*.[32]

This subjective instability, which is at once pleasurable and painful, stands at the heart of the *mise en abyme* in this chapter, which sets in oscillation the reality of the narrative worlds.

In his definition of the post-modernist text, Brian McHale argues that 'the dominant of post-modernist fiction is *ontological*' (McHale, p. 10), identifying a tendency 'to destabilize the projected world, and consequently to foreground its ontological structure' (McHale, p. 12). Within the self-reflexive questioning of the text's ontological foundations, McHale argues, the *mise en abyme* occupies a privileged position as a 'disruption of the logic of narrative hierarchy' that inevitably foregrounds the work's ontological structure (McHale, p. 125). Mieke Bal touches on the paradoxical position of the *mise en abyme* in the *plaisir*/*jouissance* dichotomy, defining it as both 'déconcertante, car elle met en question la linéarité du texte' ['disconcerting because it calls into question the linearity of the text'] and 'séduisante, car elle suscite la réflexion sur la narrativité du récit, et provoque ainsi une prise de conscience de son fonctionnement' ['seductive because it elicits reflection on the narrativity of the story and thus provokes an awareness of its functioning'] (Bal, p. 116). Following Bal, the ontological uncertainty created by *mise en abyme* elicits an ambiguous response in the reader. On the one hand, the challenge it poses to narrative linearity threatens to disrupt his experience of textual *plaisir*. At the same time, however, the *mise en abyme* promises an intense *jouissance* due to its self-reflexive nature.

Bal herself does not explain the exact functioning of the self-reflexive *mise en abyme* as a source of *jouissance*. However, the activities of the *mise en abyme* may be

---

[31] Juan-David Nasio, *Five Lessons on the Psychoanalytic Theory of Jacques Lacan*, trans. by David Pettigrew and François Raffoul (New York: University of New York Press, 1998), p. 106.

[32] Martin Thom, '*Verneinung, Verwerfung, Ausstossung*: A Problem in the Interpretation of Freud', in *The Talking Cure: Essays in Psychoanalysis and Language*, ed. by Colin MacCabe (London: Macmillan, 1981), pp. 162-87 (p. 166).

compared to 'the portion of the body *where the garment gapes*' identified by Barthes as the most erotic aspect of the body (*Pleasure*, pp. 9-10). The *mise en abyme*, as Bal has argued, permits the text to reflect upon its own existence, laying bare the act of writing. This exposure of the text's production is thus analogous to 'the intermittence of skin flashing between two articles of clothing' (*Pleasure*, p. 10), providing a tantalising glimpse between the fabric of the primary narrative. The self-reflexive (or self-exposing) function of the *mise en abyme* is most evident in what Dällenbach has named the '*mise en abyme* of the enunciation'. This species of *mise en abyme* functions as an exposition of the work's site of production and/or reception, endeavouring to 'make visible the invisible' and spotlighting the process rather than its product (Dällenbach, p. 75). The novel's principal enunciatory *mise en abyme* is formed by the split narrator of Danny Demant and his alter-ego Alexander Graffito, who are central to the revelation of the act of narrative production in the novel and repeatedly challenge the ontological certainty of the work.

Throughout the novel Demant and Graffito are set in opposition to each other, Demant representing the 'handelndes Ich' and Graffito the 'schreibendes Ich'. These two narrating figures are initially presented as twins (*Gebürtig*, p. 18); however, it is apparent that their relationship is of a less stable nature. The reader is presented with various indications throughout the novel that challenge Graffito's ontological status, such as Demant's explicit accusation: '"An dir ist nichts echt, Sascha"', which Graffito gladly affirms: '"An mir ist nichts echt? Hoffentlich?"' (*Gebürtig*, p. 17). On the following page the use of the subjunctive raises further questions about Graffito's autonomy: 'Später gehen wir auseinander, als habe jeder sein Leben' (*Gebürtig*, p. 18). Through Graffito's narration, this problematic ontology is extended to the novel's other protagonists, as the reader is repeatedly reminded that their depiction within the text emanates from his constant note-taking. This revelation of the site of production increases the reader's awareness that his view of the characters is mediated, posing a clear challenge to his desired epistemological mastery. Furthermore, Graffito's rather proud claim that 'Wenn ich mich nun im Café Bräunerhof zurücklehne, den Stift aus der Hand lasse [...] dann passierte weiter gar nichts' (*Gebürtig*, p. 98) carries with it the implication that the narrative and its protagonists rely entirely upon Graffito for their existence, positioning him as an all-knowing, all-controlling narrator. Thus Graffito cannot simply be defined as Demant's alter-ego, a fact highlighted by his physical interaction with those protagonists associated with Demant, most notably with Mascha Singer.

Graffito's relationship with Mascha further destabilises the novel's ontological foundations, as his increasing involvement with her forces him to renounce his 'papierenes Dasein' and leap into the narrated world (*Gebürtig*, p. 234). From this moment onwards, Graffito relinquishes his privileged position as omniscient narrator and Demant takes over as narrating voice, taking the former as his narrative object: 'Das käme ihm eben gelegen, diesem Problemfanatiker, daß er mir die Aufsicht über sein niedergeschriebenes Leben entzieht und in das von mir geschenkte Notizbuch meine Maschamisere kritzelt' (*Gebürtig*, p. 235). His absence from the rest of the novel, with the exception of a brief appearance in which Demant asserts his narrative autonomy from him (*Gebürtig*, p. 323), reinforces the much-stated opposition between 'handeln' and 'schreiben', posited as mutually exclusive throughout the novel. The instability in narrative perspective prevents the reader from determining the relative 'reality' of the narrators, as Graffito's role remains opaque and ambiguous throughout.

The oscillation between fiction and reality in Schindel's novel thus corresponds to Barthes's assertion that 'neither culture nor its destruction is erotic: it is the seam between them, the fault, the flaw which becomes so' (*Pleasure*, p. 7). It is neither the certainty of the narrator's level of 'reality' nor his exposure as a fictional construct that provides *jouissance*, but rather the gap between the two, the reader's awareness that he does not, and indeed cannot, know. In previous chapters, the reader's desire for knowledge has been associated with a search for pleasure, equating epistemological mastery with satisfaction. Yet Barthes identifies this drive for knowledge as an effect of the text of *plaisir*, providing a simple, comfortable form of gratification. Conversely, according to Barthes, the reader's inability to find a stable subject position within the narrative represents a potential source of *jouissance*. In becoming a 'living contradiction' the reader 'simultaneously enjoys, through the text, the consistency of his self and its collapse, its fall' (*Pleasure*, p. 21). Thus the ontological blurring, or 'flickering' in McHale's terms (McHale, p. 32), which defines the novel's narration, reveals a narrative resistant to traditional structures of pleasure. Unable to identify with a stable narrator as the source of epistemological power, the reader of *Gebürtig* is compelled to seek an alternative, less comfortable source of pleasure one which couples the promise of *jouissance* with the threat of painful loss of the subject.

Replicating the pattern of the main plot, the adaptation's cinematic counterpart to the novel's narrator, the voice-over provided by Demant, would also appear to follow more conventional paths of pleasure. This commentary appears at various points

in the narrative to conform to the conventional role ascribed to voice-over, suggesting to the spectator that he is gaining access to Demant's thoughts as background information to the profilmic events. Thus the film's initial scene with Demant and Kalteisen employs the voice-over as a direct response to her question, spoken out loud on screen, 'Ach Danny, wo bist du in Gedanken?' As Kalteisen exits to the left of the frame, the camera follows Demant around the bedroom, whilst his voice-over repeats snatches of the novel's inner monologue attributed to Graffito: 'An mir ist nichts echt. Ich spiele bloß den Getöteten hinterher', revealing a troubled relationship to both past and present. This acts out the enigma-resolution structure *in nuce*, quite literally posing a question and providing an answer. In a position to align the disembodied voice with an on-screen character, the viewer is offered a sense of epistemological mastery, as he receives the answers that Kalteisen sought in her initial question.

Anchored within the fiction, indeed motivated by intra-diegetic questioning, the voice-over at once reveals the filmic site of production and locates it within the spectacle. Unlike the invisible voice-overs in *Schöne Tage* and *Der Stille Ozean*, Demant's commentary corresponds to Silverman's 'embodied voice-over', one which may be assigned to a visible 'body' within the fiction. Silverman argues that

> since this voice-over derives from an interior rather than exterior register (in other words, since it represents thought rather than speech), the listener's access to it is unlicensed by the character from whom it derives, and so clearly constitutes a form of auditory mastery.[33]

The voice-over here serves to suture the viewer into the spectacle, according him a pleasurable sense of auditory power superior to that of the protagonists on screen. In Barthesian terms, the spectator experiences the *plaisir* associated with the textual production of 'euphoria, mastery, security' (*Pleasure*, p. 51).

However, Silverman goes on to argue that 'the embodied voice-over is a precarious hook on which to hang the phallus',[34] since its remoteness from the 'outside', conventionally the site of the disembodied voice-over as representative of the apparatus, serves to 'equate diegetic interiority with discursive impotence and lack of control'.[35] The auditory commentary in *Gebürtig*, in fact, dramatises this contradiction, allowing its voice-over to oscillate between 'inside' and 'outside', thus blurring the

---

[33] Kaja Silverman, *The Acoustic Mirror: The Female Voice in Psychoanalysis and Cinema* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1988), p. 53.
[34] Ibid, p. 53.
[35] Ibid, p. 54.

boundaries between the two. At several points in the narrative Demant's voice-over switches from an inward-looking account of his thoughts to commentary on the actions and inner lives of other protagonists. Thus, an episode with Konrad Sachs and his wife, Else, in which the former rather cryptically demands 'Nie sollst du mich befragen, Else', is followed by a voice-over that provides the spectator with general biographical details about Sachs's job and home life. However, Demant's commentary goes beyond superficial details, informing the viewer of Sachs's reasons for marrying Else: 'Vielleicht hat er sie nur deswegen geheiratet, dachte er.' The inclusion of Sachs's thoughts clearly marks a transition from 'inside' to 'outside', as Demant is revealed to possess a level of knowledge normally associated with an omniscient narrator. Yet his status as embodied voice-over remains unchanged, since the viewer is still able to identify the voice with an intradiegetic body. At the same time that the spectator is offered a superior epistemological position by the voice-over, then, he is forced to question its authority, since Demant's knowledge of Sachs's inner life finds no explanation within the diegesis.

The instability of Demant's narratorial position reaches its climax in those scenes where the action undergoes double narration, firstly on the visual level of the profilmic material and then on the verbal level of the voice-over. This is particularly clear in the sequence depicting Gebirtig's return to his childhood residence and his meeting with former neighbour, Horsti Hofstätter. This sequence begins with a tracking shot of Gebirtig and Hofstätter as they enter the courtyard of Gebirtig's former home, which then follows them out onto the street. With Hofstätter's comment 'dich haben sie im Bergwerk arbeiten lassen' and Gebirtig's reply 'so ähnlich' the camera cuts to a long shot of the street with the two protagonists on the right hand side of the frame viewed from a slight high angle. This change in perspective marks the beginning of the voice-over, which replaces the direct dialogue. Here the voice-over, in combination with the distanced camera and its elevated position, suggests an omniscient narrator with privileged access to the film's events.

This superior narrative position is consolidated by the narrated monologue, which gives us access to Gebirtig's thoughts, yet marks this access as mediated by the narrative agent through the use of the preterite and tagged thought: 'Es gab keine Möglichkeit zu erklären, wie es war in dem Lager […] dachte Gebirtig.' The revelation of the narrative voice as the controlling force behind the images is cemented by the double narration of the scene, as the voice-over informs the spectator 'zuletzt sagte Hofstätter, man wird klüger am Ende, also nichts für ungut Hermann.' This rendition

of the action in unmarked direct speech is followed by a brief return to dialogue, where Hofstätter repeats verbatim the words attributed to him by the voice-over. The positioning of the verbal narrative before the direct speech, combined with the static long shot, accords to the narrating voice the ability not only to reproduce the scene aurally but further implies a certain power to form and manipulate what is depicted visually, suggesting the voice-over to be the controlling narrative agent.

This attribution of omniscience and omnipotence raises clear epistemological issues: How can Demant, a figure within the narrative, claim knowledge of the inner thoughts of his fellow protagonists? How can he appear to shape the events depicted on screen? Yet these questions tip over into problems of a more ontological nature. Demant is recognisably the 'author' of the voice-over, its voice is identical with that of August Zirner, who plays the main protagonist. This provides the spectator with two possible modes of interpretation. Either he must accept Demant as the 'author' of the narrative, whose form and content he controls, or attribute the voice to its 'real-life' owner, regarding Zirner as the source of the commentary, speaking from a site that is somehow 'real'. In both cases, the primary level of filmic reality is exposed as a second-degree fiction, invented and controlled by Demant. Such an interpretation, however, is clearly complicated by Demant's centrality within the plot, which sees him interact with all remaining protagonists at some point, very often in an intimate manner. The spectator is thus denied a stable viewing position, since he can neither identify with Demant as an intradiegetic figure, nor align himself with his controlling gaze and voice. Reflecting the novel's enunciatory *mise en abyme*, the ontologically uncertain basis of the cinematic voice-over repeatedly positions the spectator at the seam between reality and fiction, proffering a sense of *jouissance* that requires him to relinquish his pleasurable immersion in the fictional world. Pleasure is thus to be gained in novel and film from the rejection of conventional structures of desire, which posit a stable fiction that may be known, understood and mastered.

CINEMATIC *MISE EN ABYME*

This renunciation of a comfortable viewing position in order attain *jouissance* finds its clearest expression in the adaptation's central *mise en abyme*, which makes use of generic conventions and viewer-expectations to provoke this painful pleasure. The film's opening scene depicts a concentration camp, almost formulaic in its adherence to

generic constants of the 'Holocaust film'. Its use of grey filter to create a visually sombre atmosphere and the sentimental musical soundtrack, when combined with a rather clichéd establishing shot of the camp, make obvious reference to a number of Hollywood depictions of the Holocaust, most famously *Schindler's List*.[36] Presented with this image, certain expectations (of violence, suffering, inhumanity) are awakened in the viewer, which derive from his knowledge of existing cinematic portrayals of the Holocaust and shape in advance his interpretation of the scene's subject matter.[37]

Following a lengthy establishing shot of concentration camp prisoners and guards in evidently freezing conditions, the camera cuts from a medium shot of an SS officer, whom the viewer assumes to be in command, to images of the prisoners lined up in the snow inadequately dressed in the now infamous striped uniform of the camps. As the latter are ordered to march, one of the prisoners slips on the ice and falls to the ground, disrupting the enforced order. During the prisoner's fall, a static shot of the line of prisoners cuts to a medium shot of his flailing feet, which then zooms in until the fallen prisoner fills the screen. Through a dissolve into a long shot the spectator is reminded of the threatening presence of the guards whose staring in the direction of the camera makes it clear that this incident has not escaped their attention. Guided by generic conventions, the viewer is led to believe that the approaching guards signal impending violence and perhaps even a summary execution.

This tension is reinforced by an extended shot-reverse shot sequence, which draws out the action and marks the clear division of power with a conventional juxtaposition of high- and low-angle shots. The enhanced soundtrack further contributes to this sense of threat, as the scene resounds with barking dogs, howling wind and the ominous swish of the guards' batons in the air. These aural indicators of menace, however, are replaced by sentimental piano music as the guard offers assistance to the fallen prisoner, helping him to his feet and offering to light his cigarette. This gesture has an alienating effect on the viewer, who cannot align this action with his knowledge of the camps, and yet at the same time functions as wish-fulfilment, relieving the tension experienced by the viewer and providing a 'happy end' to this scene.

However, this scene is later revealed to be pure fantasy and the 'prisoners' and 'guards' merely actors in a film. At this point, the latter section of the initial scene is repeated, yet in an altered form, as the grey filter is absent and dialogue is introduced,

---

[36] *Schindler's List*, dir. by Steven Spielberg (Universal, 1993)

[37] For a discussion of the function of genre in shaping audience response, see Leo Braudy, *The World in Frame: What We See in Films* 2nd edn (Chicago; London: University of Chicago Press, 2002), pp. 104-80.

one guard inquiring 'Haben Sie sich weh getan?' A subsequent cut to images of photographers and cinematic equipment provides final proof of the illusory basis of the viewer's initial pleasure, since the gesture of kindness loses its symbolic significance outside the concentration camp context. The spectator suffers thus from a sense of loss similar to that of the reader, realising that the scene he had believed to be real is merely fiction. The profoundly destabilising effect of this revelation stems, to a great extent, from the initial pleasure experienced by the spectator, which derived from an unexpectedly satisfactory resolution to the tension of the first concentration camp scene. Robbed of the pleasure of the happy end, the spectator nevertheless gains access to a more intense sensation of bliss, allowing him to take pleasure in the knowledge of his own loss.

This retrospective exposure of the *mise en abyme* raises a number of interesting questions about the ethics of pleasure in representations of the Holocaust. The spectator's original pleasure at the guard's assistance demonstrates a clear desire to find some redemptive human element within the atrocities of the Shoah. Marcel Beyer's assertion that 'wo Menschlichkeit herrscht, scheint eine weitergehende Hinterfragung nicht vonnöten'[38] exposes the complex moral issues surrounding the 'humanising' of Nazi crimes, which shape the political element of the filmic *mise en abyme*. The scene's doubly fictional status exposes the spectator's desire for humanity as a means of evading the true horror of the Holocaust, avoiding direct confrontation with the issues raised by the unique level of inhumanity behind the industrialised extermination of the Jews. However, in offering the spectator a more intense sense of *jouissance* on the condition that he renounce the *plaisir* inspired by the first scene, the film encourages the spectator to examine his desires more critically. The *mise en abyme*, then, carries in it a biting attack on (filmic) representations of the Holocaust, clearly condemning those that appear to offer 'simple' solutions and an equally easy sense of *plaisir*, suggesting that depictions of the Shoah resist such conventional structures of pleasure.

TEMPORAL DOUBLE VISION

Further ontological uncertainty is created around one of the film's *Täterkinder*, Konrad Sachs, the son of a former concentration camp commander in Poland. His father's participation in the Nazi atrocities assumes an increasingly dominant role in Sachs's life,

---

[38] Marcel Beyer, 'Kommentar. Holocaust: Sprechen', *Text und Kritik*, 144 (1999), 18-24 (p. 22).

as he is plagued by nightmarish visions of childhood memories of the concentration camps. This aspect of his past manifests itself in the novel in the 'Prinz von Polen', a childhood alter-ego, who increasingly threatens to destroy his adult identity. At one point the 'Prinz' almost succeeds, taking temporary control over Sachs's narrative, seizing control of the first-person and menacing Sachs: 'Ich werde mit meinem Frohsinn das Traumauge von Konrad zum Erblinden bringen, ich habe den Rippenkerker satt, den er mir seit Monaten bietet' (*Gebürtig*, p. 211). However, the direct speech following this passage reveals the fictional basis of the 'Prinz', as the doctor informs Sachs that he has suffered a circulatory collapse, allowing the reader to locate the Prinz firmly within Sachs's troubled mind. Whilst this infant alter ego may trouble Sachs, then, he poses no threat to the reader, who may attribute to him a concrete ontological status.

The manifestation of Sachs's past in the film's narrative present, however, presents far greater ontological problems. Here it is Sachs's father himself who haunts his son, appearing suddenly as a formidable uniformed figure at various points in the narrative. The majority of these appearances are clearly marked as hallucinations, remaining separate from the protagonists and events of the 'real' world. Thus, the spectator is first confronted with this ghostly figure as a shadowy outline in the frame of a lift. Konrad stands in focus in the foreground, his face filling the left half of the frame. As the lift doors open an abrupt shift in focus draws the viewer's attention to the background, where a dark silhouette of a man stands stiffly, his uniform identifiable as belonging to the SS. The camera cuts rapidly back to a reverse angle shot of Sachs as he turns around, at first visibly disturbed, then slowly relaxing. A subsequent reverse shot reveals a perfectly normal office setting with no trace of Nazi spectres. Thus the viewer may identity this figure as nothing but a hallucination, merely a figment of Sachs's troubled imagination.

Yet one scene destabilises the status of this figure, once again blurring the boundaries between fiction and reality. In the canteen on the set of the Holocaust film that forms the opening scene, Sachs is once again confronted with the image of his father. Seated amongst many actors dressed as prisoners, Sachs is addressed by one of the 'commanders'. As he looks up, the camera cuts to a low-angle shot of the officer, dimly lit and swathed in grey smoke, who apologises that he cannot play today but promises to read a bedtime story when he returns. On the surface, this appears to be a simple hallucination, triggered by the film's concentration camp setting and its

activation of childhood memories. This is further corroborated by the flashback that follows, which depicts the arrest of his father by the Allies. However, the figure, whom the spectator assumes to be Sachs's father, has already been identified as an actor named Jack, who plays the role of Auschwitz commander in the film-in-the-film. Here the spectator is given no indication of the significance to be attributed to this protagonist, since he is clearly neither a mere hallucination nor a figure on the same ontological level as the primary narrative. Once again, the rug is pulled from under the spectator's feet, providing a vertiginous sense of bliss as he wavers on the edge of several levels of 'reality'.

One rather more obvious effect of these ghostly appearances is the impression of simultaneity of past and present. An ontological impossibility, this continuing presence of the past in the narrative future is to be found in both works, posing a further challenge to the recipient's sense of mastery over the narratives. Within Schindel's novel, this 'temporal double vision'[39] manifests itself in two episodes where Demant's banal shopping trips in the narrative present are intertwined with accounts of his uncle's life in the Viennese ghetto (*Gebürtig*, pp. 173-175) and his father's perilous Resistance activities (*Gebürtig*, pp. 239-242). Here the reader is confronted with several unmarked changes in focalisation between Danny, his uncle and his father, all confusingly referred to as 'Demant'. Both passages begin by identifying the focaliser as 'Danny Demant', normally designated in the novel by his first or second name alone, and describe his movement through the streets of Vienna: 'Als Danny Demant am Stubenring erschein, waren die Wolken verzogen. Er überquerte den Ring, wandte sich dem Luegerplatz und ging ruhig dahin' (*Gebürtig*, p. 239). In both episodes it is only through their interaction with other figures that the switch in focaliser becomes apparent, as Danny's walk through Vienna includes the surprising information that 'Sonja Okun kam ihm entgegen' (*Gebürtig*, p. 173). This figure appears in Ilse Jakobssohn-Singer's account of her experiences in Theresienstadt, which tells of her death on the way to Auschwitz, thus locating her firmly in the past. Similarly the subsequent temporal shift back to the 1980s is marked by 'Ecke Graben kam ihm Wilma entgegen' (*Gebürtig*, p. 174), referring to a familiar figure from the narrative present. The symmetry of these indirect temporal markers gives a certain sense of

---

[39] Michael Ossar borrows this term from George Levine to describe 'the interpenetration of past and present in Schindel's novel'. Ossar, 'Austrians and Jews at the Turn of the Century: Robert Schindel's *Gebürtig* and Arthur Schnitzler's *Der Weg ins Freie*', in *Jews in German Literature since 1945: German-Jewish Literature?*, ed. by Pól O'Dochartaigh (Amsterdam: Rodopi, 2000), pp. 35-44 (p. 39).

enclosure, as the narrative between the two meetings, which portrays Joseph Demant at the time of the ghetto clearings, appears in some sense 'self-contained'.

However, it must be stressed that these are only very indirect indications of a shift in time and perspective. There is otherwise little to separate the two temporal levels, since both accounts are narrated in the preterite, using the third person pronoun, referring obliquely to all three characters as 'Demant'. This integration of past events into the narrative present plays a significant role in the novel's thematics, as 'auch wenn der Roman, wie immer wieder betont wurde, von den Nachgeborenen einer Generation handelt, darf man nicht außer Acht lassen , daß er neben seinem Bezug zur Gegenwart ebenso stark an die Vergangenheit anknüpft, ja sie überhaupt erst zum *dem* Thema macht.'[40] Moreover, the simultaneity of past and present established in these passages establishes a further connection to Freudian dream-work. At several points in *Die Traumdeutung* Freud highlights the 'Zeitlosigkeit des Traumes' (*Traumdeutung*, p. 86), pointing to its ability to distort the temporal norms of waking life. One facet of this 'timelessness' is the element of 'Gleichzeitigkeit' that shapes oneiric representation, allowing it to present simultaneously several elements that are logically related (within the dream) (*Traumdeutung*, p. 312).

The political significance of this sense of simultaneity becomes apparent in the depiction of space in the first passage. Whilst Demant's account is littered with references to clearly recognisable spatial markers, such as the Luegerplatz, Stephansplatz and Graben, allowing the knowledgeable reader to trace his path through Vienna's First District, there is a conspicuous absence of analogous indicators in the segments pertaining to Joseph. Streets and buildings are referred to in far more opaque terms as 'den grauen Gang', 'die Bibliothek' and, most chillingly, 'K 11', the number of Joseph's 'eiskalte Wohnung' in Theresienstadt (*Gebürtig*, p. 175). This opposition between the strikingly detailed depiction of 1980s Vienna and the absence of detail in Joseph's account presents a veiled critique of Austrian *Vergangenheitsbewältigung*, exposing attempts to erase the memory of Theresienstadt by exaggerated emphasis on Vienna's picturesque, tourist landmarks. The seeping of the two temporal levels into each other, however, creates a 'logischer Zusammenhang' (Traumdeutung, p. 312) between the two Viennas, suggesting that such clear distinctions cannot be drawn between the city's tourist present and National Socialist past.

---

[40] Posthofen, p. 194.

In both novel and adaptation, this temporal blurring presents an evident challenge to the reader/viewer's sense of stable reality. Unable to distinguish between fiction and reality, between past and present, the reader forms the impression that there is nobody guiding and shaping the narrative, that Brooks's 'motors of desire' are running without a driver. Yet unlike the Brooksian narrative, where satisfaction is dependent on resolution and knowledge, the ontological instability brought about by these embedded narratives is the very source of pleasure in *Gebürtig*. Denied the possibility of carving out a stable subject position, the reader/viewer experiences a vertiginous joy that derives from a lack of reality. As the dreamer finds enjoyment in his dream as separate from the reality of waking thought, so the consumer of *Gebürtig* experiences bliss in the works' refusal to provide a stable ontological basis.

Reading both works as texts of *jouissance*, then, is to acknowledge the ecstasy that may arise from uncertainty and ambiguity. However, the reception of the novel, which employs a variety of means in the search for a stable sense of 'reality', exposes the potential unpleasure that may arise from this source of *jouissance*. Critical interpretations regularly fail to provide an adequate account of the novel's central *mise en abyme*, overlooking its inferior ontological status or making only brief reference to it. Thomas Freeman, for example, correctly identifies Gebirtig as 'the protagonist of a novel written by one of the characters in the novel *Gebürtig*', yet proceeds to analyse him as if he were on the same ontological level as his fictional author in generalising statements such as 'Gebirtig is one of several characters who are overtaken by the past.'[41] Such an interpretation clearly overlooks the significance of his doubly fictional status and its subversion of the reader's desires for resolution. This denial of ontological uncertainty is further evident in the treatment of the novel's split narrator, as descriptions abound of Graffito as Demant's 'Zwillingsbruder und Alterego'.[42] These selective interpretations amount to a denial of lack, exposing a desire for unproblematic narrative structures that pose no threat to the reader's sense of narrative control.

Further indicative of a desire for a stable reality are the attempts in Schindel scholarship to read the novel as a 'Schlüsselroman' or semi-autobiographical account. Posthofen, for example, dedicates two pages to a list of possible 'real-life' figures behind

---

[41] Thomas Freeman, 'Jewish Identity and the Holocaust in Robert Schindel's *Gebürtig*', *Modern Austrian Literature*, 30 (1997), 117-26 (p. 119).

[42] Hildegard Nabbe, 'Die Enkelkinder des Doppeladlers: Einblendung von politischer Vergangenheit in den Alltag der Gegenwart in Robert Schindels Roman *Gebürtig*, *Modern Austrian Literature*, 32 (1999), 113-24 (p. 117).

the novel's protagonists,[43] whilst Neva Šlibar supplements her inventory with praise for the 'stimmige Wiedergabe bestimmter Wiener Milieus'.[44] Undoubtedly there are parallels between Schindel and Demant: both were born in France as the child of two *Widerstandskämpfer;* both survived the war in a National Socialist children's home; both lost their fathers in Dachau and, at a more banal level, both share a love for football and have worked as film extras.[45] However, within the context of *Gebürtig*'s mode of self-reflexivity, a simple enumeration of similarities and parallels is evidently inadequate. Rather, this integration of autobiographical detail must be regarded as a further strategy in the works' rejection of stable ontologies, provoking the reader/viewer's desire for concrete points of reference only to subvert them consistently throughout the narrative. Critical insistence on reality, then, may be regarded as the attempt to seek *plaisir* within the text of *jouissance*, attempting to find refuge in a safe and stable narrative. This response clearly attests to Barthes's assertion that there exists a 'proximity (identity?) of bliss and fear' (*Pleasure*, p. 48). Seeking bliss in a text, then, is not without its dangers.

'WRITING THE HOLOCAUST'

It is this ambiguity that Schindel exploits in both novel and film, offering a sense of bliss that is at once pleasurable and painful, as the reader/viewer's *jouissance* is dependent upon his recognition of lack within the narrative. The project of self-reflexivity at the heart of *mise en abyme*, which provides this blissful destabilisation, leads in both versions to a questioning of the medium as an adequate vehicle for the transmission of memory. The problematisation of filmic and literary media as adequate means of *Vergangenheitsbewältigung* stands in an uneasy relationship with Schindel's comments on Jewish memory and language, collected in *Gott schütz uns vor den guten Menschen*.[46] In its central essay, 'Literatur – Auskunftsbüro der Angst', Schindel identifies language as an essential component of Jewish *Vergangenheitsbewältigung*, positing discourse as the means by which the unpleasure of the past may be transformed into certain pleasure, contending that 'im Wort kommt die Lust zurück' (*Gott*, p. 61*)*. Schindel clarifies this

---

[43] Posthofen, pp. 201-2.
[44] Neva Šlibar, 'Anschreiben gegen das Schweigen: Robert Schindel, Ruth Klüger, die Postmoderne und Vergangenheitsbewältigung', in *Jenseits des Diskurses: Literatur und Sprache in der Postmoderne*, ed. by Albert Berger and Gerda Elisabeth Moser (Vienna: Passagen, 1994), pp. 337-56 (p. 345).
[45] Schindel had a small role as an extra in Werner Schroeter's filmic adaptation of Ingeborg Bachmann's *Malina*.
[46] Robert Schindel, *Gott schütz uns vor den guten Menschen: jüdisches Gedächtnis – Auskunftsbüro der Angst* (Frankfurt a. M.: Suhrkamp, 1995). Further references to this work will be given in the main body of the text, identified as *Gott*.

process, claiming that 'die Verwandlung von Angst in Lust geht über das Nennen, aber die Verwandlung von Lust in Angst geht über das Nennverbot' (*Gott*, p. 68). Schindel's conception of post-Shoah Jewish identity – 'Judentum als Widerstand'[47] – highlights the necessity of speaking out against the taboo surrounding the Holocaust. Only through a conscious verbalisation of memory can the Holocaust survivors and their children destroy the power which still resides with 'die schweigende Generation der Täter, der Mitläufer und Wegschauer' (*Gott*, p. 113). More specifically, Schindel identifies the crucial function of literature, and fiction in general, in the process of Jewish *Vergangenheitsbewältigung*. Discussing the problematics of post-Shoah Jewish identity and memory, Schindel notes that '[u]m dieses Gedächtnis auch ins Gehirn zu bekommen, also Formen der Identitätsstiftung zu entwickeln, muß dieser Zusammenschluß mit den verschwundenen Vorfahren auf phantastische Weise ausgebildet werden' (*Gott*, pp. 32-33).

Neither Schindel's novel nor its adaptation appears, however, to provide a practical application of this theory. Indeed the problematisation of the fictional mode suggests a critical reworking of these beliefs, one which exposes them as impossible utopian ideals. The notion of literature as a method of 'Angstbannung' (*Gott*, p. 114) forms a recurring motif within the novel, with several protagonists turning to writing in an attempt to deal with the complex issues of *Vergangenheitsbewältigung* and personal identity. Striking in this trend is the use of *other people*'s stories to combat one's own fears, whereby distance allows them to 'verarbeiten […] die eigenen Ängste in der Darstellung der Ängste der Anderen'.[48] Katz recognises the absurdity of his choice of fiction over personal memory, asking himself: 'Warum kommt Mama nicht vor in meinem Manuskript? Warum schreibe ich über irgendeinen verbitterten Emigranten von East River statt über die vier überstandenen Selektionen bei Mengele in Birkenau? (*Gebürtig*, p. 180). Yet it is evident that even the distance created by Gebirtig's fictionality cannot help him come to terms with his family's experiences in the Holocaust. The pessimistic end to this *mise en abyme* underlines the impossibility of Jewish *Vergangenheitsbewältigung*, as anti-Semitism persists even in a (doubly) fictional Austria.

The role of writing is further connected to the concept of self-definition through the 'other', as Graffito's noting of the events around him leads to a certain self-discovery: 'ich hab's merkwürdig getroffen, bekannt wie ich mir bin durch die fremden

---

[47] This is the title of the second essay in *Gott schütz uns*, pp. 29-35.
[48] Pranter-Eberharter, p. 66.

Geschichten' (*Gebürtig*, p. 41). However, fiction is ultimately exposed as an inadequate mode of existence, as Graffito renounces his privileged narrative position in order to develop his relationship with Mascha. The simultaneity of his loss of omniscience and his relationship to Mascha, including his unsuccessful efforts to help her to work through her troubled relationship to the past, renders evident the connection between failed *Vergangenheitsbewältigung* and the failure of this narrative strategy. Schindel thus reveals anew the inadequacy of literature when faced with the task of *Vergangenheitsbewältigung*, again failing to find a narrative method suited to dealing with the issues of the Holocaust and Jewish identity.

Indeed, the only protagonist to find any solace in the act of writing is Konrad Sachs. Following his nervous breakdown, Sachs seeks help from Jewish acquaintances and is recommended to narrativise his *Vergangenheitsbewältigung* through writing, on the grounds that the 'Prinz von Polen […] verträgt das Tageslicht nicht' (*Gebürtig*, p. 332). This advice proves successful, as Sachs is able to separate himself entirely from the 'Prinz', thus allowing him to return to his wife and continue to lead a normal life (*Gebürtig*, p. 334). The contrast between his successful *Vergangenheitsbewältigung* and the failure of the Jewish protagonists to come to terms with their identity provides a damning critique of the function of German-speaking literature in post-Shoah *Täterländer* and the self-pity created by the perpetrators' children. That Sachs is not intended to be a tragic figure becomes at the latest apparent in his exaggerated monologues, where excessive self-pity obscures all reason:

> Präzise teilte er mir mit, was für eine komplette Nazisau er geworden wäre, hätte er zwanzig Jahre früher gelebt, und als Beleg dienten ihm die Hände des Vaters, die Stimme, sein ganzer Habitus. (*Gebürtig*, p. 330)

The utter ridiculousness of this self-created guilt complex is exposed in the absurd self-reproach that the car accident in which Demant was injured is evidence of his latent anti-Semitism: 'Es ist soweit. Jetzt beginne ich damit, Juden zu verwunden. Das ist erst der Anfang' (*Gebürtig*, p. 327). Sachs's successful attempts to exorcise the past by telling his 'unappetitliche Geschichte' (*Gebürtig*, p. 339) thus represents an ironic side-swipe at the deluge of 'Väterromane' in the 1980s.[49] Literary *Vergangenheitsbewältigung* is thus revealed to be the privileged domain of the *Täterkinder*, barred to the victims and their children.

---

[49] Reinhold Tauber refers to this literary trend as 'die für heuer [1980] befohlene Leitlinie […]den Vater durch die Mangel Schreibmaschine zu drehen'. Tauber, 'Das Thema paßt immer', *Oberösterreichische Nachrichten*, 7 July 1980.

CONCLUSIONS

Both novel and film, then, clearly resist the conventional patterns of narrative pleasure explored in previous chapters. In integrating Gebirtig's story into the film's primary diegetic level, the film establishes the text of pleasure as its main basis, encouraging the spectator to seek satisfaction through resolution and offering a 'comfortable' viewing experience. It is this recourse to conventional narrative structures that sets in relief the novel's subversive *mise en abyme* and its denial of *plaisir*, requiring the reader to look elsewhere for textual satisfaction. Upon rereading the novel, it becomes apparent that the ontological oscillation between fiction and reality, past and present supplies an intense sense of *jouissance*, both confirming and destroying the reader's stable subject position. Significantly, this revelation of the novel's source of pleasure illuminates similar instances of ontological flickering in its adaptation, turning the interpretative function of the adaptation back upon itself. Following a re-reading of the novel, the spectator may now look beneath the exterior of the narrative, clothed in the garments of *plaisir*, to discover those flashes of skin that expose his precarious subject position and provide such intense *jouissance*.

That bliss may be found in the destabilisation of the reader's subjectivity clearly stands at odds with the findings of previous chapters, which have stressed the crucial role of perceived mastery in narrative pleasure. However, the works' subject matter, their treatment of post-Shoah memory and Schindel's self-reflexive problematisation of the media suggests that such a divergence is inevitable. Referencing Lacan, Barthes proposes that *jouissance* is the 'unsayable', that its painful bliss is the moment where speech fails. The structures of pleasure at work in novel and film, then, clearly suggest that, contrary to Schindel's own claims, the simple act of narrating is not an adequate means of approaching the Holocaust. Whilst acknowledging the *plaisir* that may arise from conventional end-orientated narratives, both novel and film equally expose the illusionary nature of this pleasure, which rests on the sustained denial of lack. In recognising and embracing the linguistic and emotional impotence engendered by the atrocities of the Shoah, *Gebürtig* implies, the subject may derive a more intense pleasure than that which is to be derived from the search for simple solutions.

In this sense, *Gebürtig* operates within the ongoing debate surrounding the representability of the Holocaust. Sparked off in the late eighties by the *Historikerstreit* in West Germany, this dispute concerns the historical comparability of National Socialist

atrocities and subsequently questions the possibility of its representation.[50] Referencing Saul Friedlander, Hayden White discerns two issues at the heart of this debate, arguing that it raises questions of an epistemological and ethical nature, namely: How can 'facts' be established? and how must they be represented?[51] *Gebürtig* clearly addresses both issues, questioning the possibility of ascertaining any ontological reality and reflecting upon how this may then be conveyed through narrative. The absence of solutions in novel and film leaves unanswered the question posed by Jan Strümpel: 'Wo beginnt der diskutable Umgang mit dem Holocaust?'[52]

Gebürtig, then, would appear to both confirm and challenge dominant discourse surrounding Austrian literature of the post-Waldheim period. On the one hand, its critical approach to Austria's continuing historical amnesia and its problematisation of the relationship between Jews and non-Jews clearly corresponds to the notion of an emergent politically conscious literature, supporting Menasse's assessment of Austrian cultural production 'so versteinert die beschriebenen Verhältnisse auch schienen, Ende der 80er Jahre begannen sie zu tanzen'.[53] However, Schindel's novel and its adaptation clearly challenge the compensatory role frequently ascribed to Austrian literature, exemplified in Fliedl's view, discussed above, that 'die Literatur war das beharrliche Gedächtnis der Zweiten Republik'.[54] *Gebürtig* forcibly demonstrates that narrative in its literary or filmic form can in no way replace a collective process of *Vergangenheitbewältigung* and dramatises the obstacles that hinder this task's transition from fiction to reality.

Beyond its specifically Austrian context, *Gebürtig* further challenges the means by which narrative pleasure is sought by the reader and defined by the critic. The complex ontological structures of novel and film and their refusal to provide the reader or spectator with textual pleasure in a conventional manner clearly expose the inadequacy of a conception of narrative satisfaction reliant on the drive towards the end and the resolution of the enigma. In the face of post-modern ontologies, this chapter would suggest, plot-driven theories of desire find their outer limits. In order to approximate an

---

[50] See Charles S. Maier, *The Unmasterable Past: History, Holocaust, and German National Identity* 2nd edn (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1998).

[51] Hayden White, 'Historical Emplotment and the Problem of Truth', in *Probing the Limits of Representation: Nazism and the Final Solution*, ed. by Saul Friedlander (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1992), pp. 37-53 (p. 38).

[52] Jan Strümpel, 'Im Sog der Erinnerungskultur Holocaust und Literatur: "Normalität" und ihre Grenzen', *Text und Kritik*, 144 (1999), 9-17 (p. 9).

[53] Robert Menasse, 'Unheimlich statt öffentlich: Anmerkungen zu den Schwierigkeiten, in Österreich kreativ zu sein', in Menasse, *Das war Österreich* (Frankfurt a. M.: Suhrkamp, 2005), pp. 237-45 (p. 244).

[54] Fliedl, p. 16.

understanding of the post-modern work, then, the theoretical parameters that have informed this thesis must be expanded and complicated to accommodate the more challenging pleasure of 'uncomfortable' texts that destabilise and disorientate rather than confirm the subject.

CONCLUSIONS

Occupying a position of privilege within Lacanian psychoanalysis, the mirror has haunted this study from its beginnings. The belief that adaptation provides a reflective surface through which the literary source may be observed formed the foundation for this study, which set out to examine its specific function within the post-war Austrian canon. That this would be a carnival mirror was apparent from the outset. The shift from the verbal medium of literature to the audiovisual experience of film renders impossible a 'faithful' reproduction of the former in its entirety. Key features of the five literary sources examined here have been stretched and shortened, twisted and reversed in adaptation's hall of mirrors, resulting each time in the creation of a new, original cultural artefact. In taking these productive distortions as a starting point for its analyses, this thesis has shed new light upon five canonical texts in post-war Austrian literature, illuminating those areas previously overlooked by critical scholarship. Yet, at the same time, it has often found itself in agreement with literary history, carried by a different vehicle to the same critical destination. Psychoanalytic study of adaptation not only serves to reveal omissions, inconsistencies and misapprehensions, but may further facilitate an understanding of the process by which critical judgements are formed, exposing the sub-discourses of literary history.

The study of narrative desire in *Moos auf den Steinen* arrived at an evaluation of the novel that finds little resonance in current criticism. The film's reconfiguration of narrative desire, shown to result in a more conventionally satisfactory plot, challenged the assumption that the novel's lack of obvious linguistic and narrative innovation belies an adherence to the 'Österreich-Ideologie' of continuity and harmony identified in many post-war works. The elimination of Petrik's death and the relocation of romantic resolution to the film's conclusion, it was argued, combine with symbols of modernity and the Habsburg past to validate in the viewer's mind the harmonious union of past and present in post-war Austria, radically transforming Fritsch's subtle critique of a restorative Austrian society. The more subversive element of Fritsch's narrative that emerged in a comparison of the two works questioned the validity of a linear conception of increasing social criticism in Fritsch's oeuvre and more generally in the Second Republic. *Moos auf den Steinen*, as this study has contended, must not be regarded as an anomaly in Fritsch's work but rather merits closer consideration as an early indication of the author's dissent from Austrian society.

Conversely, the optimism of Lhotzky's adaptation and its insistence on a harmonious co-existence of past and present in post-war Austria was revealed to cast doubt upon the dominant fiction of radical social change in the 1960s, identifying a rather more reconciliatory attitude towards the past. The comparative analysis of both versions of *Moos auf den Steinen* thus revealed the inadequacy of the 'Kontinuität und Bruch' narrative that dominates depictions of Austrian culture in the fifties and sixties. In many ways similar to the reader of fiction, it would appear that critical scholarship craves an historical 'plot' with a clear beginning, middle and end. Thus Wendelin Schmidt-Dengler's hypothetical question 'Was gibt's schöneres als eine handfeste Literaturgeschichte?'[1] finds its answer in literary history of the 1950s: there is clearly nothing more satisfying than a critical narrative whose linearity promises some sense of resolution and meaning.

Chapters Two and Three addressed the problem of perspective in *Anti-Heimatliteratur*, revealing a more problematic element in literary representations of provincial Austria. The view 'von unten', celebrated as a sign of rural literature's liberation from patriarchal power, was exposed as a problematic peg on which to hang provincial equality. Whilst perspectives may have changed in works such as *Schöne Tage*, this study argued, the language in which they find expression remains firmly in the service of existing power structures, subjugating rather than enfranchising the rural subject. Returning to the novel in the light of Lehner's redistribution of identification amongst a wider cast of protagonists, this study questioned the basis of the reader's exclusive alignment with Holl and discovered in the process a far more problematic relationship between the novel's narrator, main protagonist and reader. Comparative study of novel and film revealed that the identifying subject, in the face of provincial lack, ultimately seeks out a figure with greater authority, aligning herself with the novel's narrator or the cinematic apparatus. The impulse within literary history to regard Innerhofer's work as an appeal for the emancipation of the rural underclass was thus revealed to be at best idealistic, at worst condescending.

These power relations were equally identified in the narrative of *Der Stille Ozean*, which replaces the perspective 'von unten' with the gaze 'von außen' in the form of Dr. Ascher's ethnographic observations. An analysis of the structures of focalisation in novel and adaptation exposed the reader's alignment with the anthropological gaze as an assertion of power over the novel's rural protagonists. Effacing the role of the

---

[1] Wendelin Schmidt-Dengler, *Bruchlinien: Vorlesungen zur österreichischen Literatur 1945–1990* (Salzburg: Residenz, 1995), p. 207.

narrator, Roth's work was shown to blur the boundaries between the narrator and focaliser, encouraging the reader to attribute to the Ascher the authority that properly belongs to the former. Conversely, the camera in Schwarzenberger's adaptation repeatedly asserts its autonomy from and superiority over Ascher's gaze. By challenging the spectator's identification with Ascher as the source of visual power, this chapter argued, Schwarzenberger's adaptation reveals the basis for the reader's pleasure to lie in the exclusion and judgement of the novel's rural subjects, which she undertakes in her alignment with the main protagonist. Borrowing principles from visual anthropology to illuminate Ascher's relationship with the villagers, Chapter Three thus uncovered a troubling aspect to the reader's identification with the urban gaze. Running counter to the dominant fiction of a geographically more inclusive literature, this study suggests the need to revisit *Anti-Heimatliteratur*, considering the power implications in the production and reception of rural literature. Building on the findings of the previous chapter, this study of *Der Stille Ozean* strengthened the suspicion of a paternalistic attitude amongst certain literary scholars that is only too keen to dismiss Austria's rural population as quasi-fascist degenerates, denying their position as equal subjects.

Moving into the 1980s, an analysis of Novotny's adaptation of *Die Ausgesperrten* confirmed the socially critical function commonly attributed to its literary source, and corroborated recent recognition that:

> Während es richtig ist, daß das österreichische Schweigegebot in Politik, Presse und Pädagogik jahrzehntelang in Kraft blieb, hat die österreichische Literatur nach 1945 die Erinnerung an die Nazi-Vergangenheit wachgehalten, und zwar lange *vor* Kurt Waldheim und Jörg Haider.[2]

Further confirming Jelinek scholarship, the near absence of humour in the filmic adaptation spotlighted the crucial function of comic discourse in the novel's structures of pleasure, through which the reader could align herself with the position of narrative privilege. However, upon closer inspection, the novel's narrator was revealed to be an inadequate identificatory object. In positioning the camera-apparatus as the sole source of the gaze, Novotny's adaptation exposed the power relationship that conventional cinema strives to conceal. Although its voyeuristic mode of looking was shown to facilitate partial identification, the spectator remains unable to align herself entirely with the camera, always conscious of the controlling Absent Other.

---

[2] Konstanze Fliedl, 'Einleitung', in *Judentum und Antisemitismus: Studien zur Literatur und Germanistik in Österreich*, ed. by Anne Betten and Konstanze Fliedl (Berlin: Erich Schmidt, 2003), pp. 9-17 (p. 16).

The authority of the cinematic gaze shed retrospective light on the position of the novel's narrator, exposing its relative lack. In identifying the narrator as both teller and butt of the novel's joking discourse this study has challenged the power commonly attributed to Jelinek's narrators and suggested that this authority must be located outside the text. The disappearance of the narrator engendered by *Die Ausgesperrten*'s transfer to the audiovisual medium thus allows the author ego figure to assume a far more vital role in the creation of narrative pleasure than is usually acknowledged. This chapter, then, provides justification for the centrality of Elfriede Jelinek's person in studies of her work, indeed proving this to be inscribed in the texts themselves.

Konstanze Fliedl's assertion that literature fulfils a compensatory function in Austrian collective memory was challenged by the final case study of this thesis. Exploring parallels between *mise en abyme* and Freudian dream-work, an analysis of narrative embedding in Robert Schindel's *Gebürtig* revealed a less optimistic view of the potential for literary *Vergangenheitsbewältigung*. Breaking the mould established by previous chapters, the adaptation of *Gebürtig* shed light on its literary source through structural similarities between the two. That the integration of Gebirtig into the primary narrative did not reduce the film's potential for self-reflexivity became apparent in its film-within-the-film. In fact, the embedding of Gebirtig's story is arguably replaced by a more suitably cinematic *mise en abyme*, which reflects the filmic devices employed to activate spectator expectations in cinematic representations of the Holocaust and thus challenges the viewer's response to this genre. Rereading the novel in the light of the adaptation's problematisation of the filmic medium exposed the critical function of narrative embedding in the text's exploration of literature as a vehicle for (collective) memory. That critical scholarship has managed to read Schindel's novel as literary *Vergangenheitsbewältigung* is remarkable. Its desire to find something of positive value in *Gebürtig*'s treatment of post-Shoah memory and identity clearly attests to an ongoing helplessness in the face of the Holocaust and its representation in literature and film. In challenging the position assigned to it by literary history, *Gebürtig* further forced a reassessment of the theoretical foundations that shaped conceptions of narrative pleasure in this thesis. Its more experimental narrative form questioned the role of epistemological mastery, which informed foregoing analyses, suggesting that definitions of desire must be broadened to incorporate the intellectual challenges posed by the post-modernist text.

Throughout this study, then, filmic adaptation has occupied an ambiguous role. Understood as a productive means of approaching literature it has served as a methodological device, reflecting and illuminating its literary sources. In replacing the conventional linear approach to adaptation with a more circular conception of the relationship between novel and film, this study has revealed film's potential to endow its literary source retrospectively with new meanings. Film and literature thus stand in a reciprocal and complementary relationship, each containing within it the potential to shed light on the thematic concerns, narrative structures and recipient subject positions of the other. Yet as complex and sophisticated reworking of the novels, the films themselves have proven a fascinating object of study, testifying to the diversity and distinction of Austrian film production. Studies of Austrian film and literature, then, may profit greatly from a closer study of this cinematic genre that explores its unique qualities in a specifically Austrian context. Far from representing a shadowy copy, adaptation contains within it the potential to light up the dim corners of literary history, offering a revelatory perspective that may no longer be ignored by studies of Austrian culture.

BIBLIOGRAPHY

PRIMARY SOURCES

Bernhard, Thomas, *Heldenplatz* (Frankfurt a. M.: Suhrkamp, 1988)

Fritsch, Gerhard, *Fasching* (Reinbek bei Hamburg: Rowohlt, 1967)

— *Katzenmusik* (Frankfurt a. M.: Suhrkamp, 2006)

— *Moos auf den Steinen* (Lausanne: Editions Rencontre, no date)

Innerhofer, Franz, *Die grossen Wörter* (Munich: dtv, 1977)

— *Schattseite* (Munich: dtv, 1975)

— *Schöne Tage* (Munich: dtv, 1974)

Jelinek, Elfriede, *Die Ausgesperrten* (Reinbek bei Hamburg: Rowohlt, 1980)

— *Die Liebhaberinnen* (Reinbek bei Hamburg: Rowohlt, 1975)

— *Theaterstücke: was geschah, nachdem Nora ihren Mann verlassen hatte oder Stützen der Gesellschaften. Clara S. Musikalische Tragödie. Burgtheater. Krankheit oder moderne Frauen* (Reinbek bei Hamburg: Rowohlt, 2004)

Lebert, Hans, *Die Wolfshaut* (Hamburg: Claassen, 1960)

Roth, Gerhard, *Im tiefen Österreich* (Frankfurt a. M.: Fischer, 1994)

— *Landläufiger Tod* (Frankfurt a. M.: Fischer, 1994)

— *Der Stille Ozean* (Frankfurt a. M.: Fischer, 1994)

Schindel, Robert, *Gebürtig* (Frankfurt a. M.: Suhrkamp, 1992)

— *Ein Feuerchen im Hintennach* (Frankfurt a. M.: Suhrkamp, 1992)

— *Gott schütze uns vor den guten Menschen: jüdisches Gedächtnis – Auskunftsbüro der Angst* (Frankfurt a. M.: Suhrkamp, 1995)

FILMOGRAPHY

Die Ausgesperrten, dir. by Franz Novotny (ORF/ZDF, 1982)

Gebürtig, dir. by Lukas Stepanik (CULT, 2002)

Hochzeit am Neusiedler See, dir. by Rolf Olsen (Miksch, 1963)

Moos auf den Steinen, dir. by Georg Lhotzky (West-Film, 1968)

Ruf der Wälder, dir. by Franz Antel (Neue Delta, 1965)

Schindler's List, dir. by Steven Spielberg (Universal, 1993)

Schöne Tage, dir. by Fritz Lehner (ORF/SRG/SFB, 1981)

Sonne halt!, dir. by Ferry Radax (Distributor unknown, 1959-62)

Staatsoperette, dir. by Franz Novotny (ORF, 1977)

Der Stille Ozean, dir. by Xaver Schwarzenberger (ORF/ZDF, 1983)

SECONDARY SOURCES

ADAPTATION, FILM AND VISUAL CULTURE

Albersmeier, Josef and Volker Roloff (eds), *Literaturverfilmungen* (Frankfurt a. M.: Surhkamp, 1989)

Asch, Timothy and Patsy Asch, 'Film in Ethnographic Research', in *Principles of Visual Anthropology*, ed. by Paul Hockings (Berlin; New York: de Gruyter, 2003), pp. 335-60

Barclay, Steven, *The Motion Picture Image: From Film to Digital* (Oxford: Focal Press, 2000)

Baudry, Jean-Louis, 'The Apparatus: Metapsychological Approaches to the Impression of Reality in Cinema', trans. by Jean Andrews and Bernard Augst, *Camera Obscura*, 1 (1976), 104-25

Bazin, André, *What is Cinema?*, trans. by Hugh Gray (Berkley; Los Angeles: University of California Press, 2005)

Bluestone, George, *Novels into Film* (Berkley: University of California Press, 1957)

Bohnenkamp, Anne (ed.), *Literaturverfilmungen* (Stuttgart: Reclam, 2005)

Braudy, Leo, *The World in Frame: What We See in Films*, 2nd edn (Chicago; London: University of Chicago Press, 2002)

Braudy, Leo and Marshall Cohen (eds), *Film Theory and Criticism: Introductory Readings*, 5th edn (New York: Oxford University Press, 1999)

Cartmell, Deborah, Timothy Corrigan and Imelda Whelehan, 'Introduction to *Adaptation*', *Adaptation*, 1 (2008), 1-4

Cartmell, Deborah and Imelda Whelehan (eds), *Adaptations: From Text to Screen, Screen to Text* (London: Routledge, 1999)

Dayan, Daniel, 'The Tutor-Code of Classical Cinema', *Film Quarterly*, 27 (1974), 22-31

Davis, Martha, 'Film Projectors as Microscopes: Ray L. Birdwinstell and Microanalysis of Interaction (1955-1975)', *Visual Anthropology*, 17 (2001-2002), 39-49

Elliot, Kamilla, *Rethinking the Novel/Film Debate* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2003)

Grimshaw, Anna, *The Ethnographer's Eye: Ways of Seeing in Modern Anthropology* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2001)

— 'From Observational Cinema to Participatory Cinema – and Back Again?: David MacDougall and the Doon School Project', *Visual Anthropology*, 18 (2002), 80-93

Heath, Stephen, 'Notes on Suture', *Screen*, 18 (1977-78), 48-76

Hockings, Paul (ed.), *Principles of Visual Anthropology*, 3rd edn (Berlin; New York: de Gruyter, 2003)

Jost, François, 'The Look: From Film to Novel. An Essay in Comparative Narratology', in *Companion to Film and Literature*, ed. by Robert Stam and Alessandra Raengo (Oxford: Blackwell, 2004), pp. 71-80

Kalinak, Kathryn Marie, *Settling the Score: Music and the Classical Hollywood Film* (London; Madison: University of Wisconsin, 1992)

Lajoux, Jean-Dominique, 'Ethnographic Film and History', in *Principles of Visual Anthropology*, ed. by Hockings, pp. 163-80

Leitch, Thomas, 'Adaptation Studies at a Crossroads', *Adaptation*, 1 (2008), 63-77

— *Film Adaptation and its Discontents: From* Gone With the Wind *to* The Passion of Christ (Baltimore: John Hopkins University Press, 2007)

MacDougall, David, 'Beyond Observational Cinema', in *Principles of Visual Anthropology*, ed. by Hockings, pp. 115-32

— 'Social Aesthetics and the Doon School', *Visual Anthropology*, 15 (1999), 3-20

McCarty, Mark, 'McCarty's Law and How to Break It', in *Principles of Visual Anthropology*, ed. by Hockings, pp. 69-75

McFarlane, Brian, *Novel into Film: An Introduction to the Theory of Adaptation* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1996)

Mead, Margaret, 'Visual Anthropology in a Discipline of Words', in *Principles of Visual Anthropology*, ed. by Hockings, pp. 3-10

Metz, Christian, *Film Language: A Semiotics of the Cinema*, trans. by Michael Taylor (New York: Oxford University Press, 1974)

— *The Imaginary Signifier: Psychoanalysis and the Cinema*, trans. by Celia Britton, Annwyl Williams, Ben Brewster and Alfred Guzzetti (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1974)

Mulvey, Laura, 'Afterthoughts on "Visual Pleasure and Narrative Cinema"', in Mulvey, *Visual and Other Pleasures* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1989), pp. 29-38

— 'Changes: Thoughts on Myth, Narrative and Historical Experience', in *Visual and Other Pleasures*, pp. 159-76

— *Visual and Other Pleasures* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1989)

—'Visual Pleasure and Narrative Cinema', in *Visual and Other Pleasures*, pp. 14-26

Oudart, Jean-Pierre, 'Cinema and Suture', *Screen*, 18 (1977-78), 35-47

Paech, Joachim, *Literatur und Film*, 2nd edn (Stuttgart: Metzler, 1997)

Read, Rosie, 'Scopic Regimes and the Observational Approach: Ethnographic Filmmaking in a Czech Institution', *Visual Anthropology*, 18 (2005), 47-64

Rentschler, Erich, *German Film and Literature* (New York: Methuen, 1986)

Rosolato, Guy, 'La voix: entre corps et langage', *Revue francaise de psychanalyse*, 37 (1974)

Rouch, Jean, 'The Camera and the Man', in *Principles of Visual Anthropology*, ed. by Hockings, pp. 79-98

Schmidt, Klaus M. and Ingrid Schmidt (eds), *Lexikon Literaturverfilmungen: Verzeichnis deutschsprachiger Filme 1945-2000* (Stuttgart: Metzler, 2001)

Silverman, Kaja, *The Acoustic Mirror* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1988)

— *Male Subjectivity at the Margins* (London; New York: Routledge, 1992)

— *The Subject of Semiotics* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1983)

— *The Threshold of the Visible World* (London; New York: Routledge, 1996)

Smith, Murray, *Engaging Characters: Fiction, Emotion and the Cinema* (Oxford: Clarendon, 1995)

Stam, Robert and Alessandra Raengo (eds), *Companion to Film and Literature* (Oxford: Blackwell, 2004)

Studlar, Gaylyn, 'Masochism and the Perverse Pleasures of the Cinema', in *Movies and Methods II*, ed. by Bill Nichols (Los Angeles: University of California Press, 1985)

Ward, Peter, *Picture Composition for Film and Television* (Oxford: Focal Press, 2003)

Weakland, John H., 'Feature Films as Cultural Documents', in *Principles of Visual Anthropology*, ed. by Hockings, pp. 45- 67

Whelehan, Imelda, 'Adaptations: The Contemporary Dilemmas', in *Adaptations: From Text to Screen, Screen to Text*, ed. by Cartmell and Whelehan, pp. 3-20

Young, Colin, 'Observational Cinema', in *Principles of Visual Anthropology*, ed. by Hockings, pp. 99-113

LITERARY, NARRATIVE AND CULTURAL THEORY

Bal, Mieke, 'Mise en abyme et iconicité', *littérature*, 29 (1978), 116-28

Barthes, Roland, 'The Death of the Author', in Barthes, *Image – Music – Text*, trans. by Stephen Heath (London: Fontana, 1977), pp. 142-48

— *Elements of Semiology,* trans. by Annette Levers and Colin Smith (London: Cape, 1967)

— *Image – Music – Text*, trans. by Stephen Heath (London: Fontana, 1977)

— *Mythologies*, trans. by Annette Lavers (St. Albans: Paladin, 1973)

— *The Pleasure of the Text*, trans. by Richard Miller (New York: Hill and Wang, 1977)

— *S/Z: An Essay*, trans. by Richard Miller (New York: Hill and Wang, 1974)

Brooks, Peter, *Reading for the Plot: Design and Intention in Narrative* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1984)

Chatman, Seymour, *Story and Discourse: Narrative Structure in Fiction and Film* (Ithaca: Cornell, 1980)

Cohn, Dorrit, *Transparent Minds: Modes of Presenting Narrative Consciousness in Fiction* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1978)

Colebrook, Claire, *Irony*, The New Critical Idiom (London: Routledge, 2004)

Crossley, Nick, 'The Politics of the Gaze: Between Foucault and Merleau-Ponty', *Human Studies*, 16 (1993), 399-419

Culler, Jonathan, *Roland Barthes* (London: Fontana, 1983)

Dällenbach, Lucien, *The Mirror in the Text*, trans. by Jeremy Whiteley and Emma Hughes (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1989)

Eagleton, Terry, *Literary Theory: An Introduction*, 2nd edn (Oxford: Blackwell, 1996)

Foucault, Michel, *The Birth of the Clinic: An Archaeology of Medical Perception*, trans. by A. M. Sheridan-Smith (London: Tavistock, 1970)

— *Discipline and Punish: The Birth of the Prison*, trans. by Alan Sheridan (London: Penguin, 1991)

— *The Order of Things: An Archaeology of the Human Sciences* (London; New York: Routledge, 2002)

— 'What is an Author?', in Foucault, *Language, Counter-Memory, Practice*, trans. by Donald F. Bouchard (Ithaca; New York: Cornell University Press, 1977), pp. 113-38

Friedlander, Saul (ed.), *Probing the Limits of Representation: Nazism and the Final Solution* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1992)

Geertz, Clifford, 'Thick Description: Towards an Interpretative Theory of Culture', in Geertz, *The Interpretation of Cultures: Selected Essays* (New York: Basic Books, 1973), pp. 3-30

Genette, Gérard, *Figures III* (Paris: Edition du Seuil, 1972)

Holland, Norman, *The Dynamics of Literary Response* (New York: Norton, 1975)

Hegel, G.W. F., *Werke*, 20 vols, ed. by Eva Moldenhauer and Karl Markus Michel,
    (Frankfurt a. M.: Suhrkamp, 1970), III: *Phänomenologie des Geistes*

Kerby, Anthony Paul, *Narrative and the Self* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press,
    1991)

Kojève, Alexandre, *Introduction to the Reading of Hegel: Lectures on Phenomenology of the Spirit*,
    ed. by Allan Bloom, trans. by James H. Nichols Jr. (Ithaca; London: Cornell
    University Press, 1969)

Lévi-Strauss, Claude, *The Elementary Structures of Kinship*, trans. by J. H. Bell and others,
    ed. by Rodney Needham (Boston: Beacon Press, 1969)

— *Structural Anthropology*, trans. by Clare Jacobson and Brooke Schoepf (New York:
    Basic Books, 1963)

McHale, Brian, *Postmodernist Fiction* (London; New York: Routledge, 1989)

Moi, Toril, *Sexual, Textual Politics: Feminist Literary Theory* (London; New York:
    Routledge, 1995)

Rimmon-Kenan, Shlomith, *Narrative Fiction: Contemporary Poetics* (London; New York:
    Routledge, 1996)

Ron, Moshe, 'Restricted Abyss: Nine Problems in the Theory of Mise en Abyme', *Poetics
    Today*, 8 (February 1987), 417-38

de Saussure, Ferdinand, *Course in General Linguistics*, trans. by Wade Baskin, ed. by
    Charles Bally and Albert Sèchehaye (London: P. Owen, 1960)

White, Hayden, 'Historical Emplotment and the Problem of Truth', in *Probing the Limits
    of Representation: Nazism and the Final Solution*, ed. by Saul Friedlander (Cambridge,
    MA: Harvard University Press, 1992), pp. 37-53

PSYCHOANALYTIC THEORY

Benjamin, Jessica, *Like Subjects, Love Objects: Essays on Recognition and Sexual Difference*
    (New Haven; London: Yale University Press, 1995)

Ebeling, Knut, 'Freud, die Archäologie, die Moderne. Die archäologische Methode als Antwort auf Nietzsches Repräsentationskritik', *Jahrbuch der Nietzsche-Gesellschaft*, 7 (2000), 127-40

Freud, Sigmund, 'Drei Abhandlungen zur Sexualtheorie', in Freud, *Studienausgabe*, V: *Sexualleben*, pp. 37-145

— 'Das Ich und das Es', in Freud, *Studienausgabe*, III: *Psychologie des Unbewußten*, pp. 272-330

— 'Jenseits des Lustprinzips', in Freud, *Studienausgabe*, III: *Psychologie des Unbewußten*, pp. 213-72

— 'Massenpsychologie und Ich-Analyse', in Freud, *Studienausgabe*, IX: *Fragen der Gesellschaft. Ursprünge der Religion*, pp. 61-134

— 'Psychoanalytische Bemerkungen über einen autobiographisch geschriebenen Fall von Paranoia', in Freud, *Studienausgabe*, VII: *Zwang, Paranoia und Perversion*, pp. 133-203

— 'Totem und Tabu', in Freud, *Studienausgabe*, IX: *Fragen der Gesellschaft. Ursprünge der Religion*, pp. 287-444

— *Studienausgabe*, ed. by Alexander Mitscherlich, Angela Richards and James Strachey, 10 vols (Frankfurt a. M.: Fischer, 1975), II: *Die Traumdeutung*

— 'Über einige neurotische Mechanismen bei Eifersucht, Paranoia und Homosexualität', in Freud, *Studienausgabe*, VII: *Zwang, Paranoia und Perversion*, pp. 217-28

— 'Das Unbehagen in der Kultur', in Freud, *Studienausgabe*, IX: *Fragen der Gesellschaft. Ursprünge der Religion*, pp. 191-270

— 'Der Witz und seine Beziehung zum Unbewußten', in Freud, *Studienausgabe*, IV: *Psychologische Schriften*, pp. 9-219

— 'Zur Einführung des Narzißmus', in Freud, *Studienausgabe*, III: *Psychologie des Unbewußten*, pp. 37-68

Fuss, Diana, *Identification Papers* (London; New York: Routledge, 1995)

Grosz, Elizabeth, *Jacques Lacan: A Feminist Introduction* (London; New York: Routledge, 1990)

Lacan, Jacques, 'The Agency of the Letter in the Unconscious; or Reason Since Freud', in Lacan, *Écrits: A Selection*, trans. by Alan Sheridan (London: Tavistock, 1977), pp. 146-78

— *Écrits: A Selection*, trans. by Alan Sheridan (London: Tavistock, 1977)

 — *The Four Fundamental Concepts of Psychoanalysis*, trans. by Alan Sheridan (London: Vintage, 1998)

— 'Function and the Field of Speech and Language', in Lacan, *Écrits: A Selection*, pp. 30-113

— 'On a Question Preliminary to Any Possible Treatment of Psychosis', in Lacan, *Écrits*, pp. 178-225

— 'The Mirror Stage as Formative of the Function of the I as Revealed in Psychoanalytic Experience', in Lacan, *Écrits: A Selection*, pp. 1-7

— 'The Subversion of the Subject and the Dialectic of Desire in the Freudian Unconscious', in *Écrits: A Selection*, pp. 292-326

Laplanche, Jean and Jean-Bertrand Pontalis, *The Language of Psychoanalysis* (London: Hogarth Press, 2006)

Miller, Jacques-Alain, 'Suture: Elements of the Logic of the Signifier', trans. by Jacqueline Rose, *Screen*, 18 (1978), 24-34

Nasio, Juan-David, *Five Lessons on the Psychoanalytic Theory of Jacques Lacan*, trans. by David Pettigrew and François Raffoul (New York: University of New York Press, 1998)

Purdie, Susan, *Comedy: The Mastery of Discourse* (Hemel Hempstead: Harvester Wheatsheaf, 1993)

Reich, Wilhelm, *Massenpsychologie des Faschismus* (Cologne: Kiepenhauer und Witsch, 2003)

Thom, Martin, '*Verneinung, Verwerfung, Ausstossung*: A Problem in the Interpretation of Freud', in *The Talking Cure: Essays in Psychoanalysis and Language*, ed. by Colin MacCabe (London: Macmillan, 1981), pp. 162-87

ON AUSTRIAN LITERATURE AND CULTURE

Amann, Klaus, 'Vorgeschichten: Kontinuitäten in der österreichischen Literatur von den dreißiger zu den fünfziger Jahren', in *Literatur der Nachkriegszeit und der*

fünfziger Jahre in Österreich, ed. by Friedbert Aspetsberger, Norbert Frei and Hubert Lengauer (Vienna: Österreichischer Bundesverlag, 1984), pp. 46-58

Aspetsberger, Friedbert (ed.), *Österreichische Literatur seit den 20er Jahren* (Vienna: ÖVB, 1979)

Aspetsberger, Friedbert, Norbert Frei and Hubert Lengauer (eds), *Literatur der Nachkriegszeit und der fünfziger Jahre in Österreich* (Vienna: Österreichischer Bundesverlag, 1984)

Beckermann, Ruth, *Unzugehörig: Österreicher und Juden nach 1945* (Vienna: Löcker, 1989)

Best, Alan and Hans Wolfschütz (eds), *Modern Austrian Writing: Literature and Society After 1945* (London: Oswald Wolff, 1980)

Bischof, Günther and Anton Pelinka (eds), *Austrian Historical Memory and National Identity* (New Jersey: Transaction, 1997)

— *The Kreisky Era in Austria* (New Jersey: Transaction, 1994)

Bischof, Günther, 'Founding Myths and Compartmentalised Past', in *Austrian Historical Memory and National Identity*, ed. by Bischof and Pelinka, pp. 302-41

Breicha, Otto and Reinhard Urbach (eds), *Österreich zum Beispiel: Literatur, bildende Kunst, Film und Musik seit 1968* (Vienna: Residenz, 1982)

David, Garold N., 'Die Idee "Heimat"', in *Österreichische Gegenwart: die moderne Literatur und ihr Verhältnis zur Tradition*, ed. by Wolfgang Paulsen (Bern: Francke, 1980)

Ebner, Paulus and Karl Vocelka, *'Die zahme Revolution': '68 und was davon blieb* (Vienna: Ueberreuter, 1998)

Greiner, Ulrich, *Der Tod des Nachsommers* (Munich: Hanser, 1979)

Haslinger, Josef, *Politik der Gefühle* (Frankfurt a. M.: Fischer, 1995)

Hussong, Marion, *Der Nationalsozialismus im österreichischen Roman 1945-1969* (Tübingen: Stauffenburg, 2000)

Kohl, Katrin and Ritchie Robertson (eds), *A History of Austrian Literature 1918-2000* (Rochester: Camden House, 2006)

Konzett, Matthias, *The Rhetoric of National Dissent in Thomas Bernhard, Peter Handke and Elfriede Jelinek* (Rochester: Camden House, 2000)

Kunne, Andrea, *Heimat im Roman: Last oder Lust? Transformationen eines Genres in der österreichischen Nachkriegsliteratur* (Amsterdam; Atlanta: Rodopi, 1991)

Long, J.J., 'Bernhard, *Frost*', in *Landmarks in the German Novel*, ed. by Peter Hutchinson and Michael Minden (Bern: Peter Lang, 2010), pp. 7-24

— *The Novels of Thomas Bernhard: Form and Its Function* (Rochester: Camden House, 2001)

Lunzer, Heinz, 'Der literarische Markt 1945 bis 1955', in *Literatur der Nachkriegszeit und der fünfziger Jahre in Österreich*, ed. by Aspetsberger, Frei and Lengauer, pp. 24-45

Magris, Claudio, *Der habsburgische Mythos in der modernen österreichischen Literatur*, trans. by Madeleine von Pásztory (Vienna: Zsolnay, 1996)

Maier, Charles S., *The Unmasterable Past: History, Holocaust, and German National Identity*, 2nd edn (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1998)

Manoschek, Walter, 'Verschmähte Erbschaft', in *Österreich 1945-1995*, ed. by Reinhard Sieder, Heinz Steinert, and Emmerich Tàlos (Vienna: Verlag für Gesellschaftskritik, 1995)

McVeigh, Joseph, *Kontinuität und Vergangenheitsbewältigung in der österreichischen Literatur nach 1945* (Vienna: Braumüller, 1988)

— 'Pop Culture in Austria, 1945-2000', in *A History of Austrian Literature 1918-2000*, ed. by Kohl and Robertson, pp. 247-63

Meissl, Sebastian, Klaus-Dieter Mulley and Oliver Ratholb (eds), *Verdrängte Schuld, verfehlte Sühne: Entnazifizierung in Österreich 1945-55* (Vienna: Verlag für Geschichte und Politik, 1986)

Menasse, Robert, *Das Land ohne Eigenschaften* (Vienna: Sonderzahl, 1992)

— 'Die Basis der österreichischen Gegenwartsliteratur', in *Das war Österreich* (Frankfurt a. M.: Suhrkamp, 2005), pp. 123-31

— 'Die Herausbildung sozialpartnerschaftlich-ästhetischer Strukturen in der österreichischen Literatur', in *Das war Österreich*, pp. 173-205

— 'Die Ohnmacht des Machers im Literaturbetrieb: zu Tod und Werk von Gerhard Fritsch', in *Das war Österreich*, pp. 209-24

— *Das war Österreich* (Frankfurt a. M.: Suhrkamp, 2005)

— 'Unheimlich statt öffentlich: Anmerkungen zu den Schwierigkeiten, in Österreich kreativ zu sein', in *Das war Österreich*, pp. 237-45

Müller, Karl, 'Die Bannung der Unordnung: zur Kontinuität österreichischer Literatur seit den dreißiger Jahren', in *Kontinuität und Bruch: 1938 – 1945 – 1955*, ed. by Friedrich Stadler (Munster: Lit, 2004), pp. 181-216

Parkinson, F. (ed.), *Conquering the Past: Austrian Nazism Yesterday and Today* (Detroit: Wayne State University, 1989)

Pelinka, Anton, 'Die Studentenbewegung der 60er Jahre in Österreich: 8 Thesen aus politikwissenschaftlicher Sicht', *Schriftreihe zur Lehrbildung im berufsbildenden Schulwesen*, 146 (1993), 87-104

— 'Taboos and Self-Deception' in *Austrian Historical Memory and National Identity*, ed. by Bischof and Pelinka, pp. 95-102

Ritter, Harry, 'From Habsburg to Hitler to Haider: The Peculiarities of Austrian History', *German Studies Review*, 22 (1999), 269-84

Rossbacher, Karlheinz, *Heimatkunstbewegung und Heimatroman: zu einer Literatursoziologie der Jahrhundertwende* (Stuttgart: Klett, 1975)

Ryan, Simon, 'New Directions in the Austrian Novel', in *The Modern German Novel*, ed. by Keith Bullivant (Oxford; Hamburg; New York: Berg, 1987)

Schmid, Georg, 'Die "falschen" Fuffziger: kulturpolitische Tendenzen der fünfziger Jahre', in *Literatur der Nachkriegszeit*, ed. by Aspetsberger, Frei and Lengauer, pp. 7-23.

Schmidt-Dengler, Wendelin, *Bruchlinien: Vorlesungen zur österreichischen Literatur 1945–1990* (Salzburg: Residenz, 1995)

— 'Pathos der Immobilität: zur österreichischen "Nationalliteratur"', in *Österreich zum Beispiel*, ed. by Breicha and Urbach, pp. 343-52

— 'Ulrich Greiner: "Der Tod des Nachsommers"', in *Für und wider eine österreichische Literatur*, ed. by Kurt Barsch, Dietmar Goltschnigg and Gerhard Melzer (Königstein: Athenäum, 1982), pp. 181-84

— 'Die unheiligen Experimente: zur Anpassung der Konvention an die Moderne', in *Literatur der Nachkriegszeit*, ed. by Aspetsberger, Frei and Lengauer, pp. 337-50

Schulte, Hans and Gerald Chapple (eds), *Shadows of the Past: Austrian Literature of the Twentieth Century* (New York: Peter Lang, 2009)

Sieder, Reinhard, '"Gesellschaft" oder die Schwierigkeit, vernetzend zu denken: die Zweite Republik Österreich', *Geschichte und Gesellschaft*, 24 (1998), 199-224

Stadler, Friedrich, *Kontinuität und Bruch: 1938 – 1945 – 1955* (Munster: Lit, 2004)

Urbach, Reinhard, 'Experiment. Erinnerung. Erfahrung: Bemerkungen zur Literatur in Österreich seit 1968', in *Österreich zum Beispiel*, ed. by Breicha and Urbach, pp. 7-18

Weiss, Walter, 'Literatur', in *Das neue Österreich: Geschichte der Zweiten Republik*, ed. by Erika Weinzierl and Kurt Skalnik (Vienna; Graz: Styria, 1975), pp. 277-311

— 'Die Literatur der Gegenwart in Österreich', in *Deutsche Gegenwartsliteratur: Ausgangspositionen und aktuelle Entwicklungen*, ed. by Manfred Durzak (Stuttgart: Reclam, 1981), pp. 602-19

Wischenbart, Rüdiger, 'Zur Auseinandersetzung um die Moderne: literarischer "Nachholbedarf" – Auflösung der Literatur', in *Literatur der Nachkriegszeit*, ed. by Aspetsberger, Frei and Lengauer, pp. 351-66

Zeyringer, Klaus, *Innerlichkeit und Öffentlichkeit: österreichische Literatur der achtziger Jahre* (Tübingen: Francke, 1992)

— *Österreichische Literatur seit 1945: Überblicke, Einschnitte, Wegmarken* (Innsbruck: Studienverlag, 2008)

ON AUSTRIAN FILM

Bono, Francesco (ed.), *Austria (In)Felix: zum österreichischen Film der 80er Jahre* (Graz: Blimp; Rome: Aiace, 1992)

Büttner, Elisabeth and Christian Dewald (eds), *Anschluß an Morgen: eine Geschichte des österreichischen Films von 1945 bis zur Gegenwart* (Salzburg: Residenz, 1997)

von Dassanowsky, Robert, *Austrian Cinema: A History* (Jefferson: McFarland, 2005)

— 'Austria's 1960s Film Trauma: Notes on a Cinematic Phoenix', *fipresci*, 3 (2006) <http://www.fipresci.org/undercurrent/issue_0306/dassanowsky_austria.htm#fn9> [accessed 10 March 2010]

Dörfler, Goswin, 'Austria', in *International Film Guide 1969*, ed. by Peter Cowie (London: Tantivy, 1969)

Ernst, Gustav and Gerhard Schedl (eds), *Nahaufnahmen: zur Situation des österreichischen Kinofilms* (Vienna; Zurich: Europa, 1992)

Fritz, Walter, *Im Kino erlebe ich die Welt: 100 Jahre Kino und Film in Österreich* (Vienna: Brandstätter, 1997)

Kramer, Thomas, *Film im Lauf der Zeit: 100 Jahre Kino in Deutschland, Österreich und der Schweiz* (Vienna: Ueberreuter, 1994)

Lamb-Faffelberger, Margarete (ed.), *Literature, Film, and the Culture Industry in Contemporary Austria* (New York; Vienna: Lang, 2002)

Luger, Kurt, *Vergnügen, Zeitgeist, Kritik: Streifzüge durch die populäre Kultur* (Vienna: Österreichischer Kunst- und Kulturverlag, 1998)

Perthold, Michael, *Der Film und die (österreichische) Filmwirtschaft: eine betriebswirtschaftliche Analyse* (unpublished doctoral thesis, University of Vienna, 1983)

Pyrker, Reinhard and Christine Leinfellner (eds), *Der neue österreichische Film: 1969 – 1984. 15 Jahre einer Entwicklung* (Vienna: Kulturverband Favoriten, 1984)

Rebhandl, Bert, 'Nachsaison: zum österreichischen Spielfilm seit 1968', in *Der neue österreichische Film*, ed. by Pyrker and Leinfellner, pp. 17-46

Schedl, Gerhard, 'Die österreichische Filmförderung', in *Nahaufnahmen*, ed. by Ernst and Schedl, pp. 177-86

Schlemmer, Gottfried (ed.), *Der neue österreichische Film* (Vienna: Wespennest, 1996)

Schultz, Gabriele, 'Der österreichische Film und das Fernsehen: die Programmierte Krise', in *Nahaufnahmen*, ed. by Ernst and Schedl, pp. 61-74

Steiner, Gertraud, *Filmbuch Österreich* (Vienna: Bundeskanzleramt, Bundespressedienst, 1995)

Weißbuch zur Reform der Kulturpolitik in Österreich (Vienna: Falter, 1999)

ON GERHARD FRITSCH/GEORG LHOTZKY

Alker, Stefan, *Das Andere nicht zu kurz kommen lassen: Werk und Wirken von Gerhard Fritsch* (Vienna: Braumüller, 2007)

Alker, Stefan and Andreas Brandtner (eds), *Gerhard Fritsch: Schriftsteller in Österreich* (Vienna: Sonderzahl, 2005)

Bartenstein, Helmut, *'Wo ist der Strand der Zukunft?' Eine Strukturanalyse des Romans* Moos auf den Steinen *von Gerhard Fritsch* (unpublished masters thesis, University of Salzburg, 1999)

Berger, Albert, 'Die austriakische Restauration', in *Österreichische Literatur seit den 20er Jahren*, ed. by Friedbert Aspetsberger (Vienna: ÖVB, 1979), pp. 68-80

— '*Überschmäh* und *Lost in Hypertext*: eine vergleichende Re-Lektüre von Gerhard Fritschs Romanen *Moos auf den Steinen* und *Fasching'*, in *Gerhard Fritsch: Schriftsteller in Österreich*, ed. by Alker and Brandtner, pp. 57-77

Böhm, Hermann, 'Mythos und abermals Mythos: Praxis und Theorie eines möglichen Österreich-Modells in Gerhard Fritschs Roman *Moos auf den Steinen* und bei Claudio Magris', in *Gerhard Fritsch: Schriftsteller in Österreich*, ed. by Alker and Brandtner, pp. 79-89

Fritsch, Georg, 'Messer oder Ehe', *Literatur und Kritik*, 281(1994), 51-54

Hiesel, Franz, 'Reise nach Österreich: Schreiben mit Gerhard Fritsch', *Literatur und Kritik*, 281 (1994), 55-63

Jirgal, Ernst, '*Moos auf den Steinen*', *Wort in der Zeit*, 8 (1956), 53-4

Long, J.J., 'Casual Brutalities: Hans Lebert's *Die Wolfshaut,* Gerhard Fritsch's *Fasching* and Austrian Collective Memory', *Austrian Studies*, 11 (2003), 85-101

Mádl, Antal, 'Zum Gedenken an Joseph Roth und Gerhard Fritsch', *Literatur und Kritik*, 247 (1990), 335-39

Mießgang, Thomas, *Sex, Mythos und Maskerade: der antifaschistische Roman Österreichs im Zeitraum von 1960-1980* (Vienna: VWGÖ, 1988)

Müller, Karl, 'Muß Odysseus wieder reisen? Zur weltanschaulichen Unbehaustheit und Häuslichkeit (Heimatlosigkeit und Heimat)', in *Literatur der Nachkriegszeit und der fünfziger Jahre*, ed. by Aspetsberger, pp. 270-89

Schimpl, Karl, *Weiterführung und Problematisierung: Untersuchungen zur künstlerischen Entwicklung von Gerhard Fritsch* (Stuttgart: Heinz, 1982)

Schmidt-Dengler, Wendelin, 'Gerhard Fritsch: ein Versuch, sich seiner geziemend zu erinnern', *Literatur und Kritik*, 281 (1994), 48-51

— '"Modo Austriaco": Gerhard Fritsch und die Literatur in Österreich', in *Gerhard Fritsch: Schriftsteller in Österreich*, ed. by Alker and Brandtner, pp. 25-33

Szely, Sylvia, 'Vielstimmige Erinnerung: Neubeginn, neu bewertet, *Moos auf den Steinen* (1968)'. <http://derstandard.at/fs/2654956/Fuer-STANDARD-Abonnentinnen-und-Abonnenten?_lexikaGroup=17> [accessed 10 March 2010]

Van Ingen, Ferdinand, 'Österreichische Topographien: zum epischen Werk von Gerhard Fritsch', *Literatur und Kritik*, 247 (1990), 340-50

Winterstein, Stefan, 'Filmgenuß ohne Schamröte: Georg Lhotzky's *Moos auf den Steinen*', in *Gerhard Fritsch: Schriftsteller in Österreich*, ed. by Alker and Brandtner, pp. 225-35

Wolfschütz, Hans, 'Gerhard Fritsch', in *Kritisches Lexikon zur deutschsprachigen Gegenwartsliteratur* (Munich: Heinz Ludwig Arnold, 1981)

—— 'Von der Verklärung zur Aufklärung: zur Entwicklung Gerhard Fritschs', in *Literatur und Kritik*, 111 (1977), 10-19

Zobl, Susanne, 'Transvestismus und Deformation: über ein Motiv bei Gerhard Fritsch', *Literatur und Kritik*, 29 (1994), 67-74

ON FRANZ INNERHOFER/FRITZ LEHNER

Baumgart, Reinhard, 'Auf dem Lande: Menschenfinsternis', *Süddeutsche Zeitung*, 12 October 1974

Birgfeld, Johannes, *Franz Innerhofer als Erzähler: eine Studie zu seiner Poetik* (Frankfurt a. M.: Peter Lang, 2002)

Bozzi, Paola, 'Langsame Heimkehr oder der Betrug der Dinge: zu Affinitäten zwischen Herta Müller und Thomas Bernhard, Franz Innerhofer und Peter Handke', in *Philologie im Netz* <http://web.fu-berlin.de/phin/phin6/p6t1.htm> [accessed 28th April 2009]

Esderts, Hans, 'Stimme der Sprachlosen', *Bremener Nachrichten*, 25 January 1975

Hoßfeld, Joachim, '*Schöne Tage*', *Literatur und Kritik*, 94 (1975), 251-52

A. K., 'Alptraum von Landleben', *Stüttgarter Zeitung*, 7 September 1982

M. K., 'Befreiung von der Sprachlosigkeit', *Neue Zürcher Zeitung*, 5 May 1975

Koppensteiner, Jürgen, 'Anti-Heimatliteratur: ein Unterrichtsversuch mit Franz Innerhofers Roman *Schöne Tage*', *Die Unterrichtspraxis/Teaching German*, 14 (1981), 9-19

Kruntorad, Paul, 'Das Drängen nach Mitteilung', *National-Zeitung*, Basel, 8 March 1975

Lachinger, Renate, *Der österreichische Antiheimatroman: eine Untersuchung am Beispiel von Franz Innerhofer, Gernot Wolfgruber, Michael Scharang und Elfriede Jelinek* (unpublished doctoral thesis, University of Salzburg, 1985)

Lüdke, W. Martin, 'Franz Innerhofer', in *Kritisches Lexikon zur deutschsprachigen Gegenwartsliteratur* (Munich: Heinz Ludwig Arnold, 2002)

F.R., 'Eindrucksvolle Wahrhaftigkeit', *Kölner Stadt-Anzeiger*, 7 September 1982

Ross, Werner, 'Der Bauer als Bösewicht: neue Schollenliteratur. Franz Innerhofers Roman *Schöne Tage*', *Deutsche Zeitung*, 31 January 1975

Schachtsiek-Freitag, Norbert, 'Ein Bauernroman als Anti-Idylle', *Deutsches Allgemeines Sonntagsblatt*, 5 January 1975

Schmidt, Eckhart, 'Tag der Qual', *Süddeutsche Zeitung*, 7 September 1982

Seidl, Hans-Dieter, 'Ein Davonmüssen von sich selbst', *Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung*, 7 September 1982

Struck, Karin, 'Für die Arbeit gezeugt', *Der Spiegel*, 9 December 1974

Thuswaldner, Anton, 'Angst vor dem großen Wort', *Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung*, 7 January 2003

Tichy, Frank, 'Da waren Leute, die ich erfinden wollte: Frank Tichy im Gespräch mit Franz Innerhofer', *Literatur und Kritik*, 361 (2002), 21-35

— *Franz Innerhofer: Auf der Suche nach dem Menschen* (Salzburg: Residenz, 2004)

K. W., 'Karge Kindheit unter strenger Herrschaft des Vater', *Kieler Nachrichten*, 4 September 1982

ON GERHARD ROTH/XAVER SCHWARZENBERGER

Beckermann, Thomas, 'Die allmähliche Entdeckung der Geschichte beim Schreiben', *Text und Kritik*, 128 (1995), 10-21

Blöcker, Günter, 'Ein kundiger Protokollant seelischer Irritationen: zu dem Roman *Der Stille Ozean*', in *Materialien zu* Die Archive des Schweigens, ed. by Uwe Wittstock (Frankfurt a. M.: Fisher, 1992), pp. 135-38

Cramer, Sibylle, 'Das Gedächtnis ist die letzte Instanz von Moral und Recht: zu dem Zyklus *Archive des Schweigens*', *Text und Kritik*, 128 (1995) , 110-21

Fisher, Günther, 'Heimat bist du großer Söhne: zur wechselvollen Rezeptionsgeschichte des Werkes von Gerhard Roth', *Text und Kritik*, 128 (1995), 74-85

—— 'Ein Werktagsgespräch mit Gerhard Roth', *Text und Kritik*, 128 (1995), 3-9

Glaser, Horst Albert, 'Neue Heimatliteratur', in *Deutsche Literatur zwischen 1945 und 1995*, ed. by Horst Albert Glaser, (Bern; Stuttgart; Vienna: Haupt, 1997), pp. 633-54

De Groot, Cegenias, *Arme Menschen: zur Darstellung der existentiellen und gesellschaftlichen Position des Menschen bei den österreichischen Autoren Gerhard Roth, Michael Scharang und Gernot Wolfgruber* (Hildesheim; New York; Zurich: Olms, 1988)

Hinck, Walter, 'Literarische Archäologie Österreichs: zu dem Zyklus *Archive des Schweigens*', *Text und Kritik*, 128 (1995), 97-109

Obermüller, Klara, 'Unterirdische Landschaften: Erinnerungsarbeit, Verdrängen und Schweigen. Österreichs problematischer Umgang mit der Vergangenheit, die Folgen für die Gegenwart und Gerhard Roths Analyse in *Archive des Schweigens*', *Text und Kritik*, 128 (1995), 33- 41

Raddatz, Fritz J., 'Zeit der Tollwut: zu dem Roman *Der Stille Ozean*', in *Materialien*, ed. by Wittstock, pp. 139-42

Schreckenberger, Helga, 'Mit der Kamera erzählen: Xaver Schwarzenbergers Verfilmung von Gerhard Roths Roman *Der Stille Ozean*', *Modern Austrian Literature*, 34 (2001), 79-87

—— 'Vom Sprachexperiment zum Protokoll der Realität: sich schreibend und fotografierend der Welt vergewissern', *Text und Kritik*, 128 (1995), 22-32

Sebald, W. G., 'In einer wildfremden Gegend: zu dem Roman *Landläufiger Tod*', in *Materialien*, ed. by Wittstock, pp. 164-79

Vogl, Walter, 'Arche Noah, auf hoher See gebaut: zu *Archive des Schweigens*', in *Materialien*, ed. by Wittstock, pp. 122-28

Voit, Friedrich, 'Gerhard Roth', in *Kritisches Lexikon der Gegenwartsliteratur* (Munich: Heinz Ludwig Arnold, 2002)

Weichinger, Robert, 'Anatomie des österreichischen Gehirns: Gerhard Roth im Gespräch mit Robert Weichinger', in *Materialien*, ed. by Wittstock, pp. 67-81

— 'Menschen unter einem Himmel aus Eis: zu den Filmen im Umkreis der *Archive des Schweigens*', in *Materialien*, ed. by Wittstock, pp. 207-18

Wittstock, Uwe (ed.), *Materialien zu* Die Archive des Schweigens (Frankfurt a. M.: Fisher, 1992)

ON ELFRIEDE JELINEK/FRANZ NOVOTNY

Anon., 'Ein Schöngeist wird zum Bombenwerfer', *Wahrheit*, 15 October 1982

Aspetsberger, Friedbert (ed.), *Neue Bärte für die Dichter? Studien zur österreichischen Gegenwartsliteratur* (Vienna: Österreichischer Bundesverlag, 1993)

Bartsch, Roland and Günther Höfler (eds), *Dossier: Elfriede Jelinek* (Vienna; Graz: Droschl, 1991)

Blaser, Patrice, '*Staatsoperette*: ein Film von Franz Novotny und Otto M. Zykan. Chronologie eines Skandals', in *Anschluß an Morgen*, ed. by Büttner and Dewald (Salzburg; Vienna: Residenz, 1997), pp. 207-20

Brunner, Maria E., *Die Mythenzertrummerung der Elfriede Jelinek* (Neuried: ars una, 1997)

Burger, Rudolf, 'Der böse Blick der Elfriede Jelinek', in *Gegen den schönen Sein*, ed. by Christa Gürtler (Frankfurt a. M.: Neue Kritik, 1990), pp. 17-29

— 'Geist, Zeitgeist, Spiritus Austriae', in *Neue Bärte für die Dichter?*, ed. by Aspetsberger, pp. 26-37

Egger, Irmgard, 'Vom zerstörten Selbst und den Ideologemen: zu den psychosozialen Konstellationen im Werk Elfriede Jelineks', in *Neue Bärte für die Dichter?* ed. by Aspetsberger, pp. 195-200

Fiddler, Allyson, '*Die Ausgesperrten*: intermediale Blickpunkte und Hörweisen', in *'Ich will kein Theater': mediale Überschreitungen*, ed. by Pia Janke and others (Vienna: Praesens, 2007), pp. 307-22

— 'Demythologising the Austrian "Heimat": Elfriede Jelinek as "Nestbeschmutzer"', in *From High Priests to Desecrators: Contemporary Austrian Literature*, ed. by Moray McGowan and Ricarda Schmidt (Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 1993), pp. 25-44

— 'Reading Elfriede Jelinek', in *Post-war Women's Writing in German*, ed. by Chris Weedon (Providence: Berghan, 1997), pp. 291-304

— *Rewriting Reality: An Introduction to Elfriede Jelinek* (Oxford; Providence, Berg, 1994)

Fliedl, Konstanze, '"Echt sind nur wir!": Realismus und Satire bei Elfriede Jelinek', in *Dossier: Elfriede Jelinek*, ed. by Bartsch and Höfler, pp. 57-77

— 'Sinister-Sujets: zur Rekonstrktion von Gewalt in den Texten Elfriede Jelineks', in *Neue Bärte für die Dichter?*, ed. by Aspetsberger, pp. 185-194

Gnüg, Hiltrud, 'Zum Schaden den Spott', *Neue Zürcher Zeitung*, 21 August 1980

Gürtler, Christa, *Gegen den schönen Sein* (Frankfurt a. M.: Neue Kritik, 1990)

Haines, Brigid, 'Beyond Patriarchy: Marxism, Feminism, and Elfriede Jelinek's *Die Liebhaberinnen*', *The Modern Language Review*, 92 (1997), 643-55

Hanssen, Beatrice, *Critique of Violence: Between Poststructuralism and Critical Theory* (London; New York: Routledge, 2000)

— 'Elfriede Jelinek's Language of Violence', *New German Critique*, 68 (1996), 79-112

Hoffman, Yasmin, '"Hier lacht sich die Sprache selbst aus": Sprachsatire – Sprachspiele bei Elfriede Jelinek', in *Dossier: Elfriede Jelinek*, ed. by Bartsch and Höfler, pp. 41-55

Holzinger, Lutz, 'Elfriedes scharfe Schnitte', *Volksstimme*, 23 May 1980

Jandl, Paul, 'Mythen. Schmutz. Existentialismus. Film: zu Elfriede Jelineks *Die Ausgesperrten*', in *Landnahme: der österreichische Roman nach 1980. Zeitschrift für studentische Forschung*, 1 (1989), 17-30

Janke, Pia and others (eds), *'Ich will kein Theater': mediale Überschreitungen* (Vienna: Praesens, 2007)

— *Die Nestbeschmutzerin: Jelinek und Österreich* (Salzburg; Vienna: Jung und Jung, 2002)

Janz, Marlies, 'Mythendestruktion und "Wissen": Aspekte der Intertextualität in Elfriede Jelineks Roman *Die Ausgesperrten*', *Text und Kritik*, 117 (1993), 38-50

Johns, Jorun B. and Katherine Arens (eds), *Elfriede Jelinek: Framed by Language* (Riverside California: Ariadne, 1994)

Lamb-Faffelberger, Margarete, 'In the Eyes of the Press: Provocation – Production – Prominence', in *Elfriede Jelinek: Framed by Language*, ed. by Johns and Arens, pp. 287-302

Löffler, Sigrid, 'Weltdame, schön böse', *profil*, 27 May 1980

Lorenz, Dagmar C., 'Elfriede Jelinek's Political Feminism: *Die Ausgesperrten*', *Modern Austrian Literature*, 23 (1990), 111-19

Perthold, Sabine, "'Klopfen wir sie platt zu Zelluloid!'", in *'Ich will kein Theater'*, ed. by Janke and others, pp. 323-42

Pizer, John, 'Modern vs. Postmodern Satire: Karl Kraus and Elfriede Jelinek', *Monatshefte*, 86 (1994), 500-13

Rainer, Ulrike, 'The Grand Fraud "Made in Austria": Economic Miracle, Existentialism, and Private Fascism in Elfriede Jelinek's *Die Ausgesperrten*', in *Elfriede Jelinek: Framed by Language*, ed. by Johns and Arens, pp. 176-93

Rosellini, Jay Julian, *Haider, Jelinek and the Culture Wars* (California: Create Space, 2009)

Sander, Margarete, *Textherstellungsverfahren bei Elfriede Jelinek: das Beispiel* Totenauberg (Würzburg: Könighausen und Neumann, 1996)

Schestag, Uda, *Sprachspiel als Lebensform: Strukturuntersuchungen zur erzählenden Prosa Elfriede Jelineks* (Bielfeld: Aisthesis, 1997)

Schlipphacke, Heidi, 'Translating Jelinek: Globalizing the Austrian Province', *Modern Austrian Literature*, 38 (2005), 73-81

Schmid-Bortenschlager, Sigrid, 'From Provocation to Appropriation', in *From High Priests to Desecrators*, ed. by Schmidt and McGowan, pp. 11-24

Schmitz-Burgard, Sylvia, 'Body Language as Expression of Repression: Lethal Reverberations of Fascism in *Die Ausgesperrten*', in *Elfriede Jelinek: Framed by Language*, ed. by Johns and Arens, pp. 194-228

Scholl, Guido, *Selbstinszenierungen einer Autorin: Elfriede Jelinek als literarische Figur* (Norderstet: Grin, 2004)

Schreckenberger, Helga, 'Suffering from Austria: Social Criticism in Prose Fiction of the Seventies and Eighties', in *Shadows of the Past: Austrian Literature of the Twentieth Century*, ed. by Hans Schulte and Gerald Chapple (New York: Peter Lang, 2009), pp. 107-24

Sichrovsky, Heinz, 'Die Ausgesperrten', *A-Z Journal*, 17 November 1979

Snyder Hook, Elizabeth, *Family Secrets and the Contemporary German Novel: Literary Explorations in the Aftermath of the Third Reich* (Rochester: Camden House, 2001)

Stangel, Johann, *'Das annulierte Individuum': Sozialisationskritik als Gesellschaftsanalyse in der aktuellen Frauenliteratur. Zu Texten von Frischmuth, Jelinek, Mitgutsch, Schutting, Schwaiger und anderen* (Frankfurt a. M.: Peter Lang, 1988)

Tauber, Reinhold, 'Das Thema paßt immer', *Oberösterreichische Nachrichten*, 7 July 1980

Wagner, Karl, 'Österreich – eine S(t)imulation: zu Elfriede Jelineks Österreich-Kritik', in *Dossier: Elfriede Jelinek*, ed. by Bartsch and Höfler, pp. 79-93

Winter, Riki, 'Gespräch mit Elfriede Jelinek', in *Dossier: Elfriede Jelinek*, ed. by Bartsch and Höfler (Vienna; Graz: Droschl, 1991), pp. 9-21

Wright, Elizabeth, 'Eine Ästhetik des Ekels', *Text und Kritik*, 117 (1993), 51-59

ON ROBERT SCHINDEL/LUKAS STEPANIK

Betten, Anne and Konstanze Fliedl (eds), *Judentum und Antisemitismus: Studien zur Literatur und Germanistik in Österreich* (Berlin: Erich Schmidt, 2003)

Beyer, Marcel, 'Kommentar. Holocaust: Sprechen', *Text und Kritik*, 144 (1999), 18-24

Feinberg, Anat, 'Deutschsprachige jüdische Autoren und der Holocaust', *Text und Kritik*, 144 (1999), 48-57

Fliedl, Konstanze, 'Einleitung' in *Judentum und Antisemitismus*, ed. by Betten and Fliedl, pp. 9-17

Freeman, Thomas, 'Jewish Identity and the Holocaust in Robert Schindel's *Gebürtig*', *Modern Austrian Literature*, 30 (1997), 117-26

Gilman, Sander, *The Jew's Body* (New York: Routledge, 1991)

Gilman, Sander L. and Karen Remmler (eds), *Reemerging Jewish Culture in Germany: Life and Literature Since 1989* (New York: New York University Press, 1994)

Grotz, Elisabeth, 'Ich hätt' noch gern ein Maul voll Schweigen', *Der Standard*, 6 March 1992

Hartwig, Heinz, 'Eine Spur für die Wortlosigkeiten', *Kleine Zeitung*, 4 July 1992

Kastberger, Klaus, 'Fürze zum Frühstück, nach ihrem Geschmack', *Falter*, 15-21 May 1992

Kunne, Andrea, *'Verschwinden. Zwischen den Wörtern': Sprache als Heimat im Werk Robert Schindels* (Vienna: Studienverlag, 2009)

Löffler, Sigrid, 'Der eingebildete Jude', *profil*, 16 March 1992

Nabbe, Hildegard, 'Die Enkelkinder des Doppeladlers: Einblendung von politischer Vergangenheit in den Alltag der Gegenwart in Robert Schindels Roman *Gebürtig*, *Modern Austrian Literature*, 32 (1999), 113-24

Ossar, Michael, 'Austrians and Jews at the Turn of the Century: Robert Schindel's *Gebürtig* and Arthur Schnitzler's *Der Weg ins Freie*', in *Jews in German Literature since 1945: German-Jewish Literature?*, ed. by Pól O'Dochartaigh (Amsterdam: Rodopi, 2000), pp. 35-44

Papenberg, Lilian, *Filmisches Schreiben* (unpublished masters thesis, University of Klagenfurt, 1998)

Pfoser, Alfred, 'Vergangenheitsbewältigung auf Wienerisch', *Salzburger Nachrichten*, 21 March 1992

Posthofen, Renate, 'Erinnerte Geschichte(n): Robert Schindels Roman *Gebürtig*', *Modern Austrian Literature*, 27 (1994), 193-211

Pranter-Eberharter, Klara, *Jüdische Selbstdarstellung im Roman* Gebürtig *von Robert Schindel* (unpublished doctoral thesis, University of Innsbruck, 1998)

Rybarski, Ruth, 'Die unterste Falte der Seele', *profil*, 18-28 April 1992

Scheidl, Günther, 'Renaissance des "jüdischen" Romans nach 1986', in *Judentum und Antisemitismus*, ed. by Betten and Fliedl, pp. 132-48

Šlibar, Neva, 'Anschreiben gegen das Schweigen: Robert Schindel, Ruth Klüger, die Postmoderne und Vergangenheitsbewältigung', in *Jenseits des Diskurses: Literatur und Sprache in der Postmoderne*, ed. by Albert Berger and Gerda Elisabeth Moser (Vienna: Passagen, 1994), pp. 337-56

Strümpel, Jan, 'Im Sog der Erinnerungskultur. Holocaust und Literatur: "Normalität" und ihre Grenzen', *Text und Kritik*, 144 (1999), 9-17

Tauber, Reinhold, 'Das Thema paßt immer', *Oberösterreichische Nachrichten*, 7 July 1980

Vogl, Walter, 'Mauthausen ist eine schöne Stadt', *Die Presse*, 16 May 1992

WEB RESOURCES

<http://www.austrianfilm.com/jart/prj3/afc/main.jart?rel=de&content-id=1169655765729&reserve-mode=active> [accessed 20 February 2010]

< http://www.cultfilm.at/gebirtig/> [accessed 19 February 2010]

<http://www.dieuniversitaet-online.at/dossiers/beitrag/news/1968-nichts-passiert-in-osterreich/594.html> [accessed 10 March 2010]

<http://www.staatsvertrag.at> [accessed 10 March 2010]

<http://www.swivel.com/data_columns/spreadsheet/4895482 > [accessed 29 March 2010]