

The Depiction of Crowds in 1930s German Narrative Fiction



Rachel Harland
Exeter College
University of Oxford

**Thesis Submitted for the Degree of
Doctor of Philosophy in Medieval and Modern Languages**

Trinity Term 2011

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

This research was funded by Exeter College Oxford and the Arts and Humanities Research Council. I am indebted to both institutions for their financial support, without which the project would not have been possible. I cannot overstate my gratitude to my supervisor, Professor Ritchie Robertson, who has always been exceptionally generous with his time and guidance, not to mention very kind. It has been a privilege to be taught by him. I am also grateful to Professor Katrin Kohl and Dr David Midgley for examining the thesis and for their feedback. During my undergraduate and postgraduate studies at Oxford I have benefitted from the teaching and advice of various members of the Faculty of Medieval and Modern Languages, particularly Professor Helen Watanabe-O’Kelly, Dr Caroline Warman, Dr Helen Fronius, Dr Jane Hiddleston, Dr Tom Kuhn and Dr David Groiser. I would like to extend my thanks to the staff at the Bodleian Library, the Taylor Institution Library, the History Faculty Library and the Social Science Library. The emotional support of my friends and my fiancé Sean has been invaluable. My parents Simon and Rosie have been a constant source of love and encouragement, and I thank them for giving me the confidence to pursue my studies to this level. They and Sean proofread sections of the thesis, as did Riona Nicholls and Alistair Hanson.

THE DEPICTION OF CROWDS IN 1930s GERMAN NARRATIVE FICTION

Rachel Harland (*Exeter College*)

**Thesis Submitted for the Degree of
Doctor of Philosophy in Medieval and Modern Languages**

Trinity Term 2011

*

SHORT ABSTRACT

This study of 1930s German fiction adds a new dimension to existing scholarship on the depiction of crowds in literature. Whereas previous surveys on the topic have predominantly focused on the crowd as a revolutionary phenomenon judged on the basis of class perspectives, or as a feature of mass society, this investigation deals specifically with reactions to the crowd in its incarnation as a manifestation of and symbol for political fascism. Drawing on a number of contemporaneous theoretical treatises on crowds and mass psychology, it seeks to demonstrate that war, extreme socio-political upheaval and the rise of Nazism produced intense multidisciplinary engagement with the subject among German-speaking intellectuals of the period, and examines the portrayal of crowds in works by selected literary authors in this context. Exploring the interplay between literature and concurrent theoretical works, the thesis asks how writers used specific possibilities of fiction to engage with the theme of the crowd at a time when the worth of art was often questioned by literary authors themselves. In doing so, it challenges the implication of earlier criticism that authors uncritically appropriated the findings of theoretical texts for fictional purposes. At the same time, it becomes clear that although some literary crowd portrayals support a distinction between the nature of theoretical and literary writing, certain crowd theories are as imaginative as they are positivistic. Extrapolating from textual comparisons, the thesis thus challenges the view held by some authors that knowledge produced by theoretical enquiry was somehow truer and more valuable than artistic responses to the politics of the age.

THE DEPICTION OF CROWDS IN 1930s GERMAN NARRATIVE FICTION

Rachel Harland (*Exeter College*)

Thesis Submitted for the Degree of
Doctor of Philosophy in Medieval and Modern Languages

Trinity Term 2011

*

LONG ABSTRACT

The fact that German-speaking intellectuals have long been concerned with the subject of the crowd is evidenced by Michael Gamper's 2007 study *Masse lesen, Masse schreiben: eine Diskurs- und Imaginationsgeschichte der Menschenmenge 1765-1930*. The topic was of particular significance in the context of European society after 1914, when, owing to a variety of mass phenomena including war, regime change, strikes and the rise of National Socialism, crowds were prominent in public life. Accordingly, the crowd was an important theme in literature of the time. The period also saw the publication of several theoretical texts on crowds and mass psychology, most famously Freud's 'Massenpsychologie und Ich-Analyse' (1921). This study on German fiction of the 1930s focuses on the depiction of crowds in texts written in response to fascism. The works of selected literary authors are examined against the background of contemporaneous theoretical treatises.

Historically the crowd has figured in social and political discourse primarily as a revolutionary agent, representing the interests of the lower social classes and judged in accordance with perspectives on class issues. This is borne out in Gamper's study, which takes 1930 as its end point on the grounds that interest in the crowd as a discrete entity

and an agent in class struggle was superseded at that time by the concept of mass society. Gamper also writes that the relevance of literary crowd portrayals for the wider discourse on crowds declined around 1930. Yet the importance of the crowd in several works of 1930s fiction suggests otherwise, indicating scope for research into the theme beyond the area of Gamper's scholarship. This is especially true with respect to fascism, in which context the crowd and mass society are in fact closely related concepts: historians and sociologists argue that fascist ideologues presented the crowd's sense of collective identity and purpose as a solution to the individualism and atomization of modern mass existence. The primary aim of this thesis is to analyse a range of literary crowd depictions produced in response to fascism in order to establish connections, continuities and differences between texts. While Bernd Widdig's study *Männerbunde und Massen: zur Krise männlicher Identität in der Literatur der Moderne* (1992) covers a number of texts from the modernist era, it does so without significant reference to the background of fascism.

The second aim of the thesis is to examine the relation between fictional and theoretical accounts of crowd psychology and behaviour. According to Gamper, literature has always played a distinctive role in shaping perception of the crowd in the popular imagination. The multidisciplinary engagement of interwar authors with the subject makes the period an ideal context in which to evaluate this notion. Moreover, the project of clarifying literature's role in the discourse takes on added importance with reference to a period of political upheaval during which its value was frequently called

into question, not least by literary authors themselves. Comparing and contrasting literary works and theoretical studies on crowds, the thesis asks if and how writers approached the subject in different ways.

The introduction to the thesis sets out previous critical approaches to the crowd in literature beyond the research of Gamper and Widdig. It deals with comparable studies on crowds in English and American literature in addition to earlier readings of individual texts featured here. A survey of these approaches provides the starting point for my investigation of the theme. The key points addressed are as follows: Firstly, while critics often focus on the working-class identity of fictional crowds, as I seek to highlight, class was no longer an all-important factor in defining the crowd for authors writing in response to fascism, a movement which claimed to subsume class differences under an organic national-racial totality. Secondly, previous analyses comparing literary and theoretical writing on crowds generally restrict their focus to issues of content. In contrast, I make more of discursive comparisons, addressing the ‘how’ as well as the ‘what’ of various crowd representations. Finally, commentators such as John Plotz (*The Crowd: British Literature and Public Politics*, 2000) and Mary Esteve (*The Aesthetics and Politics of the Crowd in American Literature*, 2003) describe literature and the crowd as competing modes of expression within the public sphere, each capable of representing chaos and disorder but also of making claims on society. This notion informs my discussion of how 1930s authors used literature to respond to fascist politics.

The introduction goes on to discuss the relationship of literature, politics and science in the period, in order to demonstrate that the role of literature in relation to other discourses was highly contested at the time and to give an idea of ways in which authors distinguished their art from other disciplines. An overview is then given of the major theories on crowds and mass psychology of which I make heuristic use in the chapters which follow. These have two principal themes: the nature of crowd leadership and the mass experience as a specifically modern phenomenon located within a longer historical narrative. Lastly, I discuss the approaches taken to comparing literary and theoretical texts in the remainder of the thesis. While I bear in mind the imaginative and poetic elements often displayed by treatises on crowds, I also argue that the flexibility of narrative structure available to literary authors enables them to represent the crowd from perspectives not accessible to abstract theory.

The five chapters of the thesis each examine the depiction of crowds in a single work of 1930s narrative fiction with reference to one or more theoretical texts. In some cases the texts lend themselves to comparisons highlighting differences, while other chapters focus on similarities. Chapter 1 is a reading of Thomas Mann's novella *Mario und der Zauberer* (1930), the story of a German family on holiday in Fascist Italy. The family is present at a performance given by the travelling *Zauberünstler* Cipolla, who, in a symbolic representation of fascist power, hypnotizes his audience, forcing them into all kinds of irrational behaviour. The novella is compared with Freud's 'Massenpsychologie und Ich-Analyse', in which hypnotism is also an important topic.

While conceptual similarities between these two works have attracted a substantial amount of previous scholarship, I examine an aspect of both *Mario* and ‘Massenpsychologie’ which that research has undervalued: the uncanny, occult side of hypnosis. My reading is intended both to complement previous comparisons of the texts while also highlighting discursive discrepancies: whereas Freud constructs a rational, systematic explanation for the power of crowd leaders, the uncanny elements in Mann’s novella thwart his narrator’s struggle for understanding.

The analysis of Ernst Weiss’s novel *Der Augenzeuge* (1938) in Chapter 2 also draws on Freud’s crowd theory, as well as on Ernst Simmel’s essay ‘Psychoanalyse der Massen’ (1919) and the seminal 1895 work *Psychologie des foules* by the French social psychologist Gustave Le Bon. Loosely based on biographical sources, Weiss’s novel fictionalizes Hitler’s treatment for hysterical blindness at the Pomeranian military hospital of Pasewalk after the First World War. His blindness is cured by the narrator, a surgeon and psychotherapist, who comes to regret his intervention some years later when his patient becomes a despotic politic leader, wielding messianic power over the crowds of followers who flock to his rallies. Similarities between the novel and the thought of Freud and Simmel on mass psychology have provoked Norman Ächtler (‘Hitler’s Hysteria: War Neurosis and Mass Psychology in Ernst Weiß’s *Der Augenzeuge*’, 2007) to claim that Weiss paraphrases significant sections of their theories. However, in his professional practice the narrator is motivated by a will to power that casts doubt on his character and on the reliability of his narrative. Weiss’s

ambivalence to the nature of medical and psychiatric knowledge is taken into account here when considering exactly how he incorporates programmatic notions about crowds into *Der Augenzeuge*.

Whereas Chapter 1 deals with a work of narrative fiction in which the crowd is a symbol for fascism and Chapter 2 examines one in which the crowd – at mass rallies – is a manifestation of life under a fascist regime, Chapter 3 discusses Ödön von Horváth's *Jugend ohne Gott* (1938), in which the crowd at one rally is used as a synecdoche for fascist society as a whole. It considers the appropriateness of the crowd as a metaphor for the fascist public with reference to the 1901 essay 'Le Public et la foule' by Gabriel Tarde, another seminal crowd theorist. My analysis contrasts Tarde's assessment of the modern mass media as a force for pluralism with their role in Horváth's novel, in which they are a negative force for the organization of the public into a body of crowd-like conformists. However, more so than Mann and Weiss, Horváth allows for some diversity in the psychology of individuals within the crowd. The crowd he depicts contains not only people who know no better, but also those who disagree with the fascist regime and yet acquiesce to its demands in the interests of self-preservation. The narrator, a schoolteacher, is one such individual, and the narrative traces his struggle to exert his free will for moral good. The chapter argues that by the end of the novel he has exchanged his membership of the fascist crowd for a tentative sense of moral community based on intuitive understanding of the notions of good and evil. In this last respect it identifies connections between *Jugend ohne Gott* and Alfred Adler's 1934

essay ‘Zur Massenpsychologie’, which interprets moral intuition as evidence of ‘die Massenpsyche als produktive Kraft’.

Chapter 4 analyses the treatment of crowds and mass hysteria in two works by Hermann Broch: his novel *Die Verzauberung* (1935) and his own treatise on mass psychology, the *Massenwahntheorie* (1939-48). Like Horváth, Broch saw the crowd mind as a potentially productive source of community as well as a dangerous entity. However, for the inhabitants of Kuppron, the fictional village depicted in *Die Verzauberung*, such positive collective experience has largely been superseded by the rational individualism of modern culture. Furthermore, the eradication of benevolent communal feeling among the villagers gives rise to repercussive crowd violence: their sense of alienation and existential loneliness proves fertile ground for the hysteria encouraged by Marius Ratti, a mysterious wanderer who arrives in the village and immediately begins to cultivate a climate of mob violence. The novel, which allegorizes the rise of Nazism, alludes in particular to the appropriation of ancient myth by Nazi ideologues such as Alfred Baeumler. A revival of the villagers’ collective mythical heritage brought about by Marius is central to their mass hysteria. Drawing on the theory of Broch’s contemporaries C.G. Jung and Ernst Cassirer, this chapter explores the precise relation between myth and mass hysteria in *Die Verzauberung*. It also examines formal features of the text in the light of poetological statements made by Broch about the responsibility of art to reclaim myth from fascist abuse. Finally, it discusses Broch’s attempt to formulate a systematic theory of mass psychology in the *Massenwahntheorie*,

which was a product of his frustration with the practical political impotence of literature. While he believed that the turn from literary to scientific writing would afford him greater ethical influence over his readership, drawing on the narratological scholarship of Hayden White I suggest that his treatise is in some ways as much a work of narrative imagination as *Die Verzauberung*.

Chapter 5 addresses the work of Elias Canetti, who, like Broch, treated the crowd in two modes: in his novel *Die Blendung* (1935-36) and in the treatise *Masse und Macht* (1960). Like Broch and Horváth, Canetti saw the crowd as a potentially positive entity – a phenomenon capable of overcoming the distance and inequality which separated individuals in modern society. In fact, in *Die Blendung* he suggests that extreme individualism, rather than the subsumption of the individual into the crowd, is a form of madness. His protagonist Peter Kien is a reclusive academic who is driven insane by his self-imposed isolation from other people. He ends up setting fire to his library and burning to death among his books. There are parallels between Canetti's characterization of Kien and his portrayal in *Masse und Macht* of Daniel Paul Schreber, author of the famous memoir *Denkwürdigkeiten eines Nervenkranken* (1903), in which he documented his experiences as a sufferer of paranoid schizophrenia. According to Canetti's reading of the *Denkwürdigkeiten*, in his paranoid fantasies Schreber is a crowd leader – a single, powerful individual who longs to dominate crowds. While previous commentators have interpreted *Die Blendung* as the fictional exposition of Canetti's theoretical ideas on crowds, finding traces of Kien in his portrayal of Schreber this

chapter argues that he may in fact have creatively shaped his description of Schreber's madness based on traits of his fictional protagonist. It concludes that like Broch's *Massenwahntheorie*, Canetti's *Masse und Macht* was a more imaginative work than the author admitted.

Bringing all these texts together, this study contributes to three areas of research: the role of the crowd in literature, the relationship of literature to other disciplines, and the function of literary responses to politics. Among studies on crowds in German literature it is unique in comparing and contrasting a range of texts written in response to fascism which have previously only been treated separately. In doing so it aims to draw broad conclusions about the significance of the motif in fiction of the 1930s, exploring the subject with respect to such themes as power, free will, moral responsibility and community. In its comparison of literary crowd depictions with theoretical accounts of mass psychology it seeks to expand the frame of reference beyond Freud's 'Massenpsychologie', which dominates other similar research. Finally, in exploring the relationship of literature to politics not in isolation but with simultaneous reference to the interplay of literature and scientific discourse, it hopes to shed new light on what was a pressing concern for authors of the time.

Contents

Introduction	p. 1
I. Hypnosis and the Uncanny in Thomas Mann's <i>Mario und der Zauberer</i> (1930)	p. 59
II. 'Jetzt war ich der Stärkere, da ich auf die UNTERSEELE dieses Menschen wirkte': Psychoanalysis and Power in Ernst Weiss's <i>Der Augenzeuge</i> (1938)	p. 102
III. 'Auf der Suche nach den Idealen der Menschheit': The Problem of Free Will in Ödön von Horváth's <i>Jugend ohne Gott</i> (1938)	p. 144
IV. Myth and Mass Hysteria in Hermann Broch's <i>Die Verzauberung</i> (1935)	p. 180
V. The Limits of Individuality and the Representation of Madness in Elias Canetti's <i>Die Blendung</i> (1935-36)	p. 224
Conclusion	p. 260
Bibliography	p. 267

INTRODUCTION

The idea of the crowd has figured in Western social and political thought since antiquity, with respect both to sizeable groups of physically co-present individuals and broader political, economic and cultural collectives. Whether in demonstrations or riots, at rallies or assemblies, at the fair, the theatre, or on the city streets, the crowd has long been considered an important aspect of social and communal experience. In some contexts it is also seen as a metaphor for whole sections of society: the *demos*, the people, the proletariat, the masses.¹ The variety of evocative terms, each with different implications, used to refer to crowds – in German alone, ‘Masse’, ‘Menge’, ‘Haufen’, ‘Mob’ and ‘Volk’ – indicate that it is a topic charged with emotion. Some observers regard the crowd as a positive entity, while others find it threatening. It is described as both an active and a passive force, as disciplined and violent. It takes reactionary and revolutionary forms. In certain cases it is celebrated as an expression of community or vitality; in others it is criticized from the viewpoint of concerns about urbanization, capitalism and commodification. In addition to historical, political, philosophical, psychological, sociological and anthropological accounts of crowds, literary

¹ General surveys on the subject include: J.S. McClelland, *The Crowd and the Mob: From Plato to Canetti* (London: Unwin Hyman, 1989); Jeffrey T. Schnapp and Matthew Tiews (eds.), *Crowds* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2006); Michael Gamper, *Masse lesen, Masse schreiben: eine Diskurs- und Imaginationsgeschichte der Menschenmenge 1765-1930* (Munich: Fink, 2007). A narrower focus on the nineteenth-century golden age of crowd psychology is provided in Susanna Barrows, *Distorting Mirrors: Visions of the Crowd in Late Nineteenth-Century France* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1981) and Jaap van Ginneken, *Crowds, Psychology and Politics 1871-1899* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1992). The work of the seminal crowd theorists Gabriel Tarde and Gustave Le Bon, and its significance for twentieth-century politics are addressed in Serge Moscovici, *L'âge des foules: un traité historique de psychologie des masses* (Paris: Fayard, 1981).

representations, which can reflect the nature of crowd phenomena and shape understanding of them, play an important role in this discourse.²

Crowds were especially significant in the context of European society after World War One. Speaking in 1934, Robert Musil identified a collectivist tendency which had been gathering momentum across the continent since 1914:

der Kollektivismus ist nicht nur als staatlicher Anspruch aufgetreten, sondern auch als nationaler und als Klassenanspruch und hat je nach den Umständen in Italien, Rußland, Deutschland verschiedene Formen angenommen, ja sogar solche, die im schärfsten Gegensatz zu einander stehen.³

He emphasized the contemporary nature of this trend, asserting that while national and political collectivism itself was by no means new, the multifariousness and intensity of its recent manifestations was certainly unprecedented. During the previous two decades Germany and Austria had seen a range of mass phenomena: war, widespread starvation, severe labour unrest and strikes, uprisings on both the left and the right, and the rise of Nazism. Crowds, which, as Michael Gamper notes, both play a role in and arise out of such events, were thus prominent in public life.⁴ In his 1916 book *Instincts of the Herd*

² Critical works on literary crowd representations include: Naomi Schor, *Zola's Crowds* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1978); Nicolaus Mills, *The Crowd in American Literature* (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 1986); John Plotz, *The Crowd: British Literature and Public Politics* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2000); Mary Esteve, *The Aesthetics and Politics of the Crowd in American Literature* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2003); David Bell and Gerald Porter (eds.), *Riots in Literature* (Newcastle upon Tyne: Cambridge Scholars Press, 2008). In *Masse lesen, Masse schreiben* Gamper analyses texts in various disciplines, including literary works by Herder, Schiller, Karl Philipp Moritz, Goethe, La Fontaine, Georg Forster, Kleist, Eichendorff, Heine, Gustav Freytag, Zola, Georg Heym, Carl Sternheim, Georg Kaiser, Erich Kästner, Irmgard Keun and Elfriede Jelinek.

³ Robert Musil, *Gesammelte Werke*, ed. by Adolf Frisé, 2nd edn, 9 vols (Reinbek bei Hamburg: Rowohlt, 1981), VIII: *Essays und Reden*, p. 1245. Further references to this edition are given after quotations in the text in the form (Musil, VIII, 1245).

⁴ Gamper, p. 13.

in Peace and War the English neurosurgeon and social psychologist Wilfred Trotter described the armies of the First World War as trained killing crowds. There were bread queues, such as depicted in Karl Schönherr's play *Hungerblockade 1919* (1925), protests, riots and large-scale political meetings. On 3 February 1921 Hitler gave his first speech at the Circus Krone in Munich, which could hold vast indoor crowds. The audience numbered more than six thousand.⁵ Not only were mass rallies and parades important manifestations of Nazism's collectivist ethos, but the frenzy of such crowds – as captured most famously in Leni Riefenstahl's propaganda film *Triumph des Willens* (1935), a record of the 1934 Nazi Party Congress in Nuremberg – came to symbolize the mass hysteria of a society under the leadership of a charismatic despot. Accordingly, 1930s German fiction written in response to Nazism often gave a prominent place to crowds.

After 1918 there was also intense theoretical engagement with the subjects of crowds and mass psychology among German-speaking intellectuals. Many of their theories draw on the findings of a nineteenth-century school of thought which arose out of reactionary responses to the French Revolution. Conservative commentators saw the crowd violence of the Revolution as contradictory to the Enlightenment ethos of culture and progress. Hippolyte Taine's *Origines de la France contemporaine* (1876-94) emphasizes the barbarity of the mob and the Terror, and his portrayal of the revolutionary crowd inspired the first theoretical investigations on the subject by the

⁵ Ian Kershaw, *Hitler 1889-1936: Hubris* (London: Allen Lane, 1998), p. 149.

criminologists Scipio Sighele (*La Folla delinquente*, 1891) and Gabriel Tarde ('Les Crimes des foules', 1892 and 'Foules et sectes du point de vue criminel', 1893).

Drawing on ideas about hypnotic suggestibility, Sighele and Tarde claimed that people in crowds act unconsciously and in irresponsible, criminal ways that would be alien to them as individuals. Their findings were popularized in the 1895 bestseller *Psychologie des Foules* by the French social psychologist Gustave Le Bon. Le Bon's work was translated into sixteen languages and reprinted numerous times. Like his predecessors, he predominantly portrayed the crowd as ignorant and irrational, fickle and emotional, vulnerable to manipulation by demagogues and always capable of becoming a violent mob.⁶ Yet, while later theorists such as Freud and C.G. Jung continued to focus on the irrationality of crowds, they also frequently emphasized a contrasting notion – one that was already present, but not prominent, in the work of nineteenth-century writers – namely that the group mind was a potential source of selflessness, cooperation and higher meaning.

My investigation here explores the use literary authors of the period made of the crowd, with particular reference to its narrative function as a manifestation of and symbol for fascism. I also address the relation of literary crowd representations to contemporaneous theoretical ideas about mass psychology. Some authors, such as Ernst Weiss, appear to have been familiar with theoretical perspectives on the subject and to have incorporated them into their work. Hermann Broch and Elias Canetti wrote

⁶ McClelland, pp. 8-11; Ginneken, 'The Killing of the Father: The Background of Freud's *Group Psychology*', *Political Psychology*, 5 (1984), 391-414 (pp. 395-97).

treatises on mass hysteria and crowds respectively which overlap with the content of their fictional writing. Thomas Mann and Ödön von Horváth also addressed issues raised by theorists. At the same time, all the authors considered in this study questioned the limitations of rational scientific enquiry in its tendency to overlook the subjective, affective dimension of experience. Did they tackle this issue, then, by seeking to evoke more immediately the emotion of the crowd in their literary work? And how clear is the distinction between science and fiction, analysis and mimesis?

Critical Approaches to the Crowd in Literature

Owing to the central role of crowds in the literature I discuss, the treatment of the theme in certain individual texts has been the subject of considerable scholarship. The function of the crowd in some of these texts has even been examined with reference to crowd theory. Hartmut Böhme, Maria Tatar, Gert Sautermeister and Bernd Widdig, for example, all compare Mann's novella *Mario und der Zauberer* (1930) with Freud's 'Massenpsychologie und Ich-Analyse' (1921).⁷ Although it is not known if Mann was familiar with Freud's essay, critics argue that the comparison is appropriate given that he was engaged with psychoanalysis while writing the novella and that he published 'Die Stellung Freuds in der modernen Geistesgeschichte' in 1929. Widdig asserts that *Mario und der Zauberer* presents an almost classical example of psychoanalytic crowd

⁷ Hartmut Böhme, 'Thomas Mann: *Mario und der Zauberer*: Position des Erzählers und Psychologie der Herrschaft', *Orbis Litterarum*, 30 (1975), 286-316; Maria M. Tatar, *Spellbound: Studies on Mesmerism and Literature* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1978); Gert Sautermeister, *Thomas Mann: Mario und der Zauberer* (Munich: Fink, 1981); Bernd Widdig, *Männerbunde und Massen: zur Krise männlicher Identität in der Literatur der Moderne* (Opladen: Westdeutscher Verlag, 1992).

formation.⁸ In a recent study, Regine Zeller also notes similarities between Mann's work and Le Bon's *Psychologie des foules*.⁹ These analyses tend to focus on the common ground between Mann's fictional crowd portrayal and the two theories. Central to their comparisons is the hypnotic power that the eponymous 'magician' Cipolla wields over his audience in the novella, hypnosis having an important place in Freud's and Le Bon's treatises. Similarly, Norman Ächtler has compared Weiss's novel *Der Augenzeuge* (1938) with both 'Massenpsychologie und Ich-Analyse' and the essay 'Psychoanalyse der Massen' (1919) by Freud's disciple Ernst Simmel.¹⁰ He takes for granted the influence of Freud and Simmel on Weiss and goes so far as to assert that *Der Augenzeuge* obviously paraphrases a significant amount of Freud's essay.¹¹ Critical discussion of differences in the way the subject of the crowd is treated by fictional and theoretical writers is generally limited to thematic issues – to the identification of aspects of literary representations which have no counterpart in theories of crowd psychology. Widdig, for example, highlights the motif of power (specifically over the body) in *Mario und der Zauberer* as a theme that is absent from Freud's essay.¹²

Despite the significant amount of secondary literature on crowds in individual works of German fiction, only a few critics have surveyed the topic across multiple

⁸ Widdig, p. 133.

⁹ Regine Zeller, *Cipolla und die Masse: zu Thomas Manns Novelle Mario und der Zauberer* (St. Ingbert: Röhrig, 2006).

¹⁰ Weiss's novel was written in Parisian exile in 1938 and the manuscript entered in a competition sponsored by the American Guild for German Cultural Freedom. Shortly afterwards the author committed suicide. His manuscript was not rediscovered and published until 1963.

¹¹ Norman Ächtler, 'Hitler's Hysteria: War Neurosis and Mass Psychology in Ernst Weiß's *Der Augenzeuge*', *German Quarterly*, 80 (2007), 325-49.

¹² Widdig, pp. 128-37.

literary texts, and there is no research on preoccupation with the crowd as a widespread response to fascism. Widdig's study of crowds and masculinity in literary modernism does cover several texts from the period, including *Mario und der Zauberer* and Canetti's *Die Blendung* (1935-36). However, he does not focus on the political background to these works, although his exploration of the theme might be profitably expanded with reference to it.¹³ Among writers of the time, in *Die Massenpsychologie des Faschismus* (1933) Wilhelm Reich made sexual suppression, enforced within the petty bourgeois family by the authoritarian father, central to his explanation of mass subservience to fascist rule, while in *Der Augenzeuge* Weiss likened the interaction between Hitler (thinly disguised in the novel as AH) and the crowds that attend his mass rallies to a misogynist sex act. A similar idea was later explored by Susan Sontag in her essay 'Fascinating Fascism' (1975), where she discussed the erotic lure of fascist aesthetics and described Hitler's mastery of the (feminine) masses as rape.¹⁴

Whereas Widdig limits his focus to the relationship between crowds and masculinity in the modernist period, Gamper adopts a much wider historical and thematic perspective, chronicling discourse on the crowd in a variety of fields, including literature, from the last third of the eighteenth century to the first third of the twentieth.

¹³ See Widdig, p. 12: 'Meine Untersuchung befaßt sich mit der Repräsentation, der Art und Weise der Beschreibung von Männerbünden und Massen in der deutschsprachigen Literatur und Kultur des frühen zwanzigsten Jahrhunderts. Sie verfolgt dabei weder einen empirisch-soziologischen noch einen politikwissenschaftlichen Anspruch. Es geht also nicht um den Nachweis, wie stark und in welcher Weise Männerbünde die Politik in Deutschland während des frühen zwanzigsten Jahrhunderts geprägt haben. Noch verfolgt diese Arbeit das Ziel, eine politisch-soziologische Analyse von Massen in den verschiedensten Konfigurationen zu leisten.'

¹⁴ Susan Sontag, *Under the Sign of Saturn* (London: Vintage, 1980), p. 102.

He traces the treatment of the motif from its importance in Herder's 'Volkspoesie' project of the 1770s, through nineteenth-century attempts to come to terms with the urbanization and industrialization of modern life and the political consequences of the French Revolution, to the prominence of the crowd in Expressionist drama and the influence of the mass media on twentieth-century culture. He chooses 1930 as the end point of his survey, arguing that it is a turning point in the tradition of thought about crowds:

die Zeit um 1930 bezeichnet die Epoche, in der das Thema der 'Masse' in seiner doppelten Beziehung zu Aufruhr und Nivellierung abgelöst wird von der Beschreibung und Kritik von Massenkultur beziehungsweise der Theorie der Massengesellschaft und in der auch die Literatur an Relevanz für den Gegenstand einbüßt.¹⁵

In Gamper's view, not only did the importance of literary crowd representations to the wider discourse decline after 1930, but the manner in which collective experience was conceived also changed at that time. His reference to the double function of the crowd as a force for 'Aufruhr und Nivellierung' alludes to the fact that historically it has figured in social and political discourse primarily as an agent in strikes, riots and revolutions, representing the interests of the lower social classes. Whether it is regarded with fear or admiration depends on the observer's perspective on class. For Plato and Polybius, the unpredictability and passion of the crowd formed a threat to the state. Livy believed that the Roman mob had hindered the Republic's rise to greatness. In the modern era, focussing on the relationship between crowds and their leaders, Le Bon argued for the

¹⁵ Gamper, p. 41.

importance of authority figures capable of controlling the unruly mob. Other accounts of crowd action, such as Jules Michelet's depiction of the storming of the Bastille in *Histoire de la révolution française* (1847-53) or Rosa Luxemburg's *Massenstreik, Partei und Gewerkschaften* (1906), characterize the crowd as disciplined and heroic. In the second version of 'Das Kunstwerk im Zeitalter seiner technischen Reproduzierbarkeit' (1936) Benjamin describes two kinds of crowd: the loose ('locker') crowd of the truly revolutionary proletarian masses and the compact ('kompakt') petty bourgeois crowd:

Das klassenbewußte Proletariat bildet eine kompakte Masse nur von außen, in der Vorstellung seiner Unterdrücker. In dem Augenblick, da es seinen Befreiungskampf aufnimmt, hat seine scheinbar kompakte Masse sich in Wahrheit schon aufgelockert. Sie hört auf, unter der Herrschaft bloßer Reaktionen zu stehen; sie geht zur Aktion über. [...] Die Masse als undurchdringliche und kompakte, wie sie Le Bon und andere zum Gegenstand ihrer 'Massenpsychologie' gemacht haben, ist die kleinbürgerliche.¹⁶

Unlike Le Bon, who attributed violence and chaos to all crowds, Benjamin believed they could equally behave in an organized and controlled manner, and be a force for positive social action and change. According to Gamper, by 1930 this kind of engagement with the crowd as a discrete entity defined by class interests had begun to give way to theories which conceived of society as a vast, undifferentiated mass of atomized individuals.¹⁷

The subject of class is also important for critics writing on the depiction of crowds in literature in English. They argue that the prevailing view of the crowd as

¹⁶ Walter Benjamin, *Gesammelte Schriften*, ed. by Rolf Tiedemann and Hermann Schweppenhäuser, 7 vols (Frankfurt am Main: Suhrkamp, 1991), VII.i: *Nachträge*, p. 370. Further references to this edition are given after quotations in the text.

¹⁷ For an account of the principal concerns of mass society theory see Edward Shils, 'The Theory of Mass Society: Prefatory Remarks', *Diogenes*, 10 (1962), 45-66.

impulsive and destructive, as enshrined in Le Bon's theory, is a reductive, elitist stereotype which they seek to avoid in their own investigations. For one, John Plotz, the author of a study on crowds and politics in British literature, regards the claim of Taine, Tarde and Le Bon that the crowd has an innate, timeless essence as a tactic for containing and controlling popular movements. He takes care to distinguish between 'claim making' and 'chaotic' crowds.¹⁸ In his work on the crowd in American fiction Nicolaus Mills, too, challenges Le Bon's assessment, asserting that the crowd provides the lower classes of society with a means of demanding and enforcing social change. He deals with the political crowds of strikes, protests and elections, and argues that detailed analysis of literary crowd portrayals uncovers groups composed of a rich variety of individuals and diverse forms of collective experience. He is alert to the pejorative judgements inherent in terms such as 'mob' and 'riot' and aims to avoid them as much as possible.¹⁹ Authors in a recent volume of articles on riots in literature explore further ways in which language is used to denigrate the crowd and promote political agendas, with particular reference to metaphors of primitivism, animalistic and violent images, and the binary opposition of order and disorder with which many fictional representations of crowds operate.²⁰

To a certain extent, studies of the crowd in American literature by Mills and Mary Esteve bear out Gamper's conviction that the meaning of 'being numerous', as Esteve puts it, changed around the middle of the twentieth century. Mills deals with

¹⁸ Plotz, pp. 3-4.

¹⁹ Mills, pp. 2-3, 8-9.

²⁰ Bell, Porter and Jukka Tiusanen, 'Introduction', in Bell and Porter, pp. 7-15 (p. 8).

fiction of the nineteenth and first half of the twentieth century, and discusses political collectives from the revolutionary crowd of Samuel Adams and Thomas Jefferson to the working-class crowd in novels by realists including John Steinbeck. Esteve adopts a later focus, beginning with Henry James and ending with Philip Roth, and interprets the concept of the crowd more diversely and loosely, including in her readings urban street crowds and mass immigration. Plotz, in contrast, has shown that the tendency to conceptualize a range of diverse social groups as crowds was not new to the last century. In the period 1800-50, which forms the scope of his research, he notes that the crowd meant different things to different authors: people gathered in the street, the dispersed members of a social class, and even the whole English people. He highlights the need to consider carefully the relation between representations of such different groups brought together under the heading of crowd and points out the suggestive implications of characterizing a mass as a crowd rather than in some other way.²¹

Plotz and Gamper are both interested in the particular function of literature within the wider discourse about crowds. One of the main arguments of Gamper's study is that literature plays a crucial and undervalued role in determining how the crowd is perceived in the popular consciousness. Although he refrains from drawing a firm distinction between discursive and narrative texts, acknowledging that writing in theoretical disciplines itself often displays imaginative, rhetorical and poetic aspects, he is interested in the capacity of literature to capture fleeting sensations – its appeal to

²¹ Plotz, pp. 7-8.

affectivity in representation. He also observes that in addition to making their own claims about crowds, literary authors use fiction to reflect on the claims of other disciplines, sometimes supporting and sometimes challenging them.²² Similarly, according to Plotz, representations of crowds in nineteenth-century British literature create a fundamentally different impression than the more superficial accounts of historians or journalists. Literature, he claims, supplies profound details about the nature of crowd experience that other media do not.²³

Critics are also intrigued as to why the crowd is of such interest to so many literary authors. According to David Bell, Gerald Porter and Jukka Tiusanen, depicting crowds in fiction allows authors to extend aesthetic control into a realm that often appears to be defined by the most extreme kind of disorder.²⁴ Plotz and Esteve postulate a close link between the nature of literature and the essence of the crowd. Plotz describes a struggle between various discourses in British society at the beginning of the nineteenth century to determine which would be of influence in public life. Both literature and the crowd, he writes, were among the modes of expression contesting control of the public sphere. Furthermore, he sees them as alternative and competing modes of articulation, in that they fulfil similar roles. On the one hand, the crowd represents disorder and chaos, to which literary authors are often attracted. On the other, crowds and literature represent different ways of making demands on society.

Consequently, Plotz observes: 'Every text centrally concerned with crowds proves

²² Gamper, pp. 20, 29, 31-33.

²³ Plotz, p. 2.

²⁴ Bell, Porter and Tiusanen, p. 12.

interested in establishing the role of literature itself within a public discursive space at least partially defined by those crowds.²⁵ Likewise, Esteve argues that the crowd brings together extreme affectivity to the point of self-abandonment and the pre-existing political consciousness which is a requirement for its very existence. Her study features writers who balance fascination with the aesthetic side of crowd experience and commitment to the tenets of liberal democracy.²⁶

In my analysis of crowd depictions in 1930s German fiction I build on a number of the approaches discussed above. Like several of the critics mentioned, I have chosen to examine a range of literary crowds in the attempt to establish connections and continuities as well as differences between texts and thus to draw broader conclusions about the significance of the motif for authors of the time. My choice to focus on the fascist crowd arises from the periodization advanced by Gamper. The interest of 1930s authors in the subject belies his claim that the relevance of literature in shaping understanding of crowd phenomena declined at the beginning of the decade. Furthermore, while his observation that interest in mass phenomena began to take a new direction after 1930 is useful, attention to the crowd was not in fact wholly superseded by interest in mass culture and society at that time. As John McClelland points out, the crowd and mass society are closely connected ideas. He shows that the seed of the latter concept is already present in the tradition of Le Bon, according to which crowds emerge in response to the individualism and atomization highlighted in later theories of mass

²⁵ Plotz, pp. 2-3, 10.

²⁶ Esteve, pp. 15, 18-19.

society. Indeed, McClelland goes on to argue, although nineteenth-century theorists generally expected the crowd to be left-wing and revolutionary, their worst fears were ultimately realised by fascism, which presented the crowd as a solution to the alienation of mass society. Offering a renewed sense of collective identity and purpose, fascism capitalized on the disintegration of governmental authority at the end of the First World War, mass unemployment and the sense of betrayal experienced by demobilized soldiers returning home to societies in chaos.²⁷ Edward Shils also roots Sighele and Le Bon's concept of the mob in a nineteenth-century view of society as an 'inert and formless mass' simply waiting to be exploited by a demagogue such as Louis Napoléon. Likewise, he reiterates McClelland's assessment that the German National Socialist regime in turn styled the totalitarian state as a refuge from the 'disintegrative influence' of modern life.²⁸ Extrapolating from this conclusion, I hesitate to see 1930 as a clear turning point in discourse on the crowd. Taking up where Gamper leaves off, I instead approach the Nazi era as a transition phase between the era of crowds, as Le Bon called it, and that of mass society.²⁹ In *Der Augenzeuge*, for example, the crowd gives Weiss's narrator a means of coping with the sense of dislocation from other people he feels after returning home from the Great War. In both Broch's *Die Verzauberung* (1935) and

²⁷ McClelland, pp. 276-77, 292.

²⁸ Shils, pp. 45-46.

²⁹ The introduction to *Psychologie des Foules* is subtitled 'L'ère des foules'.

Canetti's *Die Blendung* the isolation of the individual in the modern world precipitates the madness of the crowd.³⁰

Nonetheless, perhaps because the class perspectives that historically determined responses to the crowd (and which Plotz and Mills find so significant) were no longer all-important under fascism, which claimed to subsume class differences under an organic national-racial totality, there is something distinctive about crowd representations in this context.³¹ In this regard, Benjamin's analysis appears simplistic. While he, like McClelland, realizes that crowd theory predicted a revolutionary crowd and got a fascist one instead, he also limits the latter to definition by class. In the depictions analysed here, class issues are neither the sole nor even the principal factor determining the constitution of the crowd. Not only do the crowds portrayed include people from different walks of life, but the protagonists and narrators of the works discussed are all intellectuals who become caught up in crowds despite their intelligence and education. Thus, while on the one hand I address the age of Nazism as a period of transition in thought about the crowd, on the other I also distinguish, along with David

³⁰ Broch's *Nachlass* included three drafts of his unfinished novel, which is often referred to by its working title 'Bergroman'. In this study I deal only with the first and most complete version, which dates from 1935 and is published as volume III of the *Kommentierte Werkausgabe*, ed. by Paul Michael Lützeler, 13 vols (Frankfurt am Main: Suhrkamp, 1976-81). The editor provides a full account of the novel's genesis on pp. 408-13 of that volume. See also Manfred Durzak, 'Zur Entstehungsgeschichte und zu den verschiedenen Fassungen von Hermann Brochs Nachlaßroman', *Zeitschrift für deutsche Philologie*, 86 (1967), 594-627.

³¹ See Mihály Vajda, *Fascism as a Mass Movement* (London: Allison & Busby, 1976), pp. 16, 24-25: 'Fascist ideology [...] means the radical negation of particularity, the subordination of every kind of particularity to the "total", "natural-organic" whole, "the nation". [...] It was only the nationalist and racist ideology that enabled fascism to avoid conflict between, on the one hand, the particular interests of the masses who joined it and were represented by it, and on the other hand, the basic principles of the existing social system.'

Roberts, between elitist nineteenth-century unease before a threatening underclass and twentieth-century totalitarianism.³² Consequently, the loaded vocabulary often used to describe crowds from an elitist point of view does not feature here as much as it does in other studies. However, given that in several of the novels I address the crowd is not merely part of fascist society but a symbol for it, Plotz's observation that the choice to characterize a group as a crowd has certain implications remains important. In Chapter 3 I examine Horváth's rationale in *Jugend ohne Gott* (1938) for presenting the citizens of a fascist state as one vast crowd.

Of course, a consequence of restricting my focus to the crowd in its threatening incarnation is that I leave out reflections on other kinds of crowds – the crowd as an organised political entity, for example, as in Franz Jung's novel *Proletarier* (1921), or celebrated for its energy, as in the Expressionism of Georg Heym and Carl Sternheim. As the topic is so diverse, all scholarship necessarily focuses on certain crowds at the expense of others. Mills acknowledges this requirement, stating that because he is interested in the political actions of the crowd, he does not examine the behaviour of casual crowds, such as those at the theatre or the fair.³³ As Gamper's research covers so many different types of crowd, I choose to address an aspect of the subject that he leaves out.

That said, as well as investigating crowds excluded from Gamper's book, my analysis also interacts with the arguments he and Plotz make about the singularity of

³² David Roberts, 'Crowds and Power or the Natural History of Modernity: Horkheimer, Adorno, Canetti, Arendt', *Thesis Eleven*, 45 (1996), 39-68 (p.40).

³³ Mills, p. 8.

literature within the wider discourse about crowds. The extensive multidisciplinary engagement with the crowd in the fascist era provides a particularly fruitful context in which to evaluate these points. Like Böhme, Ächtler and others, I identify parallels between some of the works I examine and theories of mass psychology. In doing so, I seek to expand the frame of reference for such comparisons beyond Freud's 'Massenpsychologie'. For example, in Chapter 3 I identify similarities between Horváth's *Jugend ohne Gott* and Alfred Adler's essay 'Zur Massenpsychologie' (1934). In Chapter 4 I compare *Die Verzauberung* with theories advanced by Jung. In other cases, however, the differences between literary and theoretical texts prove more interesting than the similarities. In this respect, my analyses of *Mario und der Zauberer* and *Der Augenzeuge* in Chapters 1 and 2 respectively go against the grain of previous scholarship. Moreover, whereas previous attempts to distinguish between literature and theory on crowds have broadly been restricted to thematic aspects, I make more of discursive differences, investigating how the flexibility of narrative perspective available to literary authors allows them to present the crowd in ways writers of theoretical treatises do not.

Just as Plotz portrays the first half of the nineteenth century as a time when literature and other discourses fought for control of the public sphere in Britain, in interwar Germany and Austria literary authors struggled to find a voice to rival the

claims of political ideologies and scientific enquiry.³⁴ The project of clarifying literature's role in representing the crowd takes on increased value with reference to this period of social upheaval, during which writers themselves frequently questioned the function and worth of their writing. The authors featured here had an ambivalent attitude to theory, feeling that its detached, abstract theorizing failed to apprehend the irrational, emotional depths of personal experience which so fascinated them. Yet they were also among those who believed that the artist had a political and humanitarian responsibility, and could not afford to lose himself in what was dark and dangerous. In the following chapters I explore their attempts to balance curiosity with duty, asking whether they succeed in evoking what Plotz calls an 'attractively attenuated version' of the crowd spirit.³⁵

Literature, Politics and 'Wissenschaft'

After 1914, social and political pressures provoked many authors to reflect on the relationship of their art to the context of its production. The urgency of their preoccupation is borne out in various poetological essays and speeches with titles such

³⁴ On the relationship between literature and politics in the period see Alan Bance, 'Preface', in *Weimar Germany: Writers and Politics*, ed. by Bance (Edinburgh: Scottish Academic Press, 1982), pp. vi-viii; Richard Dove and Stephen Lamb, 'Introduction: Commitment and the Illusion of Power', in *German Writers and Politics 1918-1939*, ed. by Dove and Lamb (Basingstoke: Macmillan, 1992), pp. 1-12; Karl Leydecker, 'Introduction', in *German Novelists of the Weimar Republic: Intersections of Literature and Politics*, ed. by Leydecker (Rochester, NY: Camden House, 2006), pp. 1-17; Stuart Parkes, 'Ödön von Horváth', in *Weimar Germany*, ed. by Bance, pp. 121-37; Martin Swales, 'In Defence of Weimar: Thomas Mann and the Politics of Republicanism', in *Weimar Germany*, ed. by Bance, pp. 1-13; C.E. Williams, *The Broken Eagle: The Politics of Austrian Literature from Empire to Anschluss* (London: Elek, 1974); Williams, 'Writers and Politics: Some Reflections on a German Tradition', *Journal of European Studies*, 6 (1976), 75-99; Williams, *Writers and Politics in Modern Germany* (London: Hodder and Stoughton, 1977).

³⁵ Plotz, p. 11.

as ‘Der Dichter und diese Zeit oder: der Dichter und seine Zeit’ (Musil, c. 1921/22), ‘Der Dichter in dieser Zeit’ (Musil, 1934), ‘Die geistige Situation des Schriftstellers in unserer Zeit’ (Mann, 1930), and ‘Was soll ein Schriftsteller heutzutage schreiben?’ (Horváth, date unknown). The central issue debated in these texts is the degree of political commitment literature should show. Do authors have a moral responsibility to engage with real-life political occurrences in their literary fiction and how explicitly ought they to do so? Should their work make straightforward ideological arguments, or does good literature seek to explore and understand the forces at work in society without passing judgement?

While he changed his views significantly during the 1920s, in earlier texts such as ‘Gedanken im Kriege’ (1914) and *Betrachtungen eines Unpolitischen* (1918) Mann defended the apolitical nature of art. At that time regarding ethics and politics as separate domains, and the former as a superior to the latter, he wrote: ‘wenn nicht Politiker, so sind [Dichter] doch stets etwas anderes: sie sind Moralisten.’³⁶ While the true *Dichter* concerned himself with moral questions, only the dilettante *Literat* incorporated political activism into his work. In contrast, in ‘Das Kunstwerk im Zeitalter seiner technischen Reproduzierbarkeit’ Benjamin famously described fascism as the aestheticization of politics, an ideology which conceived of the political as inherently artistic, and championed the politicization of art as the means with which it was to be combated. Musil insists that art can never be divorced from other areas of experience,

³⁶ Thomas Mann, *Gesammelte Werke*, 13 vols (Frankfurt am Main: Fischer, 1960), XIII: *Nachträge*, p. 531. Further references to this edition are given after quotations in the text.

stating: ‘Die Hauptsache ist, daß Kunst nichts Ästhetisches ist, als wäre das ein gesondertes Reich, sondern, daß sie eine Form zu leben ist, eine *menschliche* Betätigung, Wachsen’ (Musil, VIII, 1351, emphasis in original). In ‘Der Dichter in dieser Zeit’ he asserts that works of art always bear the marks of their political and economic context, though this does not mean they should disseminate ideology. Rather, he regards moral contemplation as a prerequisite of political action and as such a valuable exercise in itself. Eventually Mann, too, came to believe that the role of the author as moralist was itself of real political importance. In ‘Kultur und Politik’ (1939), he cites disengagement from politics as one of the factors responsible for the rise of Nazism, claiming: ‘Demokratie [ist] nichts als die politische Ausprägung abendländischer Christlichkeit, und Politik selbst nichts anderes als die Moralität des Geistes, ohne die er verdirbt’ (Mann, XII, 860). Conflicting comments he made about his crowd novella *Mario und der Zauberer* underline the interconnectedness of the moral and the political in his work. On the one hand, he wrote that the novella was a ‘stark ins Politische hinüberspielende Geschichte, die mit der Psychologie des Faschismus [...] innerlich beschäftigt ist’ (Mann, XI, 672). On the other, he expressed disappointment at the tendency for the work to be read purely as a political satire. Despite the allusions to contemporary politics it contains, he insisted: ‘das Politische ist ein weiter Begriff, der ohne scharfe Grenze ins Problem und Gebiet des Ethischen

übergeht, und ich möchte die Bedeutung der kleinen Geschichte, vom Künstlerischen abgesehen, doch lieber im Ethischen als im Politischen sehen.’³⁷

That is not to say, however, that Mann advocated political activism in art. In contrast with Brecht, for one, who in ‘Fünf Schwierigkeiten beim Schreiben der Wahrheit’ (1934/35) argues that truth is ‘etwas Praktisches, Tatsächliches, Unleugbares’ to which an author must commit himself, Mann defended the artist’s right to entertain ideas that were potentially dangerous.³⁸ In ‘Bruder Hitler’ (1939), he qualifies his hatred of the dictator and the atrocities for which he was responsible, writing:

Dennoch fühle ich, daß es nicht meine besten Stunden sind, in denen ich das arme, wenn auch verhängnisvolle Geschöpf hasse. Glücklicher, angemessener wollen jene mir scheinen, in denen das Bedürfnis nach Freiheit, nach ungebundener Anschauung, mit einem Worte nach Ironie, die ich seit so langem schon als das Heimat-Element aller geistigen Kunst und Produktivität zu verstehen gelernt habe, über den Haß den Sieg davon trägt. (Mann, XII, 846)

The irony that he believes to be the most valuable tool of art strikes a balance between empathy with even the darkest of motivations and the discipline to resist being consumed by them. Musil writes in a similar vein about the privilege of the artist to refrain from moral judgement:

Ernste Kunst ist selbstverständlich immer moralisch, weil ja Moralmachen eine ihrer Haupttätigkeiten ist. Aber die moralische Aufgabe des Schriftstellers ist eine andere als die des Laien. Was im Leben gut ist, ist es noch lange nicht in der Kunst. Leben ist etwas Praktisches, ein Kompromiß, etwas, das sich begrifflich gar nicht fassen läßt, durchaus nicht restlos rationalisierbar ist u. darum Gewalt setzen muß, Postulate, Moral. Kunst aber ist etwas theoretisches [sic] [...]. (Musil, VIII, 1350-51)

³⁷ Mann, *Briefe 1889-1936*, ed. by Erika Mann (Frankfurt am Main: Fischer, 1961), p. 315.

³⁸ Bertolt Brecht, *Werke. Große kommentierte Berliner und Frankfurter Ausgabe*, ed. by Werner Hecht and others, 30 vols (Berlin: Aufbau; Frankfurt am Main: Suhrkamp, 1988-2000), XXII.i: *Schriften II* (1993), p. 75.

In other words, to say that art has an ethical purpose does not mean that its purpose is prescriptive. While in daily life it is necessary to establish moral axioms for practical purposes, art does not have to make such compromises and can remain open-minded about the experiences it portrays. On a political level, this outlook obviates allegiance to any particular party or ideology. Indeed, in 1937 Mann asserted:

Länder, Gruppen, Parteien, Dogmen behaupten und verfolgen heute ihre unumschränkte, subjective Geltung, und in den aberwitzigen Vernichtungskämpfen, die unsere Welt in Stücke reißen, ist jedes überlegene, gemeingültige, humane Kriterium in grauenhafte Vergessenheit geraten. (Mann, XII, 802)

Rather than regarding political commitment as an answer to the violence of contemporary collectivism, then, he seemed to see it as part of the problem – a source of division and partisan hostility between groups. The question with which he and other authors struggled, however, was whether a non-committal approach was really tenable any longer, given the unprecedented seriousness of the political background.

In addition to the relationship between literature and politics, another theme addressed by authors of the period is the relation of art to ‘Wissenschaft’ – the systematic, theoretical organization of knowledge. In many ways, the terms in which the latter relationship is described are reminiscent of those used in reference to the former. In both cases art is frequently characterized by its interest in individuality and uncertainty, whereas, similarly to the politician, in order to facilitate the practical advancement of knowledge, the ‘Wissenschaftler’ is seen as obliged to commit himself to categories and axioms. Musil acknowledges that some of the qualities the *Dichter*

should possess are also the virtues of the ‘Wissenschaftler’. He employs scientific metaphor to describe the experimental nature of art – ‘Kunst [ist] ein Morallaboratorium, an einzelnen Fällen werden hier neue Analysen und Zusammenfassungen probiert’ (Musil, VIII, 1351) – and in ‘Skizze der Erkenntnis des Dichters’ (1918) he explicitly remarks that the thought processes of the author and the ‘Wissenschaftler’ are similar in many ways: both seek to amass as much information as possible and apply a high degree of reason in analysing it. Yet he also observes that ‘Wissenschaft’ ultimately aims to subsume individual phenomena under a limited number of laws, while art does not. He coins the term ‘ratioïdes Gebiet’ to refer to everything that can be summarized and systematized. According to Musil, this domain encompasses the natural sciences and psychology, whereas the work of the *Dichter* properly belongs to the ‘nicht-ratioïdes Gebiet’, the realm of ambiguity and variation. A trained engineer and student of experimental psychology as well as a writer, he saw the necessity of both ways of thinking and did not regard them as mutually exclusive, although he deemed problematic the inflexible application of systematic notions of truth to moral issues, where he considered a literary approach more appropriate. Likewise, Mann argues in his essays ‘Mein Verhältnis zur Psychoanalyse’ (1925) and ‘Die Stellung Freuds in der modernen Geistesgeschichte’ that despite his admiration for Freud the advancement of knowledge does not depend solely on theoretical abstraction. On the contrary, he states: ‘auch mit entgegengesetzten Mitteln [kann] die große und allgemeine Aufklärung gefördert

werden und [wird] im Wechsel und Wellenspiel geistiger Stimmungen und Gesinnungen gefördert' (Mann, X, 267).

A somewhat different view of the value of art in comparison with that of the natural and social sciences was taken by Arnold Zweig, who attributed what he called the contemporary 'Vergeistigung des Lebens' in large part to discoveries in psychoanalysis, sociology and biology. Like Musil, Zweig distinguished literature from 'Wissenschaft' on the grounds that the former was concerned with the individual rather than the general, but unlike the Austrian writer he credited 'Wissenschaft' with greater practical worth. Noting that readers would be tempted to see the influence of Nietzsche in his treatise *Caliban oder Politik und Leidenschaft* (1926), he insisted that he had avoided any tendency towards the literary, as the two kinds of writing had fundamentally different functions: 'in erster und letzter Linie auf wirkliche Erkenntnis und praktische Brauchbarkeit bedacht, mußte der Verfasser, dem das Dichterische sonst ja nicht so fernliegt, sich hier der reinen Kategorie des Traktats unterwerfen.' Whereas he believed that a theoretical study of mass psychology and behaviour could provide genuine knowledge of life with practical value, the implication of this quotation is that literary fiction did not have the same capacity. Zweig argued that if literature could really change and improve humanity, the author would not be misunderstood, as he often seemed to be, as a harmless entertainer.³⁹

³⁹ Arnold Zweig, *Berliner Ausgabe*, ed. by Frank Hörnigk and others, 6 divisions (Berlin: Aufbau, 1996-2006), III.ii: *Caliban oder Politik und Leidenschaft: Versuch über die menschlichen Gruppenleidenschaften dargetan am Antisemitismus*, ed. by David R. Midgley (2000), p. 12.

Against the political backdrop of Nazism, Broch was particularly affected by the conviction that theoretical knowledge was somehow more ‘real’ and meaningful than the insight into human nature literary writing could offer. He went so far as to question whether literature served any purpose at all in the contemporary context. In correspondence from the 1930s and 1940s he frequently rails against the ‘Überflüssigkeit des Künstlerischen in dieser Zeit’ and his novel *Der Tod des Vergil* (1945) explores the dilemma of the artist at a time of social crisis, turning on whether Virgil should destroy the *Aeneid*.⁴⁰ His *Massenwahntheorie* (1939-48) is the product of his waning faith in the ethical power of literature. Not only did he fail to complete his crowd novel, *Die Verzauberung*, but during the 1940s, frustrated with the apparent political impotence of literature, he increasingly dedicated himself to the systematic study of mass hysteria, which he described as a ‘Beitrag zur Besiegung des Hitlerismus und zum Aufbau einer besseren Nachkriegszeit’ (Broch, XII, 68). In that text he echoes Zweig, arguing that the scientific impulse to transcend the individual in favour of the general is essential if knowledge attained is to be put to practical use. Moreover, he believed that systematic research, owing to its influence in modern society, was the realm in which he could have the greatest impact on his readership. Canetti, too, implied that his crowd theory was epistemologically superior to literary writing. Although the text was not published until 1960, he began work on *Masse und Macht* in the late 1920s. Initially inspired by the 1927 workers’ uprising in Vienna, in the course of being written

⁴⁰ Broch, *Kommentierte Werkausgabe*, ed. by Lützel, XIII.ii: *Briefe II* (1981), p. 24. Further references to this edition are given after quotations in the text.

it also became a response to fascism. Many years later, reflecting on the process of writing the treatise, Canetti would even say: ‘so sind’s doch immerhin ungefähr 500 Seiten, die eigentlich von nichts anderem handeln.’ He explained:

Meine Hauptarbeit in dieser Zeit war doch die Untersuchung der Wurzeln des Faschismus, das war der Sinn von *Masse und Macht*. Um zu begreifen was geschehen war, und zwar nicht bloß als Phänomen der Zeit, sondern in seinen tiefsten Ursprüngen und Verzweigungen hatte ich mir jede literarische Arbeit verboten.⁴¹

Here, again, it is suggested that literature deals with isolated, context-specific phenomena, whereas theory accesses abstract truths. Canetti’s disclosure that he deliberately refrained from engaging in literary projects during his work on *Masse und Macht* reveals that he thought of such ventures as distractions from a more urgent purpose.

It should however be noted that the relationship of both Canetti and Broch to theory remained uneasy. In an aphorism written in 1942, Canetti quips: ‘Der Beweis ist das Erb-Unglück des Denkens.’⁴² The necessity to prove and categorize, he thought, often resulted in a circularity of thought in which investigations simply continued until a desirable result was attained. In particular, he directed this criticism at psychoanalysis. In his view, analysts only paid attention when patients told them what they already believed they knew.⁴³ Broch, whose interdisciplinary *Massenwahntheorie* is first and

⁴¹ Elias Canetti, *Die gespaltene Zukunft* (Munich: Hanser, 1972), p. 98.

⁴² Canetti, *Gesammelte Werke*, 10 vols (Munich: Hanser, 1992-2005), IV: *Aufzeichnungen 1942-1985* (1993), p. 16. Further references to this edition are given after quotations in the text.

⁴³ Michael Rohrwasser, ‘Schreibstrategien: Canettis Beschreibungen von Freud’, in *Psychoanalyse in der modernen Literatur: Kooperation und Konkurrenz*, ed. by Thomas Anz (Würzburg: Königshausen & Neumann, 1999), pp. 145-66 (p. 146).

foremost a theory of history, nevertheless cautioned there that if pursued without balance, such intellectual enterprises end in obsessive denial of any divergence at all from the proposed law ('Gesetzeszwang'):

Aus schierer Unbeholfenheit des Denkens wird ein an sich durchaus legitimes und notwendiges Erkenntnisvorhaben, wie es das der Geschichtstheorie ist, zu einer aggressiv wahnhaften Ethik und Moral verkehrt, zu einem wahnhaften Strafrecht, das in besinnungsloser Verwirrtheit menschenmordend, menscheitsmordend allüberall Scheiterhaufen entzündet, Konzentrationslager errichtet, Marterpfähle aufstellt, Exekutionspelotons kommandiert, Tanks über die Weizenfelder jagt und die Behausungen des Menschen zu Ruinen bombt. (Broch, XII, 108)

In mentioning concentration camps as one form of persecution designed to eliminate difference, Broch identifies Nazism as the consequence of an unchecked impulse to reduce and classify. Where Mann regarded rigid political convictions as a source of, rather than a solution to European destruction, Broch similarly saw potential danger in the misapplication of systematic theories.

Authors of the time did not only explore the intersection of epistemology and ethics in their poetological and theoretical reflections; the theme also features in several novels about crowds. The understanding of medical knowledge as a form of power and control is central to Weiss's *Der Augenzeuge*, for example, in which the narrator is a doctor who specializes in nervous illnesses and psychotherapy. Though he paints himself as a detached, clear-thinking intellectual, both in his medical practice and in his private relationships he is in fact governed by a will to power which restricts his understanding of the crowds he describes to certain preconceived conclusions. In his own *Die Verzauberung*, which is also narrated by a doctor, Broch approaches scientific

rationalism from a different angle. His narrator's rigidly positivistic professional outlook proves insufficient in the face of personal existential fears, leaving him vulnerable to the mass irrationalism of the crowd. The notion of the crowd as a potential refuge from rationalism recurs in Canetti's *Die Blendung*, in which the protagonist, Peter Kien, is a reclusive academic who seeks to live life wholly according to reason, eschewing emotion and isolating himself from other people, but who is driven mad by the suppressed crowd instincts within him. In *Jugend ohne Gott*, Horváth distinguishes between the concepts of 'Wirklichkeit', as represented by the character T, who has a thirst for empirical, quasi-scientific knowledge of all kinds of experiences, but never becomes emotionally involved in any of them, and 'Wahrheit', the knowledge of intuitive, communal moral truths. Analysing the depictions of crowds in these narratives in comparison with contemporaneous attempts to theorize crowd behaviour, this study asks whether authors were correct in their view of literature and 'Wissenschaft' as providing fundamentally different kinds of knowledge, or whether their assumptions about that difference are undermined by the comparison. If there is such a difference, how does it manifest itself? It also seeks to challenge the notion that the insights of theoretical enquiry are somehow more 'real' and useful than those of art.

Post-1918 Theoretical Approaches to Mass Psychology

If the discipline of crowd theory appeared to have reached its culmination at the end of the nineteenth century with Le Bon, it was revitalized by the Great War, the mass violence and destruction of which presented a renewed challenge to modern faith in the

ideals of the Enlightenment. It produced books on mass psychology by two British authors: Trotter's *Instincts of the Herd in Peace and War* and William McDougall's *The Group Mind* (1920). Trotter postulated the existence of a herd instinct which had evolved in humans to enhance their capacity for living in groups and increase their chances of survival. McDougall similarly believed that an ancient gregarious impulse motivated the irrational mass behaviour of otherwise cultivated individuals. In this way, they accounted for the War and, in accordance with their own national allegiances, the actions of the German nation in particular.

The theories of both men intrigued Freud, who referred to them heavily in 'Massenpsychologie und Ich-Analyse', the first major work of the post-war period on mass psychology and also the most influential one. Freud's essay inspired some writers, such as Hendrik de Man (*Zur Psychologie des Sozialismus*, 1925), while provoking challenge from others like Theodor Geiger (*Die Masse und ihre Aktion*, 1926) and Canetti, both of whom questioned the reliance of his model on the figure of the crowd leader. They and several other authors of the period sought to define what made crowd and mass psychology, and its significance in a range of social circumstances. Further notable theories include Simmel's 'Psychoanalyse der Massen', which explains the state of German society after World War One as a symptom of mass war neurosis, Jung's 'Die Bedeutung der Psychologie für die Gegenwart' (1933), which aims to elucidate fascist mass movements using the concept of the collective unconscious, Reich's *Die Massenpsychologie des Faschismus* and Adler's 'Zur Massenpsychologie'. Although not

all these writers made such explicit reference to the political context of their work as Trotter and McDougall (Freud, for example, makes only one reference to the fall of Prussian militarism in World War One), that context nonetheless explains the renewed engagement of so many thinkers with a theoretical tradition which to all intents and purposes seemed to have run its course by the turn of the century.⁴⁴ Indeed, ever since Taine's reflections on the French Revolution, theorizing the crowd had always been an inherently political exercise with implications for how society should be structured and governed, and this was equally the case after World War One. In an overview of the background to 'Massenpsychologie und Ich-Analyse', Jaap van Ginneken connects what he sees as Freud's central question – 'Can the masses do without a leader, and if not – why?' – with the decline of elite authority which characterized the years leading up to the publication of the essay: the Russian Revolution of 1917 and its rapid spread to other countries, the appearance of workers' movements in Austria and Germany, the declaration of independent republics in Hungary and Czechoslovakia, the Spartakist revolt in Berlin and the collapse of the Austro-Hungarian Empire.⁴⁵ In his *Massenwahntheorie*, Broch argues that in order to overcome the tyranny of fascism the structure of social institutions has to be modified to promote 'Totaldemokratie'. Adler believed that mass psychology could help to combat dangerous mass movements by examining the conditions which produced them and developing methods to control and

⁴⁴ McClelland, p. 292: 'these were all theoretical concerns thoroughly worked out before the world had even heard of Hitler, and most of that working out had taken place well before 1914, and all of it had been worked out by the time Freud's *Group Psychology* was published in 1921.'

⁴⁵ Ginneken, 'The Killing of the Father', pp. 403-04.

change those circumstances. In the twentieth century as in the nineteenth, studying the nature of the crowd was a way for intellectuals to engage with the politics of their time.

The primary theories to which I refer here are those of Freud, Jung, Broch, Adler and Canetti. As my particular interest lies in the fascist era as a period in which the crowd ceased to be defined predominantly according to class perspectives, I do not deal at any length with the theories of Geiger or de Man, both of which continue to focus on left-wing revolutionary collectives. Likewise, I only mention Reich's work in passing, although it engages directly and in great detail with the politics of National Socialism. Like Benjamin and other Marxist theorists, Reich limits his attention to the petty bourgeois class as the mass political basis of fascism and locates the source of Nazi power in the false consciousness of the lower middle classes in the Weimar Republic.

The theories I do examine have two principle themes. The first, as already mentioned with regard to Freud, is the role of the crowd leader. For some writers, such as Freud and Broch, the leader is fundamental to the formation and constitution of crowds; others, like Canetti and Adler, believe that his importance is overrated and that the power of leaders is incidental to the existence of crowds. The leader cult was a marked feature of fascism, in both its Italian and German forms, and is a central preoccupation of 1930s German fiction on crowds. All the literary works covered here depict strong, charismatic leaders whom crowds worship and obey. It is thus a topic which I address frequently in my comparisons of literature and theory. The second main theme of the theories is the mass experience as a specifically modern phenomenon

located within a longer historical narrative – variously representing regression to a primitive model of social organization, the product of evolutionary striving for human prosperity and a cultural antidote to the rationalism and individualism of modernity.

In addition to Trotter and McDougall, Le Bon was a key influence on Freud's 'Massenpsychologie'. The proximity of Le Bon's terminology in *Psychologie des Foules* to the vocabulary of psychoanalysis captured Freud's imagination. Introducing Le Bon's description of the collective soul ('l'âme collective') which, according to the French psychologist, motivates the behaviour of the crowd, Freud observes: 'Es ist kein Zug darin, dessen Ableitung und Unterbringung dem Psychoanalytiker Schwierigkeiten bereiten würde, Le Bon weist uns selbst den Weg, indem er auf die Übereinstimmung mit dem Seelenleben der Primitiven und der Kinder hinweist.'⁴⁶ The collective soul, Le Bon wrote, is produced by the disappearance of the conscious attributes of each individual – those characteristics which differentiate them from one another – and the corresponding emergence of that which they all share: the unconscious (l'inconscient). The previously repressed unconscious rises to the surface in the crowd because the individual, newly endowed with a sense of power not felt when alone, is now free to indulge thoughts and feelings which would be repressed under normal circumstances. The change often presents itself as the lowering of individual intelligence and heightening of less desirable attributes. This idea provides the starting point of Freud's study. While he welcomes Le Bon's engagement with concepts so important to

⁴⁶ Sigmund Freud, *Gesammelte Werke: chronologisch geordnet*, ed. by Anna Freud and others, 18 vols (London: Imago, 1940-52), XIII: *Jenseits des Lustprinzips und andere Arbeiten aus den Jahren 1920-1924* (1940), p. 82. Further references to this edition are given after quotations in the text.

psychoanalysis, he disagrees with his precise conception of the unconscious mind and believes that the issue demands further attention.

In 'Das Unbewußte' (1915) Freud describes a system of dynamic interaction between the unconscious and the conscious realms of the psyche, governed by the processes of repression. This notion of dynamic interplay is lacking in Le Bon, for whom the unconscious represents a permanent primordial residue, kept down by civilization but constantly threatening to re-emerge. In Freud's words: 'Das Unbewußte Le Bons enthält vor allem die tiefsten Merkmale der Rassenseele, welche für die individuelle Psychoanalyse eigentlich außer Betracht kommt' (Freud, XIII, 79). In his own view, in contrast, although the structure of the mind is the same in all humans, the contents of the unconscious depend on the personal history of the individual and thus differ from one person to the next. As a result, the notion of the return of the repressed is insufficient explanation for the collective mentality of the crowd. Instead, he claims, the ties between crowd members result from their common psychological bond with the crowd leader. They each identify with the leader, introjecting his characteristics to form an ego-ideal ('Ichideal' – the forerunner of the super-ego) which monitors and dictates the behaviour of the ego. In Freud's account, then, what Le Bon called the collective soul is produced when crowd members all act at the behest of a shared ego-ideal: 'Eine solche primäre Masse ist eine Anzahl von Individuen, die ein und dasselbe Objekt an die Stelle ihres Ichideals gesetzt und sich infolgedessen in ihrem Ich miteinander identifiziert haben' (Freud, XIII, 128). He acknowledges that there are many types of

crowds, including those without leaders, but in describing the crowd that does have a leader as a 'primäre Masse' he at least implies that it is the norm. The authority of the leader also played an important part in *Psychologie des Foules*. However, whereas Le Bon concluded that the vulnerability of the crowd to demagogues also meant that desirable leaders could be imposed on it from without as a means of control, in 'Massenpsychologie' the leader's role is integral to the formation of the crowd. In this respect Freud's model anticipates the leader cult of Nazism with particular force; that is to say, it foreshadows the view of Hitler cultivated in *Triumph des Willens* and other Nazi propaganda as a messianic figure capable of unifying the *Volk*, and through whom the relationship of the individual to the state is mediated.⁴⁷

Freud's conviction about the leader's importance gives rise to an attempt to situate the modern crowd within a broader historical account of human psychological development. In groups unified under one dominant individual, he speculates, there is a trace of a much earlier form of social organization. In the essays which make up *Totem und Tabu* (1913) he adopted the hypothesis of Darwin's *The Descent of Man* (1871) that at the most primitive stage of their evolution humans lived in hordes governed by a single all-powerful male. He revisits this hypothesis in 'Massenpsychologie', noting the similarities between the structure of the crowd and that of the primal horde. The members of both groups, Freud asserts, are tied to one another in the belief that the leader loves them all equally, while he is in reality characterized by narcissistic

⁴⁷ Ian Kershaw challenges this understanding of Hitler's role, arguing that his aura was really a construction of propaganda. See Kershaw, *The Hitler Myth: Image and Reality in the Third Reich* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1987).

independence from any libidinal bond. He also argues that several frequently cited aspects of mass psychology – the disappearance of individual personalities, the conformity of thought and feeling, the predominance of affectivity and unconscious drives, and the tendency to act without doubt or hesitation – are all indicative of regression to a primitive stage of psycho-anthropological evolution.

It should be made clear, however, that Freud does not judge crowd psychology to be an inherently negative phenomenon. He believes that the common bond each individual member has with the leader creates a sense of equality between them that is a source of much positive feeling. Although initially hostile to one another as rivals for the affections of the leader, they soon repress their animosity out of recognition of their shared fate:

Keiner soll sich hervortun wollen, jeder das gleiche sein und haben. Soziale Gerechtigkeit will bedeuten, daß man sich selbst vieles versagt, damit auch die anderen darauf verzichten müssen, oder was dasselbe ist, es nicht fordern können. Diese Gleichheitsforderung ist die Wurzel des sozialen Gewissens und des Pflichtgefühls. (Freud, XIII, 134)

Furthermore, as the leader facilitates the growth of pragmatism, selflessness and solidarity – virtues which contribute positively to the life of a community – Freud argues that his removal, rather than his presence, produces the chaos widely thought to be characteristic of the crowd:

Es verhält sich also so, daß die panische Angst die Lockerung in der libidinösen Struktur der Masse voraussetzt und in berechtigter Weise auf sie reagiert, nicht umgekehrt, daß die Libidobindungen der Masse an der Angst vor der Gefahr zugrunde gegangen wären. (Freud, XIII, 105)

He illustrates his argument using the example of a fire in a theatre, in the face of which, he states, panic breaks out precisely because no strong connection exists between the leaderless group of individuals present, who act solely in their own interests. In one way, then, Freud takes a much brighter view of the crowd than Le Bon does. That said, in that the benevolent aspects of crowd psychology, as he describes it, still depend entirely on a superior authority, he does not distance himself completely from the anti-democratic thrust of his predecessor's ideas. Unlike Le Bon, Freud makes no suggestion that leaders should be imposed on the crowd. Nevertheless, his theory does not allow for positive action by the crowd in the absence of power exercised from above. And while his belief in the potentially valuable force of mass psychology was increasingly echoed by theorists who came after him, it is telling that for later writers, having witnessed the nature of fascist rule, the figure of the leader had a more dubious significance.

Similarly to Freud, in the *Massenwahntheorie* Broch emphasizes the regressive elements of mass psychology. However, whereas Freud makes no attempt to identify the causes of psychological regression, in Broch's treatise, which combines a model of the human psyche with a cyclical theory of its development in history, the mass hysteria of fascism is interpreted as a compensatory reaction to the epistemological conditions of modernity. At the heart of Broch's theory is the neo-Kantian concept of value ('Wert'), a term he uses to designate a state of epistemological security. Life, he writes, is a quest to attain maximum value. By a process of ego-expansion ('Ich-Erweiterung'), the ego seeks to assimilate the non-ego ('Einverleibung'), a procedure which is desirable

because the non-ego is devoid of value: it represents 'Unwert'. In other words, as that which the ego cannot know as completely as it knows itself, the non-ego detracts from the individual's sense of being at one with the world. Ego-expansion can manifest itself both literally, by means of physical possession, and symbolically through cultural sublimation. In order to assimilate the non-ego as fully as possible, it must incorporate both rational and intuitive modes of cognition, neither of which alone brings total knowledge. Successful ego-expansion results in freedom from existential fear and feelings of ecstasy ('Super-Befriedigung').

According to Broch, the success of the human search for value varies in cyclical fashion throughout history. He posits a cycle consisting of four stages. In the first stage, communities are united by 'Zentralwertsysteme', value systems which have authority over every aspect of life within their jurisdiction, while still interacting with external modes of knowledge. The historical example he most frequently cites to illustrate this phase is the unity of the medieval Church prior to the Reformation. At this time, humanity comes as close as actually possible to the ideal state of maximum value. However, it is in the nature of all value systems to strive for absolute authority, and in the second stage of the cycle, the 'Zentralwertsystem' changes from an open system, which develops in evolutionary dialogue with the world, to a closed one, which withdraws from the world and is no longer regulated by extraneous considerations. It is said to become hypertrophic, meaning that, having become disconnected from reality, it attempts to assert its authority spiral out of control. In this phase, the value system can

only be dogmatically justified and tyrannically enforced. Broch discusses this stage with particular reference to late medieval theology, which proclaimed the existence of witches a deductively valid proposition and mandated killing based on this conviction. Though such a system may survive for a time, Broch tells us, it cannot exist indefinitely in such a state of dislocation from the world. Once it has become closed off, its collapse is inevitable. In the third stage of the cycle, the 'Zentralwertsystem' reaches crisis point and breaks down into a variety of more limited systems ('Unterwertsysteme'). This is called a period of 'Wertzerfall'. Broch identifies the modern era since the Renaissance and the Enlightenment as a period of disintegrating value, during which one area of life after another, from politics to business, the military and art, extricated itself from the influence of religion. He first advanced this idea in his trilogy of novels *Die Schlafwandler* (1930-32), where he wrote:

auf diese Weise, in solch absoluter Konsequenz und Radikalität entstand die Weltleistung des Abendlandes – um an dieser Absolutheit, die sich selbst aufhebt, ad absurdum geführt zu werden: Krieg ist Krieg, l'art pour l'art, in der Politik gibt es keine Bedenken, Geschäft ist Geschäft –, dies alles besagt das nämliche, dies ist alles von der nämlichen aggressiven Radikalität, ist von jener unheimlichen, ich möchte fast sagen, metaphysischen Rücksichtslosigkeit, ist von jener auf die Sache und nur auf die Sache gerichteten grausamen Logizität, die nicht nach rechts, nicht nach links schaut, – oh, dies alles ist der Denkstil dieser Zeit! (Broch, I, 496)

However, this fragmentation of knowledge into countless different value systems, each concerned with a highly specialized area of life, severely limited the ego's scope for expansion. Under such circumstances, faced with the loss of a central, defining value system, the ego experiences contraction ('Ich-Verengung') and panic. In the fourth

phase of the cycle it falls into a hysterical state of alienation known as ‘Zerrissenheitswahn’.

At this point, Broch asserts, individuals look to a common leader who will guide them in their search for renewed value, and particularly irrational value. Unlike in Freud’s ‘Massenpsychologie’, in the *Massenwahntheorie* the leader exists in two distinct guises, each associated with a different strategy for ego-expansion. The first type, whom Broch calls ‘echte religiöse Heilbringer’, encourages ‘Irrationalbereicherung’. The term denotes a balanced and evolutionary exchange between reason and the irrational, such as is found in open value systems. Conversely, leaders of the second type, called ‘dämonische Demagogen’, promote ‘Rationalverarmung’. As is the case in closed value systems, this ego type detaches itself from reality, imposing its own personal logic on the world. The individual who adopts the first approach identifies with the world – ‘Ich bin die Welt, weil sie in mich eingegangen ist’ (Broch, XII, 25) – seeking to connect with others through love. His or her irrational impulses are transformed into ‘Gemeinschaftserlebnis’: harmonious existence and strong relationships with others. The second personality type claims to possess the world – ‘Ich habe die Welt, weil sie mir unterjocht ist’ (Broch, XII, 25) – relating to others through violence. If the latter is chosen, the ego successfully expands, but does so through a false form of community and experiences only a temporary pseudo-ecstasy (‘Rausch’). Addressing the political landscape of Nazism, Broch asserts:

Angesichts der heutigen Weltlage sind es vornehmlich die ‘negativen’ Kräfte, also die der Rationalverarmung, deren Wirken für das grausige kriegerische

Geschehen verantwortlich zu machen sind; sie sind die eigentlichen Kräfte, die eben nicht unrichtig als ‘Massenwahn’ bezeichnet werden dürfen. (Broch, XII, 33).

In that he sees the mass hysteria of Nazism as compensation for the contraction of the ego and its isolation from the world, the thrust of the *Massenwahntheorie* is similar to McClelland’s and Shils’s ideas on Nazism as a response to the problems of mass society. Whereas Freud focussed on the benign influence of leaders, Broch, writing twenty years later and with the considerable benefit of hindsight, saw in Hitler’s Germany the malevolent possibilities of their power.⁴⁸

Some of the key ideas in Broch’s *Massenwahntheorie* also arise in the work of Jung and Adler. Jung’s account of the historical development of the group mind, for example, is notably similar to Broch’s. In ‘Über das Unbewußte’ (1918), the Swiss psychiatrist posits the existence of a collective unconscious (‘[das] überpersönliche oder *kollektive* Unbewußte’) comprising a range of archetypes, formal categories for the organization of experience (‘angeborene Vorstellungsmöglichkeiten’), which determine the imaginative possibilities of the individual mind and limit them to certain patterns of thought.⁴⁹ If the unconscious were something purely personal, he argues, it would be possible to trace all psychological disturbance to personal experience, when in fact this is not the case. Similarly to Le Bon and in contrast with Freud, then, he regards the

⁴⁸ A sympathetic overview of Broch’s theory of value is provided in Ernestine Schlant, *Die Philosophie Hermann Brochs* (Bern: Francke, 1971). A much more critical account is given in Karl Menges, *Kritische Studien zur Wertphilosophie Hermann Brochs* (Tübingen: Niemeyer, 1970).

⁴⁹ C.G. Jung, *Gesammelte Werke*, ed. by Marianne Niehus-Jung and others, 20 vols (Olten: Walter, 1958-98), X: *Zivilisation im Übergang* (1974), p. 22-23. Further references to this edition are given after quotations in the text.

unconscious as the principal source of collective psychological unity. Unlike the author of *Psychologie des Foules*, however, he does not view the collective unconscious merely as a suppressed stratum of the psyche. Rather, he claims that it represents an earlier stage of human development. For the most part, he writes in 'Die Bedeutung der Psychologie für die Gegenwart', the collective archetypes play only a limited role in the modern psyche. Whereas primitive man possessed a 'Kollektivseele' which determined his cognition completely – Jung describes his tendency to project the structure of his mind onto the world around him – that soul developed into a higher, individual consciousness, and the individual began to differentiate between self and world. In Jung's view, as in Broch's, the individuality of the modern mind had become overdeveloped. He too identifies the Reformation as the beginning of a period of cultural decline, specifically a process of progressive individuation marked by increased rationalism and declining faith in the capacity of myth and religion to explain the world. He describes this process in its advanced stage in the early twentieth century as a kind of illness:

Die Tatsache, daß individuelles Bewußtsein Trennung und Feindschaft bedeutet, hat die Menschheit unzählige Male im Einzelnen sowohl wie im Ganzen erlebt. [...] Wir werden kaum noch leugnen können, daß auch unsere Gegenwart eine solche Zeit der Spaltung und Krankheit ist. Die politischen und sozialen Zustände, die religiöse und philosophische Zersplitterung, die moderne Kunst und die moderne Psychologie, alle künden in dieser Hinsicht einerlei Meinung. (Jung, X, 163)

Just as Broch bemoaned the fragmentation of knowledge in the modern era, for Jung the disintegration of shared religious and philosophical systems in the face of modern rationalism had left the individual with a sense of alienation, both from the world and

from those around him. Likewise, he also believed that the rise of contemporary mass movements was symptomatic of violent psychic regression in response to the extreme individualism of modernity:

Die ausgesprochen individualistische Tendenz unserer letzten Entwicklung hat zur Folge, daß nunmehr ein *kompensatorischer Rückschlag zum Kollektivmenschen* eintritt, dessen Autorität vorderhand noch das Schwergewicht der Masse ist. [...] Der Kollektivmensch droht das Individuum zu ersticken, jenen Einzelnen, auf dessen Verantwortlichkeit schließlich alles Menschenwerk ruht. Masse als solche ist stets anonym und unverantwortlich. (Jung, X, 178)

In Jung's eyes the intuitive collective epistemology of more primitive times was something which modern man could not do without entirely, had been starved of and now craved. And he, along with Broch, believed that Nazism exploited that craving to the point where individual responsibility and accountability were violently eradicated.

Adler puts forward a quite different view of human psychological development in his essay 'Zur Massenpsychologie'. Whereas Jung characterizes history as a process of decline and Broch describes it as an interminable cycle in which the best one can hope for is to minimize the consequences of periods of value disintegration, for Adler it is an evolutionary path forged by the promise of 'Gemeinschaftsgefühl', by which he means cooperation and communal productivity. This he regards as the one ultimate goal of humankind: 'Aktivität in der Richtung des Gemeinschaftsgefühls ist [...] die siegreiche Forderung der menschlichen Evolution.' While he acknowledges the violent mass movements of which the history books are full, just as Broch believes in the possibility of benevolent 'Gemeinschaftserlebnis', Adler argues that there are also many positive phenomena which must rightly be understood as products of the collective

mind: language, sympathy, the appreciation of beauty, reproduction. These are all examples of 'die Massenpsyche als produktive Kraft'.⁵⁰ Common sense is another:

Das gleiche gilt von der Allgemeingültigkeit der praktischen Vernunft, die wir bezeichnend als *common sense* benennen. Jeder ist in seinem Denken daran gebunden, so zu denken und zu verstehen, als ob er darin die Gesamtheit vertreten würde. Auch der common sense wie die Sprache ist nicht unbeweglich. Er ergänzt sich, verbessert sich, breitet sich aus, aber in allem Fortschritt beider steckt Massenbewegung und Anerkennung durch die Masse. (Adler, III, 58)

The terms of the Kantian categorical imperative, which denotes a universally valid moral requirement, and to which Adler clearly alludes in this passage, are directly analogous to his own understanding of the nature of 'Gemeinschaftsgefühl'. Just as the first formulation of the categorical imperative in Kant's *Grundlegung zur Metaphysik der Sitten* (1785) commands 'Handle nur nach derjenigen Maxime, durch die du zugleich wollen kannst, daß sie ein allgemeines Gesetz werde', Adler defines true 'Gemeinschaftsgefühl' as the desire for the progress and prosperity of *all* humanity: 'Wohlfahrt und Höherentwicklung der gesamten Menschheit' (Adler, III, 65).⁵¹ This is the key point in his distinction between productive and dangerous mass action. He does not see harmful mass phenomena such as wars and witch burnings as reason to condemn the mass psyche outright, but as understandable failures in the trial and error of evolutionary progress. Such destructive behaviour is driven not by concern for the wellbeing of all people, but by the misguided desires of individuals or factions seeking to advance their own limited interests.

⁵⁰ Alfred Adler, *Psychotherapie und Erziehung: ausgewählte Aufsätze*, 3 vols (Frankfurt am Main: Fischer, 1982-83), III: 1933-1937, p. 62. Further references to this edition are given in the text.

⁵¹ Immanuel Kant, *Gesammelte Schriften: Akademie-Ausgabe*, 29 vols (Berlin: Reimer [now de Gruyter], 1902-), IV, p. 421.

Incidentally, the leader figure appears to be of no interest to Jung, who does not mention the subject, and of only little significance for Adler, who dismisses Freud's leader-centred model of relationships within the crowd as 'schüchtern' (Adler, III, 57). Instead he locates the roots of the mass psyche in the early development of the individual. In the first three to four years of life, he asserts, the 'Lebensstil' of the individual – the relation in which he or she stands to mankind's evolutionary goal – is determined and can thereafter only be altered with great difficulty. The psychological development of the individual in childhood is strongly influenced by environmental factors. For example, if a child is brought up during a time of war, as is the case for the children in Horváth's *Jugend ohne Gott*, this will have a lifelong impact on his or her interaction with others. The mass psychology of a generation simply represents the 'Lebensstil' dominant among individuals of that generation. For the most part, the minority members of the generation tend either to be overrun or to go along with the dominant trend. Only if children are raised in accordance with the ideal of 'Mitmenschlichkeit' can the likelihood of malevolent mass movements, in which the personal goals of individuals are prioritized over the common good, be reduced. Adler sees it as the responsibility of the psychologist to educate society about the necessity for such an upbringing. Perhaps because his faith in the productive capacity of the group mind rests on the notion of 'Mitmenschlichkeit', the isolated figure of the crowd leader plays only a minor role in his theory. If the leader features at all, it is as one to whom people might look because their developmental environment has conditioned them

always to look to another to think, act and take responsibility for them, or to believe that the wellbeing of the collective is dependent on the power of the individual.

In Canetti's *Masse und Macht*, in contrast, crowd leadership is as significant a theme as it is for Freud in 'Massenpsychologie', albeit for very different reasons. The starting point of Canetti's treatise is the individual's fear of being touched by the unknown other, which he claims is a universal element of human psychology: 'Nichts fürchtet der Mensch mehr als die Berührung durch Unbekanntes. Man will *sehen*, was nach einem greift, man will es erkennen oder zumindest einreihen können. Überall weicht der Mensch der Berührung durch Fremdes aus' (Canetti, III, 13). He maintains that all areas of social life are constructed to uphold distance and boundaries between people, thus maintaining the individual's sense of power over others. Markers of distance include ownership of property and differences of rank and class. In contrast, the primary characteristic of the crowd (or, rather, of crowds, for Canetti provides an elaborate topology unlike that found in any other crowd theory) is equality. In the crowd individual differences are eroded as people lose their fear of contact with one another. The point at which this happens, and a mere gathering of people truly becomes a crowd, is referred to as the moment of discharge ('Entladung'): 'Vorher besteht die Masse eigentlich nicht, die Entladung macht sie erst wirklich aus' (Canetti, III, 16). While discharge can occur in crowds which have leaders, the leader is in no way essential to the process. Canetti's model thus implicitly challenges Freud, for whom the leader is

crucial to the equality of the crowd members.⁵² Indeed, in the truest of crowds no one individual is superior to another after the moment of discharge. In Canetti's eyes, then, as a single, powerful individual who stands above the crowd, the leader is its antithesis as much as its authority. He does observe, however, that all power feeds on crowds, which present the opportunity for simultaneous control of vast numbers of people. The uniqueness of his analysis is that, whereas a theorist such as Jung draws on metaphors of illness to describe crowd violence, for him it is not the crowd but the leader who is sick. In the final section of *Masse und Macht*, entitled 'Herrschaft und Paranoia', he compares the psychopathology of leadership with that of paranoia. He juxtaposes accounts of African kings and Muhammed Tughlak, the despotic Sultan of Delhi, with a study of Daniel Paul Schreber, the senior Dresden judge who documented his paranoid delusions in the memoir *Denkwürdigkeiten eines Nervenkranken* (1903). Canetti's account of the memoir describes Schreber's delusions as fantasies of power over imaginary crowds. Just as the experience of fascist rule gave Broch's views on the leadership question a different shape to Freud's, Canetti's understanding of the leader as a parasite feeding off the crowd was undoubtedly conceived with Hitler in mind. Decades after Schreber's death, he states obliquely, the structure of his fantasy world became the 'Credo eines großen Volkes' (Canetti, III, 531).

⁵² Canetti does not mention Freud by name anywhere in *Masse und Macht*, except in a footnote to the English translation. Nor does he reference 'Massenpsychologie und Ich-Analyse' in the bibliography. Nonetheless, it is clear that Freud had an antagonistic influence on him. See Ritchie Robertson, 'Between Freud and Nietzsche: Canetti's *Crowds and Power*', *Austrian Studies*, 3 (1992), 109-24.

To sum up, while each of these theorists approached the subjects of crowds and mass psychology from a different angle, a number of common themes recur throughout their work: the role of the leader, the crowd as a historical phenomenon, and the distinction between dangerous and valuable mass experience. While they frequently express ideas about the irrationality and affectivity of the crowd familiar from nineteenth-century treatises, often they also present these as positive characteristics. In the following chapters, I investigate the use literary authors of the period make of the figure of the crowd in the context of the theoretical models examined here. Do writers of fiction address the issues raised by crowd theorists or do they have quite different preoccupations of their own? Do they portray the crowd as a purely destructive force or a potential site of community and existential security? What is the function of the leader in their texts, and how do their depictions relate to the political context? Despite the focus of various crowd theorists on the emotional and irrational character of the crowd, they nonetheless write about it in abstract and generalized terms, using specialized technical vocabulary such as 'Ichideal', 'Super-Befriedigung', 'Kollektivseele' and 'Entladung'. Do literary authors exploit specific possibilities of fiction to fill the gaps in understanding about what it means to be part of the crowd left by theoretical texts? Do they, in other words, shed new light on this aspect of fascism?

As Gamper observes, the fact that one text is fictional and another nonfictional does not in itself support a rigid distinction between them. In this study I will demonstrate that works of theory and literature on the crowd not only explore similar

ideas, but that in some cases, most notably that of Weiss's *Der Augenzeuge*, fictional depictions of crowds even appear to paraphrase theoretical claims. Moreover, with regard to the question of whether theoretical knowledge is more 'real' than that of literature, I argue that some theories of mass psychology are just as imaginative as fiction on the subject. Hayden White points out that in contrast to a natural science like physics, in a discipline such as history there is no universal terminological system for the schematic representation of the world without imaginative leaps or substitutions. Although historical scholarship deals with events that really happened, it is also a discipline in which there is no absolute consensus about the nature of the object of study and in which, consequently, no such schematization of language is possible. Writing in such disciplines is thus essentially poetic. The way in which authors (imaginatively) prefigure an object of study affects the claims they make about it.⁵³ The same is true of the crowd theories discussed in this study. In 'Massenpsychologie und Ich-Analyse', for example, Freud illustrates his theory using the examples of the Church and the army. Paul Connerton rightly notes that his selection indicates a very specific interpretation of the concept of the crowd. Both these groups have a formal hierarchy and a definite structure of command. The army is characterized by restraint and discipline, and religious ritual by an atmosphere of quiet and calm. These are features which distinguish them from the noise, indiscipline and violence more commonly associated with crowd behaviour. Connerton echoes Canetti in arguing that the crowd actually challenges

⁵³ Hayden White, *Metahistory* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1973), pp. 32-33.

hierarchical social structures and the distances they cultivate between individuals. If the army can ever be regarded as a crowd, Connerton writes, it is when its order disintegrates.⁵⁴ Freud on the other hand insists that this is precisely when it ceases to be a crowd, because the bonds between the individuals have been broken. His decision to apply the label 'crowd' to these particular collectives allows him to make claims about the nature of crowds which may or may not be reflected in the psychology of other groups. And while the claims of Freud's theory are determined by the very specific groups he chooses to designate as crowds, in *Masse und Macht*, as I discuss in Chapter 5, Canetti sees crowds everywhere, arguably distorting the phenomena he investigates: from his perspective all masses, from armies to protesters, and from forests of trees to fields of corn and piles of stones are either crowds or crowd symbols. He maintains that Schreber's delusions revolve around the desire for power over crowds in order to establish a connection between the psychology of crowd leaders and that of paranoid schizophrenics, and in doing so he gives the impression of engaging in empirical analysis by making extensive use of quotation and paraphrase from Schreber's text. However, this practice threatens to distract the reader from the leaps by which he proceeds from the source text to his own conclusions about it. I suggest that Canetti in fact selectively shapes his reading of Schreber's memoir in order to heighten the elements of crowds and power within it and that certain aspects of his interpretation are

⁵⁴ Paul Connerton, 'Freud and the Crowd', in *Visions and Blueprints: Avant-garde Culture and Radical Politics in Early Twentieth-Century Europe*, ed. by Edward Timms and Peter Collier (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1988), pp. 195-207 (pp. 199-201).

more reminiscent of his characterization of Kien in *Die Blendung* than they are of Schreber himself.

It is also clear that there is an element of storytelling in the theories of mass psychology I have mentioned, in that they narrativize the place of the crowd in history. Broch and Jung, for example, present a neo-Romantic narrative which idealizes the Middle Ages and laments the fragmentation of modern epistemology by the rise of positivism and materialism since the Renaissance. Their theories contribute to a particularly widespread historical metanarrative about the Enlightenment which is found in diverse texts of cultural criticism from the first half of the twentieth century, from Hofmannsthal's 'Ein Brief' (1902) to Theodor Adorno and Max Horkheimer's *Dialektik der Aufklärung* (1947). The fact that their stories reference past events does not necessarily make them truer than fiction. As language is not a neutral medium in the task of representing the past, the act of organizing historical events into a coherent and meaningful story is always a creative one. White argues that historians prefigure the historical landscape according to their personal ideologies, identifying four modes of 'emplotment' in which histories are cast: romance, satire, tragedy and comedy. Each mode corresponds to a different understanding of the speed and manner of historical change and they lead to the production of narratives which connect historical events to one another in varying ways.⁵⁵ The very term 'emplotment' emphasizes the poetic dimension that, he contends, distinguishes historical writing from findings in the natural

⁵⁵ White, p. 9. White takes the four modes of emplotment from the essay 'Archetypal Criticism: Theory of Myths' in Northrop Frye, *Anatomy of Criticism: Four Essays* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1957).

sciences. In that Broch conceives of history as a cycle in which man is captive in the world and must resign himself to historical laws which cannot be changed and at best represent limits within which one can learn to work, his narratives exhibit attributes of both satire and tragedy. Adler, in contrast, who describes history as an evolutionary process in which conflicting social forces are constantly being reconciled, works with a comic conception. Following White's argument, they could each have cast history in an alternative mode of emplotment and their accounts would have changed accordingly. For example, had Adler shared Broch's tragic view of history he could not have so lightly dismissed war and persecution as necessary by-products of human evolution. But as both versions would have been works of imagination, there would have been no valid epistemological grounds for considering one more or less true than the other. I elaborate on these ideas in discussion of Broch's *Massenwahntheorie* in Chapter 4.

In 'Massenpsychologie und Ich-Analyse' Freud freely acknowledges the highly imaginative nature of his take on human anthropological and psychological evolution, accepting that the theory of the primal horde is a '*just so story*' (Freud, XIII, 136). For the most part, however, treatises on crowds and mass psychology are declarative in tone, framing their claims as objective truths. Owing to their manipulation of narrative perspective, the literary depictions of crowds under consideration here achieve a quite different effect. Whereas the authors of theoretical texts adopt a position of transcendental authority in relation to the object of study, in all but one case these fictional stories are told by homodiegetic narrators who are implicated in the crowd

action they describe. The one exception, Canetti's *Die Blendung*, relies heavily on free indirect discourse and thus for the most part also presents the world through the eyes of the novel's characters. Narrative perspective has two important consequences for the depiction of crowd phenomena in these literary works. For one, as the mass experience is filtered through the consciousness of characters with personal insight into it, they capture the sensation of what it is to be part of the crowd in a way not accessible to the more distant viewpoint of abstract theory. At the same time, as inhabitants of the worlds they describe, the perspectives of the various narrators and characters entail epistemological restrictions which can redirect attention from the story to the discourse level of the texts, encouraging the reader to question what it said about the crowd. In particular, in some fictional texts with first-person narration the epistemological limitations of the narrators give rise to unreliability in their crowd representations. As these works are effectively narrated by two voices – the voice of the narrator combines with that of an implied author – they provide pluralistic perspectives on the events they portray rather than making straightforward arguments. The foregrounding of narrative subjectivity contrasts further with the totalizing thrust of theoretical works.

Given that in the literary works I examine the reader sees through the eyes of characters who experience the crowd directly, the concept of empathy is important to several of my readings. The first systematic exploration of empathy was conducted by the psychological philosopher Theodor Lipps, who in his *Grundlegung der Ästhetik* (1903) describes it as a state of mind in which, rather than representing an experience to

oneself as an object, one lives it as subject. The term, which entered the English language as a translation of the German 'Einfühlung', was used in late eighteenth- and nineteenth-century aesthetics to denote the ability to feel oneself into ('sich einfühlen') works of art or the natural world. The Romantics and their precursors emphasized the value of this ability as a palliative to the fragmented modern view of nature. Similarly, I suggest that for several authors of the 1930s an empathetic exploration of social issues provided a counterweight to the rational individualism and scientific abstraction of modern culture.

Psychologists today regard empathy as fundamental to the development of a person's social character, but it is not only a recent preoccupation. In 'Massenpsychologie und Ich-Analyse' Freud hints at its importance for the psychology of identification and ultimately for the relationship between crowd members. While arguing that their common identification with the leader explains the 'affektive Gemeinsamkeit' of individuals in the crowd, he also admits to feeling that there are other factors at work and speculates that further answers might lie in the study of empathy, 'der Vorgang [...] der den größten Anteil an unserem Verständnis für das Ichfremde anderer Personen hat' (Freud, XIII, 118-19). He reiterates his suggestion more forcefully in a footnote to the end of this section of the essay, which is entitled 'Die Identifizierung', writing:

Wir wissen sehr gut, daß wir [...] das Wesen der Identifizierung nicht erschöpft haben und somit am Rätsel der Massenbildung ein Stück unangerührt lassen. Hier müßte eine viel gründlichere und mehr umfassende psychologische Analyse eingreifen. Von der Identifizierung führt ein Weg über die Nachahmung zur

Einführung, das heißt zum Verständnis des Mechanismus, durch den uns überhaupt eine Stellungnahme zu einem anderen Seelenleben ermöglicht wird. (Freud, XIII, 121)

In this context it is also useful to mention the concept of 'Verwandlung', defined by Canetti in *Masse und Macht* as the ability to see or feel oneself as another. To illustrate the idea, Canetti tells the story of an Australian aborigine who could tell when his father was coming to visit him because he would experience a sensation in his own body at the site of an old wound suffered by his father. He also describes the ability of a tribe of African Bushmen to feel sensations experienced by the animals amongst which they lived. By 'Verwandlung' he evidently means something very similar (if not identical) to empathy. Indeed, in the essay 'Der Beruf des Dichters' (1976) he acknowledges the similarity, only stating opaquely that he prefers the term 'Verwandlung' for reasons 'die ich jetzt nicht vorbringen kann'. Canetti sees the capacity for 'Verwandlung' as the source of much that is good in humanity because, like the crowd, it breaks down the distance and bonds of power between individuals. Furthermore, he refers to it as the principal goal of the author:

Dies, meine ich, wäre die eigentliche Aufgabe der Dichter. Sie sollten, dank einer Gabe, die eine allgemeine war, die jetzt zur Atrophie verurteilt ist, die sie sich aber mit allen Mitteln erhalten müßten, die Zugänge *zwischen* den Menschen offenhalten. Sie sollten imstande sein, zu *jedem* zu werden, auch zum Kleinsten, zum Naivsten, zum Ohnmächtigsten. Ihre Lust auf Erfahrung anderer von innen her dürfte nie von den Zwecken bestimmt sein, aus denen unser normales, sozusagen offizielles Leben besteht, sie müßte völlig frei sein von einer Absicht auf Erfolg oder Geltung, eine Leidenschaft für sich, eben die Leidenschaft der Verwandlung. (Canetti, VI, 367)

Here Canetti asserts not only that the *Dichter* must be free to put himself in anyone's shoes, regardless of the moral or practical implications, but also that he has a responsibility to do so if the human capacity for empathy is not to be lost altogether.⁵⁶ In what follows, I draw together Freud's and Canetti's ideas on empathy, mass psychology and authorship, exploring the idea that authors made use of narrative perspective to foster an empathetic epistemology which would replicate the positive dimension of crowd experience – intuitive knowledge and understanding of the other without the desire to objectify and control. Given that various intellectuals of the period believed that the vulnerability of their society to the malevolent mass politics of Nazism resulted in part from the dearth of such knowledge in modern life, this seems a legitimate response to fascism. It is also one for which literary perspectivism is particularly well suited.

Of course, empathy has not always been positively regarded. In the modernist era, most famously in Brecht's dramatic theory, it came to be equated with naively losing oneself in illusion. However, the emphasis on the limitations of subjectivity in the texts I examine stops the reader from becoming lost in the events depicted. Discrepancies between word and deed, perception and reality, the experience of the crowd in the moment and that experience as reflected on after the fact encourage critical reflection on the viewpoints of narrators and characters, preventing the reader from

⁵⁶ For a more extended discussion of the concept of 'Verwandlung' in Canetti's work see Enzo Rutigliano, 'Die Verwandlung des Begriffes der Verwandlung: über den Wandel einer Kategorie der Anti-Macht bei Elias Canetti', in *Tod und Verwandlung in Canettis Masse und Macht*, ed. by John Pattillo-Hess (Vienna: Kunstverein Wien, 1990), pp. 69-77.

indiscriminately adopting what are often highly emotional perspectives. This is the kind of balance between understanding and criticism that Mann promotes in 'Bruder Hitler'. Arguing for the need to gain insight into Hitler's personality and motivation rather than simply dismissing him as evil, he writes:

Liebe und Haß sind große Affekte; aber eben als Affekt unterschätzt man gewöhnlich jenes Verhalten, in dem beide sich aufs eigentümlichste vereinen, nämlich das Interesse. Man unterschätzt damit zugleich seine Moralität. Es ist mit dem Interesse ein selbstdisziplinierter Trieb, es sind humoristisch-asketische Ansätze zum Wiedererkennen, zur Identifikation, zum Solidaritätsbekenntnis verbunden, die ich dem Haß als moralisch überlegen empfinde. (Mann, XII, 846)

The notion of 'Interesse' introduced here incorporates elements necessary to empathy ('Identifikation', 'Solidaritätsbekenntnis') but Mann also insists that any investigation of Hitler's character must be self-disciplined and ironic. The empathy he encourages, then, is not the naive, unintellectual variety described by Lipps. More than 'Einfühlung', it resembles the concept of 'nacherleben' in the hermeneutic philosophy of Wilhelm Dilthey. In *Der Aufbau der geschichtlichen Welt in den Geisteswissenschaften* (1910), Dilthey distinguishes between two modes of knowledge: explanation ('erklären'), the epistemological mode of the natural sciences, and understanding ('verstehen'), the aim of the *Geisteswissenschaften*. Fundamental to understanding is the notion of experience ('Erlebnis'). In 'Die Entstehung der Hermeneutik' (1900), he employs the term 'nacherleben' to describe a form of empathy which operates at one remove from the experience in question and also reflects on it. Crucially, however, rather than being divorced from experience and final in judgement, Dilthey emphasizes that empathetic interpretation is never a completed exercise but a continuous process which moves from

experience to analysis and back again.⁵⁷ In what follows I ask how successfully authors of literary fiction on crowds manage to strike this balance. How do they reconcile the empathetic epistemology characteristic of positive crowd experience with the need to challenge the dangerous and destructive side of the crowd?

The question remains whether the ironic interest advocated by Mann in ‘Bruder Hitler’ was a suitable response to the gravity of the political context. Even Mann himself had doubts about this. In ‘Deutsche Ansprache: Ein Appell an die Vernunft’ (1930) he conceded that there were times when the artist was so oppressed by the pressures of social life that aesthetic ‘play’ was no longer an affordable luxury. Admittedly, as Benjamin observed, the aestheticization of politics was essential to fascist power. Indeed, this is itself a central theme in 1930s crowd fiction. Just as Hitler was a skilled orator supported by a vast propaganda machine, in the texts I consider the leader figure is frequently characterized as an artist whose rhetoric and stagecraft whip the crowd into a state of frenzy. He tells half-truths or lies, omits information selectively, simplifies complex issues, indulges in clichéd language and bases his appeals on emotion. He stylizes himself as a Christ-like saviour, creates myths and deploys propaganda, fostering a narrow, totalitarian outlook in his followers. Benjamin’s polarized opposition of the ‘Ästhetisierung der Politik’ and the ‘Politisierung der Kunst’ (Benjamin, I.ii, 508) leaves little room for the suggestion that there is more than one way to give artistic form to political experience or the idea that the politicization of art can itself incorporate a

⁵⁷ For a detailed defence of Dilthey’s conception of empathy against charges of naivety see Austin Harrington, ‘Dilthey, Empathy and Verstehen: A Contemporary Reappraisal’, *European Journal of Social Theory*, 4 (2001), 311-29.

critical reevaluation of the aesthetic.⁵⁸ Yet, the importance of these works is arguably that in exploring the artistic methods used to obtain political power, and responding with a critical aesthetic of their own, they undermine the strategies fundamental to the corruption of the crowd mind.

⁵⁸ See Martin Jay, “‘The Aesthetic Ideology’ as Ideology: Or, What Does it Mean to Aestheticize Politics?”, *Cultural Critique*, 21 (1992), 41-61. Jay begins his discussion of the aestheticization of politics by challenging ‘the normative notion of the aesthetic it presupposes’ (p. 43).

I

HYPNOSIS AND THE UNCANNY IN THOMAS MANN'S *MARIO UND DER ZAUBERER* (1930)

Mario und der Zauberer, the story of a German family on holiday in the fictional Italian resort of Torre di Venere, is based on the events of Thomas Mann's own family holiday in Forte dei Marmi, near Viareggio, in 1926. Four years earlier, Mussolini and the Partito Nazionale Fascista had come to power in Italy.¹ In a letter to Hugo von Hofmannsthal from Forte dei Marmi, Mann wrote: 'An kleinen Widerwärtigkeiten hat es anfangs auch nicht gefehlt, die mit dem derzeitigen unerfreulichen überspannten und fremdenfeindlichen nationalen Gemütszustand zusammenhängen.'² The novella, written in 1929 when Hitler's influence in Germany was noticeably growing, revisits 'dort empfangene Eindrücke' (Mann, XI, 140). The family's stay in Torre is marked by a number of unpleasant incidents, including a confrontation on the beach with a crowd of hostile Italian tourists. As their holiday is drawing to a close, they attend a performance by the travelling *Zauberünstler* Cipolla, who hypnotizes his audience, making them abandon reason and obey him against their will, until finally he is shot by the waiter Mario. Given the political context of the story, Cipolla's tyrannical power over the crowd has been widely read as a symbolic representation of fascist rule.

¹ On the importance of Italian Fascism in the novella see Klaus Müller-Salget, 'Der Tod in Torre di Venere: Spiegelung und Deutung des italienischen Faschismus in Thomas Manns *Mario und der Zauberer*', *Arcadia*, 18 (1983), 50-65.

² Thomas Mann, *Briefwechsel mit Autoren*, ed. by Hans Wysling (Frankfurt am Main: Fischer, 1988), pp. 215-16. The letter is dated 7 September 1926.

Owing to the importance of *Mario und der Zauberer* for Mann's changing political outlook during the Weimar period, and the conflicting remarks he made regarding the political and ethical function of the text, it has been the subject of a large amount of scholarship seeking to elucidate the precise significance of the relation between Cipolla and the crowd, and thus to establish what the novella says about fascism. Specific aspects treated in the secondary literature include possible influences on Mann's characterization of the 'magician', from Cesare Gabrielli, the celebrated hypnotist of the 1920s,³ to a silver-tongued monk (also called Cipolla) in Boccaccio's *Decameron*;⁴ the resilience of *bürgerlich*-humanist reason in the face of irrationalism and violence;⁵ the psychology of domination and subservience;⁶ and the influence of Schopenhauer's and Nietzsche's theories of will on Mann's depiction of Cipolla's crowd.⁷ As noted above (pp. 5-6), several critical readings of the novella also make heuristic use of Freud's 'Massenpsychologie und Ich-Analyse' and Le Bon's *Psychologie des foules*, both of which discuss the role of hypnosis in the power of leaders over crowds.

³ Lore Hergershausen, 'Au sujet de *Mario und der Zauberer* de Thomas Mann: Cesare Gabrielli – prototype de Cipolla?', *Études germaniques*, 23 (1968), 268-75.

⁴ Percy Matenko, 'The Prototype of Cipolla in *Mario und der Zauberer*', *Italica*, 31 (1954), 133-34; Hans Wagener, 'Mann's Cipolla and Earlier Prototypes of the Magician', *Modern Language Notes*, 84 (1969), 800-02.

⁵ Hartmut Böhme, 'Thomas Mann: *Mario und der Zauberer*: Position des Erzählers und Psychologie der Herrschaft', *Orbis Litterarum*, 30 (1975), 286-316.

⁶ R.C. Speirs, 'Some Psychological Observations on Domination, Acquiescence and Revolt in Thomas Mann's *Mario und der Zauberer*', *Forum for Modern Language Studies*, 16 (1980), 319-30; Allan J. McIntyre, 'Determinism in *Mario and the Magician*', *Germanic Review*, 52 (1977), 205-16.

⁷ Manfred Dierks, 'Die Aktualität der positivistischen Methode: am Beispiel Thomas Mann', in *Stationen der Thomas-Mann-Forschung: Aufsätze seit 1970*, ed. by Hermann Kurzke (Würzburg: Königshausen & Neumann, 1985), pp. 190-209.

The connections these readings raise will not be overlooked in the present chapter. However, in my analysis of the relationship between the crowd and the leader figure in *Mario und der Zauberer* I want to explore an aspect of the text that they undervalue. Perhaps because understanding of the psychological mechanisms of hypnosis had greatly increased by the late nineteenth century, thanks especially to pioneering research by Ambroise-Auguste Liébault and Hippolyte Bernheim in Nancy, and Jean-Martin Charcot at the Salpêtrière in Paris (Freud worked with Charcot during a research trip to Paris in 1885-86), previous studies comparing *Mario* with the theories of Freud and Le Bon have tended to underrate the dark, mystical side of Cipolla's hypnotic power.⁸ Yet whatever the scientific view of hypnosis by the time Mann came to write his crowd novella, as Alan Bance points out, in his literary representation the magician's hold over the crowd also echoes Romantic fascination with the occult.⁹ Certainly, while the eye contact with audience members on which Cipolla's control rests reflects the clinical practice of early dynamic psychiatrists including Freud, it also recalls the Romantic figure of the fatal man who fixes his victims with a penetrating gaze, such as the Armenian in Schiller's *Der Geisterseher* (1787-89) or the *Doppelgänger* figures of the Major and Alban in E.T.A. Hoffmann's *Der Magnetiseur* (1814). Writing more generally of Mann's post-war work, including *Mario und der Zauberer*, Georg Lukács noted a 'reizvolle Mischung von phantastischer oder halbphantastischer Totalität und

⁸ Henri F. Ellenberger traces the development of ideas about hypnosis in the field of dynamic psychiatry from Mesmer to Charcot in *The Discovery of the Unconscious: The History and Evolution of Dynamic Psychiatry* (New York: Basic Books, 1970), pp. 53-181.

⁹ Bance, 'The Narrator in Thomas Mann's *Mario und der Zauberer*', *Modern Language Review*, 82 (1987), 382-98 (p. 387).

erdgebunden evidenten Einzelheiten' which for him recalled Adelbert von Chamisso, Hoffmann and Gottfried Keller.¹⁰ Lore Hergershausen comments: 'L'impressionante figure de Cipolla [...]: difforme, grimaçante, diabolique, elle semble, par moments, être sortie d'un conte d'E.T.A. Hoffmann.'¹¹

Bance also suggests that in Cipolla's name and in Mann's use of the phrase 'Sand in die Augen streuen' (Mann, VIII, 696) to describe how he deceives the crowd about the dangerous nature of his act, there is an echo of the villain Coppola in another of Hoffmann's novellas, *Der Sandmann* (1816). Furthermore, he notes that it was *Der Sandmann* which provided Freud with the inspiration for his 1919 essay 'Das Unheimliche'.¹² While he does not pursue this connection, I wish to do so here. Cipolla's hypnotic power is described as uncanny on multiple occasions in *Mario und der Zauberer*, while the evil eye – a supernatural gaze believed to inflict harm – is prominent among the examples of uncanny phenomena listed in Freud's essay. In what follows, as well as discussing the analogy between hypnosis and fascist power, I relate the Freudian notion of the uncanny as a symptom of the return of the repressed to Mann's depiction of Cipolla's crowd. On the one hand my reading of the novella is intended to complement those studies which connect it with 'Massenpsychologie und Ich-Analyse', in which Freud actually cites 'Das Unheimliche' with specific reference to the uncanniness of hypnosis and its role in crowd formation. On the other, the uncanniness of the narrator's experience in *Mario und der Zauberer* also contributes to

¹⁰ Georg Lukács, *Thomas Mann* (Berlin: Aufbau, 1953), p. 33.

¹¹ Hergershausen, p. 268.

¹² Bance, 'The Narrator in Thomas Mann's *Mario und der Zauberer*', p. 387.

an important distinction between Mann's fictional crowd portrayal and Freud's theory of mass psychology. Conceptual similarities between the texts notwithstanding, at the discourse level they are presented very differently. Both the novella and the theory operate with a tripartite framework of leader, crowd, and observer, but whereas in 'Massenpsychologie und Ich-Analyse' the position of the observer/analyst outside and above the crowd is akin to that of an omniscient heterodiegetic literary narrator, in *Mario und der Zauberer* the observer is a homodiegetic narrator, implicated in the story he tells and unable to provide a clear explanation for the behaviour of the crowd. This chapter seeks to demonstrate that the uncanny, in that it represents a crisis of the self, an unsettling of the rational faculties, is central to his struggle for understanding.

Cipolla and the Crowd

While the hypnosis of Cipolla's crowd provides the central focus of *Mario und der Zauberer*, the main event is set against a very crowded background. When the narrator and his family arrive in Torre di Venere, the Italian holiday season is in full swing and their enjoyment is spoiled somewhat by the effects of mass tourism. Once an idyllic escape for 'Freunde des unverweltlichten Elementes', the town is now overrun with holidaymakers: the beach 'wimmelt von zeterndem, zankendem, jauchzendem Badevolk', the narrator bemoans the 'Gedränge' in the promenade cafés and the dining hall of the family's hotel is 'restlos besetzt' (Mann, VIII, 658-60). Moreover, the influence of fascist collectivism is clearly discernible: the atmosphere is characterized by

an all-pervasive nationalist sentiment and it seems clear to the narrator 'daß Politisches umging, die Idee der Nation im Spiele war' (Mann, VIII, 666).

The political mood impinges on family life in a series of unsettling incidents. On the first evening of their stay, for example, they are refused a table on the veranda of their hotel's restaurant because the area is reserved for 'unsere Kundschaft', 'ai nostri clienti' (Mann, VIII, 660), meaning that it is exclusively for the use of Italian guests. This nationalistic tendency is supplemented by a climate of irrationality. Barely have the family settled in at the hotel when a Roman noblewoman, whose quarters are located near theirs, demands that they be moved because the youngest child exhibits the final traces of a bout of whooping cough. The princess fears for the health of her own children, superstitiously believing the illness to be 'akustisch ansteckend' (Mann VIII, 661). Although a doctor is called and declares the cough no longer contagious, flying in the face of logic the management nonetheless insists that the family move to an annexe of the hotel. The doctor is a significant figure in that he is presented as a 'loyaler und aufrechter Diener der Wissenschaft' (Mann, VIII, 662), a spokesperson for science and reason. He is called again later when an Italian boy named Fuggièro has his toe nipped by a crab while playing on the beach and causes a dreadful fuss. On this occasion the doctor again demonstrates his 'wissenschaftlicher Geradsinn' (Mann, VIII, 665-66), dismissing the case as trivial and advising that the boy should carry on playing. Instead Fuggièro is melodramatically carried from the beach on a stretcher by a large entourage. It is instructive to compare the narrator's attitude here, as he pours scorn on the crowd,

aligning himself with the enlightened doctor, and his later acquiescence in the mass hysteria at Cipolla's show. There is a complacency in his sense of superiority which later proves to be unjustified.

A further incident occurs at the beach, where the narrator has already observed an atmosphere of tension between the Italian middle class and foreign visitors. Even the children are unnaturally patriotic, and parents intervene in their disputes with 'Redensarten von der Größe und Würde Italiens' (Mann, VIII, 666). The tension comes to a head one day when his eight-year-old daughter removes her swimming costume in order to wash the sand from it, an act that is met with wholly disproportionate outrage by the crowd of Italians who gather to berate him and his wife. The children jeer, Fuggièro whistles, and a loud, threatening babble of conversation arises among the adults. According to one pompous self-appointed representative of the people, the blunder is a 'dankvergessener und beleidigender Mißbrauch der Gastfreundschaft Italiens' (Mann, VIII, 667) and 'Nicht allein Buchstabe und Geist der öffentlichen Badevorschriften, sondern zugleich auch die Ehre seines Landes seien freventlich verletzt' (Mann, VIII, 668). It is not clear whether the narrator is reporting the man's words or paraphrasing them for bathetic effect. In either case, the gross overreaction to such a trivial offence indicated by the overblown language further illustrates the irrationalism and chauvinism that have infiltrated Italian life.

If in the early part of the story the crowd embodies the growing irrational collectivism of Italian society under Fascism, the narrator's description of these events

prepares the way for the second part of the novella, in which Cipolla exploits the forces of irrationality, moulding his audience into a mindless crowd. In his depiction of the performance Mann allegorizes the essence of fascist power: the rule of the many by the one. However, whereas in the first section of the narrative various references to the Fascist regime in Italy, the narrator's account of the Italian national character and his focus on the petty bourgeoisie as the primary carrier of nationalist aggression suggest that the behaviour he observes can be explained on national, cultural and socio-economic grounds, when it comes to the crucial part of the plot – Cipolla's performance – no such straightforward distinctions can be drawn. In fact, even early in the novella the narrator's remarks betray that beneath a veneer of superiority he is capable of the same kind of generic ethnic prejudice for which he criticizes the Italians: he condescendingly compares the southern mentality with the 'tieferen, uneinfachere Bedürfnisse der nordischen Seele' (Mann, VIII, 664). And as it turns out, Cipolla's crowd is made up of various nationalities and classes: the hall in which he holds his performance is full of local workers, guests from several hotels of different standing and people the family recognize from the beach and the town, speaking a variety of languages. The narrator sums this up by saying: 'ganz Torre war da' (Mann, VIII, 673).

Although the hall is in the working-class quarter of town, recalling Hitler's preference early in his political career for giving speeches in such districts (Ian Kershaw calls him 'the beerhall agitator'), the workers in Cipolla's audience are by no means his only victims. It is true that he specifically targets them at the beginning of the evening:

‘er hütete sich, den vornehmen Teil seines Publikums zu belästigen. Er hielt sich ans Volk’ (Mann, VIII, 681-82). Yet, as the show progresses, representatives of other classes, such as Signora Angiolieri, the owner of the pension to which the narrator and his family have decamped following their ignominious departure from the hotel, and a gentleman from Rome also fall prey to the hypnotist’s power. As for the narrator, a cosmopolitan intellectual, though he senses that there is something sinister about Cipolla’s act and knows he should leave the performance, he somehow finds himself unable to do so. The fact that the hall has only a parterre and no boxes (although it does have both standing and seating room) brings the members of the different classes closer together physically in a way that symbolizes their common state of mind during the evening. It should also be noted that the petty bourgeoisie, generally considered the primary bearers of fascism, as in Reich’s *Die Massenpsychologie des Faschismus* or in Horváth’s novel *Der ewige Spießker* (1930), and whom the narrator finds so objectionable early in the novella, have already left Torre for the season by the time Cipolla comes to town. Whereas their continued presence might have appeared to exonerate other classes from responsibility for the irrationality of the crowd, through their departure Mann avoids encouraging complacency in the working class and, above all, the members of the *Bürgertum*, as represented by the narrator.¹³

¹³ See Lukács, p. 35: ‘wieder zeigt [Mann] in Vielfarbigkeit die verschiedensten Formen der Hilflosigkeit des deutschen Bürgers der Hypnose der faschistischen Macht gegenüber.’ According to Lukács the gentleman from Rome anticipates ‘Die Wehrlosigkeit jener Menschen aus dem deutschen Bürgertum, die Hitler nicht wollten, ihm jedoch über ein Jahrzehnt widerstandslos gehorchten’.

Similarly, while the narrator suggests that the Italians and the foreigners in the crowd view Cipolla differently – ‘die Landsleute des Cavaliere mochten sich bei alldem harmlos in ihrem Elemente fühlen und zu Späßen aufgelegt bleiben; den von außen Kommenden mutete die Mischung beklemmend an’ (Mann, VIII, 688) – at the height of his power, as he leads a large number of the crowd members in an orgy of dance, it is specifically noted that an Englishwoman leaves her seat to join in without even being commanded to do so. Just as no single class can be blamed for events, contrary to what the narrator suggests, nor can any particular nationality. Commentators have stressed that *Mario und der Zauberer* is not merely a story about Italian Fascism, but also a warning about similar developments Mann witnessed in Germany towards the end of the 1920s. Henry Hatfield connects the dance orgy in which Cipolla leads his crowd with the phrase ‘Veitstanz des Fanatismus’, which Mann used in ‘Deutsche Ansprache’ to describe National Socialism. Anthony Grenville suggests that the narrator’s holiday experience is ‘a prophetic anticipation, in microcosm, of the Nuremburg rally mentality’.¹⁴ Indeed, it was not only in the Italian adulation of Mussolini (mentioned in *Mario und der Zauberer* as the *Duce*) in 1926 that Mann experienced the phenomenon of crowds in thrall to a charismatic leader, but also as early as 1923, in Munich, which

¹⁴ Henry Hatfield, ‘Thomas Mann’s *Mario und der Zauberer*: An Interpretation’, *Germanic Review*, 21 (1946), 306-12 (p. 310); Anthony Grenville, ‘Idealism versus Materialism in the Representation of History in Literature: The Dictator Figure in Thomas Mann’s *Mario und der Zauberer* and Brecht’s *Der unaufhaltsame Aufstieg des Arturo Ui*’, *Journal of European Studies*, 17 (1987), 77-105 (p. 82). Writing of Mann’s decision to break off work on his Joseph novel in order to write *Mario*, Grenville (p. 83) also points out: ‘The story’s warning of the Nazi menace, which would hardly have seemed urgent in 1927-28, the most stable years of the Weimar Republic, was acutely valid in 1929-30, precisely the period when the Nazi tide began to gain momentum, leading up to its spectacular electoral success in September 1930.’

he designated ‘die Stadt Hitlers, des deutschen Faschistenführers, die Stadt des Hakenkreuzes’ (Mann, XIII, 288). The argument that he saw fascism as more than just an Italian problem is supported by the diverse composition of Cipolla’s crowd.

Hypnosis in *Mario* and ‘Massenpsychologie’

The fact that the behaviour of Cipolla’s crowd cannot be explained solely by nationality or class is strong justification for the significant number of critical readings of *Mario und der Zauberer* based on the theories of Le Bon and Freud, which advance normative psychological principles. As McClelland observes, even though the thrust of Le Bon’s thought is elitist and anti-democratic, and while in reality he believed that certain kinds of people are more likely to join the crowd than others, the overriding implication of his theory of the mental unity of crowds is that everyone possesses the psychological characteristics necessary to become a member.¹⁵ As for Freud, while he challenged Le Bon’s assumption that the unconscious psyche is identical in all individuals and thus did not see it in itself as the source of crowd unity, he did believe that each individual psyche incorporates repressed, unconscious elements which come into play in the crowd. Rephrasing Le Bon in psychoanalytic terms, he wrote:

Es genügte uns zu sagen, das Individuum komme in der Masse unter Bedingungen, die ihm gestatten, die Verdrängungen seiner unbewußten Triebregungen abzuwerfen. Die anscheinend neuen Eigenschaften, die es dann zeigt, sind eben die Äußerungen dieses Unbewußten, in dem ja alles Böse der Menschenseele in der Anlage enthalten ist; das Schwinden des Gewissens oder Verantwortlichkeitsgefühls unter diesen Umständen macht unserem Verständnis

¹⁵ McClelland, p. 11.

keine Schwierigkeit. Wir hatten längst behauptet, der Kern des sogenannten Gewissens sei 'soziale Angst'. (Freud, XIII, 79)

As the second half of the quotation implies, Freud also shared Le Bon's view that social constraints on behaviour disintegrate in the crowd and that this releases previously repressed drives. In *Mario und der Zauberer*, although Cipolla takes longer to overpower individuals of superior social standing and education, ultimately the gentleman from Rome takes as much pleasure in abandoning restraint, giving in to 'eine trunkene Auflösung der kritischen Widerstände' (Mann, VIII, 700) and joining the dance orgy as the magician's other victims do.

As well as addressing the change in personality, loss of inhibition and regressive behaviour of Cipolla's audience, issues examined in previous comparisons of *Mario und der Zauberer* with 'Massenpsychologie und Ich-Analyse' and *Psychologie des Foules* include the feelings of power experienced by individuals in the crowd, the psychology of the leader-crowd relationship, the panic which engulfs the crowd after Cipolla has been shot, and comparisons between his character and the 'Urvater', the ruler of the primal horde. Above all other points, however, these analyses focus on Cipolla's hypnotic power over the crowd as the main link between Mann's novella and crowd theory. Hartmut Böhme writes: 'Hypnose ist die wesentliche Technik der Herrschaftsausübung Cipollas.'¹⁶ For Gert Sautermeister it is the 'Grundstoff der Novelle'.¹⁷ Bernd Widdig

¹⁶ Böhme, p. 307.

¹⁷ Sautermeister, p. 109.

states: ‘Die Hypnose wird in beiden Texten [Mann’s and Freud’s] als zentrales Element einer Fremdbestimmung hervorgehoben.’¹⁸

At the beginning of the second half of Cipolla’s performance, the narrator declares him to be ‘der stärkste Hypnotiseur, der mir in meinem Leben vorgekommen’ (Mann, VIII, 696). Long before this point, certain details in his description of the magician reveal to the reader that Cipolla is using hypnosis to control the crowd. One of the first things the narrator mentions about Cipolla’s appearance when he runs on stage to open his act are his ‘stechenden Augen’, which receive a second mention soon after as his ‘kleinen strengen Augen’ (Mann, VIII, 674-75). The trance-inducing gaze, perhaps the defining element of hypnosis in the popular imagination, is central to his psychic power. Cipolla’s first victim is a young local man who incurs the magician’s anger by heckling him. He calls this *giovanotto* up to the stage and forces him to stick his tongue out as far as he can at the audience, although the man does not want to do so because it would demonstrate bad manners. The narrator reports: ‘[Cipolla] sah ihn an, wobei seine stechenden Augen tiefer in die Höhlen zu sinken schienen’ (Mann, VIII, 677). Immediately the young man appears to fall into a trance, acquiescing in the command and then returning to his position ‘mit nichtssagendem Gesicht’ (Mann, VIII, 677). Likewise, when during a later encounter Cipolla makes the *giovanotto* writhe in pain, as if suffering from colic, the narrator reports:

er [sah] ihm eigentümlich in die Augen. [...] [seine] Augen schienen, in die des jungen Menschen getaucht, über ihren Tränensäcken zugleich welk und

¹⁸ Widdig, p. 134.

brennend zu werden, – es waren sehr sonderbare Augen, und man verstand, daß sein Partner nicht nur aus Mannesstolz die seinen nicht von ihnen lösen mochte. (Mann, VIII, 684)

Again the young man falls into a mindless, trance-like state: ‘Er sah den Cavaliere mit offenem Munde an, und dieser Mund lächelte in seiner Offenheit verstört und kläglich’ (Mann, VIII, 685). After Cipolla brings him round again, he smiles in confusion, as if he does not know what has just happened. Another young man, identified by the narrator as the audience member most susceptible to Cipolla’s will, falls under his control at a mere glance – ‘sobald ihn der Meister nur mit dem Blicke anfuhr’ (Mann, VIII, 701) – and seems prepared to do anything he is told, no matter how absurd.

As he tries to make sense of Cipolla’s hold over the crowd, and indeed over himself, the narrator asks: ‘Unterlagen wir einer Faszination, die von diesem auf so sonderbare Weise sein Brot verdienenden Manne auch neben dem Programm, auch zwischen den Kunststücken ausging und unsere Entschlüsse lähmte?’ (Mann, VIII, 695). His speculation about the fascination exerted by the magician is reminiscent of remarks made by Le Bon in *Psychologie des Foules*, when he refers to the inexplicable dimension of the leader’s power as his ‘prestige’. This quality he describes as follows:

Le prestige est en réalité une sorte de domination qu’exerce sur notre esprit un individu, une œuvre ou une doctrine. Cette fascination paralyse toutes nos facultés critiques et remplit notre âme d’étonnement et de respect. Les sentiments alors provoqués sont inexplicables, comme tous les sentiments, mais probablement du même ordre que la fascination subie par un sujet magnétisé.¹⁹

¹⁹ Gustave Le Bon, *Psychologie des Foules* (Paris: Alcan, 1905), p. 79.

Like Mann's narrator, Le Bon refers to the hold of the leader over the crowd as 'fascination'. He also draws an analogy between the psychology of fascination and the hold of a hypnotist over his subject. Freud goes a step further, claiming that the psychological process by which the crowd leader takes the place of the ego-ideal for its members is the same as that of hypnosis:

Die Übereinstimmungen beider sind augenfällig. Dieselbe demütige Unterwerfung, Gefügigkeit, Kritiklosigkeit gegen den Hypnotiseur wie gegen das geliebte Objekt. Dieselbe Aufsaugung der eigenen Initiative; kein Zweifel, der Hypnotiseur ist an die Stelle des Ichideals getreten. (Freud, XIII, 126)

Another similarity between *Mario und der Zauberer* and Freud's assessment of the leader-crowd relation in 'Massenpsychologie' relates to Freud's claim that the bond between the individual crowd members relies on the relationship of each one with the leader as ego-ideal. In Mann's novella, after the narrator's initial description of the mass of people gathered in the hall awaiting Cipolla's arrival, there is little description of the crowd as a whole. Instead, the story is constructed around a series of episodes in which different individuals interact with the magician on a one-to-one basis. He hypnotizes the *giovannotto*, Signora Angiolieri, the gentleman from Rome and a number of less prominent characters in turn. Their involvement in the crowd is mediated through their personal connections with him.

Operating as they do with theoretical models of crowd psychology developed in an age when knowledge about hypnosis had progressed beyond superstition, Böhme, Widdig, Zeller and others treat Cipolla's hypnosis of the crowd first and foremost as a psychological phenomenon and in doing so often divest it of its supernatural

implications. In some cases, passing mention is made of these: Maria Tatar, for example, notes that Freud himself refers to the mysterious side of hypnosis, but the observation is not followed up.²⁰ Böhme refers to the occult dimension of Cipolla's performance but does so only concessively – 'Th. Mann bringt die Hypnose keineswegs *nur* im [sic] Zusammenhang mit Okkultismus' (my emphasis) – before moving on to stress the psychological significance of his act with reference to questions of 'Befehlen und Gehorchen', 'Willensfreiheit', 'Fremdbestimmung' and 'Führer-Autorität'.²¹ Sautermeister is an exception: he argues that hypnosis is a potent symbol for the workings of fascism because it represents the 'Verrätselung und Mystifizierung eines Vorgangs durch Magie'. Here he alludes to the view of Hitler which understands him as a god, wielding magical influence over the German people – a perspective on fascism which comes across strongly in the depiction of Cipolla's crowd.²² Building on this interpretation, I maintain that the supernatural side of Cipolla's performance must be taken into consideration when comparing Mann's work with that of crowd theorists.

The mystery of Cipolla's power is anticipated in the ominous tone with which the novella begins – 'Die Erinnerung an Torre di Venere ist atmosphärisch unangenehm. Ärger, Gereiztheit, Überspannung lagen von Anfang an in der Luft' – and in the narrator's comment that, with hindsight, the way events played out seemed to have been 'vorgezeichnet und im Wesen der Dinge liegend' (Mann, VIII, 658). These lines not only evaluate Cipolla's crowd as a natural consequence of events earlier in the narrative

²⁰ Tatar, pp. 262-63.

²¹ Böhme, p. 308.

²² Sautermeister, p. 108.

but also contain the suggestion that the events of the holiday were fated, controlled by some agency beyond the range of ordinary understanding. Attempting to explain why he did not take his family away from Torre when the political climate became clear to him, the narrator explicitly describes the mood there as uncanny: ‘Soll man “abreisen”, wenn das Leben sich ein bißchen unheimlich, nicht ganz geheuer oder etwas peinlich und kränkend anläßt?’ (Mann, VIII, 669). Later he characterizes Cipolla’s crowd as the culmination of all the family’s unsettling experiences prior to his show: ‘dieser Saal bildete den Sammelpunkt aller Merkwürdigkeit, Nichtgeheuerlichkeit und Gespanntheit, womit uns die Atmosphäre des Aufenthaltes geladen schien; dieser Mann [...] dünkete uns die Personifikation von alledem’ (Mann, VIII, 695). He also uses the word ‘unheimlich’ again to describe Cipolla’s manipulation of the *giovanotto*. He prefaces his account of the young man’s contortions with the statement: ‘Und dann geschah abermals etwas Merkwürdiges, was jene Überlegenheit in ein unheimliches Licht setzte’ (Mann, VIII, 684). And he summarizes the magician’s hypnotic performance as follows: ‘[man] bekam vom Unscheinbaren bis zum Ungeheuerlichen alles zu sehen, was dies natürlich-unheimliche Feld an Phänomenen zu bieten hat’ (Mann, VIII, 697). The hyphenated adjective indicates uncertainty as to whether the magician’s power is a natural psychological phenomenon or a supernatural one.

Certainly, Cipolla is no normal hypnotist. As well as being able to control the behaviour of the audience, he displays clairvoyant ability. He discerns that the *giovanotto* is feeling unwell because he has drunk a large quantity of acerbic wine that

evening before coming to the show, divines Signora Angiolieri's past station as the companion of the famous actress Eleonora Duse, and can tell that Mario has troubles in love. Of course, such charlatans generally owe their knowledge to psychological insight and listening to gossip, and the narrator of *Mario und der Zauberer* retains a degree of scepticism about the magician's apparent power. Even so, he acknowledges that it seems to exceed what is rationally explicable, concluding: 'ich habe gar keinen Grund, Fähigkeiten, die ihm vor unseren Augen zum Verhängnis wurden, rationalistisch zu verdächtigen' (Mann, VIII, 694). Further to this, there are references to Cipolla's 'Dämonie' (Mann, VIII, 697) and his 'dämonische Mächte', while Ronald Speirs has compared his appearance – his physical deformity and his hair, swept forward and parted in such a way as to give the impression of horns – with that of Goethe's Mephistopheles.²³ Indeed, 'Dämon' and 'das Dämonische' are concepts frequently employed by Goethe. In terms which strongly anticipate Mann's characterization of Cipolla, in Book 20 of *Dichtung und Wahrheit* (1811-33) he writes of certain individuals in whom the power of the demonic is particularly developed and who wield great power over the crowd:

Es sind nicht immer die vorzüglichsten Menschen, weder an Geist noch an Talenten, selten durch Herzensgüte sich empfehend; aber eine ungeheure Kraft geht von ihnen aus, und sie üben eine ungläubliche Gewalt über alle Geschöpfe [...]. Alle vereinten sittlichen Kräfte vermögen nichts gegen sie; vergebens, daß der hellere Teil der Menschen sie als Betrogene oder als Betrüger verdächtig machen will, die Masse wird von ihnen angezogen.²⁴

²³ Speirs, *Mann: Mario und der Zauberer* (London: Grant and Cutler, 1990), p. 39.

²⁴ Johann Wolfgang von Goethe, *Werke: Hamburger Ausgabe*, ed. by Erich Trunz, 14 vols (Munich: Beck, 1981), X: *Autobiographische Schriften II*, p. 177. Further references to this edition are given after

While the ugly, embittered Cipolla might seem an unlikely candidate for leadership, the crowd is mysteriously compelled to obey him. When he hypnotizes Signora Angiolieri, calling her to him and luring her away from her husband like a lover, the seduction is described at first as ‘rührende und geisterhafte Komik’, then as ‘pure Behexung’ and also as ‘böser Zauber’ (Mann, VIII, 699). His gaze as he hypnotizes her is a ‘Geisterhafter und fataler Anblick!’ (Mann, VIII, 699).

With his clairvoyance and his terrible gaze, Cipolla not only recalls Mephisto, but also uncanny characters from Romantic fiction such as the Armenian in Schiller’s fragmentary novel *Der Geisterseher*, which Mann called a ‘prachtvoller Sensationsroman’ (Mann, IX, 928) in his ‘Versuch über Schiller’ (1955) and which may have been a source of inspiration for *Der Tod in Venedig* (1912).²⁵ *Der Geisterseher* is the story of a young prince residing in Venice with his entourage who becomes the object of an elaborate plot to convert him to Catholicism. Much of the first half of the novel describes the attempt of a charlatan occultist to swindle the prince by promising to summon the ghost of his dead friend. Implicated in these events is the mysterious figure of the Armenian, a ‘schreckliches Wesen’ capable of unfathomable deeds.²⁶ Like Cipolla the Armenian has a ‘schrecklicher Blick’ (Schiller, V, 65). Also similarly to Mann’s magician, his power over the prince comes from his apparently supernatural

quotations in the text. See also H.B. Nisbet, “‘Das Dämonische’”: On the Logic of Goethe’s Demonology’, *Forum for Modern Language Studies*, 7 (1971), 259-81.

²⁵ For a detailed comparison of *Der Geisterseher* and *Der Tod in Venedig* see Lida Kirchberger, ‘Death in Venice and the Eighteenth Century’, *Monatshefte*, 58 (1966), 321-34 (pp. 327-33).

²⁶ Friedrich Schiller, *Sämtliche Werke*, ed. by Gerhard Fricke and Herbert G. Göpfert, 5 vols (Munich: Hanser, 1959; repr. 1993), V, p. 76. Further references to this edition are given after quotations in the text.

knowledge about him. On their first encounter, he tells the prince of the death of his cousin, which is only taking place at that moment in a faraway land. Schiller modelled the Armenian on Count Alessandro di Cagliostro, the alias of Giuseppe Balsamo, an alchemist, magician and hypnotist who attained great fame among European high society in the eighteenth century.²⁷ Andreas Bässler suggests that *Mario und der Zauberer* also alludes directly to Cagliostro when the narrator introduces Cipolla with the observation: ‘Vielleicht mehr als irgendwo ist in Italien das achtzehnte Jahrhundert noch lebendig und mit ihm der Typus des Scharlatans, des marktschreierischen Possenreißers, der für diese Epoche so charakteristisch war’ (Mann, VIII, 674).²⁸ Cipolla also reminds Bance of Cagliostro.²⁹ At the end of the first part of *Der Geisterseher* the prince engages in a long dialogue with his companion, the Count O, in which he seeks to provide a rational explanation for the necromancy of the Armenian, though this does not dispel the dark atmosphere of the story, enhanced by the threatening depiction of Venice and a series of shadowy conspiratorial characters. Just as Mann’s narrator at first dismisses Cipolla as a mere ‘Gaukler’ (Mann, VIII, 676) but is subsequently overcome by curiosity to see what he will do next, despite his rationalization of the Armenian’s power, the encounter awakens in Schiller’s prince a taste for the supernatural. Seeking to justify his failure to leave Cipolla’s show as soon as he realized that something was

²⁷ Matthias Luserke-Jaqui (ed.), *Schiller-Handbuch: Leben – Werk – Wirkung* (Stuttgart and Weimar: Metzler, 2005), p. 312.

²⁸ Andreas Bässler, ‘Cagliostro als Menetekel des Verführers in Goethes Lustspiel *Der Groß-Cophta* (1791)’, *Neophilologus*, 95 (2010), 267-89 (p. 284).

²⁹ Bance, ‘The Political Becomes Personal: *Disorder and Early Sorrow* and *Mario and the Magician*’, in *The Cambridge Companion to Thomas Mann*, ed. by Ritchie Robertson (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2002), pp. 107-18 (p. 112).

amiss, Mann's narrator claims: 'Wir blieben auch deshalb, weil der Aufenthalt uns merkwürdig geworden war, und weil Merkwürdigkeit ja in sich selbst einen Wert bedeutet' (Mann, VIII, 669). Displaying a similar interest in dark and mysterious occurrences, in the second half of *Der Geisterseher* the prince is driven by an impulse 'der ihn immer zu allem, was nicht begriffen werden soll, mit unwiderstehlichem Reize hinzog' (Schiller, V, 108).

A further parallel is with Hoffmann's novella *Der Magnetiseur*, in which the menacing mesmerist Alban hypnotizes Marie, the daughter of a baron in whose home he is a guest, bending her to his will and, it is implied, ultimately causing her death. A friend of the baron's son Ottmar, when Marie develops a nervous illness, Alban is pressed by the family to use his skills in mesmerism to heal her. Alban has a reputation as a skilled doctor and his magnetic cure is successful where all other methods fail. Yet instead of the gratitude the baron knows he should feel towards him, he feels only unease and repulsion, calling him 'mein feindlicher Dämon'. Like Cipolla and the Armenian, Alban has a striking and ominous gaze: there are references to his 'große pechschwarze Augen', his 'schwarze feurige Augen', and to his 'ernster durchdringender Blick', which makes Marie feel she must do anything he commands.³⁰ He is also said to have 'ein Aug' wie Mars' (Hoffmann, 176) – a reference to *Hamlet*, III iv 57: 'An eye like Mars to threaten and command'. Furthermore, he reminds the baron of a mysterious figure from his youth in the military – a major with equally captivating

³⁰ E.T.A. Hoffmann, *Fantasie- und Nachtstücke*, ed. by Walter Müller-Seidel (Munich: Winkler, 1960; repr. 1976), pp. 163, 165. Further references to this edition are given after quotations in the text.

black eyes, from which it was impossible to tear one's gaze away and which seemed to compel others to act according to his will. Whereas the allusion to Cagliostro is implicit in *Der Geisterseher*, in *Der Magnetiseur* the baron explicitly compares Alban to the celebrated occultist on more than one occasion. Just as Mann's narrator has doubts about the extent of Cipolla's knowledge but ultimately concedes that his powers are beyond the ordinary, the baron's suspicion that Alban is a charlatan does nothing to ease his sense of foreboding about him. His uneasiness is proved justified when it is revealed that Alban has been exploiting his access to Marie to develop his hold over her mind, to the point where, although she fears him, she feels that it is futile to resist his will. Her ambivalence is recalled in Mann's novella. Despite Cipolla's power over the crowd, the narrator remarks: 'Auch hatte ich nicht den Eindruck, daß der Künstler bei seinem Publikum beliebt war' (Mann, VIII, 688). Alban describes his control over Marie as 'das gänzliche Hinaustreten aus sich selbst und das Leben in der höheren Sphäre des Meister' (Hoffmann, 173). This, too, is echoed in *Mario und der Zauberer*, in which Cipolla is repeatedly referred to as 'der Meister'.

There is an erotic dimension to the power Alban wields over Marie, who begins to see him as 'jenen romantischen König aus meinen Träumen' and confesses: 'er lebt ja in meinem Innern und weiß meine geheimsten Gedanken, die ich in Frömmigkeit und Demut auch nicht trachte ihm zu verschweigen' (Hoffmann, 168). Apparently in consequence of his treatment, she drops dead on the day she is supposed to marry. Hoffmann reprised the same motif in *Der unheimliche Gast* (1820), the story of a young

couple separated by an evil count who uses his supernatural powers to take control of the girl's mind and make her agree to marry him instead. Alban's plan to steal Marie away from her fiancé and her admission about his insight into her most intimate and impious thoughts are echoed in *Mario und der Zauberer* when Cipolla seduces Signora Angiolieri away from her husband: 'Der Eindruck war zwingend und vollkommen, daß sie ihrem Meister, wenn dieser gewollt hätte, so bis ans Ende der Welt gefolgt wäre' (Mann, VIII, 700). Like Marie, Signora Angiolieri is prepared to give herself completely to her master. When Cipolla eventually breaks off the hypnosis and returns her to her seat, he implies that his power over her rests on knowledge of her secret desires, warning her husband 'daß es Mächte gibt, die stärker als Vernunft und Tugend und nur ausnahmsweise mit der Hochherzigkeit der Entsagung gepaart sind!' (Mann, VIII, 700).

After the conquest of Signora Angiolieri there are two further erotic episodes in Cipolla's act. Firstly, he makes the crowd dance. To begin the orgy he selects the weakest member of the audience, the young man whom he can hypnotize with a mere glance and of whom the narrator observes: 'Auch schien er in der Hörigkeit sich ganz zu behagen und seine armselige Selbstbestimmung gern los zu sein' (Mann, VIII, 701). The sexual connotations of the word 'Hörigkeit' are underlined when the man is said to experience 'eine Art von wohlgefälliger Ekstase' (Mann, VIII, 701) in following Cipolla's orders. Incidentally, the puppet-like movements of the dancers are themselves extremely uncanny and recall Ernst Jentsch's assertion in 'Zur Psychologie des Unheimlichen' (1906) that 'Einer der sichersten Kunstgriffe, leicht unheimliche

Wirkungen durch Erzählungen hervorzurufen, beruht nun darauf, daß man den Leser im Ungewissen darüber läßt, ob er in einer bestimmten Figur eine Person oder etwa einen Automaten vor sich habe'.³¹ This effect, which for Jentsch was exemplified by the doll Olimpia in *Der Sandmann*, is achieved in *Mario und der Zauberer* because the dancers do not move of their own accord. Cipolla manipulates their bodies from a distance by cracking the riding whip he carries. Secondly, there is the fateful encounter with Mario. Cipolla dupes the waiter into believing that he is Silvestra, the girl for whom he harbours an unrequited passion. He grotesquely seduces him and, just as Marie feels it is impossible to conceal her secrets from Alban in *Der Magnetiseur*, so Cipolla convinces Mario to betray his private feelings with 'eine Preisgabe des Innigsten, die öffentliche Ausstellung verzagter und wahnhaft beseligter Leidenschaft' (Mann, VIII, 710). At the culmination of their exchange he induces Mario to kiss him, and it is this violation of his dignity which provokes the waiter to shoot the magician.

In his comparison of *Mario und der Zauberer* with 'Massenpsychologie und Ich-Analyse', Widdig draws a parallel between the erotic aspect of Cipolla's performance and Freud's model of the crowd as an instance of mass identification with an ego-ideal. According to Freud, this particular kind of identification takes place when the libido encounters an object which proves to be unattainable. In order to achieve at least partial libidinal satisfaction, he writes, when an object eludes possession, the ego turns the characteristics of the object in upon itself, thus forming the ego-ideal. Following Freud,

³¹ Ernst Jentsch, 'Zur Psychologie des Unheimlichen', *Psychiatrisch-Neurologische Wochenschrift*, 22-23 (1906), 195-98; 203-05 (p. 203).

Widdig cites the magician's seduction of Signora Angiolieri, broken off at the last moment as it is, as an example of the aim-inhibited connection between leader and crowd.³² Yet, as mentioned above (p. 77), despite their obedience to him, the crowd does not regard Cipolla with the kind of admiration necessary to the formation of the Freudian ego-ideal. The narrator reports: 'unsere Gefühle für Cavaliere Cipolla waren höchst gemischter Natur, aber das waren, wenn ich nicht irre, die Gefühle des ganzen Saales, und dennoch ging niemand weg' (Mann, VIII, 695). In other words, the magician's appeal defies rational interpretation: the members of the crowd act in contradiction of their own feelings. Even if Mann was familiar with 'Massenpsychologie und Ich-Analyse', the behaviour of the crowd in the novella does not lend itself to the kind of systematic explanation found in Freud's crowd psychology.³³ In any case, as I have discussed, the connection between hypnosis and desire was established long before Freud. Not only is it already present in Hoffmann's uncanny novellas, but as early as 1777 Franz Anton Mesmer was at the centre of a scandal surrounding a young female patient believed to have developed a strong attachment to him following magnetic therapy.³⁴

***Mario* and 'Das Unheimliche'**

³² Widdig, pp. 135-37.

³³ Although there is no evidence that Mann read 'Massenpsychologie und Ich-Analyse', he was familiar with the work of Hendrik de Man, through whom he might have apprehended some of Freud's ideas on the crowd. See Helmut Koopmann, 'Mario und der Zauberer', in *Thomas Mann: Romane und Erzählungen*, ed. by Volkmar Hansen (Stuttgart: Reclam, 1993), pp. 151-85 (pp. 176-81).

³⁴ Tatar, p. 11.

As well as recalling uncanny figures from Romanticism, Cipolla has contemporary parallels. Jeffrey Meyers has analysed similarities between *Mario und der Zauberer* and Robert Wiene's 1920 film *Das Kabinett des Doktor Caligari*, for example.³⁵ The film's eponymous character is a hypnotist, a sadistic cripple like Cipolla, who forces his medium, Cesare, to commit a series of murders. Freud himself provides another possible comparison in 'Das Unheimliche'. There he writes that a person may seem uncanny when they have evil intentions to harm us and when those intentions are realized 'mit Hilfe besonderer Kräfte' (Freud, XII, 256). A good example of such a person, he states, is the *gettatore*, a figure from Italian folklore defined by the power of the evil eye, depicted by Albrecht Schaeffer in his 1918 novel *Josef Montfort*. Schaeffer, a writer much read in the 1920s but now largely forgotten, was the author of several works dealing with mythical and mystical themes. Mann mentions him in a letter of 12 May 1943 to Wilhelm Wolfgang Schütz, in which he discusses the literary production of German emigrants in America. Markedly neo-Romantic in tone, *Josef Montfort* narrates a series of fantastic adventures undertaken by the eponymous young baron and his servant Li. While sojourning in Venice, Josef encounters his *Doppelgänger*, who also happens to be a *gettatore*. Just as Cipolla's eyes are the key to his hypnotic control of the crowd, the eyes of the *gettatore* strike fear into those who see them. 'Die Augen, haben Sie nicht gesehen? Man kann es sehn an den Augen!' exclaims one of Josef's friends.³⁶

³⁵ Jeffrey Meyers, 'Caligari and Cipolla: Mann's *Mario and the Magician*', *Modern Fiction Studies*, 32 (1986), 235-39.

³⁶ Albrecht Schaeffer, *Josef Montfort* (Leipzig: Insel, 1922), p. 366.

According to Freud, the evil eye, which he claims is one of the most common sources of the uncanny, is particularly associated with those who stand out from others in some undesirable way – ‘wenn jemand durch auffällige Kennzeichen, besonders unerwünschter Art, vor den anderen hervorsteicht’ (Freud, XII, 253) – and with the expression of their jealousy. In *Josef Montfort*, the *gettatore* turns out to be the baron’s brother Erasmus – ugly, lonely and unloved as a child – who ends up killing him. Similarly, Cipolla’s sadistic exertion of his will over the crowd is compensation for a sense of inadequacy produced by his physical deformity and ugly appearance. His jealousy is particularly clear in his interaction with the handsome *giovanotto*, about whose success with women he repeatedly speculates. In the narrator’s view the reason for his bitterness is obvious: ‘es sprach aus seinen Spitzen doch auch echte Gehässigkeit, über deren menschlichen Sinn ein Blick auf die Körperlichkeit beider belehrt haben würde’ (Mann, VIII, 679).

Links between *Mario und der Zauberer* and Freud’s analysis of the uncanny in ‘Das Unheimliche’ are highly relevant to comparisons of the novella with ‘Massenpsychologie und Ich-Analyse’. In the earlier of Freud’s two essays, he takes as his starting point an assertion made by Jentsch, namely that feelings of uncanniness arise when the perceiving subject experiences something which leaves it intellectually disoriented – that is to say, puts it in a situation in which it is not at home. Declaring Jentsch’s essay to be an ‘inhaltsreiche, aber nicht erschöpfende Abhandlung’ (Freud, XII, 230), on the grounds that not everything new and unfamiliar is uncanny, Freud sets

out to investigate the etymology of the word 'heimlich'. He notes that it can designate not only what is familiar and comfortable, but also what is hidden or concealed, and suggests that 'unheimlich' might refer to the opposite of the second meaning as much as the first. In support of this point, he paraphrases an observation made by Schelling: 'Unheimlich sei alles, was ein Geheimnis, im Verborgenen bleiben sollte und hervorgetreten sei' (Freud, XII, 236). Later he rephrases this statement using psychoanalytic terminology: 'Das Unheimliche des Erlebens kommt zustande, wenn verdrängte infantile Komplexe durch einen Eindruck wieder belebt werden, oder wenn überwundene primitive Überzeugungen wieder bestätigt scheinen' (Freud, XII, 263). He then returns to the recurrence of primitive psychological structures in the section of 'Massenpsychologie und Ich-Analyse' entitled 'Die Masse und die Horde', in which he compares the psychology and behaviour of the crowd with that of the primal horde:

Die Psychologie dieser Masse, wie wir sie aus den oft erwähnten Beschreibungen kennen, – der Schwund der bewußten Einzelpersönlichkeit, die Orientierung von Gedanken und Gefühlen nach gleichen Richtungen, die Vorherrschaft der Affektivität und des unbewußten Seelischen, die Tendenz zur unverzüglichen Ausführung auftauchender Absichten, – das alles entspricht einem Zustand von Regression zu einer primitiven Seelentätigkeit, wie man sie gerade der Urhorde zuschreiben möchte. Die Masse ercheint uns so als ein Wiederaufleben der Urhorde. So wie der Urmensch in jedem Einzelnen virtuell erhalten ist, so kann sich aus einem beliebigen Menschenhaufen die Urhorde wieder herstellen. (Freud, XIII, 136-37)

Whether or not Mann was familiar with 'Massenpsychologie und Ich-Analyse' when he wrote *Mario und der Zauberer*, he had read *Totem und Tabu*, the work in which Freud first engaged with the story of the primal horde, in the 1920s and credited it with

opening up ‘ungeheure Perspektiven seelischer Vergangenheit’ to him.³⁷ His interest in the text particularly influenced the tetralogy *Joseph und seine Brüder* (1933-43), on which he broke off work in order to write *Mario*.³⁸ This section of ‘Massenpsychologie und Ich-Analyse’ thus seems very important to any discussion of his fictional crowd portrayal in comparison with Freud’s thought.

‘Die Masse und die Horde’ has certainly been mentioned on a number of occasions in previous scholarship comparing Freud’s essay with *Mario und der Zauberer*. For example, critics have noted the similarity between Cipolla and the figure of the ‘Urvater’: the former is ‘ein Mann von einiger Eigenliebe’ (Mann, VIII, 678); the latter ‘braucht niemand anderen zu lieben, er darf von Herrennatur sein, absolute narzißtisch, aber selbstsicher und selbständig’ (Freud, XIII, 138).³⁹ And while in *Totem und Tabu* Freud speculatively locates the origins of the Oedipus complex in the murder of the ‘Urvater’ by the horde, this section of ‘Massenpsychologie und Ich-Analyse’ has also been used to elucidate both the ambivalence of Cipolla’s crowd towards him and Mario’s final act.⁴⁰ It has gone unnoticed, however, that the second half of ‘Die Masse und die Horde’ focuses specifically on the relevance of the ‘Urhorde’ comparison for the role of hypnosis in crowd formation: ‘wir erwarten noch mehr von der Zurückführung der Masse auf die Urhorde. Sie soll uns auch das noch Unverständene, Geheimnisvolle

³⁷ Mann, ‘Die Stellung Freuds in der modernen Geistesgeschichte’, in *Die Psychoanalytische Bewegung*, 1 (1929), 3-32 (p. 3); Dierks, ‘Thomas Mann und die Tiefenpsychologie’, in *Thomas-Mann-Handbuch*, ed. by Helmut Koopmann (Stuttgart: Kröner, 1990), pp. 284-300 (p. 293)

³⁸ Herbert Lehnert, ‘*Joseph und seine Brüder*’, in *Thomas Mann: Romane und Erzählungen*, ed. by Hansen, pp. 186-227 (pp. 212-14).

³⁹ Widdig, p. 134; Zeller, p. 42.

⁴⁰ Böhme, p. 311.

an der Massenbildung näher bringen, das sich hinter den Rätselworten Hypnose und Suggestion verbirgt' (Freud, XIII, 139). Freud makes it clear that here he is specifically interested in the mysterious, unscientific side of hypnosis, adding in a footnote: 'Es erscheint mir die Hervorhebung wert, daß wir durch die Erörterungen dieses Abschnittes veranlaßt werden, von der Bernheimschen Auffassung der Hypnose auf die naive ältere zurückzugreifen' (Freud, XIII, 143). He connects the uncanniness of hypnosis with the return to the origins of human psychological development enacted in the crowd:

Erinnern wir uns daran, daß die Hypnose etwas direkt Unheimliches an sich hat; der Charakter des Unheimlichen deutet aber auf etwas der Verdrängung verfallenes Altes und Wohlvertrautes hin [...]. Der unheimliche, zwanghafte Charakter der Massenbildung, der sich in ihren Suggestionerscheinungen zeigt, kann also wohl mit Recht auf ihre Abkunft von der Urhorde zurückgeführt werden. (Freud, XIII, 143)

Given the significant amount of attention Freud devotes to the uncanniness of the hypnotic effect crowd leaders have on their followers, the uncanny nature of Cipolla's power over his audience substantially strengthens the case for relating Mann's novella to Freud's crowd theory.

At the same time, an understanding of Cipolla as a manifestation of the uncanny brings out important distinctions between the texts. Where critics have identified differences between the portrayal of the crowd in *Mario und der Zauberer* and Freud's discussion of the subject, they have tended to focus on issues of content. Widdig, for one, remarks that Mann's focus on Cipolla's power over his victims' bodies (amongst other tricks, and as well as making the *giovanotto* contort with imaginary colic pains, he turns a man cataleptic and then sits on him) is a specifically literary preoccupation

absent from Freud's essay.⁴¹ Yet, in light of the various shared concerns of the two texts, including the link between hypnosis and the uncanny, thematic issues alone cannot be said to determine the extent of either work's literariness. Bearing in mind that the uncanny, in Jentsch's model as well as Freud's, represents a challenge to the conscious, rational faculties of the perceiving subject – a challenge at odds with scientific faith in reason – I now want to focus on how the narrative structure of the novella differentiates it from Freud's theoretical treatise.

There is a clear distinction in 'Das Unheimliche' between the text itself and the predominantly literary examples of the uncanny which it takes as its object. Freud observes that the sensation of uncanniness is evoked in literary works when the world depicted is in large part realistic but with deviations into the supernatural, and when the reader can empathize with – 'sich versetzen in' (Freud, XII, 267) – the perspective of characters who experience the uncanny events. These criteria are met by *Mario und der Zauberer*, in which the Italian setting for Cipolla's supernatural performance is depicted in meticulous realistic detail (Speirs comments on the colour added by references to such things as Fiat cars and the *Corriere della Sera*, and the snatches of Italian Mann includes) and which is told in the first person, giving the reader direct insight into the

⁴¹ Widdig, p. 128: 'Wenn im folgenden Freuds 'Massenpsychologie und Ich-Analyse' mit *Mario und der Zauberer* in Verbindung gebracht wird, so sollen den spezifischen Gestaltungsmitteln und Strategien des literarischen Textes besondere Beachtung geschenkt werden. Die Psychoanalytische Konstruktion der Beziehung zwischen Masse und Führer wird dabei als ein heuristisches Modell dienen. Zugleich soll aber danach gefragt werden, welche Schwerpunkte oder vielleicht neuen Erkenntnisse der ästhetisch-fiktionale Diskurs ans Licht bringt.'

magician as he is seen by the narrator.⁴² In contrast, Freud's own aim is to determine and describe the psychological mechanisms which produce such feelings: he subsumes a range of examples under the principle that the uncanny is a symptom of the return of the repressed. The distinction, in other words, is between mimesis and analysis. No doubt due to the subject matter of the essay – feelings of strangeness and uncertainty – it, perhaps more than any other text by Freud, has provoked a wealth of deconstructive criticism hostile to his attempt to submit to rational analysis an object which itself presents an inherent challenge to reason.⁴³ David Ellison summarizes this school of thought, writing:

‘Das Unheimliche’ came to be read as a self-deconstructing work in which uncanniness as such was equated with the essence of the literary; and the literary was considered to be that destabilizing force which doomed to failure all ‘reductionist’ psychoanalytical attempts to understand the uncanny.⁴⁴

According to Freud's critics, literature throws up so many diverse examples of the uncanny that they cannot possibly all be subsumed under one general law. In its preoccupation with the individual and extraordinary, it resists the classification involved in scientific analysis. This is particularly significant in the case of the uncanny, the fundamental nature of which lies in thwarting the conscious, critical faculties. To describe it in rational terms is to strip it of its essence.

⁴² Speirs, *Mann: Mario und der Zauberer*, p. 67.

⁴³ See, for example, Hélène Cixous, ‘La fiction et ses fantômes’, *Poétique*, 3 (1972), 199-216; Neil Hertz, *The End of the Line: Essays on Psychoanalysis and the Sublime* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1985); Nicholas Royle, *The Uncanny* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2003).

⁴⁴ David Ellison, *Ethics and Aesthetics in European Modernist Literature: From the Sublime to the Uncanny* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2001), p. 52.

As the uncanny features so prominently in ‘Massenpsychologie und Ich-Analyse’, the notion of literature as an alternative to psychoanalytic epistemology can usefully be applied to comparison of that essay with *Mario und der Zauberer*. Whereas in his scientific attempt to analyse the irrational Freud attributes the uncanniness of the leader’s hypnotic power over the crowd to the return of the repressed in their interaction, explaining the behaviour of the crowd as regression to the most primitive form of social organization, the crowd experience is addressed much less coherently by Mann’s narrator.

Initially the narrator views himself as a purely rational individual of superior intellect to the masses that surround him in Torre: he is a cosmopolitan, while they are full of nationalist hatred; he takes the side of science (represented by the doctor), whereas they are irrational and superstitious; and he is wise to the nature of Cipolla’s act when they appear to be ignorant. Recognizing that there is malevolence in the magician’s performance, he distances himself and his wife from the rest of the audience with such statements as: ‘Es wollte uns nicht deutlich werden, wie weit das Publikum schon im Bilde war’ (Mann, VIII, 685). In his wisdom he does not consider himself part of ‘das Publikum’. Nor, at first, is he affected by feelings of uncanniness. He dismisses Cipolla’s claims to mystical power, patronizingly observing that the bills advertising his show lead the public to expect ‘außerordentliche Phänomene geheimnisvoller und verblüffender Art’, while he himself anticipates only ‘bescheidene Künste’ (Mann, VIII, 670-71) and plans to leave as soon as his children have had a taste of these. When the

magician first appears on stage, the narrator refers to his costume as ‘reiner Humbug’ and calls him a ‘Gaukler’ (Mann, VIII, 676). Even after the first few tricks he still thinks that the whole performance has been set up to dupe the crowd, believing that the *giovanotto* and Cipolla’s other victims are in on the charade: ‘ich [hatte] auch damals den Eindruck, daß alles gewissermaßen auf Übereinkunft beruhte’ (Mann, VIII, 683).

However, the adverb ‘damals’ here anticipates a change. It comes during Cipolla’s second exchange with the *giovanotto*, which the narrator admits is both ‘unheimlich’ and ‘unerklärlich’ (Mann, VIII, 684). By the time the magician begins a series of arithmetic tricks, seemingly willing audience members to choose numbers he implants in their minds by suggestion, the narrator states emphatically: ‘Und doch war klar, daß dieser Bucklige nicht zauberte, wenigstens nicht im Sinne der Geschicklichkeit, und daß dies gar nichts für Kinder war’ (Mann, VIII, 687). Whatever Cipolla’s particular brand of magic, then, he admits that it is different from the tricks of illusion normally practised by travelling magicians. In contrast with the transcendental position of the theorist, he no longer remains aloof from the crowd experience but begins to share in it. Not only does he concede the extraordinary extent of Cipolla’s abilities, but he is affected by them too. Despite his earlier complacency, he soon finds himself unable to leave the hall, although he wants to. Unlike other members of the audience, he does not interact with the magician directly, but he acquiesces in the general loss of will all the same. Further to this, he is confounded by Cipolla’s uncanniness. Far from being able to demystify the forces at work in the leader-crowd relation, he is confronted with a

phenomenon which his reason cannot grasp and is forced to acknowledge the power of the irrational. When his narrative reaches the point of the interval in the performance, he confesses to the reader: 'Unfehlbar werden Sie mich fragen, warum wir nicht endlich weggegangen seien, – und ich muß Ihnen die Antwort schuldig bleiben. Ich verstehe es nicht und weiß mich tatsächlich nicht zu verantworten' (Mann, VIII, 694). By this time his children, whose enthusiasm for the spectacle he repeatedly cites in feeble justification for not having left earlier, have fallen asleep. As it is after eleven o'clock the logical thing would be to take them away. Yet for some unfathomable reason he does not, and when he tries to analyse his actions he again finds his powers of reason insufficient: 'Glaubten wir B sagen zu müssen, nachdem wir A gesagt und irrtümlicherweise die Kinder überhaupt hierher gebracht hatten? Ich finde das ungenügend' (Mann, VIII, 695). Ultimately he gives in to his confusion: 'Zu entschuldigen ist es nicht, daß wir blieben, und es zu erklären fast ebenso schwer' (Mann, VIII, 695). The distinction between 'Massenpsychologie und Ich-Analyse' and *Mario und der Zauberer*, then, may be summed up as follows. Whereas Freud seeks to rationalize the feelings of intellectual uncertainty produced by the uncanniness of the leader-crowd relation, Mann directly confronts the reader with the breakdown of the narrator's capacity for reason.

That is not to say that the novella, in its empathetic approach, offers no explanation at all for the behaviour of Cipolla's crowd or suggests that the power of the leader (and, by association, the power of fascism) can never be understood and must be

surrendered to. In relating his experience, the narrator is reflecting on past events. He is thus not merely a member of the crowd, but also an observer. His account does evoke his feelings of rational impotence. However, due to the temporal distance between events in Torre and their narration, as well as the psychological difference between the narrator and other more involved crowd members during the performance, he is at least able to offer a tentative explanation for what he has seen.⁴⁵ He does so with regard to the gentleman from Rome, who defiantly challenges Cipolla to make him join the dance orgy, believing that he will be able to resist where others have capitulated. When Cipolla cracks his whip and his gaze bores into the gentleman's neck, he visibly fights to subdue the spasms of his limbs, which, under the hypnotist's control, seem to have a life of their own. The confrontation continues for some time and the gentleman proves to be a greater obstacle to Cipolla's will than any of the other audience members. The struggle is violent, however, and he is slowly worn down. The magician mockingly asks him: 'Wer wird sich so quälen? Nennst du es Freiheit – diese Vergewaltigung deiner selbst? Una ballatina! Es reißt dir ja an allen Gliedern. Wie gut wird es sein, ihnen endlich den Willen zu lassen!' (Mann, VIII, 702-3). He wills him to cast off the inhibitions which place him under such strain and let his true, irrational nature take over. Eventually, the man does cease to resist and Cipolla leads him, dancing and basking in the pleasure of the release, to join the other uncanny puppets – the narrator refers to the dancers as 'Hampelmänner' (Mann, VIII, 703) – on the stage. This episode is the closest Mann

⁴⁵ While I disagree with Helmut Koopmann (p. 173) that Mann's narrator retains a 'kühle Distanz' throughout the performance, I acknowledge that Cipolla's power does not affect him as strongly as it does certain other members of the crowd.

comes to explicitly equating the uncanny dimension of power over crowds with the psychic regression of the individual as Freud does.

Reflecting on the gentleman from Rome's surrender, the narrator comments:

Verstand ich den Vorgang recht, so unterlag dieser Herr der Negativität seiner Kampfposition. Wahrscheinlich kann man vom Nichtwollen seelisch nicht leben; eine Sache nicht tun wollen, das ist auf die Dauer kein Lebensinhalt; etwas nicht wollen und überhaupt nicht mehr wollen, also das Geforderte dennoch tun, das liegt vielleicht zu benachbart, als daß nicht die Freiheitsidee dazwischen ins Gedränge geraten müßte [...]. (Mann, VIII, 702)

In his struggle with Cipolla, the gentleman from Rome directs his will against the hypnotist's appeal to the irrational. In the narrator's eyes, his resistance fails because negatively directed will is almost as worthless as a total absence of will. The implication is that one must have positive aims and fight for something if evil is to be overcome.

This was an important idea for Mann at the time. Dismayed by the growing influence of the Nazi party in Germany and no longer able to assert his apolitical stance of ten years before, he threw his weight behind Weimar democracy. In *Mario und der Zauberer*, the only positively directed response to Cipolla's tyranny comes from Mario, who is so humiliated when his secret desires are laid bare for the amusement of others that he shoots the magician, finally breaking his spell over the crowd.

If Mann did champion an active, affirmative response to the mass irrationality of Nazism in his political speeches and essays, however, the resolution of the novella is not straightforward. In Hans Vaget's view, Mario is depicted in a heroic light.⁴⁶ Widdig sees

⁴⁶ Hans R. Vaget, 'Die Erzählungen', in *Thomas-Mann-Handbuch*, ed. by Koopmann, pp. 534-618 (p. 599).

his deed as the liberating act of an individual against the crowd.⁴⁷ For Böhme, it reaffirms the narrator's conclusion that Cipolla's kind of evil must be met with positive practical action.⁴⁸ Yet there is ambiguity in the narrator's final words, which describe the shooting as 'Ein Ende mit Schrecken, ein höchst fatales Ende. Und ein befreiendes Ende dennoch' (Mann, VIII, 711). While he is grateful to have been released from the hold of Cipolla's malevolent will, his relief is moderated by horror at the violence required.⁴⁹ Böhme also acknowledges that the ending to the novella provides a *Deus ex machina* which absolves the narrator of the responsibility to properly examine his own role in events.⁵⁰ Given the unreliability of the narrator's judgement, one cannot be certain whether Mario's violent act is a genuinely positive one or whether it will simply allow the narrator to return, feeling relatively unscathed, to his earlier complacency. The mimetic, empathetic side of the narrative is not replaced with a definitive conclusion, then, but only modified with a tentative one.

The Aesthetics of Crowd Leadership

The question arises as to whether Mann's approach to the hysteria of the crowd, both in his empathetic depiction of the narrator's intellectual confusion and his ambivalent portrayal of Mario's act of resistance, is commensurate with his calls for political action. Sautermeister believes that Freud's text has the advantage of laying bare the

⁴⁷ Widdig, p. 142.

⁴⁸ Böhme, p. 286.

⁴⁹ Cf. Egon Schwarz, 'Fascism and Society: Remarks on Thomas Mann's Novella *Mario and the Magician*', *Michigan Germanic Studies*, 2 (1976), 47-67 (pp. 57, 61).

⁵⁰ Böhme, p. 289.

psychological sources of the leader's power, whereas Mann fails to demystify Cipolla's crowd control.⁵¹ Indeed, in 'Deutsche Ansprache' Mann himself addressed the dilemma the artist faced between aesthetic 'play', on the one hand, and politics on the other. He refused to join social activists in condemning art as mere frivolity, stating: 'Form, gebe sie sich noch so spielerisch, ist dem Geiste verwandt, dem Führer des Menschen auch zum gesellschaftlich Besseren.' Nevertheless, he conceded:

Dennoch gibt es Stunden, Augenblicke des Gemeinschaftslebens, wo solche Rechtfertigung der Kunst praktisch versagt; wo der Künstler von innen her nicht weiterkann, weil unmittelbare Notgedanken des Lebens den Kunstgedanken zurückdrängen, krisenhafte Bedrängnis der Allgemeinheit auch ihn auf eine Weise erschüttert, daß die spielend leidenschaftliche Vertiefung ins Ewig-Menschliche, die man Kunst nennt, wirklich das zeitliche Gepräge des Luxuriösen und Müßigen gewinnt und zur seelischen Unmöglichkeit wird. (Mann, XI, 870-71).

The sentiment expressed here is that it is self-indulgent to hide behind the artistic freedom of a fictional world when the real world is not free. In this respect, Mann anticipates Benjamin's accusation that the aestheticization of politics under fascism epitomized the attitude of *l'art pour l'art*: "Fiat ars – pereat mundus" sagt der Faschismus' (Benjamin, I.ii, 508). However, as Martin Jay has discussed, there is more than one artistic approach to politics and 'not every variant of the aestheticization of politics must lead to the same dismal end'.⁵² Jay points out that the association of fascism with the aestheticization of politics which has become commonplace since Benjamin itself subsumes a variety of different notions of the aesthetic. He also notes

⁵¹ Sautermeister, p. 78.

⁵² Jay, p. 56.

that it is possible to conceive of a more benign relationship between aesthetics and politics in which the kind of ‘play’ mentioned by Mann provides a corrective to the tyrannical norms and concepts of political ideology.

Several examples given by Jay to illustrate the various ways in which politics might be said to be aestheticized can be applied to Cipolla’s control of the crowd in *Mario und der Zauberer*.⁵³ He notes, for example, that in Benjamin's usage the idea derives from the exclusion of social, moral and other concerns from the realm of artistic beauty and illusion.⁵⁴ At least during the first half of his performance, Cipolla maintains the illusion that he is a normal *Zauberkiinstler*, although after the interval he makes little effort to hide the true nature of his act. Perhaps because they initially believe the show to be nothing but frivolous entertainment, for a long time his audience overlooks the serious ethical implications of his mind control.

The political leader can also be likened to the artist. Leaders express their will by shaping their publics as sculptors mould their clay. Jay quotes Mussolini as saying:

when the masses are like wax in my hands, or when I mingle with them and am almost crushed by them, I feel myself to be a part of them. All the same there persists in me a certain feeling of aversion, like that which the modeler feels for the clay he is molding.⁵⁵

The greater part of *Mario und der Zauberer* revolves around Cipolla imposing his will on the audience members, literally controlling their every move with a crack of his whip, although, as he leads the crowd in dance, a more appropriate comparison might be to a

⁵³ The characterization of Cipolla as an artist is central to Sautermeister’s (pp. 63-65) reading of the text.

⁵⁴ Jay, p. 43.

⁵⁵ Jay, pp. 44-45.

conductor beating out commands with his baton, or to a choreographer. Watching the uncanny dance of the magician's puppet-like victims, the narrator observes: 'nicht sie seien es eigentlich, die es täten, sondern er' (Mann, VIII, 702). Also like the *Duce*, for whose brother Cipolla is proud to have performed, even as he directs the audience his contempt for them is obvious. Mussolini continues: 'Does not the sculptor sometimes smash his block of marble into fragments because he cannot shape it into the vision he has conceived?' This sentiment is recalled in Cipolla's reaction when audience members fail to comply with his demands. His outpouring of anger on two young local men who are unable to participate in his arithmetic tricks because they are illiterate is reminiscent of Mussolini's scorn for the mediocrity of his people.

Still another conception of the aestheticization of politics associates the aesthetic with pure spectacle, designed to undermine rational reflection.⁵⁶ Cipolla employs various theatrical tricks to enhance the spectacle of his performance for the audience. Having kept them waiting for a long time at the beginning of the evening, he runs onto the stage, giving the impression of having been delayed, when in fact he has deliberately made the audience wait in order to heighten their feelings of anticipation. Later in the performance he frequently descends from the stage to walk among the crowd, something which they welcome as appropriate to such a show: 'das Publikum, wenigstens in seinen volkstümlichen Elementen, schien jedenfalls der Meinung zu sein, daß dergleichen zur Sache gehöre' (Mann, VIII, 681). He also influences the crowd with his oratorical

⁵⁶ Jay, p. 45.

prowess, despite, according to the narrator, not having the kind of personality which normally appeals to Italians. As he jousts with the *giovanotto*, one spectator exclaims “Parla benissimo” (Mann, VIII, 679), and after having hypnotized Signora Angiolieri, he returns to the stage ‘unter einem Beifall, dem seine Beredsamkeit doppelte Fülle verliehen hatte’ (Mann, VIII, 700). The narrator observes that even before he has performed any tricks – before, in other words, he has done anything of substance – his eloquence alone is enough to impress the crowd: ‘Der Mann hatte noch nichts geleistet, aber sein Sprechen allein ward als Leistung gewürdigt, er hatte damit zu imponieren gewußt’ (Mann, VIII, 679).

In summation, Cipolla’s aestheticized leadership is calculated to eradicate critical deliberation and independent action, thus moulding his crowd into a homogeneous whole incapable of individual will. But as Jay asserts, an aesthetic approach to the political need not be ‘unequivocally evil’.⁵⁷ Jay draws on the work of a variety of aesthetic theorists, from Kant and Schiller to Paul de Man, Terry Eagleton and Jean-François Lyotard in arguing that art can also criticize and resist the homogenizing, totalizing tendencies of political rule, and specifically of fascist rule. In postulating an alternative aesthetic politics that is hostile to closure, mastery and control, he refers above all to the free play of the faculties in Schiller’s *Über die ästhetische Erziehung des Menschen in einer Reihe von Briefen* (1795) and Kant’s definition of aesthetic judgement in the Third Critique as a faculty which assesses the particular without

⁵⁷ Jay, p. 50.

reference to general laws or *a priori* principles. The perspectivism of Mann's crowd representation in *Mario und der Zauberer* shows what such an aesthetic might look like in practice. Jay admits that there are problems with his defence of aesthetic politics. 'Not all political problems, after all,' he writes 'allow the luxury of an indefinitely deferred solution'.⁵⁸ He thus hits on the point that also troubled Mann. Yet, when the political is substantially defined by its aestheticization of reality, as in the case of fascism, an attempt to reclaim the aesthetic for ethical purposes can be considered a solution, or at least a partial one, in itself. David Carroll argues:

critical approaches to nationalism always risk reaffirming what they intend to criticize if they do not question and undermine the aesthetic principles and identificatory strategies inherent in the production of a collective sense of self and the making or fashioning of a people.⁵⁹

That is to say, in combating one ideology, it is not sufficient to oppose it with another, but necessary to deconstruct and challenge the reasons for its success. If one accepts that the success of a political movement owes something to the aesthetics of its self-presentation, then promoting alternative modes of aesthetic cognition is politically meaningful action for a literary author to undertake.

⁵⁸ Jay, p. 54.

⁵⁹ David Carroll, 'The Aesthetics of Nationalism and the Limits of Culture', in *Politics and Aesthetics in the Arts*, ed. by Salim Kemal and Ivan Gaskell (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2000), pp. 112-39 (p. 113).

II

‘JETZT WAR ICH DER STÄRKERE, DA ICH AUF DIE UNTERSEELE DIESES MENSCHEN WIRKTE’: PSYCHOANALYSIS AND POWER IN ERNST WEISS’S *DER AUGENZEUGE* (1938)

In *Mario und der Zauberer* the role of the doctor, the standard-bearer of science and reason, is a relatively small one. He is not mentioned again after his appearance at the beach, although there is an implicit contrast between his calm dismissal of the crowd hysteria there and the narrator’s personal involvement in the mass irrationalism at Cipolla’s show. In contrast, medicine and psychiatry are themes of central importance in the work of Ernst Weiss, a physician who gave up practising medicine in 1920 in order to devote himself to writing.¹ Weiss wrote several novels narrated by doctors, which explore the relationship between emotion, scientific objectivity and power. The protagonist of his first novel, *Die Galeere* (1913), is a medical researcher who struggles to reconcile his faith in scientific reason and the tumultuous relationship he has with his mother. In *Georg Letham: Arzt und Mörder* (1931), the eponymous narrator administers a lethal drug to his wife under the pretence of giving her morphine, while the narrator of *Der arme Verschwender* (1936) cures a friend of a psychological illness, only for the latter to become a political dictator. This episode is echoed in *Der Augenzeuge* (1938), Weiss’s last novel, which is narrated by a surgeon with a second specialism in nervous illnesses and a doctorate in the study of the unconscious as pioneered by Charcot and Freud. He tells of his experiences with crowds and mass hysteria from the outbreak of

¹ Ulrike Längle, *Ernst Weiß: Vatermythos und Zeitkritik: die Exilromane am Beispiel des Armen Verschwenders* (Innsbruck: Institut für Germanistik, 1981), p. 10.

the First World War to the rise of Nazism. The plot turns on an encounter he has while stationed at a military psychiatric facility in the town of P at the end of World War One. There he meets AH, a corporal suffering from insomnia and hysterical blindness. The initials provide the thinnest of veils for Weiss's portrayal of Hitler and the Pomeranian military hospital of Pasewalk where he was hospitalized in November 1918.² The narrator takes a special interest in H's case and subjects him to psychotherapeutic treatment which cures his blindness. Though initially filled with a sense of quasi-divine omnipotence at his success, years later he comes to regret his intervention when he again meets his patient, now a fanatical political agitator who, like Cipolla, exhibits great skill as an orator and exercises seemingly hypnotic power over the crowds that flock to his rallies. Here, as in Mann's novella, even the narrator himself is vulnerable to H's appeal. Given the combination of the novel's focus on mass hysteria and its narrator's professional and academic background, the question naturally arises: to what extent was Weiss influenced by psychoanalytic theories of mass psychology in writing *Der Augenzeuge*?

As mentioned previously (p. 6), Norman Ächtler compares the novel with both 'Massenpsychologie und Ich-Analyse' and Simmel's 'Psychoanalyse der Massen', and believes that Weiss must have been influenced by both works. Certainly, the narrator of

² See Ächtler for a discussion of the claim that Weiss had access to and based *Der Augenzeuge* on the files of Hitler's doctor Edmund Forster. Dieter Kliche maintains that Konrad Heiden's biography of Hitler, *Adolf Hitler: das Zeitalter der Verantwortungslosigkeit* (1936), which was widely read by German exiles, was Weiss's main source. See Kliche, 'Der Versuch, einen politischen Roman zu schreiben: Ernst Weiß: *Der Augenzeuge*', in *Erfahrung Exil: antifaschistische Romane 1933-1945: Analysen*, ed. by Sigrid Bock and Manfred Hahn (Berlin: Aufbau, 1979), pp. 309-27 (p. 320).

Der Augenzeuge repeatedly cites the impulses of the unconscious psyche in explanation for the mass phenomena he observes. Thus, to some extent, the novel does reflect those contemporaneous psychoanalytic theories in which the workings of mass psychology are attributed to processes of the unconscious mind. However, similarities between *Der Augenzeuge* and such theories notwithstanding, there are reasons to challenge and elaborate on Ächtler's reading of the novel. For one, while he assumes Weiss's knowledge of Freud's and Simmel's essays, there is no firm evidence that the author had read either 'Massenpsychologie und Ich-Analyse' or 'Psychoanalyse der Massen'. Ächtler mistakenly claims that 'Massenpsychologie' is explicitly referenced in the novel.³ Furthermore, his comparison of *Der Augenzeuge* with psychoanalytic theories of mass psychology rests on the assumption that Weiss's 'Unterseele' – the term used in the novel to designate the unconscious – and Freud's 'das Unbewußte' are equivalent concepts. In fact, Weiss's concept is much simpler than Freud's and probably came from Le Bon. Moreover, focussed as Ächtler is on identifying the sources behind *Der Augenzeuge*, his reading does not take the narrative structure of the novel into account. Another homodiegetic narrator who, like the narrator of *Mario und der Zauberer*, becomes caught up in the events he describes, the doctor gives an account of mass phenomena that necessarily differs from the distanced stance of theoretical models. How, then, does Weiss incorporate programmatic notions about mass psychology into

³ Ächtler, p. 43.

his text while also evoking the affective, personal experience of the individual in the crowd?

A reading of *Der Augenzeuge* in relation to psychoanalytic theories of mass psychology must also consider the ambivalence towards the nature of medical knowledge expressed throughout Weiss's oeuvre. Summing up his interpretation of the novel, Ächtler writes that the 'well-founded scientific dimension' of Weiss's text sets it apart from better-known literary responses to Nazism such as Mann's *Doktor Faustus* (1947). He argues that Weiss's psychological focus provides a more objective standpoint from which to explore fascism than works like Mann's which draw on notions of a fundamental German character.⁴ Yet the narrator's statement in *Der Augenzeuge* that 'es war immer mein Bestreben, in den Menschen zu lesen wie in mir, um sie zu beherrschen wie mich selbst', implies that his interest in human psychology is not wholly rational and scientific, but is in fact motivated by a desire for power.⁵ Indeed, there is an imbalance of power inherent in doctor-patient relationships, in which one party operates from a position of superior knowledge and that knowledge legitimizes control of the other. Particularly significant is the sense of power Weiss's narrator gains from his professional interaction with AH and the evident pleasure he takes in it. His characterization places *Der Augenzeuge* in a tradition of thought about psychoanalysis and power which is exemplified by Foucault but which also includes Weiss's

⁴ Ächtler, p. 344.

⁵ Ernst Weiss, *Gesammelte Werke*, ed. by Peter Engels and Volker Michels, 16 vols (Frankfurt am Main: Suhrkamp, 1982), XIV: *Der Augenzeuge*, p. 76. Further references to this edition are given after quotations in the text.

contemporaries Canetti and Karl Kraus. In *Folie et déraison: histoire de la folie à l'âge classique* (1961), Foucault argued that in their efforts to understand and normalize madness, modern scientific disciplines, including psychoanalysis, objectify it and thus rob it of its specificity – its very inaccessibility to reason.⁶ As noted above (pp. 25-26), Canetti believed that psychoanalysts imposed predetermined findings onto their patients' cases. Kraus was more open to Freud's thought than Canetti, but, like Foucault, remained sceptical about the possibility of providing conscious explanations for unconscious disturbances and warned against the discipline's potential for reductiveness.⁷ Echoing these objections, whereas in the essays of Freud and Simmel the validity of the analytic perspective goes unchallenged, in *Der Augenzeuge* attention is drawn to the unreliability of the narrator as one whose will to power undermines his objectivity. As a result, it is impossible to regard it as a text which uncritically appropriates psychoanalytic concepts. This chapter questions the assumption that it does, arguing that Weiss takes a pluralistic approach to the problem of mass psychology which challenges the authoritative viewpoint of the analyst.

Crowds, Power and the Unconscious

Der Augenzeuge depicts three waves of mass phenomena, the first of which coincides with the First World War. The narrator describes the period as one of nationalist fervour and degraded respect for individuality during which the collective identity is the only

⁶ For a detailed analysis of Foucault's relationship to psychoanalysis see Joel Whitebrook, 'Freud, Foucault and the "Dialogue with Unreason"', *Philosophy and Social Criticism*, 25: 6 (1999), 29-66.

⁷ Edward Timms analyses Kraus's dialogue with Freud in *Karl Kraus: Apocalyptic Satirist: Culture and Catastrophe in Habsburg Vienna* (New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 1986), pp. 94-114.

acceptable one and individual rights and reason are subordinated to the national interest. During the social upheaval which follows the War, he frequently finds himself caught up in mass demonstrations, which become a fixture of public life. Finally, against this background of mass unrest, AH begins to accumulate political support. Promising to restore the nation to its former glory, he singles out minority groups as scapegoats for Germany's defeat and the ensuing socio-economic crisis.

The narrator witnesses the power of H's claims at first hand when his half-brother is made redundant from his factory job and the boy's mother, who worships H, blames the Jews and the communists. The brother, who likewise idolizes H, then finds alternative employment in the SA. H's appeal as a mass leader becomes even clearer as he wins over almost everyone the narrator knows: his father and stepmother, his partner, a childhood friend, another doctor in his town and many other people besides. The narrator also experiences H's appeal as a crowd leader at close quarters, first in front of a packed room of appreciative military personnel and again later as he captivates audiences of thousands during the mass rallies which are fundamental to his political campaign. Just as his ideas win him masses of followers across society as whole, on these occasions virtually the whole crowd submits enthusiastically to him. The first time the narrator hears him speak the room reverberates with riotous applause in response to his words. The next time the effect is amplified: H whips the crowd up into a state of frenzy. The fact that nobody, the narrator included, is immune to his appeal is

emphasized by the repeated binary oppositions in the declaration: 'Er redete uns nieder, Kluge und Törichte, Mann und Frau, alt und jung' (Weiss, XIV, 148).

Reflecting on the collective enthusiasm which greets the beginning of the War, the narrator identifies a will to power at work in the sacrifice of individuality to the strategic aims of the state. He remarks: 'der einzelne war nichts mehr. Der Staat brauchte Massen, den letzten Mann, und die letzten Männer wurden durch Addition groß und fühlten sich und waren als Sklaven die Herren' (Weiss, XIV, 97). The chiasmic structure of this statement, and the use of the apparently contradictory terms 'Sklaven' and 'Herren' to denote the same group of people, highlight the exercise of power on two levels: first, its use by the state to conscript individual citizens into what Trotter termed the 'killing crowds'; second, by the individual who, in becoming a faceless instrument of the state, subjects himself to one form of power in order to secure another – power over those outside the collective. When Weiss reviewed *Mario und der Zauberer* in 1930, he identified a similar thirst for power as fundamental to the crowd in Mann's novella, writing of Cipolla: 'Er weiß alles so zu drehen, daß diese Masse glauben kann und glauben muß, auch sie, jeder Einzelne unter Hunderten wie unter Hunderttausenden, habe Teil an dem glücklichmachenden Triumph des stärkeren Willens über einen schwächeren' (Weiss, XVI, 378-79).

According to the narrator of *Der Augenzeuge*, the influence of the will to power in human relations arises from the unconscious psyche – the so called 'Unterseele'. Describing the structure of the mind, he states:

Es gibt einen Geist, eine Seele; es gibt aber auch eine Unterseele. In entscheidenden Augenblicken sind es nicht die logischen Gründe, der Geist La Rochefoucaulds oder Voltaires, welche unsere Überzeugungen und Entschlüsse bestimmen, sondern unberechenbare Schwankungen der Gefühle. (Weiss, XIV, 91-92)

In the War, he asserts, the forces which usually keep the instincts in check are weakened: 'Was den Menschen zum Menschen macht, Vernunft und Maß, das galt plötzlich als vaterlandsfeindlich' (Weiss, XIV, 97). Instead, the unconscious takes over: 'Die bestialischen Triebe, die UNTERSEELEN waren erwacht' (Weiss, XIV, 97).⁸ Motivated by these instincts, men fight ruthlessly, unmoved by blood, pain and suffering, and war hysteria grips Germany on a mass scale because the 'Unterseele' is a universal attribute of human psychology: 'Ob jeder eine Seele hatte, blieb dahingestellt, eine UNTERSEELE hatte jeder. Jeder wollte der Stärkere sein und als der Stärkere im Recht' (Weiss, XIV, 97-8). Even the narrator himself, a supposedly rational intellectual, becomes caught up in the collective mood. During the War he is called up to the army and spends one tour in the field as a surgeon, but when he returns from leave for a second tour he enlists to fight. Looking back on his choice, he asks: 'War es auch bei mir die UNTERSEELE, die an die Oberfläche wollte, hatte ich auch Blut geleckt (mir war oft genug ein Tropfen heiß ins Gesicht gespritzt) und wollte einer von denen sein, die wissen, wie es ist, wenn man Menschen tötet?' (Weiss, XIV, 104). He acknowledges the impotence of his reason compared with the strength of his unconscious instincts: 'Es zog mich, meine ganze Energie strebte nach etwas, wogegen sich die Vernunft

⁸ Throughout the novel Weiss capitalizes certain important terms, including 'Unterseele', 'Augenzeuge' and 'Gott'.

vergeblich sträubte. Was hilft es, sich durch logische Gründe klarmachen zu wollen, was aus “unberechenbaren Schwankungen des innersten Gefühls” hervorkam?” (Weiss, XIV, 104). He also admits to behaving as if he had no mind of his own: ‘niemals habe ich weniger gehandelt und einen Willen gehabt als damals’ (Weiss, XIV, 98). And he contrasts the behaviour required of him in his professional life with that which he displays during the War, confessing: ‘Ich, ein Arzt, ein Forscher, ein kaltblütiger Mensch, war der UNTERSEELE im Krieg unterlegen und hatte bestialisch gehandelt’ (Weiss, XIV, 162).

With reference to the period after the War, when he becomes caught up in mass protest marches, the narrator again notes the disappearance of his logical, responsible professional persona in the crowd: ‘Ich, der ich den Vormittag in der Klinik verbracht hatte als ein klar beobachtender, verantwortungsvoller klinischer Arzt, ein einzelner, hier ging ich in der Masse auf, sie trieb mich unwiderstehlich mit sich’ (Weiss, XIV, 135). Having previously feared and avoided crowds, he begins to feel drawn to them because he can forget himself when surrounded by vast numbers of others. Comparing these ‘riesige Massenzüge’ with mass religious processions he witnessed as a child, he states: ‘Ich muß sagen, ich vergaß, wenn ich in Reih und Glied marschierte, alles Elend leichter als in der Kirche’ (Weiss, XIV, 135). In addition to the quasi-religious consolation he feels in the crowd, the metaphor likening it to military troops marching in rank and file also establishes a connection between his experience as one of the crowd and the time he spent as a frontline soldier during the War, when he relinquished his individual will to

the war aims of the German nation. The choice of the verb 'ziehen' in his statement 'Oft zog es mich nun aber auch zu den Massen' (Weiss, XIV, 135), and its use in the impersonal third-person form, suggest that his involvement with these crowds is involuntary, an impression that is further emphasized by the passive terms in which he describes his experience. The crowd is like a wave that subsumes him ('aufgehen in') and carries him along ('treiben').

Later, the narrator again cites the return of the 'Unterseele' by way of explanation for the mass hysteria of AH's followers. In his view, it is what allows H to convince people of the most preposterous things, in defiance of all reason. Initially he does not believe that H will come to power, because he offers no meaningful strategy for bettering the circumstances of the masses. There are only three points to his political programme: the power of a dictatorial leader in the mould of Mussolini, the need to avenge the defeat of 1918, and fanatical anti-Semitism. He also makes wildly illogical claims. At one mass gathering, he tells the crowd that thirty million people in Russia – a quarter of the population – have been murdered by Jews. The narrator points out that even if Russian Jews were guilty of the kinds of crime H alleges, the figure he gives is ridiculous. His followers believe him nonetheless, leading the narrator to conclude that he has overestimated the capacity of the masses for reason:

H rechnete besser [...] und baute auf drei Grundeigenschaften des Menschen, auf seine Bestialität, seine Schwäche und seine Feigheit. Diese Triebe bestanden vielleicht in jedem Menschen. In ruhigen Zeiten wurden sie von der Vernunft und dem Gesetz unterdrückt. In gefährlichen Zeiten wurden sie entfesselt und brachen sich Bahn. (Weiss, XIV, 162)

What is more, the narrator finds his own rationality undermined by his response to H. During one rally he gets swept up in the madness of the crowd. While logical objections occur to him about H's capacity to lead – if he is so strong, why did he suffer such great psychological trauma during the War? – they are soon discarded as powerless in the face of his unconscious impulses: 'Nichtige Erwägungen meines Gehirns, nichtiger Widerstand meines Willens'. Just how easily he is overwhelmed is communicated by the short, matter-of-fact statement: 'Er sprach, ich unterlag' (Weiss, XIV, 148). Yet again the narrator notes the contradiction between the reasonable, critical epistemology fundamental to his professional life and his submission to the mentality of the crowd: 'Selbst Menschen wie ich, die skeptisch und mit der ärztlichen Diagnose in die Versammlung gekommen waren, verfielen ihm. Nur für Augenblicke, aber vollständig überwältigt' (Weiss, XIV, 147-48).

Theoretical Influences

Ächtler draws on the resemblance between Weiss's 'Unterseele' – defined in contradistinction to the rational workings of the intellect and the spirit of the Enlightenment – and the Freudian unconscious in order to argue that his portrayal of mass hysteria in *Der Augenzeuge* was influenced by psychoanalytic theories of mass psychology. He highlights parallels between the mentality of the crowds in the novel and Freud's description of group psychology in 'Massenpsychologie und Ich-Analyse', pointing out that in both texts the crowd is described as uncritical and easily influenced. Its emotions are unsophisticated and violent, and it sees everything in extreme terms,

admitting no doubt or uncertainty.⁹ He also investigates the influence of Simmel's theory on Weiss's novel. Like the narrator of *Der Augenzeuge*, in 'Psychoanalyse der Massen' Simmel explains the mass psychology of wartime and post-war society with reference to the release of unconscious drives:

In diesem Zusammenhang wird begreiflich, welche innerpsychische Verschiebung der Krieg im Individuum bewirkt hat. Die Kulturgemeinschaft selbst hat das Moralgebot von der Grenze zwischen Bewußtsein und Unterbewußtsein entfernt [...]. Dadurch war der Entfesselung eines jahrtausendlang verdrängten Urmenschentums der Weg wieder gebahnt, und es wird begreiflich, daß auch heute noch, nach Beendigung des Krieges, jene aus unbewußten Tiefen aufgewühlten Leidenschaften als zwanghaft aufsteigende Triebregungen den Volksorganismus beherrschen, nachdem sie alle Grenzen bewußter Vernunft und parteiprogrammatischer Logik durchbrochen haben.¹⁰

Simmel goes on to diagnose post-war German society as a case of mass neurosis brought about by war and social collapse. Illogical ranting and raving such as H indulges in and which Simmel himself observed in many mass meetings of the period is interpreted as a symptom of the urge to discharge repressed emotion about the trauma of the War. More generally, Simmel attributes the behaviour of the masses to a psychological conflict experienced by vast numbers of people between what he terms a 'Bemächtigungstrieb' unleashed by that trauma and the remnants of a cultural instinct which leads them to combine their selfish needs with altruistic ideas such as nationalism and socialism. This combination, he argues, explains the proliferation and aggression of post-war mass movements. In Ächtler's reading of *Der Augenzeuge*, both the narrator and AH represent in different ways the mass war neurosis elaborated by Simmel. He also combines

⁹ Ächtler, pp. 341-42.

¹⁰ Ernst Simmel, *Psychoanalyse und ihre Anwendungen* (Frankfurt am Main: Fischer, 1993), p. 37. Further references to this edition are given after quotations in the text.

Simmel's theory with a definition Freud gives of the crowd leader as one who possesses the same characteristics as his followers to an extreme degree, thus explaining why H rather than someone else should be the person to lead his fellow neurotics.¹¹ Amid the post-war social disintegration, H promises a return to the national unity of 1914. He seems a perfect talisman for the rootless masses because he has no other ties; the German nation is everything to him: 'Er hatte keine Familie, seine Heimat war die Kaserne' (Weiss, XIV, 115).

Although Weiss heard lectures given by Freud when he was a student in Vienna and many of his novels bear the influence of psychoanalysis, one reason that Ächtler's claim about the extent of his reliance on Freud in *Der Augenzeuge* fails to convince is that the psychoanalytic concept of the unconscious is more complex than Weiss's 'Unterseele'.¹² In Ächtler's words, in *Der Augenzeuge*, 'the war had unleashed the base primary instincts of humans, which society usually suppresses during peace'.¹³ The unconscious, on this account, is merely a primitive phylogenetic stratum kept down by civilization only to re-emerge at times of cultural crisis. It has nothing of the dynamic ontogenetic interaction and psychic conflict between the unconscious, preconscious and conscious systems which is fundamental to Freud's account of the mind. The 'Unterseele' is closer to Simmel's understanding of the unconscious when he describes the return of a 'jahrtausendlang verdrängten Urmenschentums', but, again, Weiss's

¹¹ Ächtler, pp. 341-42.

¹² For information about Weiss's exposure to Freud in his student years see Hans Jürgen Fröhlich, 'Arzt und Dichter: Ernst Weiß', *Literatur und Kritik*, 1 (1966), 50-53 (p. 52).

¹³ Ächtler, p. 343.

novel makes no mention of the struggle between conscious and unconscious forces which gives rise to neuroses such as those described by Simmel.

It is more likely that the passages of the novel describing the credulity and destructiveness of the crowd which Ächtler believes echo Freud were in fact conceived with Le Bon in mind. The sections of Freud's essay quoted by Ächtler are actually taken from the section entitled 'Le Bons Schilderung der Massenseele' in which he paraphrases the ideas he wants to argue with, including what he believes to be Le Bon's simplistic conception of the unconscious. Le Bon's notion of the collective soul is echoed by Weiss's narrator who, observing the audience at one of H's rallies, comments: 'Es sprang von Mann zu Mann, dreitausend wurden *eine* Seele' (Weiss, XIV, 150). As in *Mario und der Zauberer*, more than Freud's model of mass identification with a common ego-ideal, Weiss's portrayal of the connection between AH and his audiences recalls Le Bon's suggestion that the power of the leader over the crowd has a quasi-mystical basis in his personal magnetism. The narrator refers to H as 'dieser scheinbar so einfache, aber mit unheimlichen Kräften begnadete Mann' (Weiss, XIV, 139) and describes him, among other metaphors, as 'ein Magier' and, further recalling Mann's novella, 'ein Zauberer' (Weiss, XIV, 148). Finally, Le Bon claims that the leader must himself be fascinated by the power of his own ideas in order to rule the crowd. On the one hand, at the beginning of H's speeches he stands apart from and above his audiences. Much like Cipolla: 'Er stand über der Masse, denn er war gänzlich unberührt von ihr [...]. Er verachtete sie. Sie dagegen war vollständig unter seiner Faszination'

(Weiss, XIV, 147) (Le Bon's word again). On the other, as he talks he works himself up just as much as them and becomes one with the crowd: 'Er ließ kaum einen kalt, denn er berauschte sich selbst. Er zeigte es allen, wie herrlich es ist, von einer einzigen mächtigen irdischen Idee besessen zu sein' (Weiss, XIV, 147).

These philological issues aside, again like *Mario und der Zauberer*, *Der Augenzeuge* also differs from theoretical texts on mass psychology in more fundamental ways. For one, as the narrator of the novel reports on his personal experiences as 'ein Atom der Masse' (Weiss, XIV, 148), his description of the crowd has a quite distinct feel from the accounts of Freud, Simmel and Le Bon. A theme that recurs at several points in the text is the importance of empathy for meaningful understanding of an experience. Early in the novel the narrator has an accident with a horse which tramples him when he tries to feed it. In recounting the hours after the accident, he skips over the pain of his injuries as something which language cannot adequately express: 'Ich beschreibe diesen Nachmittag, diesen Abend, diese Nacht nicht. Nachzufühlen ist eine solche Lage nur von dem, der etwas Ähnliches erlebt hat' (Weiss, XIV, 13). Conversely, when later his mother falls ill with a respiratory illness, he is particularly affected by her suffering, having experienced a similar affliction after his accident: 'Hätte doch meine arme Mutter [...] an einer anderen Krankheit gelitten! Aber gerade Schmerzen in der Lunge, am Rippenfell kannte ich aus eigener furchtbarer Erfahrung nur zu gut' (Weiss, XIV, 34). Most significantly, referring to his own violent impulses during the War he writes:

Das innere, DAS ZERMALMENDE und das prachtvoll Bestialische, das Barbarenglück, den Barbarenrausch, den beschreibt man nicht. Man kann ein Delir nicht mit Worten beschreiben. Man kann nicht die Worte in einem stillen Zimmer niederschreiben, und ein anderer, in einem anderen stillen Zimmer, für sich allein, die Zigarre im Mund, den Hund zu seinen Füßen, soll dies begreifen und dann wissen, wie einem dabei zumute ist. Einer für sich allein erlebt dies nicht. Ich habe es nur als einer in der Masse erlebt. (Weiss, XIV, 105)

In the essays of Freud, Simmel and Le Bon, the position of the theorist outside the crowd is reflected in abstract, technical language which conveys a view of what happens in the crowd but cannot express what it feels like. In contrast, in that the narrator of *Der Augenzeuge* attempts to do what he believes is ultimately unfeasible – adequately portray the experience of being part of the crowd – he does so in terms designed to evoke the sensations involved as closely as possible.

Describing the crowd at one of H's rallies, he begins by referring to it using the pronoun 'sie' (Weiss, XIV, 147) but soon exchanges this for the first-person plural pronouns and nouns 'uns', 'unsereinem', 'die unsrige' (Weiss, XIV, 148-50). Correspondingly, in contrast to the detached language of theoretical texts, the narrator's words here are arranged to stir up the heated, frenetic mood of the crowd. He witnesses H's ability to generate contagious energy with his words: 'Sein Gefühl wirkte auf unser Gefühl' (Weiss, XIV, 148). After only a quarter of an hour of a speech that lasts for several more, H is trembling, his shirt is dripping with sweat and veins throbbing in his forehead. The excitement is conveyed in the narrator's sentences, which consist of lists of short, choppy phrases. He states of the crowd members: 'sie wollten im Wachen schlafen, träumen, sich berauschen lassen, ihn anbeten, blind gehorchen, vom Geist

besessen sein' (Weiss, XIV, 147). Of H he writes: 'Er ließ es nicht enden, viertelstundenlang, halbe Stunden lang, drei, vier Stunden lang das gleiche, nie etwas anderes, ewig im Kreise' (Weiss, XIV, 148) and 'Seine Übermacht war Haß, Wut, Ekstase, Ausbruch, Kampfgeheul' (Weiss, XIV, 151). These lines are structured to create a sense of frantic bombardment and their fast pace mirrors the intensity of H's oratorical style, which leaves no time for processing or reflection.

The narrator also describes the relationship between H and the crowd in a highly metaphorical style, inviting the reader to identify with his experience more easily than with theoretical descriptions of the leader-crowd relation as the symptom of an abstract psychological principle. For example, H is referred to as 'Herr über Knechte, ein Magier, ein Despot, ein Zauberer und grausamer, harter Priester in einem' (Weiss, XIV, 148). By consistently describing the crowd experience in terms of other ideas which add depth to the depiction, he endows it with intuitively graspable meaning. That is not to say that Freud and other theoretical authors never use metaphors or concrete examples to illustrate their theories, but their texts contain nothing as striking as the use Weiss's narrator makes of the conceit of a sex act to illustrate H's power over the crowd. Wolfgang Müller-Funk regards Weiss's representation of the crowd in this manner as a simplification of Freud's libidinal model of crowd leadership, but regardless of whether it reflects a particular theory of crowd psychology, the generally matter-of-fact tone of psychological treatises contrasts starkly with Weiss's use of sustained, detailed

comparison to express what it is to be one of the crowd.¹⁴ The comparison begins with scattered metaphors, including the obviously phallic phrase: ‘er bohrte, bis er ins Tiefste gedrungen war’, used to describe H’s repetitive, aggressive oratorical technique, and the equally suggestive statement: ‘immer noch endete er nicht, und niemand wollte es, daß er schon ende’ (Weiss, XIV, 148). It is then extended when the narrator, observing the reaction of his partner to H, remarks:

Ich merkte an den gespannten aufgewühlten Zügen, an den bebenden Gliedern der Angelika, daß der Höhepunkt noch nicht erreicht war, aber in den nächsten Sekunden kommen mußte. Nach einem ungeheuerlichen, unfäßbaren Haßerguß gegen die “marxistische Judenbrut” kam es über ihn und über uns. (Weiss, XIV, 150)

Taken in combination, the signs of physical arousal displayed by Angelika, and the references to the ‘Höhepunkt’ of H’s speech and his anti-Semitic ‘Haßerguß’ constitute the metaphor of sexual climax. The conceit can also be traced in H’s behaviour. Experiencing the ecstasy along with his audience, at the moment of climax he loses control of himself, grotesquely screaming out ‘Deutsches Blut! Deutsches Blut! Deutsches Blut!’, while the crowd yells ‘Deutschland! Deutschland! Deutschland!’ (Weiss, XIV, 150).

At the same time, just as the narrator of *Mario und der Zauberer* both evokes and reflects on his crowd experience, so too the narrator of *Der Augenzeuge* is reporting events which took place in his past. Accordingly, his personal, affective understanding of H’s crowd is combined with reflection on the encounter and attempts to codify it in

¹⁴ Wolfgang Müller-Funk, ‘Fear in Culture: Broch’s *Massenwahntheorie*’, in *Hermann Broch: Visionary in Exile: the 2001 Yale Symposium*, ed. by Paul Michael Lützeler (Rochester, NY: Camden House, 2003), pp. 89-104 (p. 94).

terms which do sometimes recall theoretical approaches to mass psychology, as Ächtler suggests. For example, he describes the culmination of H's speech as follows:

Er stand dort oben, schluchzte, er schrie, gurgelnd brach etwas Unerklärliches, Urhaftes, Nacktes, Blutiges aus ihm heraus, er konnte es nicht halten, es waren keine fest gebauten Sätze mehr, keine artikulierten Worte, die UNTERSEELE, die immer verhüllte, der schwarze heiße Ort der Mütter war nach oben gedrungen, und niemand konnte widerstehen. (Weiss, XIV, 150)

This passage combines two perspectives on the crowd. On the one hand, the narrator again employs a long list of short phrases to evoke the frenzied energy generated by H. On the other, in citing the influence of the 'Unterseele' he moves beyond the immediacy of the experience and seeks to explain it. A similar attempt at explanation is contained in his statement: 'Es überwältigte ihn, es überwältigte uns, und wir waren nicht mehr die, die wir früher waren'. This is not merely a description of what it felt like to be in the crowd, but also a reflection on the relationship between individual and mass psychology, as found in various theories of the period. That said, Weiss does not indiscriminately adopt psychoanalytic theories of mass psychology. His ambivalent characterization of the narrator, himself a psychotherapist, serves precisely to undermine the objectivity of psychoanalytic epistemology and with it the narrator's attempts to extrapolate from his personal experiences to more general claims about crowds. As I have discussed, the narrator regards the instincts of the 'Unterseele', which implicate him in the mass phenomena he describes, as antithetical to his medical persona. On the contrary, I will now argue, his own will to power is more evident than ever in his professional practice.

Medicine and Power

Throughout *Der Augenzeuge* the narrator presents himself as a clear-sighted eyewitness. The title motif, which recurs at many points in the novel, is invoked to imply truthfulness and impartiality. Commenting on his accident with the horse and on a false rumour, started by someone who was not present at the incident, that he provoked the animal by attempting to beat it, the narrator remarks: 'Er war kein Augenzeuge gewesen' (Weiss, XIV, 12). He also refers to the man in question as 'der FALSCHER AUGENZEUGE' (Weiss, XIV, 19). When the narrator is a teenager, his father has an affair with the family maid who bears him two illegitimate children. Despite always having had a much closer relationship with his mother than his father, as an only child the narrator is pleased by the discovery of his new siblings and agrees to keep his father's secret. He later reflects that it was not his place to take sides in the matter: 'mein Unglück war es, beide Parteien zu verstehen, Augenzeuge zu bleiben, nicht zu richten und kein Pharisäer zu sein' (Weiss, XIV, 61). He professes to value the principles of truthfulness and objectivity highly, not only in his personal life but also in his role as a doctor. Professionally, he emphasizes his qualities of 'Kaltblütigkeit, Überblick und Selbstbeherrschung' (Weiss, XIV, 85), and when asked to give expert evidence in the case of a murderer suffering from psychogenic blindness, he states: 'Ich bin immer gegen die Rolle des Arztes als Helfer des Gerichtes gewesen. Er soll neben dem Kranken stehen oder über ihm als objektiver Zeuge, aber nicht gegen ihn' (Weiss, XIV, 95).

However, he often fails to live up to his ideals. On more than one occasion he demonstrates himself to be driven by emotion and impulse in his decision-making, and particularly by a desire for power. During his time as a medical student he meets a very poor young man scraping by as a train station porter. The man is a heavy drinker and the narrator buys him several drinks out of sympathy, despite the fact that he is himself almost destitute. He is virtually penniless in the first place because he has given away almost all of his meagre allowance to his father's abandoned mistress to prevent her from having to go into service and put his half-siblings into care. While these actions are seemingly generous, given his personal circumstances they are also foolish, as the narrator himself remarks. Furthermore, reflecting on the actions of his younger self, he turns his apparent altruism on its head, concluding that he was in fact motivated by a need to control the fates of those around him. He believes that he was driven to give up his money 'Durch eigene Torheit, durch eigenen Übermut, durch das "Den-lieben-Gott-spielen-Wollen", durch meinen Größenwahn' (Weiss, XIV, 48).

Significantly, the narrator reports that these aspects of his personality – his delusions of grandeur and the need to play God – were established at an early age. Moreover, their development was catalysed by his first medical experience. After his accident with the horse he is treated by the local doctor, who injects him with morphine in order to relieve the pain of his injuries. Amazed by the effect of the drug, he comes to regard it as a miracle cure and is filled with a sense of the "Übermacht" eines Arztes' (Weiss, XIV, 17). After the first dose of morphine, he no longer needs the opiate to feel

better. The doctor takes on a thaumaturgic role in the boy's eyes and his mere presence is sufficient to relieve his symptoms. Following this experience the narrator is filled with a desire to exert power over those stronger than him:

Als ich nun so lange ans Bett genagelt war, brach eine Regung in mir durch, die mir neu war und die mir eine Art Genugtuung oder einen Ersatz für die verlorenen Knabenfreuden gewährte, nämlich der Wille, über die Großen zu herrschen, meinen Willen bei den Übermächtigen durchzusetzen. (Weiss, XIV, 18)

The doctor is his first target in this endeavour. As he feels better when the doctor is with him, he develops various tricks to induce him to remain longer by his bedside. He later reflects that this probably meant other important patients were kept waiting, a fact which may have been a major source of his satisfaction. Not only does the encounter unleash in him a thirst for power, but simultaneously with the development of this impulse he resolves that he will himself become a doctor one day.

At first glance the narrator does appear to bring the detachment of the eyewitness to his role as a doctor. During an anatomy class at medical school he is relatively unaffected when his old acquaintance from the train station turns up on the dissection table. After the initial shock, he finds he can push away any sentimental feelings in the interest of 'der objektiven Wissenschaft' (Weiss, XIV, 68). After a while he thinks of nothing but the hand assigned to him for dissection. Despite his apparent coldness, however, on closer inspection his reaction to the situation is not without emotion. His description of the hand conveys his awe at the magnificence of the human body and he defends what is an ostensibly cold reaction to the death of his friend on the grounds that

no one could witness such a marvel and not be similarly transfixed. His reference to the hand as a 'greifbares, positives Wunderwerk der Mechanik' (Weiss, XIV, 69) communicates both his clinical objectification of the body as a machine and an almost mystical reverence for it. He regards it as a miracle, just as when young he attributed supernatural effects to the morphine the doctor gave him. The great detail of his description reveals his amazement at the complexity of the hand:

wer nicht vor seinen Augen gesehen hat, wie sich in dem winzigen Raum zwischen Haut und Knochen die verschiedensten Sehnen, Strecker und Beuger, Nerven, motorische und sensible Adern, zuführende und abführende, einordnen, wie sie hier zusammenarbeiten, sich genial einfach ergänzend, der mag mich verurteilen. (Weiss, XIV, 69)

The list of the various different components, his observation of the tiny space within which they are all contained and the sense of their interconnectedness illustrate the intricacy of the hand. To the narrator, it is a far more impressive machine than even the most complex feats of modern invention such as the steam engine, the automobile or the latest weapons technology. In a way, as he works on it he is like a divine watchmaker surveying the universe. He may not have created the body, but as a doctor he has the power to manipulate and control it. The sense of strength this power gives him enables him to forget all his worries in other areas of his life, giving him a sense of peace and control, and leading him to declare that after this: 'Ich konnte, was ich wollte' (Weiss, XIV, 69).

The sense of wellbeing the narrator experiences on dissecting the hand mirrors the attitude of his mentor, a psychiatrist named Kaiser, towards his patients. In one way

Kaiser is an extremely caring doctor. He is a hard man who treats his staff strictly and shows no indulgence to his children, yet he behaves like a father or a friend towards those in his care. In another, his treatment of them is as ambiguous as the narrator's fits of foolish generosity. The narrator reports:

Manchmal gewann ich nahezu den Eindruck, er verehere das mystische Dunkel dieser unbegreiflichen Geister; es ziehe ihn magisch an, und er fühle sich wohl in ihrer Gegenwart voll Toben, Trauer, Freude und Geheimnis und Verwirrung, Verzweiflung, Zerstörung. (Weiss, XIV, 64)

Just as the narrator regards the complexity of human physiology as an almost supernatural wonder, Kaiser's patients hold a magical fascination for him. And just as a feeling of power comes over the narrator after his dissection of the hand, Kaiser's son indicates that his father enjoys being with his patients so much because of the feeling of strength he gains from ruling over them in their vulnerability: 'es muß auch Narren geben, schon allein deshalb, damit sich mein Vater wie ein Herrgott unter ihnen fühlt' (Weiss, XIV, 63).

The narrator believes that all doctors experience similar feelings of divine power, stating of himself and his colleagues: 'Wir hielten uns für Halbgötter' (Weiss, XIV, 87). *Der Augenzeuge* thus undermines the view of doctors as purely objective scientists in relation to their patients. Moreover, it shows that the power they wield is open to abuse. The accused in the murder trial on which Kaiser and the narrator are asked to consult is named Oswald Schwarz. This also happens to be the name of the man for whom Kaiser's wife has recently left him. The two doctors are called in to investigate the cause of Schwarz's simulated blindness, but upon a detailed examination they agree that he

also suffers from epilepsy and conclude that his crime was committed during a blackout.

Yet when Kaiser learns the patient's name, the coincidence sends him into a rage, prejudicing him in the evidence he gives to the court, before which he fails to mention the diagnosis of epilepsy:

Er konnte dem Schicksal den Zufall nicht verzeihen, daß der arme Hirnkrüppel den gleichen Namen trug wie der Mann, der ihm sein Lebensglück geraubt hatte. Er, in seiner Gottähnlichkeit, gab keinen falschen Befund ab. Nein. Er war formal im Recht, den es ging dem Gericht in erster Linie um die Blindheit. (Weiss XIV, 96)

The relative characterizations of Schwarz ('der arme Hirnkrüppel') and Kaiser ('in seiner Gottähnlichkeit') highlight the power discrepancy in their relationship. In this case, Kaiser's epistemological superiority in relation to the patient places him in a position of strength which he uses to satisfy his illogical jealousy. Technically he does nothing wrong – he answers the questions he is asked in a truthful manner – but rather than objectively stating all the medical facts of Schwarz's case and letting the court judge, he selectively reveals parts of what he knows, concealing information which could clear the patient. As Schwarz is ultimately sentenced to death, Kaiser effectively chooses to end his life, albeit not by direct medical means. In this regard, the term 'Gottähnlichkeit' is of further significance, recalling as it does the conversation between Mephistopheles and the student in *Faust I*. Writing in the student's book 'Eritis sicut Deus scientes bonum et malum', Mephisto tells him: 'Folg' nur dem alten Spruch und meiner Muhme, der Schlange, / Dir wird gewiß einmal bei deiner Gottähnlichkeit bange!' (Goethe, III, 66). Weiss's use of the term recalls Mephisto's quotation of the

serpent's words to Eve in Genesis 3:5, thereby coupling the connection of knowledge and power with that of knowledge and sin.

The distribution of power in the doctor-patient relationship is of particular importance when it comes to the narrator's encounter with H. During his time at P he encounters many patients suffering from psychological war wounds, from those who can still hear the sounds of mortar fire to others who see the fire of flamethrowers. He does not intervene in many of their cases but is intrigued by H. H claims to have been blinded by an English mustard gas attack, but his blindness is in fact simulated. The narrator decides to try and cure him, despite his suspicion that mental illness cannot be permanently healed:

Ich habe mehr als einen Kranken seiner Art behandelt, ohne ihn freilich im Grunde zu ändern. Denn der Urgrund solcher Menschen, ihre Wandelbarkeit, ihre Unwahrhaftigkeit, ihre Unersättlichkeit, die Unkenntnis ihrer selbst, ihre Unfähigkeit, in einem anderen Menschen aufzugehen, ja auch nur das Minimum an Lebensrecht eines andern zu begreifen, ihr Undank, ihr egozentrisches Feuer, ihr Hunger nach Zärtlichkeiten und nach Aufsehen – das alles hätte nur ein GOTT von Grund aus ändern können. Unserer aber dünkte sich gottähnlich, immer noch. (Weiss, XIV, 111)

Much of the narrator's description of his psychiatric patients portrays them as people who live in their own worlds. They are out of touch with reality, entirely self-absorbed, devoid of self-awareness and incapable of relating to others. Part of Foucault's criticism of psychiatry is aimed at the (mistaken, he believes) conviction that this kind of mental state can be grasped and controlled from without. In his 'Gottähnlichkeit', in contrast, the narrator of *Der Augenzeuge* believes he can overcome H's madness.

On beginning his treatment of H, the narrator at first sits unobtrusively in his patient's presence, letting him talk about himself for hours on end. Eventually, in an attempt to uncover the unconscious basis of his hysterical symptoms, he interrogates H about his sexual history. When this approach meets with resistance, he changes tack. Identifying a 'Gottähnlichkeitstrieb' in H's personality, similar to that which he believes characterizes medical knowledge, he concludes that as his patient has become totally detached from reality, the only way to heal him is to turn his delusions of grandeur to his advantage. He decides to affirm H's belief in his own strength, thus willing him to overcome his blindness: 'ihm mußte ich nicht mit logischen Überlegungen, sondern mit einer großartigen Lüge kommen, um ihn zu überwältigen' (Weiss, XIV, 116). The choice of the verb 'überwältigen' to describe his approach to H is indicative of the ambiguous power dynamic that underlies their interaction. On the one hand, the narrator as therapist stands as the exemplar of health in relation to the sick H and ostensibly acts for the good of his patient. On the other, the language used to describe their relationship conveys a violent impulse in the narrator's conduct.

Once he has decided on the necessary course of treatment, he has another member of staff let H know that he is interested in his case and will send for him. He then waits for a long time before doing so, making sure H grows impatient. His apparent intention is to increase the patient's receptiveness to the treatment when it is eventually provided, but his words betray another motivation. He writes: 'Er sollte gespannt sein. Er sollte nach mir rufen, er sollte mich sehnsüchtig erwarten, und er war es, der eines

Abends durch den verlassenen Korridor angetappt kam und Einlaß begehrte' (Weiss, XIV, 116). The demanding tone produced by the anaphora in these lines highlights the narrator's strong desire for control over his patient, while the phrase 'sehnsüchtig erwarten' casts their relationship in terms of sexual dominance. Even after H comes to him he manipulates him further. Rather than acknowledging H when he enters his office, he ignores him and continues working, before eventually leaving the patient alone in the room. As a consequence of the agitation, H.'s insomnia actually grows worse before the narrator finally calls for him. Now the patient does anything the narrator tells him. Sometimes he does not even have to be asked. Echoing the effect of the doctor's presence on the young narrator and foreshadowing Foucault's critique of medical practice, his treatment of H rests on a thaumaturgic power which he relishes:

Voll Freude an meiner Übermacht fühlte ich, ich hatte ihn in der Gewalt. Ohne es ihm zu befehlen, dachte ich mit aller Energie daran, er solle seine Hände über dem Schoß falten. Er tat es. Er solle an seinem Eisernen Kreuz nesteln, als wollte er es abnehmen. Er gehorchte. Ich befahl ihm, er solle mir sein Geheimnis mit den Frauen mitteilen. Ich überwand den Widerstand, und er sprach. Ich befahl ihm, er solle den rechten Arm ausstrecken, er zögerte, aber dann tat er auch dies. (Weiss, XIV, 117)¹⁵

With H. fully in his power, he returns to the subject of the blindness, telling his patient that while the average person would not be able to overcome such an affliction, he is no average person. Temporarily switching to reverse psychology, he speculates that H does not have the strength of will to achieve such a miracle after all, before insinuating that he

¹⁵ Cf. Foucault, *Folie et déraison: histoire de la folie à l'âge classique* (Paris: Plon, 1961), p. 609: 'A mesure que le positivisme s'impose à la médecine et à la psychiatrie singulièrement, cette pratique devient plus obscure, le pouvoir du psychiatre plus miraculeux, et le couple médecin-malade s'enfoncé davantage dans un monde étrange.'

might be the saviour Germany needs and, if so, has a responsibility to heal himself. Emotionally manipulating the patient in this way, he frees him from his hysterical symptoms. Once again, he feels a rush of strength and pride at his achievements and boasts: ‘Alles geschah, wie ich es wollte. Ich hatte das Schicksal, den Gott gespielt und einem Blinden das Augenlicht und den Schlaf wiedergegeben’ (Weiss, XIV, 119).

Years later, however, he is left plagued with guilt at the thought that events in Germany might never have happened had he not become involved with H. Reflecting on his handling of the case, he writes:

Daß ich ihn damit nicht von seiner Grundkrankheit heilen konnte, gestand ich mir nicht ein. Da war ich blind. Ich wollte es nicht sehen, weil mich eine Art Leidenschaft ergriffen hatte. Auch ich wollte wirken, ich mußte handeln. Ich wollte herrschen, und jede Tat ist mehr oder weniger ein Herrschen, ein Verändern, ein Sich-über-das-Schicksal-aktiv-Erheben. Auch H hatte sich über das Schicksal erhoben. Er wurde lieber blind, als daß er sich den Untergang Deutschlands ansah. Seine Blindheit war ein Zeichen seines außergewöhnlichen starken Willens. (Weiss, XIV, 116)

He acknowledges that his actions towards H were not the product of reason but of his thirst for power. He failed to cure his patient of the more fundamental psychological problems behind his blindness, and he admits that he did more harm than good by meddling, setting H on the path to political dictatorship: ‘Meine Hände hatten Unheil bewirkt’ (Weiss, XIV, 215).¹⁶ Notably, he also compares his metaphorical blindness in this respect with H’s loss of sight, which he attributes in turn to H’s own will to power. This gives rise to two possible explanations: either the narrator genuinely shares certain

¹⁶ Ächtler (p. 339) observes that the method of treatment adopted by the narrator seems to reaffirm H’s narcissism, lust for power and sense of purpose.

personality traits with the despot H or he projects his own characteristics onto his patient. In either case, the reliability of his judgement is called into question, but it is the second scenario that I wish to pursue in the remainder of this chapter.

Edward Timms points out that the risk of projection from analyst to analysand is fundamental to Kraus's criticism of psychoanalysis. He notes that Kraus's most famous aphorism on the subject – 'Die Psychoanalyse ist jene Geisteskrankheit, für deren Therapie sie sich hält!' – identifies a structural paradox inherent in the discipline, namely that if the universality of the theory is valid the analyst must acknowledge in himself the psychological characteristics he diagnoses in his patient and, as a result, that every diagnosis involves an element of projection.¹⁷ Indeed, Freud himself accepts that all knowledge of others is based on projection:

Das Bewußtsein vermittelt jedem einzelnen von uns nur die Kenntnis von eigenen Seelenzuständen; das auch ein anderer Mensch ein Bewußtsein hat, ist ein Schluß, der per analogiam auf Grund der wahrnehmbaren Äußerung und Handlungen dieses anderen gezogen wird, um uns dieses Benehmen des anderen verständlich zu machen. (Freud, X, 267)

In light of these remarks, it is possible to read the admission of Weiss's narrator that 'es war immer mein Bestreben, in den Menschen zu lesen wie in mir, um sie zu beherrschen wie mich selbst' not simply as evidence of his will to power, but as an indication that his power instinct manifests itself in the impulse to render others like him, to rob them of their alterity. In diagnosing H with a 'Gottähnlichkeitstrieb', he identifies a personality trait in his patient which is central to his own character. In the end, the accuracy of this

¹⁷ Karl Kraus, *Die Fackel*, 376-77 (30.05.1913), p. 21. Timms, pp. 109-10.

diagnosis is questionable. The seed of ‘Gottähnlichkeit’, it seems, is first planted in H by the narrator’s projection of his own divine self-conception. When later faced with H as a crowd leader, he himself admits: ‘Ich kannte das Wunder an der Quelle. Denn ich hatte ihm den Glauben an sich als göttliches Wunder gegeben’ (Weiss, XIV, 166).

By extension of this idea, the narrator’s proclamations about mass psychology may likewise be read as a large-scale projection of his personal experience of irrationality in the crowd. At any rate, while *Der Augenzeuge* echoes and may even directly draw on the claims of contemporary theoretical treatises on mass psychology, as Ächtler believes, the critical approach the text takes to psychoanalytic epistemology makes it impossible to regard it as an unquestioning appropriation of such theories.

Re-evaluating the Crowd

Admittedly, looking back on his younger days, the narrator does acknowledge his subjectivity and admits that he has not always been motivated by reason: ‘Ich wollte mein ganzes Leben im kühlen Licht der bewußten Vernunft führen. Vielleicht habe ich später aus diesem Grunde unbeschreiblich leiden müssen, weil ich nicht einsehen konnte oder wollte, daß nicht alles in der Vernunft beschlossen ist’ (Weiss, XIV, 91). However, in a movement which Tom Kindt identifies as typical of the unreliable narrators who feature in many of Weiss’s novels, he ends up repeating his mistakes.¹⁸ At the beginning

¹⁸ Tom Kindt, *Unzuverlässiges Erzählen und literarische Moderne: eine Untersuchung der Romane von Ernst Weiß* (Tübingen: Niemeyer, 2008), pp. 189-208. For more on the narrative structure of *Der Augenzeuge* see Jan Christoph Meister, ‘Sprachloser Augenzeuge: Geschichte, Diskurs und Narration in Ernst Weiß’ Hitler-Roman *Der Augenzeuge*’, in *Ernst Weiß: Seelenanalytiker und Erzähler*, ed. by Peter Engel and Hans-Harald Müller (Bern: Lang, 1992), pp. 292-304.

of *Der Augenzeuge*, he accepts the influence of his own feelings of ‘Gottähnlichkeit’ on his encounter with H and promises that his narrative will, in contrast, be ‘Nüchtern und klar, schmucklos und möglichst wahrheitsgetreu’ (Weiss, XIV, 7). Yet his account of the national mood at the outbreak of World War One is more a product of emotion rather than reason. He writes:

Mit einem Schlage gab es kein Europa mehr, die Grenzen waren gesperrt, und überall floß Blut. Im Norden, im Osten, im Süden, im Westen. Der Kosmopolitismus war zu Ende. Es gab keine Reisen ins “Ausland” mehr, es gab keine Rechte des einzelnen mehr, keine Pressefreiheit, also keine Denkfreiheit, keine Forschungsfreiheit. Keine Kritik. Keine Vernunft. Es herrschte Kriegerrecht, Notrecht, also kein Recht. Das universale Völkerrecht war dem geheiligten Recht der sich verteidigenden einzelnen Nation unterlegen, die gegen eine oder einige andere Nationen kämpfte, die sich ebenfalls verteidigten. (Weiss, XIV, 96)

The passage is a highly dramatic one. Frequent punctuation divides the sentences into short, punchy segments; lists of multiple words and phrases create an impression of bombardment similar to that conveyed in the narrator’s account of the crowd at H’s rally, while the impact of individual phrases is emphasized with anaphora and epiphora; the hyperbolic use of adverbials with superlative force such as ‘Mit einem Schlage’, ‘überall’ and ‘zu Ende’ produces a sense of sudden and drastic change, the extent of which is underlined by the binary opposition of ‘das universale Völkerrecht’ and ‘die einzelne Nation’. In the narrator’s assessment, no noble belief in the essence of nationhood lies behind this change. The cultivation of a collective sense of identity is simply necessary to the pursuit of the state’s political strategy. Ultimately, the individual means nothing but another body for slaughter in the trenches: ‘Nicht mehr groß und

klein, alles war wertvoll als Masse, wertlos als Einzellerscheinung. Ob ein Angriff 100 000 oder “nur” 10 000 Menschenleben wert war, entschied die strategische Lage. Niemand von den Menschen, die zugrunde gingen, wurde gefragt’ (Weiss, XIV, 98). Here, again, the thrust of his statements is superlative (‘alles’, ‘Niemand’), and his vision of the relationship between crowd and individual black and white (‘wertvoll’/‘wertlos’).

This passage is introduced into the text as abruptly as its opening words suggest, with no preamble detailing the socio-political background to the beginning of the War. The feeling with which the narrator portrays its outbreak is compounded by this omission, which strips the behaviour of the masses of any mitigating explanation, casting them as wholly irrational. In this respect, as well as in his dismay at the apparent sacrifice of cosmopolitanism to what he sees as collective madness, the narrator conveys the same nostalgia for pre-war European culture familiar from the writing of Weiss’s contemporary, Habsburg compatriot and fellow exile Stefan Zweig. In his autobiography *Die Welt von Gestern* (1942) Zweig describes the mood of 1914 as a ‘gefährliche Massenpsychose’ and the ‘Verrat der Vernunft an die aktuelle Massenleidenschaft’.¹⁹ McClelland reports that this kind of pessimism about the decline of the European ‘fellowship in civilization’ led to universalizing theories of mass psychology such as Le Bon’s being taken more seriously after the War than they previously had been. There

¹⁹ Stefan Zweig, *Die Welt von Gestern: Erinnerungen eines Europäers*, (Frankfurt am Main: Fischer, 1981), p. 273.

seemed to be no rational explanation for the destruction it occasioned.²⁰ Yet recent scholarship has also questioned whether the German public reaction to the outbreak of war was as universally enthusiastic as is generally thought. Jeffrey Verhey maintains that powerful as the experiences of August 1914 were, little in-depth research has been conducted on the extent of the zeal or on the regional, professional, political and temporal variations in mood with which the War was met. He provides evidence that many sections of German society regarded the conflict with a heavy heart and argues that the ‘spirit of 1914’ was in part a social myth – a narrative cultivated to uphold the ideal of a common national identity and sustain support for the war effort as it dragged on and morale waned.²¹ While for Verhey it was primarily a conservative myth designed to nullify party and class differences, the idea was also accepted, albeit with regret, by humanist intellectuals such as Zweig.

Verhey’s scholarship provokes questions about the account of mass fervour put forward by the narrator of *Der Augenzeuge*. The quoted passage pre-emptively dispenses with details he later provides regarding the harrowing effects of life at the front and the fact that many men turned to drink in order to cope with their situation. Even his conclusion that he was himself motivated by the drives of the ‘Unterseele’ to resign from his post as an army doctor and re-enlist as an infantry soldier has another possible reason: he initially states that he no longer wished to use his gift in the service of a campaign he abhorred, to heal soldiers only for them to be sent back into battle when

²⁰ McClelland, p. 23.

²¹ Jeffrey Verhey, *The Spirit of 1914: Militarism, Myth and Mobilization in Germany* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2000).

they had barely recovered. As a result, he asked for a different position. The ‘Unterseele’ explanation is only imposed retrospectively: ‘Oder war es ein anderer Grund , der mich dazu bewog, mich zum Kampftruppe zu melden statt zur Sanitätstruppe?’ (Weiss, XIV, 104). Having decided that he was himself governed by primitive impulses, he finds the same motivation in everyone, but the discrepancy between his promises of truth and balance, and the obvious emotion with which he reports on the War undermines the credibility of his story.

The impact of his subjectivity on his understanding of mass psychology is further evident when he makes the ‘Unterseele’ responsible for the mass unrest which follows the War, despite the fact that a very different kind of collective is now under consideration. As the War progresses and the likelihood of a German victory fades, public enthusiasm for the conflict wanes. Then, in the aftermath of the conflict, the narrator depicts a society in total chaos, in stark contrast to the spirit of national unity he describes at its beginning. While he observes that the War alone did not represent a new experience, the deprivation it caused on the home front was unprecedented: shortages of food and essential resources, rising crime, financial collapse and the impotence of the authorities to do anything about them. The crowds which feature in post-war life are not moved by patriotic eagerness. They are crowds of workers motivated by poverty: sickly, starving and dressed in threadbare clothes. The narrator takes part in mass demonstrations because after the trauma of the War the anonymity of the crowd is comforting to him, yet his account of being swept along unthinkingly does not seem to

describe satisfactorily the involvement of the other crowd members. Speaking as if ‘aus einem Munde’ (Weiss XIV, 135), they shout both curses and political slogans, registering anger and disenchantment but also engaging in organized protest. This is a disciplined act which is devalued by the narrator’s recourse to the ‘Unterseele’.

The narrator’s attitude to these crowds appears to have been a common one among Weiss’s contemporaries. For example, his assessment recalls views put forward by Musil in ‘Der Dichter in dieser Zeit’. When he spoke of the many collective movements of the post-war era, despite the various different causes they represented, Musil claimed: ‘Gemeinsam ist ihnen allen aber das Übergewicht kollektiver, gesamtheitlicher Interessen gegenüber den individuellen, und ihre mehr oder weniger rücksichtslose Geltendmachung in unserem Zeitalter’ (Musil, VIII, 1245). Like the narrator of *Der Augenzeuge*, he did not distinguish between different kinds of collectivism, equating nationalism with class activism, and war with revolution. He failed to acknowledge that not all mass movements are necessarily irrational or malevolent. A similar sentiment is implicit in ‘Psychoanalyse der Massen’, where Simmel diagnoses post-war mass unrest as a symptom of psychological sickness. Rather than simply echoing Simmel’s perspective as Ächtler claims, however, the unreliability of Weiss’s narrator leads one to question its limitations. When Simmel defends striking workers against the accusation that they are workshy on the grounds that they cannot help themselves – ‘Ihre Glieder gehorchen nicht mehr dem Bewußtsein’ (Simmel, 40) – he implies that these are the only two available explanations, ignoring the possibility that

the masses have a valid, conscious motivation for striking. Indeed, even though Simmel was actually a committed socialist, his assumption that all crowds function in the same way is reminiscent of the anti-democratic origins of modern crowd theory in reactionary responses to the French Revolution.

Finally, when it comes to AH's mass following, the narrator of *Der Augenzeuge* once more cites the workings of the 'Unterseele' in explanation for crowd hysteria. As set out above, he identifies it as the source of H's hold over the crowds at his rallies, which he illustrates using sexual metaphor. It is possible that Weiss did have Freud in mind when depicting H's crowds and that his portrayal of the leader-crowd relation in this manner is a vulgarized version of Freud's libidinal model, as argued by Müller-Funk. However, taking into account the narrator's tendency to project his own experiences onto others, as with crowds elsewhere in the novel his judgement cannot be taken at face value. Whereas in other cases he projects his own feelings as one of the crowd onto the crowd as a whole, here he projects his understanding of power onto H's role as leader. His account of H's relationship to the crowd recalls the rush of power over H that grips him during their treatment sessions. His belief that H's authority rests on his appeal to the unconscious instincts of his followers echoes the thrill of strength he himself experiences when manipulating his patient. Describing that experience, he states: 'Er wehrte sich gegen mich, aber jetzt war ich der Stärkere, da ich auf die UNTERSEELE dieses Menschen wirkte' (Weiss, XIV, 117). Furthermore, the sexual metaphor he uses to characterize the connection between H and the crowd is reminiscent

of the sensation he seeks to provoke in his patient in the hospital at P ('er sollte mich sehnsüchtig erwarten').

In fact, the narrator's use of the sexual conceit to describe the crowd is suspicious in itself. He likens his personal sense of temporary resistance to H and eventual subsumption into the hysteria of the crowd to the initial ambivalence and ultimate surrender of a woman to her sexual partner:

Zum erstenmal habe ich begriffen, was es heißt, Weib sein und dem Mann, der das Weib zuerst gegen ihren Willen und dann plötzlich mit ihrem Willen, mit ihren brennenden Schmerzen, mit noch tausendmal mehr brennender Wollust zersprengt, unterliegen, in ihm aufgehen, mit ihm zusammenwachsen, als ob es auf ewig wäre. (Weiss, XIV, 150)

Despite H's own emotion during the rally, he retains a position of strength in relation to the crowd, even as he descends from his rostrum in order to move about among the people: 'er war neben uns, in uns, in dem Verborgenen wühlte er umher, und er zermalmte uns mit seinem sklavischen Wollustglück, gehorchen, sich auslöschen, unten sein, nichts mehr sein' (Weiss, XIV, 150). The use of the preposition 'in' in the phrase 'in uns', as opposed to the expected 'unter', again emphasizes the sexual comparison. H is not simply among the members of the crowd; he penetrates it. While himself enslaved by desire, he is nonetheless described in dominant terms. The verbs 'wühlen' and 'zermalmen' communicate the violence of the interaction. The list of verbs beginning 'gehörchen, sich auslöschen [...]' conveys the relentlessness of H's assault on the crowd while likening its submission to him to erotic humiliation. That is to say, the leader-crowd relationship is likened not simply to sex, but specifically to sexual violence. The

comparison not only reveals how the narrator views the crowd, but also says something about his perspective on sexual relationships and on human interaction more generally. The implication is that he views all relationships in terms of domination and submission, and is thus predisposed to see the leader-crowd relation in this way too. Weiss's portrayal of his narrator in *Der Augenzeuge* thus recalls Canetti's comments on preconceived conclusions formed by analysts about their patients, as well as Kraus's views on projection. In consequence of his predetermined notions about crowd psychology, he presents H's crowd as a case of the arbitrary capitulation of many before the will of one fascinating individual. He thus perpetuates what J.P. Stern has called a particularly German tendency to place undue emphasis on the force of charismatic and 'natural' leadership.²² He subscribes and contributes to the 'Führer Myth' of the leader who magically held the masses in thrall, a myth which Goebbels claimed was his most important propaganda achievement.²³ Yet there is at least some suggestion in *Der Augenzeuge* that more mundane factors contribute to H's power. For example, he exploits people's fears about socio-economic issues. He is also accompanied everywhere by a gang of bodyguards who eject dissenters from his rallies. Ultimately, however, the narrator does not dwell on these points as he does on the ecstasy of the crowd.

The ambivalence expressed in *Der Augenzeuge* towards psychoanalytic knowledge illustrates the limitations of an epistemological model which purports to explain the experience of irrationality using a framework of reason. The novel provides

²² See J.P. Stern, *Hitler: The Führer and the People* (Glasgow: Fontana, 1975), p. 24. Stern traces this tendency from the Romantics and through the Second Reich to Hitler.

²³ Kershaw, *The Hitler Myth*, p. 4.

a perspective on mass psychology distinct from that of theories such as Freud's and Simmel's in that it seeks to capture the affectivity of the crowd experience seen through the eyes of one who is part of it. However, as the narrative structure of the novel undermines the narrator's projection of his personal psychological experiences onto the crowd as a whole, it also cautions that crowds may not be as homogeneous as is often suggested and that what is presented as objective scientific fact about them may really be a form of power masquerading as reason. In contrast with the detached stance of the observers in theoretical texts on mass psychology, the unreliable homodiegetic narration of the psychotherapist in *Der Augenzeuge* allows Weiss simultaneously to entertain psychoanalytic propositions on the subject and to investigate their limitations. The novel suggests that psychoanalytic theory cannot fully grasp the emotions of the experiencing subject within the crowd; nor can it account for all the reasons why crowds form or for various different types of crowds.

It could be seen as a weakness of the novel that, being presented from such a restricted first-person point of view, it cannot explore in any depth explanations for crowd phenomena other than the psychological ideas favoured by Weiss's narrator and can thus offer no immediate solutions to mass political violence. If the workings of the unconscious are permanent and universal, as the narrator claims, little can be done to tackle their symptoms, whereas socio-economic and cultural factors can be practically confronted. At best the novel challenges normative theories of mass psychology, prompting the reader to detect hidden meaning and consider the wider social

circumstances of mass movements. Yet, as with Mann, it was perhaps Weiss's intention to resist providing answers. H's thinking is characterized by one-sidedness and the deceptively easy solutions he promises to social problems. He wins over his crowds 'durch die Energie des tausendmal eingehämmerten Gedankens, durch die Verengung des geistigen Gesichtsfeldes. Keine Fülle des Geistes. Kein Zweifel. Kein Umlernen. Kein Zulernen. Ein Gedanke, zwei, höchstens drei, diese aber immer wiederholt' (Weiss, XIV, 140). In contrast, instead of offering straightforward answers, *Der Augenzeuge* merely opens up different possible ways of thinking about crowds, encouraging a critical and pluralistic epistemology which undermines H's oratorical strategies as much as it does psychoanalytic reason. Hans Rochelt judges Weiss's failure to commit himself politically in the novel as an expression of helplessness in the face of Nazism. Dieter Kliche writes of a 'latente Spannung zwischen politischem Bekenntnis zum Antifaschismus und Romanform'. He even attributes Weiss's suicide in 1940 as the Nazis marched on Paris, where he was in exile, to his inability to overcome this tension.²⁴ Certainly, the ethics of adopting an empathetic and noncommittal stance in response to fascism troubled Weiss just as it did Mann.²⁵ At one point in *Der Augenzeuge*, after the narrator's experience at H's rally, when he decides to join a democratic resistance organization, he regretfully wonders:

²⁴ Kliche, p. 313.

²⁵ Hans Rochelt, 'Die Ohnmacht des Augenzeugen: über den Schriftsteller Ernst Weiß', *Literatur und Kritik*, 29 (1969), 552-56 (p. 555): 'Ernst Weiß wußte um seine Ohnmacht, in der er sich angesichts unaufhaltsamer Katastrophen schreibend behaupten mußte. Er konnte nicht Partei ergreifen, da sich seinem Blick stets die Motive beider Kontrahenten, des Mörders und des Opfers, in ihrer Erbärmlichkeit zu entschleiern pflegten.'

Konnten wir [H] auf der anderen Seite etwas Gleiches entgegensetzen? Wir konnten es nicht. Wir hatten uns in den Gegner zu sehr hineingelebt. Das war unsere tödliche Schwäche. Es fehlte uns die naive Brutalität ebenso wie die naive Sentimentalität, die Faust, die Träne und die Lüge. Man steigt zu der Masse nicht hinab, ohne sich der Skrupel und des Gewissens, die den einzelnen adeln, entledigt zu haben. (Weiss, XIV, 153).

In other words, the strong suit of the democratic movement, the capacity of its members to empathize with their enemies, puts it at a disadvantage when it comes to combating fascism. In order to fight on an equal footing, the members of the resistance would have to sacrifice their critical individuality to the same homogeneity of perspective which H seeks to cultivate in the crowd. But if the pluralism of *Der Augenzeuge* is a limitation, it can at least be regarded as a redeeming feature of the text that its author raises this problem himself.

III

‘AUF DER SUCHE NACH DEN IDEALEN DER MENSCHHEIT’: THE PROBLEM OF FREE WILL IN ÖDÖN VON HORVÁTH’S *JUGEND OHNE GOTT* (1938)

Towards the end of Ödön von Horváth’s *Jugend ohne Gott*, the narrator, a schoolteacher, watches from his window as a crowd celebrating the birthday of the ‘Oberplebejer’ – his name for the head of the fascist state in which he lives – parades through the streets:

Durch die Straßen marschierten die Mädchen, die den verschollenen Flieger suchen, die Jungen, die alle Neger sterben lassen, und die Eltern, die die Lügen glauben, die auf den Transparenten stehen. Und die sie nicht glauben, marschieren ebenfalls mit. Divisionen der Charakterlosen unter dem Kommando von Idioten. Im gleichen Schritt und Tritt. [...] So preisen die Schwachsinnigen und Lügner den Tag, an dem der Oberplebejer geboren ward.¹

The crowd Horváth depicts here is a microcosm of the wider society portrayed in his novel. The reference to the girls ‘die den verschollenen Flieger suchen’ recalls an earlier episode in which a group of schoolgirls are put through a training exercise, a mock search for a missing pilot, designed to prepare them for the role they are to play in war.

The boys ‘die alle Neger sterben lassen’ are the narrator’s pupils. The phrase used to

¹ Ödön von Horváth, *Gesammelte Werke*, ed. by Dieter Hildebrandt, Walter Huder, and Traugott Krischke, 4 vols (Frankfurt am Main: Suhrkamp, 1970), III: *Lyrik, Prosa, Romane*, p. 373. Further references to this edition are given after quotations in the text. In *LTI: Lingua Tertii Imperii: Notizbuch eines Philologen* (1947) the philologist Victor Klemperer, who in his diaries recorded the detail of life in Germany from the Wilhelmine empire to the GDR, discusses the widespread use of the term ‘Führer’ under Nazism to illustrate the influence of political propaganda on everyday discourse. Horváth reportedly never referred to Hitler other than as the Oberplebejer – see note in Horváth, *Gesammelte Werke: Kommentierte Werkausgabe in Einzelbänden*, ed. by Traugott Krischke, 14 vols (Frankfurt am Main: Suhrkamp, 1983–88), XIII: *Jugend ohne Gott* (1983), p. 173. The use of the name in *Jugend ohne Gott* contributes to the analogy drawn in the novel between the rulers of the present-day fascist state and the last Plebeian secession in ancient Rome in 287 BC. For a detailed account of the importance of classical allusions in Horváth’s work see Peter Gros, *Plebejer, Sklaven und Caesaren: Die Antike im Werk Ödön von Horváths* (Bern: Lang, 1996).

describe them also refers to an earlier occurrence. After one of his lessons the narrator is reprimanded by the headmaster of his school for contradicting the curriculum prescribed by the state, which teaches German superiority over other nations and races. Irritated by racist remarks in an essay by one particularly nasty pupil, a boy named N, he retorts: 'Auch die Neger sind doch Menschen' (Horváth, III, 286).² Later a complaint is brought against him by the child's father, one of the parents in the crowd who believe the propaganda disseminated by the regime. Despite the narrator's small act of resistance on this occasion, however, for much of the novel he is among those who do not believe the state propaganda but who 'marschieren ebenfalls mit'. If in *Mario und der Zauberer* Cipolla's crowd is a symbolic representation of fascism and in *Der Augenzeuge* the crowds at H's rallies are an important part of fascist rule, Horváth combines the two approaches: in *Jugend ohne Gott* the crowd is presented both as an element of fascism and as a synecdoche for fascist society as a whole.

In the previous chapter, I discussed the importance of the way in which Weiss depicts the crowd for the message he communicates about Hitler and Nazism. In this chapter, with reference to Horváth's characterization of fascist society as a crowd, I want to consider the appropriateness of the crowd in general as a metaphor in this context. As Tarde pointed out in his 1901 essay 'Le Public et la foule', the equivalence of the two concepts is not self-evident, although around the turn of the century the notion of the

² Except on one occasion, when the narrator refers to the pupil Bauer by name, the boys are referred to only by their initials. Wolfgang Heinz Schober reads this as an acknowledgement of the fact that 'Das Kollektiv kennt kaum Individuen'. Schober, 'Die Jugendproblematik in Horváths Romanen', in *Horváth-Diskussion*, ed. by Kurt Bartsch, Uwe Baur and Dietmar Goltschnigg (Kronberg: Scriptor, 1976), pp.124-37 (p.133).

crowd took on ‘un prestigieux attrait sur le lecteur contemporain’. According to Tarde, certain writers were ‘trop portés à désigner par ce mot ambigu toutes sortes de groupements humains’.³ Seeking to distinguish the crowd from the public, he observed that the former was an age-old group, reliant on the co-presence of its members for the transmission of ideas and emotions, whereas the latter was a modern product of the rise of the mass media, which facilitated communication to widely dispersed audiences. Furthermore, he believed that in the media age the public had largely superseded the crowd, in comparison with which, owing to its increased range of influence, it was significantly more powerful. At the same time, he noted that individuals can simultaneously belong to more than one public but can be members of only a single crowd at a time, and suggested that crowds are consequently much more extreme and intolerant in their views than any given public. What was it about fascism, then, that led Horváth to explore the crowd not only as a manifestation of collectivist politics, as in the case of the mass rallies depicted by Weiss in *Der Augenzeuge*, but also as a fitting symbol for fascist society, as in the work of Mann?

Jugend ohne Gott incorporates a different understanding of the modern mass media from that formulated in Tarde’s essay. Horváth portrays the media not as a force for pluralism but as a negative force for the organization of the public into a body of conformists. This view goes back at least to the middle of the nineteenth century and Kierkegaard’s equation in *Two Ages* (1846) of the mass media with the dominance of

³ Gabriel Tarde, *L’Opinion et la foule* (Paris: Les Presses Universitaires de France, 1989), p. 8. Further references to this edition are given after quotations in the text.

the crowd in modern society, but it also underpins Kraus's early twentieth-century journalistic satire. In the totalitarian public depicted by Horváth, in which the media are wholly under the control of the regime, there can be no diversity. The influence of the media is a political weapon used to cultivate the homogeneity and intransigence of the crowd, which no longer needs to be assembled in one place.

However, recalling the doubt cast on the narrator's normative pronouncements about crowd psychology in *Der Augenzeuge*, neither the crowd which celebrates the birthday of the Oberplebejer nor the society it symbolizes is a perfectly homogeneous whole. They comprise not only those incapable of independent thought but also individuals who, like Horváth's narrator, reflect critically on the propaganda and agenda of the regime while acquiescing to its demands in the interests of self-preservation. Hence the distinction the narrator draws between different kinds of conformist: the 'Schwachsinnigen' and the 'Lügner' in the crowd. The dilemma such characters face between what is prudent and what is right gives rise to the problem of free will as a central concern of *Jugend ohne Gott*. Whereas some members of the crowd do not know any better, the more self-aware intellectual characters have a choice between conscience and survival. The novel traces the narrator's struggle to escape the apparent determinism of his self-preservation instinct and to exert his moral freedom in both political and personal matters.

In addition to his complicity with fascist power, the narrator is caught up in the murder of one of his pupils. As a result of action he takes, another pupil is falsely

accused of the crime. His struggle to do the right thing in both matters is religious as well as moral. Having lost his faith in God during the First World War, unable to reconcile the existence of such brutality with the proposition of a benevolent Deity, over the course of the narrative he re-engages with the problem of evil. The novel addresses the free will defence, which argues that evil is due to the free, bad choices of men, in order to reconcile its existence with the goodness of God. It also states that the God-given freedom to commit evil is what gives meaning to the notion of moral responsibility. The narrator comes to identify God as an inspiration to goodness, thus finding the courage to act on his conscience, tell the truth about events surrounding the murder and free himself from the grip of the fascist collective.

The religious dimension of *Jugend ohne Gott* has been unfavourably received by various critics. Commentators tend to see Horváth's departure from Germany in 1933 as a caesura in his career: whether between realism and metaphysics, materialism and idealism or politics and individual ethics, the identification of oppositions between the social engagement of his early work and the apparent inward turn of his later writing is central to their argument.⁴ The metaphysical focus of *Jugend ohne Gott*, and other late works such as *Der jüngste Tag* (1936) and *Ein Kind unserer Zeit* (1938), is regarded as

⁴ The most influential example of this approach to Horváth's writing is Jürgen Schröder's 'Das Spätwerk Ödön von Horváths', *Sprachkunst*, 7 (1976), pp. 49-71. Marcel Reich-Ranicki is also highly critical of his exile novels in 'Horváth, Gott und die Frauen: die Etablierung eines neuen Klassikers der Moderne', in *Über Ödön von Horváth*, ed. by Dieter Hildebrandt and Traugott Krischke (Frankfurt am Main: Suhrkamp, 1972), pp. 83-91. Although Urs Jenny rejects such clear distinctions between the early and late works, in 'Horváth realistisch, Horváth metaphysisch', *Akzente*, 18 (1971), 289-95 he too views the later writing negatively. See also Jenny, 'Ödön von Horváths Größe und Grenzen', in *Über Ödön von Horváth*, ed. by Hildebrandt and Krischke, pp. 71-78.

escapism from material reality.⁵ Even more sympathetic critics such as Axel Fritz view the later works as a kind of compromise. Fritz asserts: ‘es steht außer Frage, daß auch das Spätwerk Horváths vorwiegend unter dem Aspekt der Zeitkritik gesehen werden muß, auch wenn diese Kritik mehr dem moralischen Verhalten des Einzelmenschen gilt.’⁶ The concessive force of the words ‘auch wenn’ in this quotation implies that the focus on individual moral autonomy in Horváth’s later social criticism is inferior to the Marxist outlook of his early *Volksstücke* and his first novel *Der ewige Spießer*, which attributed fascism to the false consciousness of the petty bourgeoisie. Yet, in its emphasis on the subjectivity of the individual, this assessment discounts the bridge between individual and collective epistemology provided by the Kantian notion of universal reason as the categorical imperative of morality – a notion which is central to Adler’s thought in ‘Zur Massenpsychologie’, where he interprets shared intuitive understanding of good and evil as evidence of ‘die Massenpsyche als produktive Kraft’. In *Jugend ohne Gott* the narrator’s individual courage inspires instances of positive collective behaviour as others join him in standing up for what is right, while extreme individualism is attacked in Horváth’s portrayal of the character T, who is devoid of moral feeling. In addressing Horváth’s treatment of different notions of individuality and

⁵ Jenny, ‘Horváth realistisch, Horváth metaphysisch’ (p. 294) writes: ‘Nichts von den späteren Arbeiten hat Überzeugungskraft; aktuelle Anspielungen, Anflüge eines moralisierenden Antifaschismus, die Zeitbezug herstellen sollen, täuschen kaum darüber hinweg, daß seine Zeit Horváth immer fremder wurde.’

⁶ Axel Fritz, *Ödön von Horváth als Kritiker seiner Zeit* (Munich: List, 1973), p. 23. A similar stance is adopted by Carmen Cadow and Gretel Wich-Trapp, ‘Horváth: Ein Exilautor?’, in *Österreicher im Exil 1934 bis 1945*, ed. by Helene Maimann and Heinz Lunzer (Vienna: Österreichischer Bundesverlag, 1977), pp. 400-12.

collectivity, this chapter will argue that he engages with the idea of community to a greater extent than previously acknowledged.

Crowd Culture

In contrast to the extended crowd representations found in the works of Mann and Weiss, *Jugend ohne Gott* conveys the crowd culture of the period in a range of shorter episodes. From a stadium of football fans to the packed gallery of a courtroom, from a gang of violent schoolboys to marching cadets and the rally for the birthday of the Oberplebejer, references to a range of mass phenomena punctuate the novel. These episodes play out against the backdrop of the fascist state, in which the individual has ceased to count. The terms ‘Vaterland’ and ‘Volk’ permeate the vocabulary of Horváth’s characters. According to one newspaper, the job of teachers is to mould ‘junge aufgeschlossene Seelen’ into ‘wertvolle Volksgenossen’ (Horváth, III, 347). At school children learn to judge people solely according to nationality and race, and are assured of the superiority of their own kind. The education authorities set essay titles like ‘Warum müssen wir Kolonien haben?’ (Horváth, III, 282), thus inculcating in the pupils a belief in the greater rights of their own nation compared with those of others. The boys are taught to despise ‘die Neger’, all of whom, according to N’s essay, are deceitful and lazy. When the narrator challenges N on this point, the boy’s father accuses him of ‘Humanitätsduselei’ and ‘Sabotage am Vaterland’ (Horváth, III, 288).⁷ In the school

⁷ Background to the theme of education under fascism is provided in Alexander Fuhrmann, ‘Der historische Hintergrund: Schule-Kirche-Staat’, in *Horváths Jugend ohne Gott*, ed. by Traugott Krischke (Frankfurt am Main: Suhrkamp, 1984), pp.129-46 and Holger Rudloff, ‘Zur Darstellung des Themas

holidays the boys engage in military training and they dream of sacrificing themselves for the *Vaterland*. During the training the pupil Z is chastised by his peers for his inability to march in formation. This foreshadows later events, which reveal him to be more sensitive and reflective than many of the other boys. The views expressed in the children's essays also emphasize the supremacy of the nation over other kinds of collective, particularly that of class: 'Es dreht sich zwar nicht um die Arbeiter [...],' writes one boy, 'es dreht sich vielmehr um das Volksganze, denn auch der Arbeiter gehört letzten Endes zum Volk' (Horváth, III, 282).

In addressing the nationalist, racist, militarist and totalitarian aspects of fascism, then, Horváth emphasizes the inherent collectivity of the movement. He takes the characterization further when he specifically conceptualizes fascist society as a crowd, both in his depiction of the mass rally and, on a further occasion, when he reflects on the aggressive nationalism of the period in allegorical terms: 'Sortiert nach Sprache, Rasse und Nation stehen die Haufen nebeneinander und fixieren sich, wer größer ist' (Horváth, III, 324). His use of the term 'Haufen' again elicits comparison of fascist society with actual, physical crowds. Yet, for Tarde, while the public and the crowd were connected, they were not to be confused. On the one hand, he believed that the public represented the natural expansion of the crowd in the age of mass media. Like Horváth in his representation of the Oberplebejer's birthday rally, Tarde describes the crowd as a microcosm of the public, observing that in the media age every sect desired its own

Schule und Faschismus in der deutschen Literatur', in *Horváths Jugend ohne Gott*, ed. by Krischke, pp.180-197.

newspaper ‘pour s’entourer d’un public qui rayonne bien au-delà d’elle, sorte d’atmosphère ambiante où elle sera baignée, de conscience collective dont elle sera illuminée’ (Tarde, 17). To a degree this kind of development of the crowd mentality on a vast scale was what Horváth and other authors had in mind when they used the crowd to symbolize fascist society. On the other hand, for Tarde the public and the crowd were also significantly different, and with the advent of the media age the former had largely replaced the latter. He wrote: ‘Je ne puis donc accorder à un vigoureux écrivain, le Dr Le Bon, que notre âge soit ‘l’ère des foules’. Il est l’ère du public ou des publics, ce qui est bien différent’ (Tarde, 12). He viewed the crowd as ‘le groupe social du passé’, not only with regard to the technological advancement of society, but also to its moral betterment, given that its threatening homogeneity had been replaced by diverse, and thus innocuous, publics:

De là l’intolérance beaucoup plus grande des foules et, par suite, des nations où domine l’esprit des foules, parce que l’être y est pris tout entier, irrésistiblement entraîné par une force sans contrepoids. Et de là, l’avantage attaché à la substitution graduelle des publics aux foules, transformation qui s’accompagne toujours d’un progrès dans la tolérance, sinon dans le scepticisme. (Tarde, 13)

While he conceded that it was possible for a ‘public surexcité’ (Tarde, 13) to regress to the point of producing crowd action, he believed that the danger of this happening was slight.

In *Jugend ohne Gott*, in contrast, under the total control of the state, the media are utilized to create and control one single public. In this respect a further comment made by Tarde is of interest. He stated that ‘les publics sont moins outranciers que les

foules, moins despotes ou moins dogmatiques’, but also that ‘leur despotisme ou leur dogmatisme, s’il est moins aigu, est en revanche tout autrement tenace et chronique que celui des foules’ (Tarde, 21). In other words, because of its greater size and range, if the public were to mutate into the crowd, he feared that it would pose an even greater danger. This concern is echoed in Horváth’s novel. The restrictive abuse of media technology by the fascist regime regressively combines the tenacity of the public with the extremism of the crowd, recalling Kraus’s description of Nazi propaganda as ‘ein Moment im Völkerleben [...], als bei elektrischem Licht, ja mit allen Behelfen der Radiotechnik an den Urzustand angeknüpft wird’.⁸

Of all the modern mass media, Horváth’s novel refers most frequently to the radio, which was a key tool in Goebbels’s propaganda strategy. In a speech given on 25 March 1933, Goebbels stated: ‘Ich halte den Rundfunk für das allermodernste und allerwichtigste Massenbeeinflussungsinstrument, das es überhaupt gibt [...] ein Mittel zur Vereinheitlichung des deutschen Volkes in Nord und West, in Süd und Ost.’ In the same year, the *Reichspropagandaministerium* commissioned the large-scale manufacture of inexpensive radio devices for mass consumption. They were only for medium-wave reception and thus could not receive foreign broadcasts which might provide alternatives to the official perspective of the state.⁹ In *Jugend ohne Gott*, the use of the radio for the dissemination of propaganda is such a prominent feature of life under

⁸ Karl Kraus, *Schriften*, ed. by Christian Wagenknecht, 20 vols (Frankfurt am Main: Suhrkamp, 1986-94), XII: *Dritte Walpurgisnacht* (1989), p. 16.

⁹ Quotation and further detail in Horváth, *Gesammelte Werke: Kommentierte Werkausgabe in Einzelbänden*, ed. by Krischke, XIII, 162-63.

fascism that it symbolizes the ominous background presence of the state in all areas of life. When the narrator reports “‘Recht ist, was der eigenen Sippschaft frommt”, sagt das Radio’ (Horváth, III, 293), as well as on other similar occasions, the radio is used as a metonym for the fascist regime. While correcting his pupils’ essays he remarks: ‘Und während ich weiterlese, höre ich immer das Radio: es lispelt, es heult, es bellt, es girrt, es droht – und die Zeitungen drucken es nach und die Kindlein, sie schreiben es ab’ (Horváth, III, 283). The list of verbs in the first part of the quotation highlights the all-pervasiveness of radio propaganda, while the anaphora on ‘und die’ in the second part both emphasizes the inevitability with which its image of the world is unquestioningly accepted and creates a bitter tone that conveys the narrator’s scorn for this state of affairs. The narrator also mentions the radio several more times, whenever he is on his guard and concerned that he risks deviating from prescribed ideology. He tells himself, for example: ‘was einer im Radio redet, darf kein Lehrer im Schulheft streichen’ (Horváth, III, 283). During the clash with N for which he is later reprimanded, before contradicting the boy’s racist views he reports: ‘[ich] antworte vorsichtig, denn ich kann mich momentan nicht erinnern, ob das Radio diesen Blödsinn nicht schon mal verkündet hat’ (Horváth, III, 326). Later in the novel, when N is murdered and Z is put on trial for the crime (the supposed motive is that Z believes N to have read his diary, when in fact the teacher has done so), the judge, too, is constantly cautious when choosing his words to the court, leading the narrator to wonder: ‘Fühlt er, daß nun ein Gebiet betreten wurde, wo das Radio regiert?’ (Horváth, III, 352).

The obvious advantage to the state of being able to disseminate its propaganda on a mass scale is the wide exposure this ensures for its ideology. Yet the substance of that ideology is of relatively minor importance in the novel in comparison with the impact of propaganda on the capacity of individuals for critical, independent thought, which is actively discouraged. The correct answers to the essays set by the authorities for schoolchildren are predetermined in accordance with the messages transmitted on the radio. A retired teacher, referred to by the nickname Julius Caesar, with whom the narrator is acquainted complains: 'sie müssen ja nur das abschreiben, was das Radio zusammenblödelt, und schon bekommen sie die besten Noten' (Horváth, III, 297). His frustration is validated when the narrator corrects the children's work, finding that, exactly as he expects, the answers are full of well-rehearsed ideas and devoid of logical rigour. He grumbles: 'Jetzt weiß ich nur, daß ich wiederum sechsundzwanzig Aufsätze durchlesen muß, Aufsätze, die mit schiefen Voraussetzungen falsche Schlußfolgerungen ziehen' (Horváth, III, 283). Yet he goes on to concede: '[man] hatte gegen den Inhalt der Aufsätze vorschriftsgemäß nichts einzuwenden' (Horváth, III, 286). If anything, it seems that according to official guidelines the quality of the schoolwork is deemed inversely proportional to the level of critical reason it displays. Moreover, not only does the best work simply regurgitate ideas expressed in propaganda, but the pupils are not to be exposed to ideas which challenge the single perspective put forward by the state. When the narrator is tempted to challenge this principle, he is warned by the headmaster: 'Wir müssen von der Jugend alles fernhalten, was nur in irgendeiner Weise ihre zukünftigen

militärischen Fähigkeiten beeinträchtigen könnte' (Horváth, III, 289). Consequently, the narrator reflects, if his pupils ever were 'aufgeschlossene Seelen', they certainly are no longer: 'Alles Denken ist ihnen verhaßt' (Horváth, III, 292).

The attack of propaganda on critical thought in the novel rests not only on the homogeneity of its content, but also on the experience of superficiality and distraction provided by modern mass media and cultural technology. In addition to the radio, another medium exploited by the fascist state is the cinema, where the narrator goes in order to divert himself from the guilt he feels over his political cowardice in failing to stand up to the regime. One evening, while reflecting on his weakness, he suddenly exclaims: 'Nein, jetzt will ich nicht weiterdenken! Jetzt wasche ich meine Hände und geh ins Café' (Horváth III, 293). While he, unlike his pupils, is capable of critical reflection, he chooses not to engage in it. When he cannot find anyone to distract him at the café, he immediately seeks an alternative diversion. He is not interested in any particular activity, but simply needs some way to forget his uncomfortable thoughts.

In dem Café sitzt keiner, den ich kenne. Niemand.
Was tun?
Ich geh ins Kino. (Horváth, III, 294)

The short, clipped sentences convey the urgency with which the narrator seeks to escape his feelings of guilt. Horváth's contemporaries Benjamin and Siegfried Kracauer saw the experience of distraction as fundamental to modern mass cultural forms, and to the cinema especially. They believed that the rush of stimuli to which the film spectator was

exposed necessarily encouraged superficiality and externality. For Benjamin in particular, the cinema cultivated distraction as a cognitive habit of the masses:

Man vergleiche die Leinwand, auf der der Film abrollt, mit der Leinwand, auf der sich das Gemälde befindet. Das letztere lädt den Betrachter zur Kontemplation ein; vor ihm kann er sich seinem Assoziationsablauf überlassen. Vor der Filmaufnahme kann er das nicht. Kaum hat er sie ins Auge gefaßt, so hat sie sich schon verändert. Sie kann nicht fixiert werden. (Benjamin, I.ii, 502)

Horváth takes a related but different approach, addressing distraction not as a fundamental component of the cinematic experience, but as a state of mind cultivated by the fascist regime with the aid of mass cultural forms in order to divert the masses from critical engagement with political affairs. The narrator describes the programme he sees as follows:

In der Wochenschau seh ich die reichen Plebejer. Sie enthüllen ihre eigenen Denkmäler, machen die ersten Spatenstiche und nehmen die Paraden ihrer Leibgarden ab. Dann folgt ein Mäuslein, das die größten Katzen besiegt, und dann eine spannende Kriminalgeschichte, in der viel geschossen wird, damit das gute Prinzip triumphieren möge. (Horváth, III, 294)

The incongruity of the elements of the programme is obvious. The inclusion of the propaganda newsreel is in itself to be expected. In Nazi Germany the *Reichskulturkammer* made extensive use of the cinema in order to reach mass audiences with such material.¹⁰ What is noteworthy is the context in which the political film is broadcast, alongside a cartoon and a feature film with a formulaic plot. In packaging its propaganda in this way, the state exploits an entertainment environment in which mass audiences habitually disengage from critical contemplation in order to escape the

¹⁰ David Welch, 'Nazi Wartime Newsreel Propaganda', in *Film and Radio Propaganda in World War II*, ed. by K.R.M. Short (London and Canberra: Croom Helm, 1983), pp. 201-19 (p. 203).

seriousness of everyday life. It capitalizes on the fact that spectators will not reflect on political claims broadcast in this form any more than they would on the message of a cartoon or detective drama.¹¹

The idea that fascism exploits and intensifies the mindlessness already present in mass society is explored further in another of the novel's crowd scenes, when the narrator reflects on his experience at a football match. Having caught a chill at the match, one of the narrator's pupils falls seriously ill and dies. At first he wonders why the boy went to the game when the weather was so bad, but then he remembers that he was there too, and stayed until the final whistle even though it was a boring match. He is thus forced to ask himself: 'also – warum bliebst du? Und mit dir dreißigtausend zahlende Zuschauer?' (Horváth, III, 284). His question is strongly reminiscent of the narrator's guilt in *Mario und der Zauberer* as he attempts to explain his failure to leave Cipolla's show. Mann's narrator claims to have remained out of curiosity, while the search for a different kind of diversion keeps Horváth's teacher and the rest of the crowd at the football stadium. Incidentally, the sports crowd is also of importance in Canetti's autobiography. He attributes the development of his interest in crowds to hearing the football fans at the Sportplatz Rapid near his home in the Viennese suburb of Hütteldorf. But whereas Canetti merely observed those crowds, Horváth offers a possible explanation for their motivation. Speculating on the transformation undergone in the minds of the spectators, he writes:

¹¹ Cf. Welch, p. 202: 'whether by means of direct political instructions or by covert use of entertainment genres to create a false sense of security or normality, Nazi feature films constantly attempted to counteract the negative opinions held by the population during the war.'

Wenn der Rechtsaußen den linken Half überspielt und zentert, wenn der Mittelstürmer den Ball in den leeren Raum vorlegt und der Tormann sich wirft, wenn der Halblinke seine Verteidigung entlastet und ein Flügelspiel forciert, wenn der Verteidiger auf der Torlinie rettet, wenn einer unfair rempelt oder eine ritterliche Geste verübt, wenn der Schiedsrichter gut ist oder schwach, parteiisch oder parteilos, dann existiert für den Zuschauer nichts auf der Welt, außer dem Fußball, ob die Sonne scheint, obs regnet oder scheint. Dann hat er alles vergessen. Was 'alles'? Ich muß lächeln: die Neger, wahrscheinlich - - (Horváth, III, 284).

As with his experience at the cinema, the narrator's description of the football crowd suggests that people flock to such events in order to escape the seriousness of their daily lives. It recalls Kracauer's remarks on sport in *Die Angestellten* (1930), where it is mentioned as one of a variety of amusements to which the wage-earning masses in Weimar Germany turned in their free time to escape the pressures of work. Kracauer was disturbed by the tendency to cordon off work like an epidemic that could be escaped at the weekend, believing that people's dissatisfaction with work could not be reduced by periodical opportunities to escape from it, but only by addressing the contradictions of the dominant economic system. In providing people with an incentive to escape from the problems of work rather than tackling them, he believed that sport undermined the reshaping of social relations and was a powerful means of depoliticization. *Jugend ohne Gott* is set in a different context and the social reality the masses are conditioned to accept is different to that of the Weimar Republic. However, as in Kracauer's work, the escapism of mass culture is connected with the depoliticization of public life. On a first reading, the long list of actions in the narrator's description of the match and the anaphora on 'wenn' seems to convey a diverting atmosphere of excitement similar to

that produced in the descriptions of H's crowds in *Der Augenzeuge*. In fact, however, as the narrator has already revealed that the game he attended was not very exciting, the effect is more sinister. The repetitive structure of the account may instead be read as an expression of the intellectual torpor induced in the football crowd by the spectacle, just as Benjamin believed that the flurry of images to which cinema audiences were exposed dulled their critical faculties. It is no coincidence that Adorno, another commentator on the role of sport as a political weapon – he compared sports crowds to the crowds at totalitarian mass rallies – chooses the metaphor of sport to describe the degradation of spontaneous and objective thought in political discourse: 'Er wird sportifiziert. Man will möglichst viele Punkte machen: keine Unterhaltung, in die nicht wie ein Giftstoff die Gelegenheit zur Wette sich eindrängte.'¹²

With this comment, Adorno addressed not only the superficiality and lack of reflection in public discourse but also its impoverished form. In *Jugend ohne Gott*, the extent of the control the state exerts over the minds of the public is conveyed most effectively not in explicit references to its propaganda, but when the characters' language implicitly reveals that it is being referenced. They betray themselves by speaking and writing in an impersonal jargon that is clearly not their own. As well as commenting on the illogical content of his pupils' work, when marking their essays the

¹² Theodor W. Adorno, *Gesammelte Schriften*, ed. by Rolf Tiedemann and others, 20 vols (Frankfurt am Main: Suhrkamp, 1970-86), X.i: *Kulturkritik und Gesellschaft I* (1977), p. 79: 'die sportlichen Veranstaltungen waren die Modelle der totalitären Massenversammlungen. Als tolerierte Exzesse verbinden sie das Moment der Grausamkeit und Aggression mit dem autoritären, dem disziplinierten Innehalten von Spielregeln: legal wie die neudeutschen und volksdemokratischen Pogrome'; IV: *Minima Moralia* (1980), p. 154.

narrator remarks: ‘plötzlich fällt es mir wieder auf, wie häufig in unserer Zeit uralte Weisheiten als erstmalig formulierte Schlagworte serviert werden’ (Horváth, III, 282-3). His observation is underlined when N scorns Z for keeping a diary on the grounds that ‘Das Tagebuchschreiben ist der typische Ausdruck der typischen Überschätzung des eigenen Ichs’ (Horváth, III, 326). The substance of the statement alone makes it jarring in the mouth of a fourteen-year-old, alerting the reader to that fact that this is not the boy’s own idea, but one assimilated from propaganda. Of greater importance still is the fact that he does not express the thought in his own terms but reproduces the abstract officialese of the fascist regime. In automatically adopting that language as his own, he avoids meaningful engagement with the idea behind the words.

In exploring the use of propagandistic language to craft a homogenized collective consciousness, Horváth raises concerns addressed in similar terms by Victor Klemperer in *LTI: Lingua Tertii Imperii: Notizbuch eines Philologen* (1947). Based on diaries he kept under the Nazi regime, Klemperer’s text contains anecdotes about many aspects of everyday life under National Socialism, but focuses above all on the language of politics and propaganda. He writes:

Die LTI ist ganz darauf gerichtet, den einzelnen um sein individuelles Wesen zu bringen, ihn als Persönlichkeit zu betäuben, ihn zum gedanken- und willenslosen Stück einer in bestimmter Richtung getriebenen und gehetzten Herde, ihn zum Atom eines rollenden Steinblocks zu machen. Die LTI ist die Sprache des Massenfanatismus. Wo sie sich an den einzelnen wendet, und nicht nur an seinen Willen, sondern auch an sein Denken, wo sie Lehre ist, da lehrt sie die Mittel des Fanatisierens und der Massensuggestion.¹³

¹³ Victor Klemperer, *LTI: Notizbuch eines Philologen* (Leipzig: Reclam, 1970), p. 34. Further references to this edition are given after quotations in the text.

It is striking how directly Klemperer connects the manipulation of public discourse with the eradication of individuality and the development of a herd mentality. His metaphor likening the individual who speaks the LTI to an ‘Atom eines rollenden Steinblocks’ recalls the statement of Weiss’s narrator in *Der Augenzeuge* that he became ‘ein Atom der Masse’ during AH’s speeches. The description of this language as a form of ‘Massensuggestion’ also echoes the link between the oratorical skills of AH and Cipolla (particularly the repetitive speeches given by H), and the hypnotic effect they have on their respective crowds. Klemperer communicates explicitly what is implicit in Horváth’s novel, namely that this effect is due to the negative repercussive impact that the unthinking use of language can have on the individual’s capacity for critical deliberation. He also uses phrases similar to those employed by Horváth’s narrator, such as ‘die Angst vor dem denkenden Menschen, der Haß auf das Denken’ (Klemperer, 9). He likewise describes the ‘Einheitlichkeit der Schriftsprache’ and the ‘Gleichheit der Redeform’ (Klemperer, 20) under Nazism, and adds that language has become ‘arm und eintönig’ (Klemperer, 29). Furthermore, he regards mass political gatherings such as those fictionalized by Weiss and Horváth as important occasions for the spread of this impoverished language. Recounting his experience at a real rally held in honour of Hitler’s birthday, he records the excessive use of the word ‘Volk’ in the speeches: “‘Volk’ wird jetzt beim Reden und Schreiben so oft verwandt wie Salz beim Essen, an alles gibt man eine Prise Volk: Volksfest, Volksgenosse, Volksgemeinschaft, volksnah, volksfremd, volksentstammt’ (Klemperer, 41). His description of this repetitiveness

echoes the boredom of B, another of the boys in Horváth's novel, who sneaks away from the Oberplebejer's rally because he is tired of listening to the 'faden Ansprachen, immer dasselbe, lauter Blödsinn!' (Horváth, III, 376). However, Klemperer notes that not everyone sees through this surreptitious form of manipulation. When a young acquaintance, whom he likes and respects in spite of the fact that he is a member of the German army, begins to express himself in propagandistic terms, Klemperer at first brushes it off as 'die gedankenlose Übernahme eines Klischees'. But he later corrects himself: 'Klischees bekommen eben Gewalt über uns' (Klemperer, 38). For this reason he believes that intellectuals who, he maintains, are better equipped than most to reflect on how they express themselves, have an important responsibility to resist the degradation of public discourse.

Free Will

In 'Zur Massenpsychologie', Adler argues that the dominant 'Lebensstil' of a generation prevails whenever the protest of the minority members of that generation is silenced, or when they simply go along with the general trend. Similarly, Klemperer observes that the successful spread of Nazi language and the resulting crowd consciousness through public life relies not only on the susceptibility of the masses, but equally on the fears of intellectuals who abdicate their responsibility: 'Ich urteile wie ein Intellektueller, und Herr Goebbels rechnet mit einer betrunken gemachten Masse. Und außerdem noch mit der Angst der Gebildeten' (Klemperer, 50). In Horváth's novel there is a difference between the reproduction of propagandistic language by characters such as N and his

father, who have assimilated that language as their own, and by the narrator, who takes a more critical attitude to it. When correcting the pupils' work, he asks "Warum müssen wir Kolonien haben?" Ja, warum? Nun, lasset uns hören!" (Horváth, III, 282), sarcastically feigning interest and the expectation of originality, when he knows word for word the clichés he can expect. In response to the (officially correct) answer given by one pupil, he mockingly responds: 'Sehr richtig, lieber Bauer!' and derisively anticipates the claims of the essay with phrases like 'sondern, Bauer?' (Horváth, III, 282). Yet the narrator does not reject the language of the state outright. He himself frequently uses propagandistic words and phrases such as 'Beruf ist Pflicht' (Horváth, III, 282), 'vorschriftsgemäß' (Horváth, III, 286) and 'der ausnahmsweise Durchbruch eines verbrecherischen Individualismus' (Horváth, III, 347), usually with evident disdain. This creates an effect which Angelika Steets describes as 'Spannung zwischen Anpassung und Distanzierung'.¹⁴

On a positive note, the two strands present in the narrative voice allow Horváth to counter the homogeneity of the fascist aesthetic with a more critical language of his own. However, the tension in the narrator's expression is also representative of his general attitude to the state. Despite his scorn for the regime, he goes along with its rules in order to protect himself. His language communicates simultaneously what it is to be part of the fascist collective while remaining distanced from it, mirroring his complicity with the Oberplebejer's crowd when he remains on its fringe. His critical distance from

¹⁴ Angelika Steets, 'NS-Sprache in Horváths Romanen', in *Horváths Prosa*, ed. by Traugott Krischke (Frankfurt am Main: Suhrkamp, 1989), pp.113-132 (p.120).

the crowd is marked by his physical distance from the parade as he watches from his window, but his description of the crowd scene is immediately followed by the admission that he is flying a flag from his window, as is expected of all citizens of the *Vaterland*: ‘Und wie ich so denke, konstatiere ich mit einer gewissen Befriedigung, daß auch aus meinem Fenster ein Fähnchen flattert. [...] Wer mit Verbrechern und Narren zu tun hat, muß verbrecherisch und närrisch handeln, sonst hört er auf’ (Horváth, III, 373). As much as the ‘Schwachsinnigen’ in the crowd, he, as one of the ‘Lügner’, perpetuates the crowd culture of his society.

At the same time, for all that Horváth suggests that mass society is already incipiently fascist, the narrator’s unwillingness in his conformism with the Oberplebejer’s crowd indicates that even fascist society can be diverse. The simultaneous closeness and distance of his association with the crowd undermines the notion of the fascist collective as an organic totality. In this regard Horváth’s treatment of the subject differs from the crowd representations of Mann and Weiss, which do not deal with members of the collective who choose to cooperate with it even though they do not want to, rather than simply succumbing to mass hysteria.

In exploring the motivation of such individuals, Horváth focuses on the degree of freedom they have to make their choice. The tension that arises in *Jugend ohne Gott* between the narrator’s self-interest and his conscience poses questions about the extent to which his behaviour is determined by an instinct for self-preservation. The novel certainly includes various instances of other characters apparently acting on the basis of

an instinctual desire for power over one other. The case of a gang of bullies who fight in the schoolyard, for example, illustrates this desire for power manifested in collective behaviour, echoing the theory of crowd psychology put forward by Weiss's narrator. Several boys band together to attack another, who is alone, for no apparent reason. They steal his bread roll, 'nicht, um sie zu essen, sondern nur, damit er keine hat' (Horváth, III, 285). The explanation they give for their behaviour indicates that they are motivated not by the desire to take what he has, but by an even more primitive drive to exert their will over him. Further insight into this aspect of human nature is provided in another crowd scene, which takes place at the courthouse on the day of Z's trial. The crowd that gathers to witness the spectacle is so big that it is almost impossible to move in the corridors of the courthouse, and a further three hundred people without tickets also assemble outside. According to the narrator, they have come in such vast numbers in order to indulge in Z's suffering. Recalling Le Bon and Tarde, who both characterized the crowd as a feminine entity, he is especially scornful of the women in the courthouse crowd because they are 'geil auf Katastrophe [...]. Sie lagen mit dem Unglück anderer Leute im Bett und befriedigten sich mit einem künstlichen Mitleid' (Horváth, III, 350). The erotic language of this statement ('geil', 'lagen [...] im Bett', 'befriedigten sich') adds a sensual dimension to the account of the crowd's pleasure which reinforces the impression that its behaviour is guided by instinct. The last of the three terms in particular suggests that they act to satisfy an urge. Despite the misogynist implications of characterizing the crowd as a woman (in the French Third Republic the tendency to

do so was connected with the threat posed by the growing women's movement), the fact that the courthouse crowd is so large suggests that the desire to feel superior to others is a particularly widespread attribute of human psychology.¹⁵ The narrator's own case is admittedly quite different, in that he is worried about protecting himself, and specifically about keeping his job. He does not arbitrarily crave power over others. He also experiences a constant struggle between what is best for him and what he knows to be for the greater good (the essence of Adler's concepts of 'Gemeinschaftsgefühl' and 'Mitmenschlichkeit'). However, for much of the novel his own needs win out, raising the possibility that he too is a slave to instinct.

The possibility that such determinism controls crowd behaviour has important implications for the problem of free will and its relationship to moral responsibility. A common philosophical argument on the subject states that in order to be held morally responsible for one's actions, one must be *causa sui*, the cause of the way one is. And, as nothing is *causa sui*, there can be no moral responsibility.¹⁶ Arguments of this kind were bolstered in the early twentieth century, in the light of Nietzschean and Freudian thought about psychological drives. In his discussion of will in *Jenseits von Gut und Böse* (1886), Nietzsche wrote:

Die *causa sui* ist der beste Selbst-Widerspruch, der bisher ausgedacht worden ist [...]: aber der ausschweifende Stolz des Menschen hat es dahin gebracht, sich tief und schrecklich gerade mit diesem Unsinn zu verstricken. Das Verlangen nach

¹⁵ On the late nineteenth-century tendency to associate the crowd with femininity see Mark Meyers, 'Feminizing Fascist Men: Crowd Psychology, Gender, and French Antifascism, 1929-1945', *French Historical Studies*, 29 (2006), 109-42 (pp. 116-17).

¹⁶ See Galen Strawson, 'The Impossibility of Moral Responsibility', *Philosophical Studies*, 75 (1994), 5-24.

‘Freiheit des Willens’ [...], wie er leider noch immer in den Köpfen der Halb-Unterrichteten herrschte, das Verlangen, die ganze und letzte Verantwortlichkeit für seine Handlungen selbst zu tragen und Gott, Welt, Vorfahren, Zufall, Gesellschaft davon zu entlasten, ist nämlich nichts Geringeres, als eben eine *causa sui* zu sein [...].¹⁷

In *Jugend ohne Gott*, the incident with the gang of schoolboys leads the narrator to ask whether man is inherently evil. Alluding to Genesis 8:2 and 8:21, he speculates:

Ja, der Mensch dürfte wohl böse sein und das steht auch schon in der Bibel. Als es aufhörte zu regnen und die Wasser der Sündflut wieder wichen, sagte Gott: ‘Ich will hinfort nicht mehr die Erde strafen um der Menschen willen, denn das Trachten des menschlichen Herzens ist böse von Jugend auf. (Horváth, III, 285)

Although, unlike Nietzsche, he addresses their behaviour with reference to the concept of evil, such a view of human nature nonetheless undermines the very notions of free will and moral responsibility, since if people are purely evil there can be no possibility of goodness.

Over the course of the narrative, however, the narrator’s religious outlook and his perspective on the problem of evil are transformed.¹⁸ In fact, even at the time of the fight, while he entertains the possible existence of innate evil, he is inclined to see the boys’ behaviour not as the manifestation of the universal wickedness of human nature, but as the mark of a specific age. Recalling Adler’s belief in ‘Zur Massenpsychologie’

¹⁷ Friedrich Nietzsche, *Werke: kritische Gesamtausgabe*, ed. by Giorgio Colli andazzino Montinari, 8 divisions (Berlin: de Gruyter, 1967-), VI.ii: *Jenseits von Gut und Böse, Zur Genealogie der Moral* (1968), p. 29. Further references to this edition are given after quotations in the text.

¹⁸ For a range of approaches to the religious dimension of Horváth’s work see Stefan Heil, *Die Rede von Gott im Werk Ödön von Horváths: eine erfahrungstheologische und pragmatische Autobiographie- und Literaturinterpretation mit einer religionsdidaktischen Reflexion* (Ostfildern: Schwabenverlag, 1999); Adolf Holl, ‘Gott ist die Wahrheit oder Horváths Suche nach der zweiten religiösen Naivität’, in *Horváths Jugend ohne Gott*, ed. by Krischke, pp.147-56; Karl Müller, ‘Einheit und Disparität: Ödön von Horváths “Weg nach innen”’, in *Horváths Prosa*, ed. by Krischke, pp.156-77; Müller-Funk, Wolfgang, ‘Faschismus und freier Wille: Horváths Roman *Jugend ohne Gott* zwischen Zeitbilanz und Theodizee’, in *Horváths Jugend ohne Gott*, ed. by Krischke, pp. 157-79.

that the 'Lebensstil' of an age is determined largely by the way its children are raised, an important theme in the novel is the transformation of social values from one generation to the next. When the narrator breaks up the scuffle he tells the boys that it is dishonourable for a gang to pick on an individual. None of them seem to understand him. Even the victim laughs:

Ich erkundige mich nur, ob sie es noch nie gehört hätten, daß sich seit Urzeiten her, seit tausend und tausend Jahren, seit dem Beginn der menschlichen Gesittung, immer stärker und stärker ein ungeschriebenes Gesetz herausgebildet hat, ein schönes männliches Gesetz: Wenn ihr schon rauft, dann raufe nur einer gegen einen! Bleibet immer ritterlich! Und ich wende mich wieder an die fünf und frage: 'Schämt ihr euch denn nicht?' Sie schämen sich nicht. Ich rede eine andere Sprache. (Horváth, III, 285)

The passage both gives some idea of the narrator's personal moral code – what might be called his old-fashioned sense of honour – and reveals that until this point he has held it to be universally accepted. The behaviour of the children, on the other hand, often indicates that this code has lost its power in society, provoking him to ask: 'Was wird das für eine Generation: Eine harte oder nur eine rohe' (Horváth, III, 286) and to exclaim: 'Eine verrohte Gesellschaft, diese Kinder!' (Horváth, III, 310).

After a conversation with a pious old man during the murder trial, the narrator comes to the conclusion that this change in the moral outlook of society can be attributed to a general loss of faith in God and the consequent loss of inspiration to goodness. This realization marks the end point of his struggle with religious doubt, during which, as the narrative progresses, he re-evaluates his religious beliefs and his ideas about free will. Free will serves an important function in Christian theology as a response to the problem

of evil – the question of how an omnipotent and benevolent deity can allow suffering and injustice to pass in the world. According to what is known as the free will defence, God gives man the free will to choose to do good when presented with a choice between different actions, including the temptation to evil. This defence also accounts for the existence of evil at all, without which the freedom to do good would be meaningless.¹⁹ Early in *Jugend ohne Gott*, the narrator alternates between denying the existence of God as incompatible with all the evil he has witnessed in the world and believing that God exists but has washed his hands of an inherently evil humanity, as implied in his allusion to Genesis. Later, in a chapter entitled ‘Auf der Suche nach den Idealen der Menschheit’ (Horváth’s working title for the novel) his perspective is changed by a discussion he has with a priest. According to the priest: ‘Gott schuf die Natur, also ist gottgewollt, was naturnotwendig ist. Aber die Konsequenzen der Erschaffung der Natur [...] ist ein Produkt des freien menschlichen Willens’ (Horváth, III, 316). Although phrased differently, this is in essence the free will defence. However, while the priest believes that people have the freedom to do good, he is nonetheless convinced that they tend towards evil and that God has become vengeful in order to punish them. The narrator initially accepts this explanation but is determined to exert his free will for good in order to prove to God that he is wrong about man: ‘Ja, Gott ist schrecklich, aber ich will ihm einen Strich durch die Rechnung machen. Mit meinem freien Willen’ (Horváth, III, 336). Ultimately, however, this negative incentive proves insufficient motivation for him

¹⁹ Ilham Dilman, *Free Will: An Historical and Philosophical Introduction* (London and New York: Routledge, 1999), p. 71.

to act on his conscience, recalling the narrator's discussion of negatively and positively directed will in the face of Cipolla's crowd leadership in *Mario und der Zauberer*. Only after his encounter with the old man at the courthouse does Horváth's narrator develop a more positive conception of God. The man tells him: 'Er wohnt überall, wo er nicht vergessen wurde' (Horváth, III, 358) and the narrator begins to see the promise of God's love as affirmative encouragement to do what is right. After this encounter he finds the courage to tell the truth about his role in N's murder. As a consequence he loses his job, but rather than having a negative effect, his sacking in turn frees him from his dependence on and subservience to the fascist state. During the Oberplebejer's rally he is hit by a new-found sense of moral freedom. When he remembers that he now answers to a higher authority, the crowd outside his window suddenly seems very far away:

Wie entfernt ist alles geworden! Wie winzig sind plötzlich die großen Gebieter
und wie arm die reichen Plebejer! Wie lächerlich!
Wie verwaschen die Fahnen!
Kannst du die Transparente noch lesen?
Nein.
Hörst du noch das Radio?
Kaum. (Horváth, III, 374)

With this passage he distances himself once and for all both from the crowd and from the public that the radio has made out of it.

In the eyes of Horváth's critics, the religious dimension of *Jugend ohne Gott* was an attempt to escape rather than to confront the material basis of fascism's mass support. In the novel Horváth certainly moves away from his stance of the early 1930s, when he believed that the failure of vulgar communists and socialists to comprehend petty

bourgeois false consciousness explained the turn of so many voters to Nazism when other parties were, rationally speaking, more representative of their interests. Horváth addressed the psychology of the petty bourgeoisie in all his major dramas, the most important of which with respect to fascism was *Italienische Nacht* (1931).²⁰ In *Jugend ohne Gott* there are traces of the spirit of the *Volksstücke*. There is a moment of interest in the mass class basis of the fascist regime when the narrator describes his pupils' parents as 'brave Bürger, Beamte, Offiziere, Kaufleute', noting also that 'Arbeiter war keiner darunter' (Horváth, III, 286-87). The analogy he draws between the fascists and the rich plebeians in ancient Rome also suggests that the bulk of the movement is drawn from the petty bourgeoisie. However, the emphasis on economic issues is much weaker in the novel. Equally, critics judge the metaphysical turn of the novel as a manifestation of increasing introversion and subjectivity on the part of the author as he became more and more disillusioned with the world around him. Yet it does not necessarily follow that a materialist approach to the world provides wholly objective knowledge while an idealist outlook is purely subjective.

Commentators have perhaps been put off automatically by the religious theme of the novel, but while the narrator's belief in God provides his incentive to free himself from the crowd, he does not need religious faith in order to conceive of the existence of good and evil in the first place; he takes these concepts for granted. One is reminded that as early as the boys' fight, when he reprimands them for their lack of moral integrity, he

²⁰ See Grenville, 'The Failure of Constitutional Democracy: The SPD and the Collapse of the Weimar Republic in Ödön von Horváth's *Italienische Nacht*', *Modern Language Review*, 82 (1987), 399-414.

speaks to them of ‘ein ungeschriebenes Gesetz’ that has been evolving ‘seit dem Beginn der menschlichen Gesittung’. His words imply that these notions are not personal to him, nor are they set down by some higher authority, but that they should be intuitively understandable to everyone.

This idea has a basis in Kantian ethical theory, which postulates an autonomous moral agent capable of knowing how it ought to act without reference to external authority. The agent, constantly caught in the struggle between reason and desire, determines what should be done by reflecting according to the categorical imperative that the maxim by which it acts must also be universally applicable. This is the foundation of the concept of practical reason, on which Adler draws in ‘Zur Massenpsychologie’. Like Kant, Adler defines practical reason as the universally accepted yardstick of morality:

Was wir demnach ‘gut’, ‘böse’, ‘wertvoll’ nennen [...], wird vom Volke intuitiv zumeist richtig erfaßt und kann nach den obigen Ausführungen der praktischen Vernunft und dem common sense unterstellt werden. Dieses intuitive Erfassen der Masse, in fast gleichmäßiger Weise zu beobachten, zeigt uns abermals die Massenpsyche als produktive Kraft. Es liegt in ihrer Auswirkung nicht bloß eine Feststellung für die Gegenwart, sondern weit darüber hinaus eine Feststellung sub specie aeternatis, daß etwas gut, böse, wertvoll sei bis in alle Ewigkeit. (Adler, III, 62)

The same sentiment is echoed in the words of Horváth’s narrator to his pupils regarding the endurance of human notions of right and wrong.

By extension of this position, the narrator’s exertion of his individual free will both in the court case and against the tyranny of the fascist regime is not merely a product of moral subjectivity. Following Kant and Adler, the knowledge of what is good

and right is in principle available to everyone. Indeed, the narrator's individual act of courage soon gives rise to the kind of positive and productive collective action envisaged by Adler: his behaviour prompts others to join him in taking a moral stand. For example, some of his pupils are inspired to form a club where they meet secretly to read books forbidden by the state and to discuss how the world ought to be. They take heart from his truthfulness, telling him: 'Sie sind der einzige Erwachsene, den wir kennen, der die Wahrheit liebt' (Horváth, III, 378). Similarly, Eva, Z's girlfriend and a witness to N's murder, follows his honest example: when her turn comes to give testimony in court, she states that she wishes to tell the truth, 'Weil halt der Herr Lehrer auch die Wahrheit gesagt hat' (Horváth, III, 366). His courage and honesty in court earn him the approbation of both Julius Caesar and the priest who offer him support in catching N's real killer and in finding a new job when he loses his. It is also due to him that the mother of the boy named T, who turns out to be the murderer, finally reveals her son's crime.

Set against these examples of what Adler called 'die Massenpsyche als produktive Kraft' is the extreme individualism of T himself, a cold, sinister loner figure who feels no moral bond to anyone. Whereas, according to Adler, collective understanding of what is right and wrong is arrived at intuitively, there is nothing intuitive about T's outlook on the world. He has a thirst for knowledge, but believes in nothing, approaching every experience in a neutral, emotionless, quasi-scientific manner. The pupil B tells the narrator that T could even see someone being run over in

the street and it would have no effect on him. He tells his classmates that he would like to see a child being born, simply out of curiosity about the process. He visits a prostitute for the same reason, and he spies on Z and Eva during their trysts in the woods. He also wants to know what it is like when somebody dies, and this is his motivation for killing N. The narrator sums up his opinion of T with the statement: ‘Seine Liebe zur Wirklichkeit war nur der Haß auf die Wahrheit’ (Horváth, III, 404). The distinction drawn between the ideas of ‘Wirklichkeit’ and ‘Wahrheit’ indicates that T’s affectless, amoral perspective on reality is incomplete because it leaves out the kind of shared, intuitive knowledge of good and evil described by Adler.

Of course, Kant’s and Adler’s discussion of collective morality provides only one perspective on the foundation of ethics, and one that is vehemently criticized, for example, by Nietzsche in *Jenseits von Gut und Böse*.²¹ Nietzsche, too, acknowledges the collective basis of morality, but does not think that this is in its favour. On the contrary, he sees the ideas of good and evil, particularly in Christian morality, as constructs designed to preserve the mediocrity of the herd: ‘Alles, was den Einzelnen über die Herde hinaushebt und dem Nächsten Furcht macht, heisst von nun an böse; die billige, bescheidene, sich einordnende, gleichsetzende Gesinnung, das Mittelmaass der Begierden kommt zu moralischen Namen und Ehren’ (Nietzsche, VI.ii, 125). He argues instead for the value of an extra-moral – ‘aussermoralisch’ (Nietzsche, VI.ii, 124) – outlook on life. Horváth considers and rejects a similar perspective, albeit with the

²¹ The concept of the categorical imperative is attacked as ‘Die ebenso steife als sittsame Tartüfferie des alten Kant’ in section I.v (Nietzsche, VI.ii, 13).

difference that in *Jugend ohne Gott* amorality not only sets an individual like T apart from the Adlerian moral collective but also distinguishes the ‘Lügner’ who are complicit in the fascist crowd from the narrator’s act of individual will. After N’s father complains to the headmaster about the narrator’s conduct, the headmaster reminds the narrator of his duties and they discuss the older man’s tacit support for the regime. The narrator’s assumption that the headmaster only complies with the directives of the education authority because he is forced to provokes an indignant response from the older man:

‘Junger Mann’, sagte er ernst, ‘merken Sie sich eines: es gibt keinen Zwang. Ich könnte ja dem Zeitgeist widersprechen und mich von einem Herrn Bäckermeister [N’s father] einsperren lassen, ich könnte ja hier gehen, aber ich will nicht gehen, jawohl, ich will nicht! Denn ich möchte die Altersgrenze erreichen, um die volle Pension beziehen zu können.’ Das ist ja recht fein, dachte ich. (Horváth, III, 289)

In defending his own free will, the headmaster leaves out the notions of right and wrong altogether. He does not speak of free will, as Christian theology does, as the freedom to choose between good and evil but reduces it to the ability of the individual to recognize the choices available to him and to act according to his own wants and interests. This extra-moral outlook is characteristic of the fascist regime itself. The narrator follows the radio mantra ‘Recht ist, was der eigenen Sippschaft frommt’ to its logical conclusion:

Was uns nicht gut tut, ist Unrecht. Also ist alles erlaubt, Mord, Raub, Brandstiftung, Meineid – ja, es ist nicht nur erlaubt, sondern es gibt überhaupt keine Untaten, wenn sie im Interesse der Sippschaft begangen werden! Was ist das? Der Standpunkt des Verbrechers. (Horváth, III, 293).

Here, too, morality has been removed from the equation (‘es gibt überhaupt keine Untaten’). The question of whether a deed is right or wrong is no longer an ethical one; actions are judged purely on the benefit they bring to the fascist collective.

It is clear from the narrator's reaction in both these cases – his sarcasm in response to the headmaster and his condemnation of the state as criminal – that he thinks this a sophistic position. Though there is a coherency to the headmaster's argument that makes it difficult to refute on logical grounds, echoing Adler's account of collective moral intuition the narrator does so on the basis of what he calls 'ein unbegreifliches Gesetz' (Horváth, III, 379). His own preference for the theological conception of free will, as opposed to the definition put forward by the headmaster, is significant precisely because, as the headmaster points out, there is no necessary connection between the issues of free will and moral responsibility. The narrator subscribes to a definition which rests on the notions of good and evil and rejects another which holds those ideas to be irrelevant. And while the intuitive basis of his choice might give the impression of introspection and subjectivity, it paradoxically facilitates his engagement in a wider moral community.

Horváth was not the only author of his time to express a belief in ahistorical moral truths, objectively knowable independent of tradition or ideology. Mann stressed that the approach of *Maß und Wert*, the émigré journal that he edited, had nothing to do with class concerns, insisting: 'Der freie und kühne Gedanke, das Gewissen, die Erkenntnis sind Menschenwerte; sie kommen nicht aus Klassen-Bedingtheit, daran wollen wir festhalten' (Mann, XII, 808). In 'Skizze der Erkenntnis des Dichters' Musil designated literature in its concern with moral questions 'das Gebiet der Idee' (Musil, VIII, 1028). Similarly, in 'James Joyce und die Gegenwart' (1936), Broch asserted:

dies ist der Punkt, an dem die Mission des Dichterischen einsetzt. Mission einer totalitätserfassenden Erkenntnis, die über jeder empirischen oder sozialen Bedingtheit steht und für die es gleichgültig ist, ob der Mensch in einer feudalen, in einer bürgerlichen oder in einer proletarischen Zeit lebt. Pflicht der Dichtung zur Absolutheit der Erkenntnis schlechthin. (Broch, IX.i, 85)

Such claims understandably raise suspicion amongst materialist critics because they pave the way for ideology masquerading as essential truth. What they are not, however, is subjective, as suggested by those critics for whom Horváth's religious perspective seems an inadequate response to fascism. Musil presents a defence against this charge in invoking the author's engagement with literary tradition. In his eyes, 'Der Dichter ist nicht nur der Ausdruck einer augenblicklichen Geistesverfassung, mag sie selbst eine neue Zeit einleiten. Seine Überlieferung ist nicht Jahrzehnte, sondern Jahrtausende alt' (Musil, VIII, 1250). The notion that literature deals in timeless values, then, is not intended to apply to any single work in isolation, but rather to truths which can be viewed as such because they emerge from diverse texts by authors writing centuries apart. Canetti puts forward a similar idea, asserting:

Ein Dichter braucht Ahnen. [...] Auch ihnen ist an Anderen, nämlich an Nachkommen gelegen. Sie sind in tausend Händen gewesen: niemand hat ihnen etwas angehabt, sie sind darum zu Ahnen geworden, weil sie sich kampflös der Schwächeren zu erwehren vermögen [...]. (Canetti, IX, 275-76)

The conviction behind this statement is that that which endures does so for good reason, because it has passed repeated tests, as Canetti hoped his own work would: 'Ich hatte mir schon jung vorgenommen, nie ein Buch zu veröffentlichen, das nicht Anspruch auf Bestand hat. [...] Mein größter Wunsch war es, noch in hundert Jahren gelesen zu

werden.’²² In *Jugend ohne Gott* it is the amoral individual T who rejects the realm of ideas and is incapable of any communal sentiment, whereas the tentative moral community set in motion by the narrator challenges the threatening, conformist crowd culture which governs public life in his society.

²² Canetti, *Die gespaltene Zukunft*, p. 95.

IV

MYTH AND MASS HYSTERIA: HERMANN BROCH'S *DIE VERZAUBERUNG* (1935)

The ambivalence of collective experience highlighted by Horváth is expressed especially clearly in the work of Hermann Broch. Broch explored the subjects of crowds and mass psychology in two modes: The first was his novel *Die Verzauberung*, an allegorical response to the rise of Nazism begun in 1934 and left unfinished at his death in 1951.¹ The novel alludes in particular to the Nazi cult of nature worship and the appropriation of ancient myth by ideologues such as Alfred Baeumler and Alfred Rosenberg.² The second was the *Massenwahntheorie*, which occupied him for much of the last decade of his life. In both texts, he addressed the vulnerability of the age to mass movements, prioritizing psychological explanations, which he believed to account for the appearance of mass phenomena at certain critical points in history. However, he argued, while such phenomena are inevitable, the form they take is not. He distinguished between valuable and dangerous collectives, and between two kinds of crowd leader: one who encourages genuine feelings of community and the other who cultivates mass hysteria. Furthermore, like Mann in *Mario und der Zauberer*, in the *Massenwahntheorie* Broch characterized the leader (in both incarnations) as a kind of artist. Whereas he associated the first type

¹ In 'Hermann Brochs *Die Verzauberung* als politischer Roman', *Neophilologus*, 61 (1977), 111-26, Paul Michael Lützeler analyses the parallels between the novel and contemporary politics.

² See Carole Duebbert, 'Hermann Brochs *Verzauberung* als "Anti-Heimatroman"', in *Brochs Verzauberung*, ed. by Paul Michael Lützeler (Frankfurt am Main: Suhrkamp, 1983), pp. 226-36; Thomas Quinn, "'Dialektik der Verzauberung": Mystification, Enlightenment, *The Spell*', in *Hermann Broch: Literature, Philosophy, Politics: The Yale Broch Symposium 1986*, ed. by Stephen D. Dowden (Columbia, SC: Camden House, 1988), pp. 110-24.

with 'echte Dichtung', he compared the second with the 'ästhetisierender Literat' (Broch, XII, 165).

Die Verzauberung is the story of Kuppron, a remote mountain village whose inhabitants fall under the sway of a charismatic demagogue named Marius Ratti. Marius's arrival comes at a time of crisis and disillusionment for the villagers, who have become alienated both from nature and from one another. While they still lead a relatively primitive life, exposure to certain processes of modernization has eroded the authority of their Christian faith and left them troubled by existential doubt. Marius is initially greeted with dislike, but he gradually attracts more and more followers. He promises to return the villagers to a primordial state of harmony with nature and to restore their sense of 'Gemeinsamkeit' with one another. He also encourages a pagan cult of nature worship in place of the villagers' defunct religion, exploiting their collective anxiety for his own political ends. By the end of the novel he has been given a powerful position on the village council. Along the way he encourages the persecution of outsiders and instigates the murder of a young woman by a hysterical mob. These events are reported by the village doctor, whom Broch selected as his narrator because 'einem solchen all die Kritik und Selbstkritik zuzutrauen ist, deren schließliche Überwältigung durch das Massenpsychische so erstaunlich ist' (Broch, III, 384). Like Mann, Weiss and Horváth, Broch was interested in the susceptibility of intellectuals and professionals to fascist power, where in other contexts the crowd was seen as the domain

of the lower classes. And as in *Der Augenzeuge*, the scientific background of Broch's narrator paradoxically makes him more rather than less susceptible to irrationality.

The purported origins of the Kuppronberg are narrated in an old myth, according to which centuries before the period depicted in the novel, there was no distinction between heaven and earth. Then giants emerged from the earth and, wanting it all to themselves, built the mountain out of stones in order to divide the two realms. A second myth tells that the mountain was once guarded by a dragon, to which a maiden was sacrificed in return for the fertility of the land. Marius's revival of the villagers' mythical understanding of their environment is central to their mass hysteria. In one of the earliest critical analyses of the novel, George Schoolfield observes that the role played by myth in determining the villagers' collective mindset distinguishes Broch's portrayal of the crowd from Le Bon's. The latter, he notes, does not mention that crowd leaders often construct mythologies in order to gain and maintain power.³ However, Schoolfield merely highlights the issue. No previous analysis has explored the exact nature of the connection between myth and mass hysteria in the novel. Drawing on discussion of this topic in the work of Broch's contemporaries Jung (whose theory Broch studied while working on *Die Verzauberung* in 1935 and whom he knew through his publisher Daniel Brody) and Ernst Cassirer, in the first part of this chapter I want to explore the issue more closely.

³ George C. Schoolfield, 'Notes on Broch's *Der Versucher*', *Monatshefte*, 48 (1956), 1-16 (p. 10).

Set against Marius's 'böse und närrische Mystik' (Broch, III, 143), is a benign irrationalism represented by Mutter Gisson, the wise old matriarch of the village.⁴ Whereas Marius cultivates a violent collective mentality hostile to individuality, in Broch's characterization of Mutter Gisson he promotes a Platonic notion of harmony between the individual and the world, as described in the essay 'Neue religiöse Dichtung' (1933): 'die Welt soll von der Einheit des Ichs aus begriffen werden, sie soll, einströmend in diese Einheit, selber zur Einheit werden, sie wird in all ihrer Vielfalt zur platonischen Idee ihrer selbst, wird in solcher Ganzheit zur Emanation des Göttlichen' (Broch, IX.ii, 54). It is generally accepted that Broch intended Marius to represent the mystical strain in Nazism and Mutter Gisson to embody his own beliefs. However, his success in distinguishing between the two characters has often been questioned. As both venerate nature and reject modern notions of progress, the differentiation between positive and negative forms of irrationalism has struck commentators as arbitrary.⁵ Furthermore, as a handful of critics have observed, Mutter Gisson, like Marius, is

⁴ This opposition has been characterized in a variety of ways. In *The Genealogy of the Massenführer: Hermann Broch's Die Verzauberung as a Religious Novel* (Heidelberg: Winter, 1997), p. 38, Glenn Robert Sandberg writes: 'Broch positions the novel in a Demeter-versus-Dionysos context, directing the reader to view the entire novel as the account of the Dionysian "spell" in Kuppron and the counterforce of the Demetrian matriarchy as it is embodied in Mutter Gisson.' In 'The Avant-Garde in Crisis: Hermann Broch's Negative Aesthetics in Exile', in *Hermann Broch: Literature, Philosophy, Politics*, ed. by Dowden, pp. 14-31 (p. 21), Lützel differentiates between Mutter Gisson's benevolent matriarchy and Marius's 'inhuman patriarchy'. In 'The Self-destructing Message: A Response to Paul Michael Lützel', in *Hermann Broch: Literature, Philosophy, Politics*, ed. by Dowden, pp. 32-41 (p. 38), Judith Ryan argues that Marius represents the political and Mutter Gisson the mythical. And in 'Hermann Broch's Theories on Mass Psychology and *Der Versucher*', *German Quarterly*, 47 (1974), 24-33 (p. 26), James Hardin argues that the novel's message is embodied in the conflict between Marius's materialism and Mutter Gisson's idealism.

⁵ See Quinn, p. 120; Ryan, p. 38; W.G. Sebald, *Unheimliche Heimat: Essays zur österreichischen Literatur* (Salzburg: Residenz, 1991), p. 124.

associated with myth.⁶ Bearing in mind Broch's equation of the malevolent crowd leader with aestheticism and his benevolent counterpart with 'echte Dichtung', I want to explore this last similarity more carefully than has been done hitherto.

I respond to critical concerns by arguing that the type of myth Mutter Gisson represents is not the kind understood by the common sense of the word, which designates a sacred narrative of archetypal significance. Rather, I use the term as Broch does in such essays as 'Neue religiöse Dichtung', 'Geist und Zeitgeist' (1934), 'Die mythische Erbschaft der Dichtung' (1945) and 'Mythos und Altersstil' (1947), to denote a form of aesthetic consciousness capable of reconciling rational and intuitive cognition, and of enabling objective meditation on subjective experience.⁷ Broch's discussions of myth contributed to a highly contested debate on the subject in relation to Nazism. If thinkers such as Lukács, Adorno and Horkheimer highlighted the complicity of myth with Nazi irrationalism, others such as Mann, Carl Einstein and Ernst Bloch argued that myths of various kinds could still have a positive function in modern culture.⁸ Broch claimed that it was the responsibility of art to foster a new mythical consciousness in an

⁶ See Quinn and Schoolfield.

⁷ Broch's conception of myth has been discussed in Herwig Gottwald, 'Der Mythosbegriff bei Hermann Broch', in *Elias Canetti und Hermann Broch*, ed. by Penka Angelova, Marianne Gruber and Paul Michael Lützelner (St. Ingbert: Röhrig, 2009), pp. 141-63; Thomas Koebner, 'Mythos und "Zeitgeist" in Hermann Brochs *Die Verzauberung*', in *Brochs Verzauberung*, ed. by Lützelner, pp. 169-185; Beate Loos, *Mythos, Zeit und Tod: zum Verhältnis von Kunsttheorie und dichterischer Praxis in Hermann Brochs Bergroman* (Frankfurt am Main: Athenäum, 1971); Dietrich Meinert, 'Hermann Broch: *Der Versucher*: Versuchung und Erlösung im Bannkreis mythischen Erlebens', in *Sprachkunst als Weltgestaltung: Festschrift für Herbert Seidler*, ed. by Adolf Haslinger (Salzburg: Pustet, 1966), pp. 140-52.

⁸ For a discussion of various conceptions of myth in the period see Philippe Lacoue-Labarthe and Jean-Luc Nancy, 'The Nazi Myth', *Critical Enquiry*, 16 (1990), 291-312; David Pan, 'The Struggle for Myth in the Nazi Period: Alfred Baeumler, Ernst Bloch and Carl Einstein', *South Atlantic Review*, 65 (2000), 41-57 and Pan, 'Revising the Dialectic of Enlightenment: Alfred Baeumler and the Nazi Appropriation of Myth', *New German Critique*, 84 (2001), 37-52.

age alternately enslaved by either tyrannical positivism or despotic irrationalism. In my analysis of the role of myth in relation to the crowd in *Die Verzauberung*, I contrast the notions of myth conceived as narrative and myth conceived as consciousness, ultimately arguing that the former alone is conducive to the cultivation of mass hysteria. I do so, I seek to establish a firmer basis for distinguishing Marius's irrationalism from that of Mutter Gisson.

In 1943 Broch himself cited dissatisfaction with the mythical bent of the novel as one of the reasons why he never completed it. This statement has been interpreted as an admission that he had set himself an ethically impossible task in seeking to differentiate between evil and benign forms of irrationalism.⁹ Yet as late as 1945, in 'Die mythische Erbschaft der Dichtung', he continued to write of myth as both a form of belief to be explored in art and a model for artistic production. But it is one thing to conceive of a positive mythical consciousness, as distinct from mythical narrative, and quite another to give it meaningful expression. Reviewing Broch's attempt to do so in *Die Verzauberung*, I suggest that aesthetic problems with the novel were as much to blame for his discontentment as ethical concerns.

I then go on to discuss how, in the 1940s, frustrated with the impotence of literature in the face of contemporary politics, Broch devoted himself increasingly to the theoretical exposition of his views on mass hysteria, appealing to the authority of science in the hope of achieving a greater ethical impact on his readership. In the

⁹ See Quinn, p. 118.

Massenwahntheorie Broch elaborates and combines an abstract model of the human psyche and a cyclical theory of history to formulate a deterministic model of the conditions for mass hysteria. Yet while he believed that the claims of his research to factuality would afford him greater social influence than his literary work had done, his efforts failed to live up to that hope. The *Massenwahntheorie* has been largely ignored in social theory and most of the attention it has attracted has come from literary critics.¹⁰ To what extent, then, is the distinction Broch draws between literary and scientific writing actually borne out in the *Massenwahntheorie*? Drawing on Hayden White's narratological scholarship on the poetic dimension of historical writing, and specifically on his concept of historical 'emplotment', I suggest that Broch's treatise is in some ways as much a work of imagination as *Die Verzauberung*.

Myth and the Crowd Mind

The central importance of myth in relation to the themes of nature worship and mass hysteria in *Die Verzauberung* is hinted at by Broch in a 1940 commentary on the text. He explains that his objective in writing the novel was to investigate the apparent replacement of formal religion in contemporary culture with a 'beinahe frenetisch werdende Naturanbetung' (Broch, III, 385) and that in doing so he focussed on the interplay between the psychic landscape of his characters and their physical

¹⁰ Christian Borch, 'Modern Mass Aberration: Hermann Broch and the Problem of Irrationality', *History of the Human Sciences*, 21:2 (2008), 63-83 (p. 63).

environment: ‘das Ineinanderspiel, welches die Landschaft der Seele mit dem [sic] des äußeren Schauplatzes fortwährend verbindet’. He writes:

Und achtet man auf dieses Ineinanderspiel, das wohl bei jedem Menschen mehr oder weniger deutlich stattfindet, so entdeckt man sehr bald, wie aufbruchsbereit die mythologischen Vorstellungen in der Seele liegen. Weil dem aber zweifelsohne so ist, darf ebenso zweifelsohne in dieser ständigen Natur- und Mythosbereitschaft mit einer der Gründe gesehen werden, welche diese Zeit so aufnahmefähig für massenpsychische Bewegungen machen. (Broch, III, 385)

In the first part of the quotation Broch refers to myth as a psychic property which mediates the relationship of men to their natural environment and correlates the increased prominence of myth in the contemporary psyche with the concurrent cult of nature worship. The second part of the quotation is less straightforward. He does not establish why these developments should render the age so vulnerable to mass movements.

Clarification on this point is offered by Jung, who elaborates a more explicit connection between the role of myth in the human psyche and the mass hysteria of 1930s political culture. In ‘Über das Unbewußte’, explaining his belief in the existence of the collective unconscious on the grounds that not all psychological illness has its roots in personal trauma, the Swiss psychiatrist states: ‘es gibt Phantasiezusammenhänge, deren Wurzeln man vergeblich in der individuellen Vorgeschichte aufsuchen würde. Und was sind das für Phantasien? Es sind – mit einem Wort gesagt – *mythologische Phantasien*’ (Jung, X, 21). In other words, following Jung, the prominence of mythical thought in modern life observed by Broch indicates the regression of the individual not only to a more irrational outlook on the world, but also

to a collective state of mind. According to Jung, the environment of primordial man, whose cognition was wholly unconscious, was simply a projection of the mythical structure of his mind: 'Das Land, das er bewohnt, ist zugleich auch eine Topographie seines Unbewußten' (Jung X, 40). In contrast, as he explains in 'Die Bedeutung der Psychologie für die Gegenwart', the mythical archetypes of the collective unconscious have little place in the rational, individual consciousness of modern man. As discussed previously (pp. 37-42), however, he and Broch shared the view that psychological strain arising from the overdevelopment of rational individualism in modernity was responsible for the paradoxical regression to collective irrationalism manifest in modern mass politics. The notion of psychic compensation can be traced through Broch's oeuvre. In *Die Schlafwandler*, he addresses the so called 'Zerfall der Werte' of modernity: the gradual disintegration of the Platonic, Catholic worldview of medieval Europe triggered by the Renaissance and advanced by the growing fragmentation of knowledge into specialisms. In *Die Verzauberung*, the villagers welcome Marius's revival of their pagan heritage as an antidote to what the narrator calls the 'Gnadenfluch der Unterscheidung' (Broch, III, 87), by which increasingly rational modern man has come to differentiate between himself and the world around him. Psychic compensation is a theme of particular importance in relation to the depiction of the crowd in the novel.

The climactic scene, in which a bloodthirsty mob of villagers sacrifices a young woman, is anticipated by another important episode: the celebration of the 'Steinsegen' festival, the ritual component of a Christianized version of the old dragon myth. In the

Christianized story, St. George slays the dragon, rescues the maiden and returns the mountain to prosperity. During the festival, a 'Bergbraut' played by a local woman (on this occasion Mutter Gisson's granddaughter Irmgard, who is also the victim of the eventual murder) is led up the mountain by a priest and crowned in a service at the mountain chapel. The Bergbraut praises Christ for her freedom, and as the villagers process behind her they carry an image of the Madonna and recite a litany of saints. The procession is the only ritual of its kind they still observe. The narrator comments: 'Der Kranz der Feste und Beschwörungen, die der Mensch um den Berg geschlungen hat, ist eben schon welk und dürrig geworden, arg zerzaust vom Sturm der Jahrhunderte' (Broch, III, 94). Like the other villagers, he sees little value in the ritual, remarking sceptically that the purpose it once served has been rendered superfluous by the findings of modern science: 'Einstens vielleicht, als die Sprache entstand, vielleicht ehe noch die Erde sich zu den Gebirgen aufwarf und faltete, da gab es noch den Schoß der Berge [where the myth reports the dragon to live], heute ist er ein in die Geologie verirrter leerer Begriff' (Broch, III, 94). And although many villagers take part, the event appears to hold little meaning for them. While they follow the priest up the mountain, they do so 'noch nicht in voller Frommheit' (Broch, III, 90). The prayer the priest says to begin the procession has no effect on them – 'es hat sich für sie noch nichts geändert' (Broch, III, 90) – and they are easily distracted by the pretty flowers on the altar. As in *Jugend ohne Gott*, then, the decline of Christian faith plays an important role in Broch's crowd novel. However, whereas Horváth connected the absence of religion in modern society with the

absence of any moral defence against fascism, Broch takes a different approach to the theme. In the Steinsegen episode he advances a perspective on the history of religion which is also developed systematically in the *Massenwahntheorie*. In the treatise, he states that the modern era has seen the gradual suppression of paganism by Christianity, followed increasingly by the total abandonment of religion. In the novel, the Steinsegen festival is part of a similar process. Whereas, as the narrator observes, ‘das Heidnische braucht den Mord, um bestehen zu können’ (Broch, III, 286), the Christianized version of the dragon myth and the accompanying Steinsegen ritual do away with the sacrifice of the maiden. The rituals performed by the Bergbraut in thanks to Christ are purely symbolic. Moreover, the villagers have ceased to believe in even this version of the myth.

However, in the *Massenwahntheorie* Broch also refers to ‘die wiederverheidete Welt von heute’ (Broch, XII, 378) to characterize the primitive climate of Nazi Germany, which in his view was a consequence of compensatory psychic regression fuelled in part by myth-makers such as Baeumler and Rosenberg. Correspondingly, in *Die Verzauberung* Marius exploits the existential anxiety to which secularization has given rise among the villagers, appealing to their collective mythical heritage and thus shaping them into a violent crowd. When the narrator suggests to one of the villagers that all they need is Christian neighbourly love, he responds: ‘Es ist mehr als Liebe, es ist Gemeinsamkeit’ (Broch, III, 226), and ‘Gemeinsamkeit’ is what Marius promises them they will attain by sacrificing Irmgard. There is a great contrast between the

lethargy of the gathered villagers at the Steinsegen procession and the mass ecstasy of the later sacrifice scene. The latter episode provides a true crowd scene over the course of which the villagers are referred to as a ‘schweigende Masse’, a ‘kompakte Masse’ (Broch, III, 260), a ‘dichtgedrängte Masse’ (Broch, III, 273), and a ‘nachdrängende Masse’ (Broch, III, 277).

The murder takes place on the night of a village fair. The evening begins with a dance orgy reminiscent of Cipolla’s in *Mario und der Zauberer*, during which the narrator perceives the will of the crowd to be stronger than that of the individuals within it. The atmosphere is recalled in Cassirer’s account of Dionysian orgies in *The Myth of the State* (1946), where he describes the euphoria of dance as an expression of ‘the deep desire of the individual to be freed from the fetters of its individuality, to immerse itself in the stream of universal life, to lose its identity, to be absorbed in the whole of nature’.¹¹ But if the dancing already provides evidence of an irrational collective impulse among the villagers, it is only when Marius enters the scene that it is hastened to a violent culmination. The dancing is interrupted when a group of his henchmen descend on the fair, leading the crowd to the nearby remains of a Celtic sacrificial altar where he awaits. There the henchmen narrate a story which, while it recalls the myths of the villagers’ collective heritage, is in fact a perversion of them. Marius’s myth conflates the fable of the giants and the origins of the Kuppronberg with that of the maiden and the

¹¹ Ernst Cassirer, *Gesammelte Werke. Hamburger Ausgabe*, ed. by Birgit Recki, 26 vols (Hamburg: Meiner, 1998-2009), xxv, 43. Further references to this edition are given after quotations in the text. *The Myth of the State*, the last work Cassirer wrote before his death in 1945, was written in American exile and written in English.

dragon. The narrative chanted by his henchmen includes both the passages: ‘Der Drach’ hat die Jungfrau / Die Jungfrau hat den Drach / Und wenn er sie anschaut / Dann wird ihm so schwach’ and ‘Und die Erd’ hat den Himmel / Und der Himmel die Erd’ / Und wenn sie getrennt sind, / Gibt’s Feuer und Schwert’ (Broch, III, 264). Marius also embellishes the detail of the old myths. He claims that the giants who divided heaven and earth were helped both by the dragon and by an old witch, who is clearly modelled on Mutter Gisson. He likens the misery caused by the separation of the material and spiritual realms to the villagers’ own sense of disenchantment and existential insecurity, claiming that the harmony of the universe was only restored when the maiden offered herself for sacrifice and was killed by a stab wound to the heart.

In addition to reworking components of the old myths into a faux-archetypal narrative of his own, Marius has his henchmen stage a play to bring the myth to life and accelerate the crowd’s acceptance of it. The performance is designed to work the onlookers into a frenzy, manipulating them with moments of carefully orchestrated suspense. The narrator cannot help but admire Marius’s stagecraft, which recalls Cipolla’s prowess in artistically manipulating his crowd. At one point, for example, he observes: ‘die Kunstpause ward bis zur äußersten Grenze des Erträglichen gehalten’ (Broch, III, 263). Eventually the members of the crowd become so hysterical that they cease to draw any distinction between the symbolic and the real. When it comes to the part of the play when the witch is put on trial for her crimes, they turn violent, pushing forward to attack the actor. Moreover, they genuinely accept Marius’s claim that the

sacrifice of an innocent will assuage their existential fear. He has long been grooming Irmgard for this purpose and, like the rest of the performance, her arrival on the scene is carefully stage-managed. She appears beside the sacrificial altar 'als gehörte dies so zum Spiele' (Broch, III, 268), the crowd baying for her blood. Finally, after a further period of suspense, one of the villagers runs forward and stabs her. Despite all his medical knowledge and scientific rationalism, indeed perhaps because reason is an inadequate comfort to him in the face of existential fear, the doctor wills it along with the rest of the crowd.

The New Myth

In regressively exchanging the symbolic offering of the Steinsegen festival for genuine sacrifice, the crowd's behaviour echoes Jung's assertion that primitive man projects the mythical topography of the collective unconscious onto the world. The identification of the villagers with ancient mythology in the sacrifice scene also recalls remarks made by Cassirer in *Das mythische Denken* (1925). Describing the belief systems of primordial communities, Cassirer writes: 'In allem mythischen Tun gibt es einen Moment, in dem sich eine wahrhafte Transsubstantiation – eine Verwandlung des Subjektes dieses Tuns in den Gott oder Dämon, den es darstellt – vollzieht' (Cassirer, XII, 47). According to Cassirer, in such communities myth does not remain a symbolic representation of the world but comes to be understood literally, and this is particularly the case where myth is connected with ritual, a requirement for action on the basis of the account of the world

it provides: ‘es ist ein *δρώμενον* [the Greek for ritual] als ein reales und wirkliches, weil durch und durch wirksames Geschehen’ (Cassirer, XII, 48).

Two decades later, in *The Myth of the State*, Cassirer would designate the revival of myth the most disturbing development of modern mass politics. In totalitarian societies, he argued, political leaders take over the role played by medicine men in primitive communities – that of revealing the will of the gods, of foretelling the future and of promising solutions to all the community’s problems – and myth becomes a weapon, not aimed directly at physical destruction, but indirectly, via the homogenization of the thoughts and feelings of individuals. He even went so far as to write of recent political events in Germany: ‘The real rearmament began with the origin and rise of the political myths. [...] the military rearmament was only the necessary consequence of the mental rearmament brought about by the political myths’ (Cassirer, XXV, 278). Like Jung, Cassirer regarded the rise of mass political movements such as Nazism as symptomatic of a return to pre-modern irrationality. However, whereas Jung described the tyrannical renewal of the collective unconscious as an inevitable response to modern individuation, in Cassirer’s eyes the regression was brought about quite deliberately:

Myth has always been described as the result of an unconscious activity and as a free product of imagination. But here we find myth made according to plan. The new political myths do not grow up freely; they are not wild fruits of an exuberant imagination. They are artificial things fabricated by very skilful and cunning artisans. (Cassirer, XV, 277)

Anticipating Cassirer's words, and recalling the relationship between Cipolla and the crowd in *Mario und der Zauberer*, as the leader of the mob on the night of the sacrifice, Marius too is characterized as a skilful artist.

Nonetheless, Broch remained closer to Jung in seeing the hyper-rational ethos of modernity as potentially as harmful as the extreme mysticism of Nazism. Though he challenged the Nazi radicalization of myth, he did so because he thought it as destructive as the intellectual trend of rational individualism it opposed. Rather than advocating the rejection of myth, as Cassirer did, he called on artists to counter the aestheticization of reality by political myth-makers with myths of their own. In the 1940 commentary on *Die Verzauberung* he praised the mythopoeic turn of much modern literature, including Mann's Joseph tetralogy, James Joyce's *Ulysses* (1922) and Jean Giono's Pan trilogy (1929-30). In an age which had long since lost its faith but which craved real belief and thus accepted every possible surrogate for it, he saw the social function of literature as a religious one.

On the subject of myth in *Die Verzauberung*, Schoolfield writes: 'In order to eradicate the last traces of Mutter Gisson's teachings from [the villagers'] spirits, [Marius] also has to venture into the realm of mythology, since Mutter Gisson represents a myth – indeed, one of the most important myths of the ancient world.'¹² He is referring to the mythical dimension of novel's allegorical structure, within which, he contends, Mutter Gisson represents Demeter, the Greek goddess of agriculture and grain, who is

¹² Schoolfield, p. 10.

mentioned in one of Broch's working titles for the novel: 'Demeter oder die Verzauberung'. In the second Homeric Hymn to Demeter, Demeter's daughter Persephone is snatched by Hades, who wishes to make her queen of the Underworld. Demeter wanders the earth in search of her daughter, fasting so that the world becomes barren, until Zeus commands Hades to release Persephone to be with her mother for part of the year. Irmgard's murder and the eventual reunion between the dying Mutter Gisson and her granddaughter's spirit which takes place at the end of the novel do echo the kidnap and return of Persephone, although Schoolfield's analysis becomes convoluted when he attempts to apply the paradigm too rigidly.¹³ More importantly, however, in setting Marius against Demeter in this way, he conflates the structural function of myth in the novel and the use to which it is put by characters within that structure. After all, Marius, too, has an obvious mythical counterpart: his history and character mark him out as a Dionysian figure. Like Dionysus, the god of vegetation, but also of mob fury and mystical religious ecstasy, Marius is a stranger from the south whose hypnotic appeal wins him many followers. He promises prosperity and harmony to those who believe what he preaches and threatens those who challenge him.¹⁴

Thomas Quinn provides a more accurate assessment of Mutter Gisson's role. He highlights the connection between Broch's novel and the mythologizing tendency of

¹³ Felix Stössinger, the editor of *Der Versucher*, a speculative amalgamation of the three drafts of the 'Bergroman', argues: 'Demeter [...] ist nur eine der vielen Vegetationsgottheiten, die schließlich in die universal große Mutter aufgegangen sind. [...] Unzweifelhaft hat Broch in Mutter Gisson eine Inkarnation der großen Mutter und nicht der Demeter geben wollen [...] das leibliche Mutter-Tochterverhältnis Demeter-Persephone fehlt.' Quoted by Schoolfield, pp. 10-11.

¹⁴ A detailed account of Marius's Dionysian characteristics is given by Sandberg, pp. 33-67.

Nazi ideology and propaganda, most notably represented by Alfred Rosenberg in *Der Mythos des zwanzigsten Jahrhunderts* (1930). Setting Mutter Gisson against the abuse of myth, as represented by Marius, he refers to her spirituality as ‘Broch’s mythical cure of the age’s sickness’.¹⁵ Yet, her irrational belief is not actually mythical in the sense of the word as it is most commonly employed, to refer to a sacred archetypal narrative. It seems instead to be a form of mystical or Gnostic consciousness. Indeed, as W.G. Sebald points out, ‘Gisson’ is an anagram of ‘Gnosis’.¹⁶ That is not to say that Quinn’s use of the term ‘myth’ in this context is unfounded. I contend that the kind of myth represented by Mutter Gisson corresponds to the definition advanced in several of Broch’s poetological essays of the 1930s and 1940s. When he called for mythical renewal in art, Broch was not merely encouraging the revival of ancient narratives but also the development of a new kind of myth. In ‘Mythos und Altersstil’, he wrote:

die Wiederbelebung biblischer Themen, wie zum Beispiel in den Romanen Thomas Manns, ist schlagender Beweis der ungestümen Stärke, mit der sich der Mythos heute in der Dichtung wieder zu Wort meldet. Dies aber ist eben bloß Rückkehr – Rückkehr zum Mythos in seinen alten Formen (selbst wenn diese so modernisiert werden wie bei Joyce) und stellt vorderhand noch keinen wirklichen neuen Mythos dar, keinesfalls *den* neuen Mythos. (Broch, IX.ii, 229)

And in ‘Die mythische Erbschaft der Dichtung’ he defined the new myth as a synthesis of the intuitive and the rational, the subjective and the objective, of *mythos* and *logos* in a totality seemingly lost to the modern mind: ‘Von solchem doppelten Grundbestand des

¹⁵ Quinn, p. 120.

¹⁶ Sebald, p. 128.

Menschenseins bedingt, vollzieht sich im Mythos und Logos das Erfassen der Welt’ (Broch, IX.ii, 202).

In *Die Verzauberung*, the mythology Marius presents to the crowd on the night of Irmgard’s murder incorporates elements traditionally associated with myth: an archetypal sacred narrative referring to origins, anthropomorphic superhuman characters and a ritual component. But for all its irrationality, it is paradoxically materialist. As a narrative, it postulates straightforward causal connections between events. As it is peopled by anthropomorphic characters and set in an environment familiar to the villagers, it responds to their existential anxiety in terms that make it rationally understandable to them. And in its sacrificial component it seeks to make the immanent absolute. In much the same way, the writing of Baeumler and Rosenberg rationally manipulates mythical structures in order to link their symbols with the material facts of blood and race.¹⁷ In contrast, Mutter Gisson represents something like the new mythical consciousness articulated by Broch. She is distinguished from Marius in her renunciation of the formal paraphernalia of conventional mythology. Unlike him, she has no need for a coherent narrative: ‘sie vermag nicht zu sagen “Es war ein Fabelwesen”, “Es war eine Fee”, “Es war ein Drache”, sondern sie weiß bloß, daß es um sie webt’ (Broch, III, 95-96). She also eschews ritual, having access to a beyond ‘deren Schlichtheit keiner kultischen Anstrengungen mehr bedarf’ (Broch, III, 102). Though she herself played the role of the ‘Bergbraut’ when she was young, she now sings along

¹⁷ This point is made by Pan, ‘The Struggle for Myth in the Nazi Period’, p. 49.

with the processional songs during the Steinsegen festival so lustily that the narrator suspects her of good-hearted mockery. She does perform some minor rituals with herbs but, as Michael Mack notes, like the Steinsegen rituals these are purely symbolic.¹⁸ Her mythical consciousness cannot be conceptually explained, and she combines material and transcendental knowledge: ‘das Fabelhafte drang immerzu zu ihr aus einem Einst, das vor jeder Erinnerung liegt und das ihr beinahe ebenso viel galt wie die Gegenwart, in der sie trotzdem mit festen Füßen wurzelt’ (Broch, III, 95).

Mutter Gisson in fact resembles Marius less than she does Wetchy, a radio and insurance salesman from the city whom Marius makes a scapegoat for the villagers’ alienation from nature and who accuses Marius of believing only in what he can touch. On the night of the village fair, after the mob has sacrificed Irmgard it moves on to Wetchy’s house, which it vandalizes before torturing him. After recovering from the ordeal, Wetchy and his wife decide to leave Kuppron. During their final confrontation before Wetchy leaves, Marius picks up a handful of earth from the ground and thrusts it at Wetchy, claiming that it represents what he stands for: the worship of nature in the face of spreading urbanization, the protection of the country from the influence of the city. Yet to Wetchy the pile of earth is nothing more than ‘das braune Häufchen’ (Broch, III, 344). As a poor man, he knows he cannot rely on material things for comfort.¹⁹ The soil motif then recurs in Mutter Gisson’s death scene. She tells the narrator of a time

¹⁸ Michael Mack, ‘The Politics of Sacrifice: Hermann Broch’s Critique of Fascism in *Die Verzauberung*’, *Orbis Litterarum*, 55 (2000), 15-36 (p. 28).

¹⁹ Wetchy is a Calvinist but, symbolically, the Jewish scapegoat of the Nazis. Mack (p. 21) notes that this tallies with Broch’s description of Judaism in the *Massenwahntheorie* as a religion that focuses on the intellectual and the abstract rather than on material satisfaction.

many years earlier when, while grieving for her husband who had been killed in a hunting accident, she went to the site of his death to mourn. She threw herself on the ground, digging her hands into the earth in an attempt to be closer to him. Only later did she come to understand that there was more to the world than what could be seen and touched. She then ceased to fear death, accepting it as part of the totality of existence.

Writing in the afterword to his *Aufsätze zur Zeitgeschichte* (1946), Jung stated:

Beim kollektiven Erscheinen von Archetypen besteht die große Gefahr der Massenbewegung, die nur dann nicht zur Katastrophe wird, wenn eine Mehrzahl von Individuen vorhanden ist, welche die Wirkung des Archetypus aufzufangen wissen, oder wenigstens eine gewisse Anzahl von Einzelnen, deren Einfluß sich noch Gehör verschaffen kann. (Jung, X, 256-57)

He advised that the only individuals capable of resisting malevolent mass movements were those who balanced intuitive and rational cognition, the collective unconscious and individual consciousness. In *Die Verzauberung* Mutter Gisson is the only character (aside perhaps from Wetchy) to achieve such a balance. She and Marius do not merely represent competing mythologies, but different conceptions of myth as such. They both seek to make the irrational accessible, but whereas his narrative substitutes the material for the spiritual, her mythical consciousness incorporates the rational within the irrational and vice versa. Accordingly, on the night of the sacrifice, she alone is unaffected by Marius's performance and immune from the hysteria of the crowd. She initially takes part in the dancing, but leaves the dance floor before the other villagers completely lose their senses; she understands their fears, but denies that the sacrifice is a

solution. The distinction is an important one, given the prevailing critical suspicion of Broch's differentiation between Marius's negative irrationalism and Mutter Gisson's positive spirituality. As a narrative which postulates causal connections between events, Marius's brand of myth can be used to legitimate ideology, whereas Mutter Gisson's mythical consciousness, in that it cannot be expressed conceptually, resists political appropriation.

Of course, this reading does not account for Broch's personal dissatisfaction with the novel, and particularly with the mythical dimension of the text. As Quinn notes, in 1943 Broch wrote to Friedrich Torberg: 'Als ich meinen Bergroman schrieb, bemerkte ich den Hang zum Mythos, entdeckte ihn sozusagen sukzessive und entdeckte damit auch die Unzulänglichkeit meines Beginnens, so daß ich das Buch einfach stehen ließ' (Broch, XIII.ii, 320).²⁰ However, Quinn quotes this section out of the context of a letter which, in its entirety, is not straightforward. The passage above is immediately preceded by the following lines:

Und wie soll die Totalität aussehen, welche das Kunstwerk heute dem des Weltgrauens entgegensetzen will, wie soll diese Gewichtsgleichheit hergestellt werden?! Das Kunstwerk, das hiezu einstens imstande sein wird, das erste, das wieder seinen Namen verdient, wird ein Mythos sein, das es wieder mit dem Gilgamesch wird aufnehmen können. (Broch, XIII.ii, 320)

Here again Broch champions the pursuit of myth in art, suggesting that his remark about the 'Bergroman' was not an attack on myth as such but one specific to his treatment of it

²⁰ On Broch's correspondence with Torberg see Mária Kajtár, 'Hermann Broch und Friedrich Torberg: Demokratie und Totalitarismus', in *Hermann Brochs literarische Freundschaften*, ed. by Endre Kiss, Paul Michael Lützeler and Gabriella Rácz (Tübingen: Stauffenberg, 2008), pp. 293-303.

in *Die Verzauberung*. Specifically, aesthetic difficulties with the text may have been partly to blame for his discontentment.

In 1941, Mann wrote to Karl Kerényi of the need to reclaim myth from fascist abuse and ‘ihn ins Humane “umzufunktionieren”’.²¹ Conversely, addressing what he sees as the inherent danger of myth, Jean-Luc Nancy comments: ‘Il me semble que c’est exactement ce qu’il ne faut pas faire: la fonction du mythe, comme tel, ne saurait être inverse. Il faut l’interrompre.’²² Broch’s treatment of myth in *Die Verzauberung* lies somewhere between these approaches. He was full of admiration for Mann’s Joseph project and praised *Die Geschichten Jaakobs* (1933) as sharing his own notion of the new task of art, ‘die eben in einer beinahe religiösen Totalität liegt’ (Broch, XIII.i, 299). In incorporating the Demeter and Dionysus motifs in his novel he too sought to rescue ancient mythical narratives for humane ends. Simultaneously, however, in the form of *Die Verzauberung* he tried to develop the mythical consciousness envisaged in his characterization of Mutter Gisson.

In ‘Mythos und Altersstil’, Broch stated that mythical consciousness was accessible in the work of the mature artist, who was defined by the ability to free himself from the predominant style of his time, so that the object of representation could be understood beyond its contemporary significance. He wrote that what often appeared to the artist as a purely technical problem – the question of form – was thus an epistemological one:

²¹ Thomas Mann and Karl Kerényi, *Gespräch in Briefen* (Frankfurt am Main: Fischer, 1972), p. 98.

²² Nancy, *La Communauté désœuvrée* (Paris: Christian Bourgeois Éditeur, 1986), p. 116.

denn das wahre Kunstwerk, selbst wenn es sich dabei nur um das kürzeste Gedicht handeln sollte, hat stets die Welt in ihrer Totalität zu erfassen, es hat diese zu spiegeln und hat sie gleichzeitig voll aufzuwiegen. Jeder wahre Künstler empfindet dies, aber nur der vom Altersstil begnadete vermag es in seinem Schaffen zu verwirklichen. (Broch, IX.ii, 214-5).

Mature style and mythical consciousness had been attained by myth-makers in the traditional sense, but not exclusively: Homer achieved it, but so too did Tolstoy. Broch cited the abstraction of Picasso's art, and *Guernica* especially, as a paradigmatic example of mythic totality: 'ein so abstraktes Bild, daß es auf jegliche Farbe verzichten konnte und dem Beschauer nur die Essenz von Schmerz, Trauer und Abscheu vermittelt' (Broch, IX.ii, 228). Among German-speaking authors, it was in Kafka rather than in Mann that Broch identified the beginnings of the new mythical consciousness. In Kafka, he remarked, any concern with the personal was at once subsumed into the supra-personal.

He did not elaborate on this interpretation of Kafka's writing, but he himself attempted to amalgamate the immediate and the eternal in *Die Verzauberung* by combining ancient myth with contemporary politics in the allegorical tale of events in Kuppron.²³ However, while he intended the doctor's encounter with Marius and Mutter Gisson to represent one specific case of a perpetually relevant experience, judging by critical responses to the novel his execution of the political strand of the allegory was more convincing than its mythical dimension. Paul Michael Lützeler has analysed

²³ For Michael Winkler, Broch's combination of a framework of classical mythology with first-person homodiegetic narration is a further attempt to fuse the personal and the abstract. See Winkler, 'Die Funktion der Erzählungen in Hermann Brochs Roman *Der Versucher*', *Seminar*, 4 (1968), 81-99 (pp. 84-85).

thoroughly the parallels between the text and the politics of Nazi Germany, demonstrating that the immediate political context is manifest in even small details. Lützeler not only compares Ratti with Hitler but links his nature worship, persecution of minorities, and anti-capitalist and militarist convictions with Nazi politics more generally. He recognizes traits of Goebbels, Hermann Göring and Ernst Röhm in Marius's henchman Wenzel, while the doctor is shown to represent the weakness of apolitical bourgeois humanists in the face of Nazi power.²⁴ In contrast, Felix Stössinger describes Broch's working title for the novel – 'Demeter oder die Verzauberung' – as 'mythologisch nicht haltbar'. He contends that it does not accurately reflect the portrayal of Mutter Gisson, in which the elements of the Demeter myth are only 'Nebenmotive' and cannot be traced consistently throughout the novel.²⁵ Broch himself also admitted that he failed to amalgamate successfully the specific and the archetypal in the novel. In a letter to Hannah Arendt, he stated: 'es stört mich, daß ich mich, ohne richtig darüber klar zu werden, von aktuell-emotionalen Motiven habe leiten lassen, als ich das Ganze anlegte. So etwas darf man nie tun: was nicht von vorneherein zur Super-Aktualität transzendiert ist, wird ein Schmarrn.' The letter was written in 1951, when Broch was working on the third draft of the novel. Though he did not expand on the reasons for his dissatisfaction, he clearly felt that the text did not transcend mere contemporary significance. It seems that the political landscape in 1951 being quite different from what it was when he began work on *Die Verzauberung* in 1934, he feared that it was no

²⁴ Lützeler, 'Hermann Brochs *Die Verzauberung* als politischer Roman'.

²⁵ See Schoolfield, p. 10.

longer as relevant. He suggested to Arendt that he could correct this with a second volume which would expose 'die Rationalmagie des Kommunismus etc.'²⁶ This implies that he regarded the crisis in Kuppron as too obvious a representation of Nazi Germany to be properly understood as symbolic of an enduring human predicament.

In addition to his attempt to transcend particularity in the structure of the novel, Broch's effort to combine rational with irrational cognition is evident in the prose style of *Die Verzauberung*. In 'Geist und Zeitgeist' he asserted that the language of modernity was on the one hand the language of positivism, in which words were direct signifiers with no mystical component, and on the other the radical language of extreme mysticism. Between these poles, he conceived of a mythical style capable of reconciling the material and the ideal, reason and intuition. Accordingly, the narrative of *Die Verzauberung* brings together characteristics of both realism and lyricism, alternating between passages ecstatically evoking the wonder of nature and passages of naturalism. At the beginning of one chapter the narrator's reflections on the beauty of the Kuppronberg in the early morning are immediately followed by a description of his bathroom plumbing. Broch also seeks to create a sense of epistemological totality within the many lyrical passages meditating on the landscape of the Kuppronberg. Towards the end of the novel, for example, the narrator describes a walk by a mountain lake. Not only the mountain and the sky, but also the narrator's emotions are described as being

²⁶ Hannah Arendt and Hermann Broch, *Briefwechsel*, ed. by Paul Michael Lützeler (Frankfurt am Main: Jüdischer Verlag, 1996), p. 162. On Broch's correspondence with Arendt see Karol Sauerland, 'Hermann Broch and Hannah Arendt: Massenwahn und Menschenrecht', in *Hermann Brochs literarische Freundschaften*, ed. by Kiss, Lützeler and Rácz, pp. 319-33.

reflected in the water, conveying a sense of unity both within nature and between nature and the individual self. This impression is further augmented by the style of the description: the interconnectedness of nature is conveyed not by any statement, but by oxymora such as ‘mittäglich die Nacht’ (Broch, III, 357) and ‘das Künftige [wird] zur Erinnerung’ (Broch, III, 358). The narrator’s observations are related obliquely rather than directly: the mountain is not a mountain reflected in a lake, but a giant tree pushing its roots down into the earth. The sky is simply the ‘Blütenlicht der oberen Bläue’ and the lake the ‘flüssig silberne Schwärze’ (Broch, III, 357). The passage is further characterized by lengthy sentences, repeatedly modified by additional clauses, which destabilize the perspective of the reader while moving rapidly along. The occasionally irregular syntactical relationship between the elements of the sentences, multiple instances of alliteration and anaphora, a chiasmus – ‘Das Echo der Wände singt Schweigen, und Schweigen singt des Echos Quell’ (Broch, III, 357) – and the repetition throughout the passage of significant words (‘Tiefe’, ‘Stille’) contribute to a musical sense of non-representational abstraction. Whereas Marius’s mythical narrative provides a purely conceptual interpretation of the Kuppronberg landscape, the pathos of this passage communicates the immediate, subjective essence of the narrator’s experience, while still making it possible for the reader to deduce rationally what is being described.

However, in ‘Mythos und Altersstil’ Broch also claimed that the mythopoeic features of even the best modern literature were ultimately inferior to the true abstraction of music, which could not be achieved in writing. For the most part, commentators have

agreed that he, at least, failed to replicate that quality in his prose. For example, Timothy Casey describes his alternation between lyricism and realism as ‘an irritating mannerism’.²⁷ Jürgen Heizmann cautions that he occasionally risks celebrating ‘only his own linguistic acrobatics’.²⁸ Karlheinz Deschner writes: ‘Betrachtet man die Schilderung Brochs, so hat man [...] den Eindruck des Forcierens, einer gewissen emphatisch geschwellten, hymnisch allzu aufgebauchten Sprache, die nicht immer ganz befriedigt und überzeugt’ and ‘Bei Broch ist die ganze Prosa doch von einem pathetischen Behagen, einem gewissen artistischen Triumph durchzogen.’²⁹ The last two responses testify to the danger of falling into aestheticism run by authors of lyrical prose. Sebald caustically refers to Broch’s language as ‘eine zweifelhafte Prosa, schwankend zwischen meteorologischer Sachlichkeit und seichter Poesie’. More dismissively still, he writes: ‘Selten sind die Stellen in diesem Text, da sich aus den Wortbildern die intendierte Offenheit ins “Ewige” ergibt, die Wendungen ins Peinliche hingegen sind zahlreich.’ His most serious objection is that Broch’s lyrical language ultimately fails to say anything at all, and that consequently the text is an ethically defeatist response to Nazism.³⁰

Writing to Rudolf Brunngraber in 1938, Broch admitted of the novel: ‘ich habe das Gefühl, mich thematisch und formal einfach überhoben zu haben’ (Broch, XIII.i,

²⁷ Timothy J. Casey, ‘Questioning Broch’s *Der Versucher*’, *Deutsche Vierteljahrsschrift*, 47 (1973), 467-507 (p. 495).

²⁸ Jürgen Heizmann, ‘Poetic Reflection in Broch’s *Der Tod des Vergil*’, in *Hermann Broch: Visionary in Exile*, ed. by Lützel, pp. 187-200 (p. 192).

²⁹ Karlheinz Deschner, *Kitsch, Konvention und Kunst: eine literarische Streitschrift* (Munich: List, 1957), pp. 86-87.

³⁰ Sebald, pp. 123-25.

492). It seems that formal problems were at least as much to blame for his dissatisfaction with the 'Hang zum Mythos' of the novel as any ambivalence of myth itself. Read as a whole, the Torberg letter does not support the conclusion that the Nazis' political abuse of myth had irredeemably tainted it in Broch's eyes. If he had believed this, he would presumably not have continued to pursue mythical consciousness in *Der Tod des Vergil*. That he did do so is revealed in a later letter of 14 October 1943 to Robert Neumann, in which he writes:

we all are constantly aware of the fact that the ground on which we used to stand is fading away: we know only too well, that in the depth of our soul we want a new form of expression, a form adequate to our times, and we can't find it, because it will only be found by the next generation. The Virgil was an attempt, but realizing that there is no possibility to surpass such state of attempt, I stopped the whole business and prefer to wait. (Broch, XIII.ii, 357)

While he continued to believe in the need for a new mythical consciousness to rival the malevolent irrationalism of fascist mass politics, he had come to recognize the difficulty of expressing that consciousness through literature. Whereas Mann and Weiss successfully constructed reflective, pluralistic viewpoints to contrast with the fascist aestheticization of politics and Horváth effectively criticized the homogeneity of Nazi language, Broch seems temporarily to have admitted defeat in his attempt to oppose the Nazi appropriation of myth. Even if he had found a way to do so, it must be conceded that if mythical consciousness cannot be used to legitimize a 'bad' ideology such as Marius's, it can no more support a 'good' one. While Mutter Gisson is herself immune from the hysteria of the crowd in *Die Verzauberung*, she is powerless to prevent the sacrifice. Not only did Broch fail to complete *Die Verzauberung*, but during the 1940s,

convinced of the 'Überflüssigkeit des Künstlerischen' yet determined to make a contribution to the defeat of Hitler and the building of a better future, he turned his attention to constructing a theoretical model of mass hysteria.

Fiction or History?

Struggling with his frustration at the political impotence of art, in a letter to Daisy Brody, the wife of his publisher, Broch expressed a desire to return to the kind of scholarly research he had engaged in in early essays and as a student of mathematics, psychology and philosophy at the University of Vienna in the late 1920s:

es kommt vor, daß ich tagelang an einem einzigen Satz oder an einem architektonischen Aufbau knete, freilich auch in der Überzeugung, daß jeder Ausdrucksmangel, sei er auch nur ein stilistischer, auf eine Unreinheit des Gedankens zurückzuführen ist. Letztlich gehen also diese Schwierigkeiten über das künstlerisch Ästhetische hinaus und münden in dem Begriff der Erkenntnis, von der ich derart besessen bin, daß ich unausgesetzt mit dem Gedanken einer Rückkehr zur Wissenschaft (die, wie ich glaube, mein stärkstes Begabungsgebiet ist) mich beschäftige. (Broch, XIII.i, 433)

Yet, while Broch felt that scientific research into mass hysteria would bring him closer to true knowledge than his crowd novel and other fiction had managed to do, the majority of the attention the *Massenwahntheorie* has attracted has come from literary critics rather than social scientists.

Critics can be divided into those who situate Broch's text in the wider contemporary discourse on mass psychology, represented primarily by Freud and

Canetti,³¹ and those who relate it to his literary writing.³² The latter generally view the fiction as a vehicle for Broch's theoretical concepts: the 'Wertzerfall' of post-Enlightenment intellectual culture, the benevolent and malevolent forms of collective experience ('Gemeinschaftserlebnis' and 'Massenwahn'), and the two types of crowd leader – the 'Heilbringer' and the 'Demagoge' – as represented by Mutter Gisson and Marius. The possibility that his earlier literary work may have had a reciprocal influence on the *Massenwahntheorie* is also raised by some commentators. Of these, Erich Wolfgang Skwara goes the furthest, asserting polemically: 'One might well argue that the theoretical writings just repeat the artistic work – and in a less appealing form.'³³ Skwara also argues that the *Massenwahntheorie* itself has a poetic dimension, though the reasons he offers for this claim – the abstract character of the work and Broch's focus on the individual soul as the basic unit of mass psychology – both happen to be cited by Broch himself as evidence of the treatise's scientific purview. In relation to Skwara's first point, Broch writes:

³¹ See Sigrid Schmid-Bortenschlager, 'Der Einzelne und seine Masse: Massentheorie und Literaturkonzeption bei Elias Canetti und Hermann Broch', in *Experte der Macht: Elias Canetti*, ed. by Kurt Bartsch and Gerhard Melzer (Graz: Droschl, 1985), pp. 116-32; Mack, *Anthropology as Memory: Elias Canetti's and Franz Baermann Steiner's Responses to the Shoah* (Tübingen: Niemeyer, 2001), pp. 10-18; Müller-Funk, 'Fear in Culture'; Müller-Funk, 'Die Angst vor der Masse bei Broch und Canetti', in *Elias Canetti und Hermann Broch*, ed. by Angelova, Gruber and Lützel, pp. 179-200.

³² See Bernhard Fetz, 'Hermann Broch: *Die Verzauberung*: zum Verhältnis von dichterischer Praxis und Massenwahntheorie', *German Life and Letters*, 40 (1987), 200-211; Zsuzsa Széll, 'Stadt und Land: ein Motiv und seine Bedeutung', in *Romanstruktur und Menschenrecht bei Hermann Broch*, ed. by Hartmut Steinecke and Joseph Strelka (Bern: Peter Lang, 1990), pp. 71-82.

³³ Erich Wolfgang Skwara, 'Mind and World and No Way Out: A Response to Joseph Strelka', in *Hermann Broch: Literature, Philosophy, Politics*, ed. by Dowden, pp. 87-92 (p. 89). Joseph Strelka also states that an understanding of Broch's novels leads to a better understanding of the *Massenwahntheorie* in 'Politics and the Human Condition: Broch's Model of a Mass Psychology', in *Hermann Broch: Literature, Philosophy, Politics*, ed. by Dowden, pp. 76-86 (pp. 76-77). Robert Weigel traces the continuity of Broch's ideas throughout his oeuvre in *Zur geistigen Einheit von Hermann Brochs Werk: Massenpsychologie, Politologie, Romane* (Tübingen: Francke, 1994).

Ein 'Modell' ist ein theoretisches System, das aus bestimmten Abstraktionen empirischer Tatsachen besteht, die logisch miteinander verknüpft werden und durch Schlußfolgerungen die Gesetzmäßigkeiten eines bestimmten Wirklichkeitsgebietes abzubilden trachten. (Broch, XII, 73)

Whereas, one recalls, Broch believed that literature had the 'Mission einer totalitätserfassenden Erkenntnis, die über jeder empirischen oder sozialen Bedingtheit steht' (see pp. 170-71), here he explains that the abstraction of scientific research is quite different, in that it builds on empirical observations rather than remaining valid regardless of such evidence. He then goes on to argue that empirical research can only be conducted on concrete objects, stating: 'Das menschliche Einzelindividuum ist ein derartig konkretes Beobachtungs- und Untersuchungsobjekt. Eine Menschenmasse hingegen hat nicht die gleiche Konkretheitsdignität' (Broch, XII, 13). Whereas in *Die Verzauberung* the 'Befragung der Einzelseele' (Broch, III, 384) had meant giving a single individual's (the narrator's) account of his experience in the crowd, in the *Massenwahntheorie* Broch states that any meaningful research into mass hysteria must be based on thorough investigation of numerous individuals and meticulous statistical analysis of the resulting data. Nevertheless, even if the aspects of the *Massenwahntheorie* mentioned by Skwara do not on their own support the claim that it is a poetic text, the imaginative dimension of Broch's theory does manifest itself in other ways.

In focussing on the consciousness of individuals within the crowd, Broch follows Freud in rejecting Le Bon's concept of the collective soul. He, too, maintains: 'Massenseele und Massenbewußtsein sind lediglich Bequemlichkeitsausdrücke' (Broch,

XII, 15). The distinction he draws between positive and negative mass phenomena also recalls Adler's distinction in 'Zur Massenpsychologie' between the violent crowds produced by a selfish 'Lebensstil' and the creation of positive moral communities through 'Mitmenschlichkeit'. These similarities notwithstanding, Lützel identifies three aspects of Broch's text which he believes distinguish it from other crowd theories: the concept of the 'menschlicher Dämmerzustand', Broch's term for the particular combination of rational and irrational elements in the human psyche which governs the occurrence of mass hysteria; the connection between his crowd theory and the theories of value and history first developed in *Die Schlafwandler*; and his attempts to promote political democracy as the solution to mass hysteria.³⁴ Writing of the 'Dämmerzustand', Broch states:

als tierisches Erbe ist der menschliche Dämmerzustand zum Teil eine Funktion des Unterbewußten, also der Instinkte und der irrationalen Triebe, aber teilweise auch eine Funktion des rationalen menschlichen Vermögens und seiner spezifischen Begrenzungen. (Broch, XII, 71)

As in *Die Verzauberung*, here too the rational element of consciousness provides a crucial balance to the irrational element in protecting individuals from malevolent mass movements. If the balance of the 'Dämmerzustand' is lost and irrationalism overpowers reason entirely – a transformation Broch refers to using the verb 'dahindämmern' – individuals regress to the state of herd animals: 'wo das Dahindämmern die Oberhand gewinnt, da wird der Mensch zu Masse. Die Masse ist das Produkt des Dahindämmerns' (Broch, XII, 70). Though Lützel sees this as an original idea, there are similarities with

³⁴ See the editorial notes in Broch, XII, 580-82.

Le Bon's theory that crowds are formed when groups of individuals cast off the rule of reason and act in accordance with the aspect of the psyche they all share: the unconscious. More notable still is the similarity between the idea of the 'Dämmerzustand' and Jung's definition of a healthy mind as one which manages to balance the forces of individual consciousness and the collective unconscious. There is precedent, too, for the political dimension of the *Massenwahntheorie*. Le Bon regarded his theory as a blueprint for political leaders to follow and Reich promoted a Marxist agenda based on the theory he developed in *Die Massenpsychologie des Faschismus*. No other author, however, seeks to explain the prominence of crowd phenomena in particular epochs, as Broch does with his theory of psychic cycles in history (see pp. 35-38).

Despite this, and despite the fact that the theory of psychic cycles, owing to its determinism, is the element of the *Massenwahntheorie* that has proved most objectionable to commentators, it has had relatively little bearing on critical attempts to classify the text.³⁵ Though the historical aspect of the treatise is frequently mentioned, it is ultimately subordinated to sociological and psychological perspectives.³⁶ Yet it was of primary importance to Broch himself, who repeatedly referred to the *Massenwahntheorie* as a theory of history. The very first chapter bears the title

³⁵ In 'Fear in Culture' (p. 100) Müller-Funk notes the apparent incompatibility of Broch's normative, deterministic view of history and his struggle for humanist values. Lützel indicates that this is the critical consensus in 'Vom "Zerfall der Werte" zur "Theorie der Demokratie": Hermann Broch als Philosoph und Politologe', in *Wegbereiter der Moderne*, ed. by Helmut Koopmann and Clark Muenzer (Tübingen: Niemeyer, 1990), pp. 163-70 (p. 165).

³⁶ See, for example, Borch, p. 79.

‘Methodologische Vorbemerkungen: Historische Gesetze und Willensfreiheit’ (Broch, XII, 101), and a further methodological chapter is called ‘Der Erkenntnisvorstoß und das Neue in der Geschichte’ (Broch, XII, 177). After setting out one part of his theory, he writes: ‘um diese Begriffe wirklich zu klären und der ganzen Einteilung einen konkreten Gehalt zu verleihen, muß die seelische Mechanik der Massen konkret beobachtet werden, und dies kann bloß an ihrer geschichtlichen Entwicklung geschehen’ (Broch, XII, 282). And at a later point he explicitly states that his theory of history provides the foundation for the treatise as a whole, writing: ‘als Grundvorstellung für das Modell massenpsychischen Geschehens ist das “*Gesetz psychischer Zyklen*” stipuliert’ (Broch XII, 302).

Broch intended the theory of psychic cycles in history to be understood as a normative model. He argued, for example: ‘die Forderung nach ekstatischen “Super-Befriedigungen” ist *unabdingbar*’ (Broch, XII, 32, emphasis in original), and ‘Der Ablauf dieser vier Phasen scheint unausweichlich zu sein’ (Broch, XII, 55). In postulating general laws, he aimed to endow his work with a methodological discipline akin to that of physics, which he considered ‘Das “treueste” Modell der empirischen Wirklichkeit’ (Broch, XII, 237), writing: ‘Es gibt keinen “Zufall” im Bereich der Naturgesetze, und auf gleiche Weise schließt das historische Gesetz das Moment des freien Willens aus’ (Broch, XII, 68). Yet, as he himself acknowledged elsewhere, while history can incorporate scientific practices, it is in many ways as much an imaginative pursuit as literature. When historians write narrative accounts of past events, they are

faced with various epistemological and aesthetic choices, each of which can lead to the presentation of those events in a different light. As White argues, the choices the historian makes are not neutral, but are guided by ethical and ideological considerations, meaning that historical writing does not simply reflect the reality of the past but creates diverse versions of it. In recognition of this state of affairs, in the early essay 'Zum Begriff der Geisteswissenschaften' (1917) Broch characterized the historian as an artist engaged in the construction of historical reality. Austin Harrington has this in mind when he writes that it was Broch's intention in the *Massenwahntheorie* 'to evoke a normatively salient narrative of the rise and fate of the modern world'. However, Harrington qualifies his characterization of the text in writing that Broch saw the need for a methodology which would guide his narrative, endowing it with scientific rigour. He also contends that the neo-Kantian theoretical vocabulary Broch employs in the *Massenwahntheorie* elevates the treatise above what Harrington calls the 'indulgent sophistries' of an obviously similar text such as Oswald Spengler's *Der Untergang des Abendlandes* (1918-22).³⁷ In fact, despite Broch's own assertions to the contrary, the poetic aspects of history are as evident as ever in the *Massenwahntheorie*.

Harrington is perhaps more sympathetic towards Broch's presentation of his ideas in the *Massenwahntheorie* than the author deserves. He accepts without question Broch's claims to a critical methodology when, as Skwara indicates, he seems to do little more than reiterate notions already contained in *Die Schlafwandler* and *Die*

³⁷ Harrington, 'Hermann Broch as a Reader of Max Weber: Protestantism, Rationalization and the "Disintegration of Values"', *History of the Human Sciences*, 19:2 (2006), 1-18 (p. 5). Broch's theory of historical cycles is also reminiscent of Nietzsche in 'Schopenhauer als Erzieher' (1874).

Verzauberung. And while Broch maintains that his model of mass psychology is based on the careful consideration of concrete data, the historical phenomena that he takes as the basis for his universalizing claims are rather limited, extending little further than the examples mentioned in the introduction to this thesis: the state of the medieval Church prior to the Reformation, late-medieval witch hunts, the intellectual culture of the Enlightenment and the rise of Nazism. The fact that he explains the whole of modern history as an abstract system with such limited reference to material examples undermines his claims to empiricism and even provokes one to ask whether he reproduces to some extent the impulse to reductive categorization he criticizes in Nazism itself (p. 27). Harrington also neglects to explain why Broch's development of a theoretical vocabulary which enables him to present his ideas more systematically in the treatise than in his novels should automatically give them more credence than in the fiction.

Furthermore, making use of White's terms for the various modes of historical emplotment (pp. 50-51), it is possible to identify metahistorical elements in Broch's theory. For example, the *Massenwahntheorie* corresponds to the mode of satire when Broch insists: 'Es ist immer als erwiesen betrachtet worden, daß das Individuum in seinem Handeln an diese Geschichtsgesetze gebunden ist' (Broch, XII, 71). White, in comparison, describes satire as:

a drama dominated by the apprehension that man is ultimately a captive of the world rather than its master, and by the recognition that, in the final analysis,

human consciousness and will are always inadequate to the task of overcoming definitively the dark force of death, which is man's unremitting enemy.³⁸

In both instances man's fight to exert his will against the forces of history is cast as futile. Moreover, White's reference to death as the primary force against which humanity struggles in vain resonates strongly with Broch's ego model. While there are many different kinds of value, Broch writes: 'Grundwert alles Lebens ist das Leben selbst' (Broch, XII, 46). That is to say, individuals are driven by a will to life or, as he formulates it elsewhere in negative terms, they are motivated by 'Innerseelische Angst vor der Todes-Einsamkeit' (Broch, XII, 32). Yet, despite their struggle, something ultimately dooms them to succumb to the latter, as he believes has been demonstrated by the politics of the Third Reich, the Second World War and the Holocaust: 'Die apokalyptischen Ereignisse der heutigen Zeit zeigen wieder einmal, daß der Mensch sein Schicksal nicht in der Hand hat, sondern daß er von ihm unzugänglichen und unkontrollablen Mächten dahingetrieben wird' (Broch, XII, 247).

That said, the dominant mode of narrative employment in the *Massenwahntheorie* is actually tragedy, which, according to White, is distinguished from satire by the gain in consciousness its protagonist experiences regarding those laws to which humanity must resign itself. Although the forces of history cannot be overcome, the tragic hero realizes that they are limits within which man can learn to work.³⁹ Correspondingly, it is Broch's conviction that the individual can be made

³⁸ White, p. 9.

³⁹ White, p. 9.

conscious of the cyclical process of history, even though he cannot entirely overcome it.

Thus, he at least considers it possible to effect some variation within the limits of historical law, between the poles of hypertrophy and mass hysteria:

Es erscheint jedoch durchaus möglich, daß man eben durch Kenntnis der Gesetzmäßigkeiten eine Kontrolle des Geschehens ausüben kann, und sofern mit dem „Gesetz der psychischen Zyklen“ tatsächlich eine reale Struktur der Abläufe aufgedeckt ist, dürfte es möglich sein, die Periode, welche zwischen den beiden Wahnformen der Hypertrophie und des Zerrissenheitswahnes liegt, durch eine entsprechende Massenbeeinflussung zu verlängern, so daß der Pendelausschlag zwischen den beiden Wahnpolen nicht so kraß wird. (Broch, XII, 58)

He stresses more than once that knowledge of the underlying mechanisms of history is a valuable tool for empowering individuals to combat the evil inflicted upon them by nature, pointing to the American Civil War as a time when humanity temporarily resisted the inevitability of its destructive course. Rather than emphasizing the strategic and industrial reasons for which the War was fought, he prioritizes the struggle against slavery.

Broch's assessment of the American conflict as a momentary deviation from the otherwise interminable cycle of history may or may not appear convincing. White's point is that by choosing to highlight certain aspects of historical events rather than others, and by connecting past occurrences in one particular pattern instead of another, a historian actively constructs one account of the past when it is possible to build other distinct versions using the same data. Hence Broch can portray the eruption of mass hysteria at various points in history as a cyclical process, whereas in 'Zur Massenpsychologie' Adler interprets cases of violent crowd action as temporary

obstacles in the evolutionary development of humanity towards attainment of ‘Gemeinschaftsgefühl’. Further to this, White argues that there is no valid epistemological method of distinguishing between the truth value of historical narratives emplotted in different modes and that the historian’s reasons for selecting one mode over another must consequently be ideological. If one can claim to understand the processes by which past worlds have developed, he observes, one can also claim authoritative knowledge of the form the present should take. The epistemological mode to which one is committed will determine not only how one views the past, but also whether and in what manner one believes present circumstances must be changed.⁴⁰

In an early research proposal for the *Massenwahntheorie* project Broch expresses contradictory views about the political function of the treatise. On the one hand he states that it is not the place of academic research to propagate ethical or religious ideologies: ‘Ein wissenschaftliches Institut ist kein Propagandaministerium und auch keine Aufklärungsstelle. Eine direkte Beeinflussung der Bevölkerung fiele aus ihrem wissenschaftlichen Rahmen’ (Broch, XII, 36). On the other he openly admits that he will not conduct his own research dispassionately:

eine Forschungsarbeit mit Heiltendenzen, deren Objekt gerade der wertsetzende Mensch ist, [kann] nicht wertneutral bleiben: die Beurteilung von Gut und Böse, von Gesund und Krank, von echter Gemeinschaft und Massenwahn, ist ohne a priori gegebene und anerkannte Grundwertungen nicht durchzuführen. (Broch, XII, 35-36)

⁴⁰ White, p. 21.

In that their findings have socio-political impact, he contends, all social sciences must in fact operate with *a priori* principles. Throughout the course of his treatise he states that the task of the *Massenwahntheorie* is to increase his readers' consciousness of their position in the cycle of history, thus giving them the tools with which to change their situation, to the extent that this is possible at all. He argues that in order to overcome modern mass movements such as Nazism, the structure of social institutions must be modified to promote democracy as the new 'Zentralwert' of society. Furthermore, he claims that in order to be truly effective, existing forms of democracy must be replaced with 'Totaldemokratie': 'Als zukünftiger Zentralwert und offenes System wird die Demokratie notwendigerweise einige Bestandteile totalitärer Organisation übernehmen müssen' (Broch, XII, 92). The theory of psychic cycles in history, then, is not only the conclusion but also the premise of his enquiry. On the basis of his ideological convictions he imaginatively prefigures the historical landscape rather than deducing historical laws empirically. He seeks to promote social change in the form of totalitarian democracy that is too urgent and drastic to evolve passively as in Adler's conception of history. Its enactment depends on the immediate and radical actions of historical agents. In emplotting history as tragedy, Broch constructs a narrative intended to empower his readers to actively involve themselves in the kind of political change he endorses.

Whether or not one agrees with the objectives of Broch's theoretical project, then, it does not represent the break from imagination promised in his correspondence with Brody. Not only is it based on a view of history already explored in his earlier

fiction, but the questionable distinction he draws between desirable and undesirable forms of totalitarianism is especially unscientific, as the rise of McCarthyism during the last years of his life, which were spent in exile in America, would perhaps have shown him. On reflection, however, this state of affairs is anticipated by the *Massenwahntheorie* itself. Although Broch maintains that mass hysteria comes about when the balance of the 'Dämmerzustand' has been lost and irrationalism overcomes reason, he makes it clear that a loss of balance in favour of reason is no more desirable. Again recalling Jung's views on modern rationalism, he asserts:

Die hochentwickelte Rationalität der modernen Großstadtkultur mildert das menschliche Dahindämmern nicht, sondern intensiviert es. Die akzeptierte Ratio wird zu einem bloßen Mittel der Triebbefriedigung und wird hiedurch ihres Erkenntnisgehaltes zur Gänze beraubt. (Broch, XII, 72)

Given the similarity between the *Massenwahntheorie* and *Die Verzauberung* on this point, it is strange to find Quinn praising the 'politically positive development' which he believes took place between the two texts.⁴¹ He is too trusting of Broch's claim in a letter to Daniel Brody of 7 August 1943 that '[ich] werde nach Fertigstellung des Massenwahns sofort den Bergroman wieder vornehmen, ihn meinem jetzigen Können und meiner tieferen Einsicht gemäß umarbeiten'.⁴² Quinn cites this remark as evidence that Broch had gained new political awareness in writing the *Massenwahntheorie* and that he intended to revise *Die Verzauberung* accordingly. Yet there is actually very little development from the novel to the theoretical treatise.

⁴¹ Quinn, pp. 117-18.

⁴² Quoted in Lützel (ed.), *Brochs Verzauberung*, pp. 74-75.

It should be remembered that in the *Massenwahntheorie* Broch equates successful ego-expansion with ‘Irrationalbereicherung’, the balance of the rational and intuitive aspect of the human mind (see p. 38). Amongst other sources, he writes, ‘Irrationalbereicherung’ has an aesthetic foundation:

da eben die Kultur, und zwar unter Voraussetzung des intakten Rationalbewußtseins im einzelindividuellen Ich, diesem mit ihren ethisch gebundenen Lebensformen der Gemeinschaft, mit ihren kultischen Bindungen und – nicht zuletzt – mit ihrer künstlerisch-ästhetischen Daseinsformung jenen Irrationalitätszuschuß vermittelt, den die individuellen Irrationalbedürfnisse und –triebe nicht nur zu ihrer unmittelbaren Befriedigung, sondern auch zu ihrer kulturalen Umgestaltung zu Gemeinschafts- und Zusammengehörigkeitsgefühlen benötigen. (Broch, XII, 14)

His concern is not only with the practical uses to which knowledge can be put, but also with the way in which it is obtained, and in this regard, even in his theoretical treatise, he considers the cognitive properties of art to be of the highest value. Art responds to the irrational needs of the psyche while balancing them with the demands of rational consciousness. It does not abandon itself to the satisfaction of irrational instincts but facilitates their sublimation in productive feelings of community. Since he evidently continued to believe it necessary for a complete epistemology to incorporate both the rational and the irrational, it is difficult to see his presentation of the *Massenwahntheorie* as a break from literary imagination as anything other than a strategic move at a time when the ethical currency of literature was low. In fact, while in his theoretical analysis of mass hysteria he claims the authority of scientific reason in the hope of exerting

greater influence over his audience, not unlike Marius before the crowd in *Die Verzauberung*, he ends up perpetuating his own archetypal narrative.⁴³

⁴³ Drawing on the work of Claude Lévi-Strauss, in 'Theories of Myth', *Man*, 4 (1969), 337-53 (p. 352) Percy Cohen makes the point that there is 'an element of myth in a good deal of interpretation of history'.

**THE LIMITS OF INDIVIDUALITY AND THE REPRESENTATION OF
MADNESS IN ELIAS CANETTI'S *DIE BLENDUNG* (1935-36)**

Like Broch, Elias Canetti treated the crowd in two modes: in his novel *Die Blendung* and in the treatise *Masse und Macht*. In comparison with the other works addressed in this study, *Die Blendung* is a crowd novel of a different kind. Its protagonist Peter Kien is a reclusive academic who lives only for his books and ends up burning to death among them. For Kien the crowd represents not only large groups such as those found in the fiction of Mann, Weiss and Broch, or even a whole society as depicted by Horváth, but all other people. Moreover, while from the first chapter Canetti's characterization of Kien identifies the relationship between the individual and the crowd as a central theme of the text, the narrative focuses not on Kien's subsumption into the crowd but on his isolation from it. He holds it in utter contempt and meticulously avoids any contact with it. Still another contrast with the works discussed in Chapters 1-4 is the fact that the narrative of *Die Blendung* betrays very little of its historico-political context.

That said, commentators have related the novel to its background in two respects: Firstly, it has been connected with the rise of Nazism, of which Canetti began to take serious note when he witnessed scuffles between groups of Nazis and socialists during a stay in Berlin in 1928-29.¹ For both Karl Markus Michel and Michael Mack Kien's self-imposed isolation foreshadows the capitulation of non-committed intellectuals before

¹ Raphaël Sorin, 'Souvenirs', in *Elias Canetti*, ed. by Martine Blanc-Montmayeur (Paris: Édition du Centre Pompidou, 1995), pp. 51-57 (p. 53).

Hitler.² In terms which recall the inhabitants of Kuppron in *Die Verzauberung*, Mack also writes that Kien ‘mirrors an atomized society that drifts towards a totalitarian mass-state’.³ Secondly, remarks made by Canetti in his autobiography have enabled critics to connect *Die Blendung* with the mass uprising which occurred in Vienna on 15 July 1927. On that day the author was himself part of the crowd as the law courts were burned down in protest at the acquittal of two Heimwehr soldiers who had been charged with killing a man and a child during clashes with republican Schutzbündler earlier the same year.⁴ In *Die Fackel im Ohr* (1980) Canetti refers to *Die Blendung* as ‘Die Frucht des Feuers’ (Canetti, VIII, 293).

The story of Kien, his exaggerated sense of individualism and his eventual self-immolation has been read as a fable communicating the epiphany Canetti reported having on 15 July regarding the fragility of the boundary between the individual self and the crowd. In an account written many years after the event, in *Die Fackel im Ohr*, he emphasizes the spontaneity of his absorption into the crowd on the day of the riots, the regression of his cognitive faculties and his heightened affectivity – ‘Ich *sehe* mich nicht gut an diesem Tag, aber ich *fühle* noch die Erregung, das Vorrennen und Ausweichen,

² Karl Markus Michel, ‘Der Intellektuelle und die Masse: zu zwei Büchern von Elias Canetti’, *Die neue Rundschau*, 75 (1964), 308-16; Mack, ‘*Die Blendung* as a Negative Poetics: Positivism, Nihilism, Fascism’, *Orbis Litterarum*, 54 (1999), 146-60.

³ Mack, ‘*Die Blendung* as a Negative Poetics’, p. 147.

⁴ See Widdig, p. 206; Idris Parry, ‘Elias Canetti’s Novel *Die Blendung*’, in *Essays in German Literature I*, ed. by F. Norman (London: Institute of Germanic Studies, 1965), 145-66 (p. 147); Gerald Stieg, ‘Früchte des Feuers: der 15. Juli 1927 in der *Blendung* und in den *Dämonen*’, in *Blendung als Lebensform: Elias Canetti*, ed. by Friedbert Aspetsberger and Stieg (Königstein: Athenäum, 1985), pp. 143-75 (pp. 146, 160); Stieg, *Frucht des Feuers: Canetti, Doderer, Kraus und der Justizpalastbrand* (Vienna: Falter, 1990), p. 13. Johann P. Arnason and David Roberts, *Elias Canetti’s Counter-image of Society: Crowds, Power, Transformation* (Rochester, NY: Camden House, 2004), p. 5.

das Flüssige der Bewegung’ – and the weakening of his individual will: ‘Ich hatte nicht das Gefühl, daß ich mit eigenen Beinen ging’ (Canetti, VIII, 232-33). Gerald Stieg interprets the affectivity of Kien’s fiery death among his masses of books in *Die Blendung* as a symbolic transformation of Canetti’s own crowd experience.⁵ This view of *Die Blendung* in the light of 15 July has also been supplemented by research connecting Kien’s death with Canetti’s designation of fire as a crowd symbol in *Masse und Macht*, on which, he also reports in the autobiography, he was inspired to begin work in the immediate aftermath of the uprising.⁶ In the treatise he writes:

Faßt man diese einzelnen Züge des Feuers zusammen, so ergibt sich ein überraschendes Bild: Es ist sich überall gleich; es greift rapid um sich; es ist ansteckend und unersättlich; es kann überall entstehen, sehr plötzlich; es ist vielfach; es ist zerstörend; es hat einen Feind; es erlischt: es wirkt, als ob es lebte, und wird so behandelt. Alle diese Eigenschaften sind die der *Masse*, eine genauere Zusammenfassung ihrer Attribute ließe sich schwer geben. (Canetti, III, 88)

He does not merely associate the crowd with fire but states that the two phenomena share many characteristics.

Even allowing for the role of memory and imagination in Canetti’s autobiography, there is undoubtedly a connection between *Die Blendung* and its context in this respect.⁷ However, there are also important differences between the treatment of

⁵ Stieg, ‘Früchte des Feuers’, pp. 161, 165, 167.

⁶ See Rousiley C.M. Maia, ‘Elias Canetti’s *Auto-da-fé*: From the Antithesis of the Crowd-Man to the Madness of Power’, *Thesis Eleven*, 45 (1996), 28-38 (pp. 36-37).

⁷ In ‘Früchte des Feuers’ (p. 151) Stieg comments on an important inaccuracy in Canetti’s account of 15 July: he claims that he was inspired to join the uprising by a headline in the right-wing *Reichspost* proclaiming the court’s decision a ‘gerechtes Urteil’, but Stieg notes that the headline in the *Reichspost* that day was the rather less inflammatory ‘klares Urteil’. It is to be expected that inaccurate memories and imaginative licence also played a role in Canetti’s portrayal of the crowd.

the crowd theme in *Die Fackel im Ohr* and the way it is handled in the novel. For one, whereas Canetti was very much one of the crowd on 15 July, Kien's efforts to preserve his individuality provide the main focus of *Die Blendung*. Secondly, the gruesome nature of Kien's death, the element of the novel said to symbolize his subsumption into the crowd, contrasts with the neutral, even positive tone in which Canetti describes his crowd experience. Thus one wonders if there is more to be said about the importance of 15 July for the novel.

In particular, the figure of the 'Akten-Jammerer' in Canetti's account of the day, who, he claims, provided the inspiration for Kien, demands further attention. Out of all his experiences during the riots, Canetti devotes special attention to one encounter. He recounts having come across a man standing apart from the crowd, crying out in distress at the thought of all the files burning in the law courts. He is angered that anyone should worry about such a thing when people are being gunned down, but as the man is completely fixated on the burning files his reproach goes unheeded. While this passage seems relatively insignificant in its immediate context, at a later point in the autobiography Canetti claims that the incident inspired Kien's death in *Die Blendung*. A few years afterwards, he states, it occurred to him that the protagonist of a novel he was planning – a hermit-like professor – should burn along with his library. In truth there may be a degree of creative licence in this claim, for in an earlier draft of the chapter on 15 July Canetti writes of Kien: 'Daß sein Name [originally 'Brand'] und sein Schicksal jenem Tag des 15. Juli entsprangen, war mir damals nicht bewußt, es wäre mir peinlich

gewesen, hätte ich den Zusammenhang erkannt, und vielleicht hätte ich sogar den ganzen Plan verworfen' (Canetti, VI, 326). However, this discrepancy notwithstanding, he at least connects Kien with the Akten-Jammerer in both versions.

Two points should be noted in relation to this circumstance: Firstly, although Canetti singles out an individual, rather than the crowd, as his inspiration for the plot of *Die Blendung*, that individual figure is nonetheless defined in terms of his relationship to the crowd – that is to say, by his position outside it. The reflexive construction 'sich sehr deutlich von der Masse absetzend' (Canetti, VIII, 231) used to describe his position conveys a distinct sense of purpose. Likewise, while *Die Blendung* is a novel about crowds, it approaches the subject from the perspective of an individual who isolates himself from the crowd. Secondly, the Akten-Jammerer and Kien have more in common than just the similarity of their obsessions – files and books – and the connection of both their fates with fire. Most striking in Canetti's portrayal of the Akten-Jammerer are the signs of mental illness he exhibits. His behaviour is generally childlike, as is indeed indicated by the very choice of the name 'Jammerer', and quasi-autistic. He is completely dominated by the *idée fixe* of the files ('er hatte nur die Akten im Kopf') and fails to respond to any external stimuli other than their destruction: 'Er sah mich an, als wär ich nicht da' (Canetti, VIII, 231). Similarly, in *Die Blendung* Kien is insane.

Previous scholarship has identified elements of paranoia and schizophrenia in his behaviour.⁸

While I do not seek to diagnose Kien's particular illness, extrapolating from the connection between him and the Akten-Jammerer I do want to argue that there is a link in *Die Blendung* between his madness and his hyper-individualism. I use the term 'hyper-individualism' in this chapter to refer to the interplay of several aspects of Kien's character and behaviour which isolate him from the world around him: the fact that he limits his interaction with other people to a bare minimum, either by secluding himself in his library or, when he does leave its confines, avoiding conversation with or emotional investment in those he encounters; his fixation on preserving the integrity of his personal space and his body against external encroachment and, at the same time, the stark distinction he draws between his intellectual life and material considerations such as food and sleep (his total neglect of the latter reveals a desire to live solely in his own mind); his conscious and deliberate restriction of his scholarly research and his intellectual curiosity in general to his own highly specialized area of expertise (sinology), a policy symptomatic of the fragmentation of modern epistemology which so concerned Jung and Broch; his insistence on always observing reason and routine in his daily life and his consequent rejection of the affectivity which characterizes the crowd

⁸ See Maia, p. 28; Dieter Dissinger, 'Elias Canettis Roman *Die Blendung* und seine Stellung im Werke des Autors' (unpublished doctoral thesis, University of Bristol, 1968), p. 230, cited in Edward A. Thomson, 'Elias Canetti's *Die Blendung* and the Changing Image of Madness', *German Life and Letters*, 26 (1972), 38-47 (p. 41); Manfred Schneider, 'Kritik der Paranoia: Elias Canetti und Karl Kraus', in *Der Überlebende und sein Doppel: Kulturwissenschaftliche Analysen zum Werk Elias Canettis*, ed. by Susanne Lüdemann (Freiburg: Rombach, 2008), pp. 189-213 (p. 198).

both in *Die Blendung* and in the crowd fiction of other authors. In characterizing Kien's hyper-individualism – alienation not from reason but, on the contrary, from emotion and instinct – as a form of madness, Canetti adopts a perspective on insanity also found in the work of twentieth-century psychiatrists such as Eugène Minkowski and R.D. Laing.⁹ More generally, he engages with a long literary tradition in which the representation of madness has served as a comment not only on mental illness, but on the processes of the human mind more generally, and on society and culture.¹⁰

As well as in *Die Fackel im Ohr* and *Die Blendung*, Canetti draws a parallel between madness and extreme individualism in *Masse und Macht*, where he compares crowd leaders such as Muhammed Tughlak – the single, powerful individuals who stand outside and above the crowd – with the paranoid schizophrenic Schreber. Critics have noted similarities between Canetti's analysis of Schreber's illness as a sickness of power over crowds and his characterization of Kien, pointing to the chapter of *Die Blendung* entitled 'Mobilmachung', in which Kien fantasizes that the books in his library are a vast army, styling himself as their commander-in-chief.¹¹ As with Broch, the conceptual similarities between Canetti's fictional and theoretical approaches to the crowd lead one to compare the way ideas are presented in the two texts. Canetti's own remarks (quoted

⁹ Eugène Minkowski, *La Schizophrénie: psychopathologie des schizoïdes et des schizophrènes* (Paris: Brouwer, 1953); R.D. Laing, *The Divided Self* (London: Tavistock, 1960). See Louis A. Sass, *Madness and Modernism: Insanity in the Light of Modern Art, Literature, and Thought* (New York: Basic Books, 1992), p. 4 on the relative originality of this perspective in comparison with the more conventional conception of madness as a loss of, or liberation from, reason.

¹⁰ See Lillian Feder, *Madness in Literature* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1980), pp. xi, 4.

¹¹ See Arnason and Roberts, p. 20; Maia, pp. 28, 35-36, 40-41; Ian Watson, 'Elias Canetti: The One and the Many', *Chicago Review*, 20/21 (1969), 184-200 (pp. 191, 193).

on p. 25) imply that his theoretical work on the subject was epistemologically superior to his fictional treatment of it. He suggests that whereas a literary exploration of the theme could only have given limited insight into the nature of crowds, his theoretical investigation provided him with a more fundamental understanding of the field and thus of fascism. His views on the matter are significant given that apparent inconsistencies between his wider critique of science as a form of power and his own methods in *Masse und Macht* have been a source of considerable discussion. He has been criticized for the authoritarianism of his writing style in the treatise, with some critics claiming that he reproduces the very will to power he professes to unmask. Tom Nairn is particularly scathing. He writes that Canetti constantly expands the definition of ‘crowd’ and greatly restricts that of ‘power’, thus concealing all nuance to suit his argument; suggests that all human groupings illustrate his theory; uses sources not to argue his case but merely to confer an air of authority on it; dismisses thinkers such as Freud in a sentence, rather than arguing with them point by point; and asserts that certain issues are objectively unimportant when really they are only unimportant to him.¹²

This issue takes on further importance with regard to the theme of madness. In the same year that *Masse und Macht* was published, Foucault presented *Histoire de la folie* as his doctoral thesis. Referring to the language of psychiatry as a ‘monologue de la raison sur la folie’ designed to bring madness under control, Foucault stated that he

¹² Tom Nairn, ‘Crowds and Critics’, *New Left Review*, 1: 17 (1962), 24-33 (pp. 24-30). See also Schneider, pp. 206-12; Hansjakob Werlen, ‘Ohnmächtige Hoffnung: die Stimme des Individuums in *Masse und Macht*’, in *Einladung zur Verwandlung: Essays zu Elias Canettis Masse und Macht*, ed. by Michael Krüger (Munich: Hanser, 1995), pp. 151-163.

wanted to write the archaeology of what psychiatric discourse concealed: ‘il ne s’agit point d’une histoire de la connaissance, mais des mouvements rudimentaires d’une expérience. Histoire, non de la psychiatrie, mais de la folie elle-même, dans sa vivacité, avant toute capture par le savoir.’¹³ As Shoshana Felman puts it, Foucault hoped to produce a competing discourse which undid the distinctions between subject and object, inside and outside, reason and madness.¹⁴ In this chapter, the notion of such a discourse informs my analysis of Canetti’s writing in both *Die Blendung* and *Masse und Macht* as he explores through madness the isolation of the individual from the crowd.

The Madness of the Individual

Peter Kien is a man of punctilious habits. He adheres rigidly to a strict daily routine, any interruption to which causes him great distress. Most of his day is devoted to study, and the relatively small amount of time he allots to meals and sleep indicates that the life of the mind is much more important to him than any material consideration. Similarly, his vast personal library, his only passion, has accounted for most of the inheritance that ought to have kept him in material comfort for the rest of his life. The library dominates his living space, which contains very few practical items of furniture, all of them distasteful to Kien for the distraction they provide from his work. As with his routine, he is unable to cope with change in his surroundings. He also rejects all social interaction which might disrupt his studies. As much as possible he avoids contact with other people

¹³ Foucault, pp. ii, vii.

¹⁴ Shoshana Felman, *Writing and Madness: Literature/Philosophy/Psychoanalysis*, trans. by Martha Noel Evans and Barbara Johnson (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2003), p. 42.

and the windows of his library have been blocked out to ensure an environment in which 'kein überflüssiger Mensch' (Canetti, I, 21) can disturb him. As indicated by the adjective 'überflüssig', he sees all unnecessary human interaction as pointless and simple companionship as a worthless diversion.

At first, while Kien appears an unpleasant character, one might plausibly attribute his controlling, reclusive behaviour to certain extreme personality traits: a workaholic nature, an introverted and antisocial disposition, and obsessive tendencies. However, from an early point in the novel it becomes clear that his strangeness is of pathological proportions. During a morning walk, he hears one man asking another for directions. Irritated by the first man's loud voice, Kien is pleased and intrigued to find that the second does not reply, even when the questioner repeats his enquiry several times, becoming more and more irate. Kien is sure that the second man is lost in deep contemplation and thus applauds his silence. Only when the first man grabs Kien's briefcase to get his attention does he realize that he is himself the person being addressed. Another incident indicating the abnormal extent of his withdrawal from the world around him takes place after his marriage to his housekeeper Therese, to whom he only proposes because he mistakenly believes that she shares his reverence for books and will make a suitable guardian for his collection. When she insists on filling the library with practical items of furniture his reaction to the change in his surroundings is bizarre and drastic: he decides to keep his eyes shut when moving around the room in order to avoid seeing the offending items. Over time he trains himself to walk about,

climb ladders and fetch books without needing to open his eyes at all, thus isolating himself from his hostile environment.

In his account of madness in *Die Blendung*, Edward Thomson reads Kien's insanity as a metaphor for his unbending faith in reason at the expense of instinct and emotion. He writes that the principal manifestation of this faith is Kien's scholarship, which provides a parody of positivist epistemology. Kien refuses to accept that there are sometimes philological ambiguities which cannot be explained, he only publicizes the findings of his research when he is satisfied that they are unassailable, and 'Wissenschaft und Wahrheit waren für ihn identische Begriffe' (Canetti, I, 13). Beyond the realm of academia, on the rare occasions when he does take an interest in other people, he observes them coldly, like scientific specimens, in a manner reminiscent of T in *Jugend ohne Gott*. Observing the strain Kien's attitude places on his mental health, Thomson refers to 'the wall he has built across his mind to split one form of awareness from another'.¹⁵ While well taken, the connection he draws between Kien's uncompromising rationalism and his madness can be developed further.

Firstly, there are also links between Kien's positivist outlook and his hyper-individualism. For one, his belief that a scholar must always restrict his intellectual enquiry to his own personal specialism leads him to restrict severely the boundaries of his experience. His rejection of instinct and emotion also obstructs any meaningful interaction with other people. Described as 'Wortkarg und mürrisch von Natur' (Canetti,

¹⁵ Thomson, p. 42.

I, 8), he dislikes women and regards children only as a source of noise. He looks away when he passes anyone on the staircase of his apartment building and feels no interest in the crowds of people around him in the street. He constantly keeps his eyes lowered or 'hoch über sie erhaben' (Canetti, I, 14). Furthermore, there is a connection between the self-imposed limitation of his intellectual curiosity and his isolation from the crowd. He believes that as a scholar the most dangerous thing he can do is engage in conversation with others and that: 'Man näherte sich der Wahrheit, indem man sich von den Menschen abschloß' (Canetti, I, 13). His attitude follows from the advice attributed to the Chinese philosopher Mong-tse that one must beware the crowd: 'Sie handeln und wissen nicht, was sie tun; sie haben ihre Gewohnheiten und wissen nicht, warum; sie wandeln ihr ganzes Leben und kennen doch nicht ihren Weg: so sind sie, die Leute der Masse' (Canetti, I, 96). Kien is particularly troubled by the inconstancy and changeability of the crowd alluded to in the quotation. In his eyes it is made up of liars and actors: 'Der Alltag war ein oberflächliches Gewirr von Lügen. Soviel Passanten, soviel Lügner. Drum sah er sie gar nicht an. Wer unter den schlechten Schauspielern, aus denen die Masse bestand, hatte ein Gesicht, das ihn fesselte?' (Canetti, I, 13). In his scholarly work he is obsessed with pinning down a fixed truth on every matter and it disturbs him that the crowd cannot be similarly defined and controlled. In order to possess the world through knowledge as he desires to, he must make it as small as possible, ultimately limiting it to that which he can master: his individual self.

Secondly, however, it is important to note certain details in *Die Blendung* which reveal how artificial Kien's state of isolation from the crowd is. It is imposed not merely for questionable reasons but also in apparent contradiction of his natural feelings. In the passage quoted above, the description of the people of the crowd as bad actors conveys that they are always pretending to be something they are not. But in the line that follows, Kien's complaint is elaborated with the observation: 'nicht einen Tag lang verharrten sie bei derselben Rolle' (Canetti, I, 13). The implication of this statement is quite different: what he dislikes is not so much that people act, but that they are *bad* actors, unable to assume one permanent guise. In contrast, he, who is so unchanging in his habits, is the best actor of all and the most unnatural in his behaviour.

This impression is confirmed on several occasions in the narrative when Kien betrays emotional, communicative impulses only to stifle them again. One example is the conversation he begins with Franz Metzger, a boy who lives in his apartment building, at the beginning of the novel. He initially speaks to the child out of pity, although he has no intention of having a long conversation. However, pleased with Franz's interest in and respect for books, and his seriousness in comparison with other children, Kien impulsively invites him to visit and to see his library. Yet as soon as he has made the offer he begins to withdraw, putting Franz off by telling him not to come for at least a week. Then he reproaches himself for having entered into conversation without good reason. When Franz eventually does come to visit, Kien orders Therese to send the boy away.

Later on the day of his encounter with Franz Metzger, Kien comes across a street crowd gathered around a blind beggar. When a boy drops a heavy button into the blind man's cap, tricking him into thinking he has been given a substantial sum, Kien is deeply affected: 'Kien gab es einen Stich ins Herz' (Canetti, I, 20). As in his interaction with Franz, he responds impulsively, in this case hitting the boy around the head with his briefcase, driven by the sympathy that also unites the gathered crowd. However, a moment afterwards, realizing that the briefcase he has used as his weapon contains some of his precious books, he is horrified that he could have been so careless with it. He then throws all his change into the blind man's cap, but only 'Um auf die gewöhnliche, viel tiefere Ebene des Mitleids zurückzugelangen' (Canetti, I, 20), a remark which implies that the relatively commonplace act of giving money to a beggar requires much less profound feelings of sympathy and kindness than Kien's initial impulsive gesture. It is even indicated that he may be capable of greater sympathy towards others than the average crowd member. In response to his donation, we learn, 'Die Umstehenden nickten laut; er kam sich jetzt vorsichtiger und kleinlicher vor' (Canetti, I, 20). The binary structure of the sentence emphasizes the contrast between the banal pity of the crowd for the blind man and the higher sentiments experienced by Kien. But the episode as a whole also illustrates his tendency to suppress such emotion. The repeated struggles of this kind which take place within Kien as he buries his crowd instincts give rise to madness and eventually to the auto-da-fé in which he burns alive with his books. His case seems to confirm the conclusion reached by his psychiatrist brother Georges that

‘Zahllose Menschen werden verrückt, weil die Masse in ihnen besonders stark ist und keine Befriedigung findet’ (Canetti, I, 450). According to Georges’s theory, inflexible rational individualism not only does not protect against madness but is actually a cause of it.

With regard to the relationship of the individual to the crowd, there are strong links between *Die Blendung* and other 1930s crowd narratives. Compare, for example, Kien’s flawed belief in the equivalence of ‘Wissenschaft’ and ‘Wahrheit’ with Horváth’s distinction between the empirical knowledge of ‘Wirklichkeit’ and the intuitive, communal insight of ‘Wahrheit’. In *Jugend ohne Gott* T is associated with the cool, distanced observation of ‘Wirklichkeit’. Similarly, in his study of other people Kien knows no ‘Neugier’, only ‘Wißbegier’ (Canetti, I, 14). And just as T’s nihilistic individuality contrasts with Adlerian notions of moral community, Kien’s suppression of his moral feelings sets him apart from the crowd. There is also a parallel between the unstable relationship of reason to madness in *Die Blendung* and the equation of scientific knowledge with power in *Der Augenzeuge*. Weiss’s narrator regards the instincts of the ‘Unterseele’ which implicate him in the mass phenomena he describes as antithetical to his professional objectivity. Yet the rush of power he feels in his role as a doctor is very similar to the sense of irrational intoxication he experiences in H’s crowd. Finally, Kien’s eschewal of instinct and emotion provokes comparison with *Die Verzauberung*. In Broch’s text the eradication of irrationalism from modern life is seen as part of a process of progressive individuation, while the mass hysteria of Marius’s crowd

overcompensates for that process. Kien's death by fire, the ultimate crowd symbol, at the end of *Die Blendung* is likewise a form of affective overcompensation for his hyper-individualist rationality and restraint, hence Mack's interpretation of the novel as the story of his transformation from atomized individual to proto-fascist crowd madman.

Kien and Schreber

Long before Kien's violent surrender to his subdued crowd instincts at the end of the novel he suffers a more obvious crowd delusion, in which he holds a position of power over the crowd. When Therese claims several of the rooms in his library as her rightful share of their marital home, he plans and addresses a speech to his books, in which he calls on them to resist the threat she poses. While the books are only a symbolic crowd, in many ways the scene is structurally similar to the real crowd episodes in other texts, during which authoritarian leaders assert themselves over masses of followers.

Kien's use of a range of military terms in his speech identifies the books as an army. He refers to the 'Generalmusterung' (Canetti, I, 96) he has performed in order to ascertain whether Therese has already caused any damage to the library, and when speaking of her he mentions the 'Pläne unserer Feinde' (Canetti, I, 96) and the 'Verschiebungen' (Canetti, I, 97) she intends. He also tells the books: '[der Feind] glaubt, wir würden es nicht wagen, seine Eroberungen im besetzten Gebiet rückgängig zu machen' (Canetti, I, 97). The part of the library in which Therese lives becomes the area 'der vom Feind okkupiert ist' (Canetti, I, 96), and, in explaining the need to rise up against her, Kien speaks of the 'Kriegszustand' (Canetti, I, 97) and refers to the struggle

as a 'Heiliger Krieg!' (Canetti, I, 98). He notes that so far the books – 'Kameraden' (Canetti, I, 97) – have suffered 'keinerlei Verluste' and remain an 'unverletzte, geschlossene Körperschaft' (Canetti, I, 96). In turn, he styles himself as the commander-in-chief of the army – 'Das Kommando ist zentralisiert. Ich bin oberster Kriegsherr, einziger Führer und Offizier' – referring to the books as 'seine Leute' (Canetti, I, 98).

In giving his speech he becomes an orator much like Cipolla or AH, and he thrives on the rush of power he gets from the response of the crowd: 'Der Beifall wollte kein Ende nehmen. Es war ihm, als sauge er ihn mit Augen, Ohren, Nase und Zunge, mit seiner ganzen feuchten summenden Haut auf. Einer solchen Brandrede hätte er sich nicht für fähig gehalten' (Canetti, I, 98). The depiction of the crowd of books as an army also calls to mind Freud's analysis of armies in 'Massenpsychologie und Ich-Analyse'. However, whereas Freud characterizes the army as an undifferentiated mass whose members are united by their mutual adoration for their commander-in-chief, Kien's books soon turn on him. During the initial part of his speech they retain their individual identities – 'Einzelne aus der Masse erkannte er an ihren Worten' (Canetti, I, 98) – but they revolt when he orders 'Die Demokratisierung des Heeres', which is to be effected by turning the spines of all the books against the wall: 'Diese Maßnahme steigert unser Zusammengehörigkeitsgefühl' (Canetti, I, 99). Although the majority of the books do not protest, there is resistance from some who do not wish to be assimilated into the crowd. Not wanting to sacrifice their individuality, they accuse Kien of belittling them in order to increase his own sense of power: 'Er sei immer bescheiden gewesen, drum

erniedrigte er sie, um sich zu erhöhen' (Canetti, I, 100-01). In a comical exchange, the works of German philosophers raise their voices in protest, each asserting its individual will with recognizable reference to its author's thought:

Schopenhauer bekundete seinen Willen zum Leben. Nachträglich gelüstete es ihn nach dieser Schlechtesten aller Welten. Jedenfalls weigerte er sich, Schulter an Schulter mit einem *Hegel* zu kämpfen. *Schelling* holte seine alten Beschuldigungen hervor und bewies die Identität der Hegelschen Lehre mit der seinigen, die älter sei. *Fichte* rief heroisch "Ich!" *Immanuel Kant* trat kategorischer als bei Lebzeiten für einen Ewigen Frieden ein. *Nietzsche* deklamierte, was er alles sei, Dionysus, Anti-Wagner, Antichrist und Heiland. Andere drängten sich dazwischen und mißbrauchten diesen Augenblick, gerade diesen Augenblick dazu, um ihre Verkanntheit hervorzuheben. (Canetti, I, 100)

As the last sentence of the passage anticipates, their response brings out the despot in Kien. While at first he is sorry to have to do such a thing to his old friends – '[es] tat ihm leid, daß er sie in die Namenlosigkeit eines kriegsbereiten Heeres verstoßen mußte' (Canetti, I, 99) – he shouts them down, telling them that they do not deserve him, and turns their spines to the wall all the same.

As mentioned above (p. 230), Kien's role as a symbolic crowd leader has provoked comparisons with Canetti's portrayal of the paranoid schizophrenic Schreber, whose *Denkwürdigkeiten eines Nervenkranken* describes the manifestations of his illness over a period of thirteen years. Schreber recounts delusions and hallucinations covering a vast range of psychic abnormalities, though Canetti's interpretation of the case in *Masse und Macht* focuses on identifying crowd symbols in his fantasies. The central idea in Schreber's delusional system is that the human soul is contained in the nerves of the body and that after death God approaches corpses, extracting their nerves by the

power of divine rays. The rays awaken the souls of the dead to heavenly life (a state referred to as 'Seligkeit') in which, after a time, they lose their self-awareness, retaining only the consciousness of being part of God. The accumulation of souls around God is referred to as the 'Vorhöfe des Himmels'. While this is the natural order of things, Schreber reports that his illness is connected to a change in the structure of the universe, whereby his psychiatrist Professor Flechsig has somehow managed to draw the souls away from God and focus them instead on Schreber. This change has endangered both God and the existence of the state of Seligkeit.¹⁶ Responding to Schreber's description of the souls' attraction to him, Canetti writes: 'Man könnte sagen, daß er sie als Masse um sich versammelt, und da es sich – wie er betont – um die Gesamtheit aller Seelen handelt, stellen sie die größte überhaupt denkbare Masse vor' (Canetti, III, 522). Moreover, he regards Schreber's fantasy of power over crowds as a model of political despotism akin to the mass politics of fascism.

Canetti's interpretation of the Schreber case was in part a response to Freud's 'Psychoanalytische Bemerkungen zu einem autobiographisch beschriebenen Fall von Paranoia (Dementia Paranoides)' (1911). Freud's essay focusses on sexual manifestations of Schreber's illness, attributing his symptoms to an outburst of previously repressed homosexuality. In keeping with Canetti's hostility to psychoanalysis, although Freud is not mentioned by name in the German text of *Masse*

¹⁶ Daniel Paul Schreber, *Denkwürdigkeiten eines Nervenkranken* (Frankfurt am Main: Syndikat, 1985), pp. 11-27. Further references to this edition are given after quotations in the text.

und Macht, his conclusions about Schreber are comprehensively dismissed in a footnote to the English translation:

I was, of course, aware of Freud's paper on the subject and knew of the general conclusions he had reached, but my close acquaintance with the *Denkwürdigkeiten* inclined me to believe that these conclusions were too narrow and, indeed, misleading and I therefore decided to complete my study independently, *before* reading Freud's. When I read it afterwards, I found no reason to regret having made the decision.¹⁷

Nairn discerns a lack of rigour in Canetti's reaction to Freud, claiming that rather than engaging with the detail of his essay he 'demolishes Freud from a distance, with the resounding assertion that 'At the core of it all is the lust for power'.¹⁸ In fairness to Canetti, early in his account of Schreber's illness he does concede that the richness of the *Denkwürdigkeiten* could plausibly give rise to multiple interpretations. However, his treatment of the text does not always tally with this concession.

Opening with the observation that Schreber was an educated, intelligent man whose profession had taught him how to express himself clearly, Canetti writes:

Die sprachlichen Mittel, die ihm zu Gebote stehen, sind für die Darstellung eines so eigentümlichen gedanklichen Gebildes wie geschaffen; er erfaßt damit gerade so viel, daß nichts Wesentliches im Dunkeln bleibt. Er plädiert und ist zum Glück kein Dichter: so kann man ihm überallhin folgen und ist doch vor ihm geschützt. (Canetti, III, 516)

In Canetti's eyes, then, Schreber's memoir is such a valuable document of insanity because it provides readers with real insight into the nature of his psychological experiences without allowing them to become lost in the madness as a poetic account

¹⁷ Elias Canetti, *Crowds and Power*, trans. by Carol Stewart (London: Phoenix, 1962), p. 481.

¹⁸ Nairn, p. 30.

might do. Yet, for all the lucidity of the *Denkwürdigkeiten*, Schreber presents his manifold delusions without attempting to classify them in a rationally comprehensible system. He aims to give his readers as close an understanding of his world as possible but concedes that insanity in its very nature cannot be understood completely:

ich [werde] versuchen, anderen Menschen von den übersinnlichen Dingen, deren Erkenntniß sich mir seit nahezu sechs Jahren erschlossen hat, eine wenigstens einigermaßen verständliche Darlegung zu geben. Auf *volles* Verständniß kann ich von vornherein nicht rechnen, da es sich dabei zum Theil um Dinge handelt, die sich in menschlicher Sprache überhaupt nicht ausdrücken lassen, weil sie über das menschliche Begriffsvermögen hinausgehen. (Schreber, 8)

Canetti on the other hand does propose a systematic, rationally graspable interpretation of Schreber's illness (to use Foucault's concept, a discourse of reason about madness) as a disease of individual power over crowds. What is more, despite his suggestion that *Masse und Macht* was epistemologically superior to his literary work, in doing what he accuses Freud of and providing a single, narrow explanation of his own for Schreber's paranoia, he imaginatively interprets the case to fit his theory.

Again, in order to do justice to Canetti one must acknowledge that he quotes and paraphrases extensively from Schreber's memoir, but it is also important to recognize how he proceeds from the source text to draw his own conclusions about it. Writing of one of his delusions, namely the belief that he was at the centre of a universe of celestial bodies, Schreber reports:

Dabei wurden mir in sehr vielen Fällen die Sterne oder Sternbilder genannt, von denen sie [the souls] ausgingen oder 'unter denen sie hingen', Namen, die zum Teil mit den üblichen astronomischen Bezeichnungen übereinstimmten, zum Theil aber auch nicht. So wurden besonders häufig genannt die Cassiopeja, die Wega, die Capella, auch ein Stern 'Gemma' (von dem ich nicht weiß, ob er einer

astronomischen Beziehung entspricht), ferner die ‘Crucianer’ (vielleicht das südliche Kreuz?) das ‘Firmament’ u.a.m. (Schreber, 52)

The corresponding section of *Masse und Macht* provides a good example of Canetti’s argumentative technique, demonstrating how he first interweaves details from the *Denkwürdigkeiten* into a narrative of his own before advancing an interpretation based on his own text and then proceeding to more general conclusions about the nature of paranoia. He writes of Schreber:

Im Weltraum ist er nicht weniger zu Hause als in der Ewigkeit. Manche Sternbilder und einzelne Sterne: Kassiopeia, Wega, Capella, die Plejaden haben es ihm besonders angetan. Er spricht von ihnen, als wären es Autobusstationen gleich um die Ecke. Dabei ist er sich ihrer wirklichen Entfernungen von der Erde sehr wohl bewußt. Er hat astronomische Kenntnisse und verkleinert die Welt nicht. Es ist im Gegenteil so, daß ihn die Weltkörper gerade deswegen anziehen, weil sie so entfernt sind. Die Größe des Raumes lockt ihn; er will so weit sein wie dieser und sich ganz über ihn erstrecken. (Canetti, III, 517)

He includes some of the detail from Schreber’s report but clearly puts his own stamp on it. He adds (at some points rather exuberant) descriptive colour to his narrative (‘haben es ihm besonders abgetan’, ‘Er spricht von ihnen, als wären es Autobusstationen’), interpretative statements (‘Im Weltraum ist er nicht weniger zu Hause als in der Ewigkeit’, ‘Er hat astronomische Kenntnisse und verkleinert die Welt nicht’) and ideas not obviously connected with anything Schreber writes (‘Es ist im Gegenteil so [...] erstrecken’). The function of these ideas soon becomes clear: they contribute to a portrayal of Schreber’s paranoia which fits Canetti’s conception of it as a sickness of power. He goes on to speculate that the reason Schreber wishes to stretch himself out across the universe is because he wants to assert the dominance of his position within it:

‘Die *Position* als solche ist das Wichtige, und sie kann nicht groß und ewig genug sein’ (Canetti, III, 517). Finally he moves from his conclusion about Schreber’s individual case to a general statement about the nature of paranoia and, by analogy, the essence of power:

Dieses *Positionsgefühl* des Paranoikers ist von wesentlicher Bedeutung: Immer geht es darum, eine exaltierte Stellung zu verteidigen und zu sichern. Auch beim Machthaber kann es, der Natur der Macht nach, nicht anders sein: Das subjective Gefühl, das er für seine Position hat, unterscheidet sich in nichts von der des Paranoikers. (Canetti, III, 517)

Not only does Canetti extrapolate from the individual to the general, but certain components of this statement (‘Immer’, ‘[es kann] nicht anders sein’, ‘unterscheidet sich in nichts’) give the impression that his analysis is beyond contradiction. In spite of the imaginativeness of his portrayal of Schreber, his use of language bears out Mack’s observation that he ‘cuts out everything that could arouse the suspicion of subjectivity’.¹⁹

Canetti adopts a similarly imaginative and yet unequivocal approach to the analysis of crowd elements in Schreber’s madness. Addressing Schreber’s professed ability to communicate with all the souls in the universe, he asserts: ‘Das Massenhafte dieser Vorgänge für Schreber ist evident’ (Canetti, III, 522). Yet it has not proved to be so for all commentators on *Masse und Macht*, and with good reason. Although Schreber himself uses the word ‘Masse’ a handful of times, he does so not to describe the accumulation of souls around himself, but around God. The souls that gather around him

¹⁹ See Mack, *Anthropology as Memory*, pp. 47-48 for a more extensive analysis of Canetti’s universalizing language in *Masse und Macht*.

are described as having become detached from that crowd. For example, at one point he writes of ‘Das “Hülfe”-rufen der von der Gesamtmasse weiter losgelösten Gottesnerven, das um so kläglicher klingt, in je größerer Entfernung sich Gott von mir zurückgezogen hat’ (Schreber, 142). In any case, Canetti also exaggerates the importance of the crowd of souls around God. He writes: ‘Die Verschmelzung der Seelen zu einer *Masse* wird hier als höchste aller Seligkeiten gesetzt’ (Canetti, III, 518). The sentence is misleading because it implies that the state of Seligkeit in Schreber’s fantasies is defined by the organization of the souls in a crowd, when Schreber himself focuses on quite different and unrelated factors. He reports that it is based on complete idleness and pleasure, the contemplation of God, and the souls’ indulgence in recollections of their human past. The crowd-like state may be part of Seligkeit, but for Schreber it is not integral.

Regarding his own relationship to the souls, Schreber admittedly uses the adverb ‘massenhaft’ (Schreber, 91) on one occasion, but he does so only to indicate that the souls penetrate his body in great numbers, not that they behave especially like a crowd. If anything, his description of their behaviour undermines such a reading. He notes that they all talk to him at the same time, but that no one soul is aware of the others. As for his alleged desire to rule over the crowd, he in fact states repeatedly that he does not want the souls to be attracted to him. Instead, when they are drawn to him he tries to dissolve them, in the hope that this will counteract the danger posed to God. At one point he refers to them as leading a ‘Vernichtungskampf’ (Schreber, 171) against him

and seems more at their mercy than they are at his. At another he describes his awe of them, stating his wish to save them and thus restore the universe to its proper order. These points contradict Canetti's characterization of Schreber in his paranoia as a crowd leader. The latter example especially undermines his claim that Schreber takes pleasure in the harm done to humanity by the souls' attraction to him and that his pleasure betrays his desire for power: 'Man hat nicht den Eindruck, daß diese Katastrophen sehr gegen den Willen Schrebers über die Menschheit hereingebrochen sind. [...] Schreber bleibt als der einzige Überlebende zurück, weil er es selber so will' (Canetti, III, 526). On the contrary, Schreber wants to be cured of his illness, and far from seeking to draw the crowd of souls to him, he believes that they are directed against him by Professor Flechsig. He describes Flechsig, rather than himself, as a leader: 'Professor Flechsig [hatte], inmittelst verstanden, sich mit seiner ganzen Seele oder einem Theile derselben zum Himmel aufschwingen und sich damit selbst [...] zum Strahlenführer zu machen' (Schreber, 43). In short, the relationship between Schreber and the souls as it is presented in the *Denkwürdigkeiten* is by no means identical to the model of paranoia as a disease of power over crowds put forward by Canetti in *Masse und Macht*.

While the criticism is very strongly stated, there is perhaps some truth to Manfred Schneider's claim that just as Schreber has his delusional worldview, Canetti suffers from a monomaniacal obsession with crowds and power. In his description of the mentality of paranoiacs in *Masse und Macht* Canetti highlights a constant need for explanation which is satisfied by leading everything back to familiar causes:

Es geschieht nichts ohne Grund, man muß nur danach fragen. Man findet immer einen Grund. Jedes Unbekannte wird auf ein Bekanntes zurückgeführt. Das Fremdartige, das an einen herantritt, wird als geheimes Eigentum entlarvt. Hinter der Maske des Neuen steckt immer ein Altes, man muß sie nur ohne jede Scheu durchschauen und herunterreißen. Das *Begründen* wird zur Passion, die man an allem übt. (Canetti, III, 537)

In Schneider's eyes, Canetti himself projects the explanation of crowds and power onto Schreber's illness in order to render it familiar and thus take possession of ('sich bemächtigen') it.²⁰ His assessment recalls both Foucault, who describes psychiatric discourse about madness as 'répression aveugle dans un régime absolutiste', and Kien's need in *Die Blendung* to reduce the world to what he can control.²¹ In contrast, if in *Masse und Macht* Canetti's attempt to articulate a rational discourse about Schreber's madness leads him to replicate the controlling tendency he identifies in the paranoid mind, in *Die Blendung* there is a clear distinction between Kien's outlook and the narrative perspective on his insanity. Kien resents the people of the crowd because in their inconstancy he cannot submit them to the control of his reason. In contrast, rather than try to rationalize Kien's madness from a transcendental viewpoint, Canetti alternates his narrative technique between direct speech, free indirect discourse and the presentation of Kien's delusions from a third person perspective which treats them as real. In other words, he represents Kien's madness either through the eyes of the experiencing subject or at least from an external standpoint which accepts his fantasies at face value. The majority of the 'Mobilmachung' scene is composed of Kien's speech

²⁰ Schneider, p. 210.

²¹ Foucault, p. viii.

to the crowd, which passes without narrative comment. Nor is there any challenge to his perception of events, such as his pleasure when he hears his books applaud, or his annoyance when they resist his authority. These events are told not as imagined occurrences, but as if they are really happening.

Canetti's use of narrative perspective to break down the distinction between reason and madness can be further illustrated with reference to two specific delusions. Towards the end of the first part of the novel, after recovering from a brutal beating Theresa has given him, Kien avoids further interaction with her by convincing himself he has developed the ability to petrify his body like an Egyptian statue:

Er preßte die dünnen Beine eng aneinander. Seine Rechte legte sich zur Faust geballt aufs Knie. Unterarm und Oberschenkel hielten einander in Ruhe. Mit dem linken Arm verstärkte er seine Brust. Leicht hob sich der Kopf. Seine Augen blickten ins Weite. Er versuchte sie zu schließen. An ihrer Weigerung erkannte er sich als ägyptischen Priester von Granit. (Canetti, I, 171)

Each morning he sits down at his desk to perform the petrification process, tracing the cold of the stone as it spreads through his body. In the evening he warms himself up again. While the narration of the quoted passage is in the third person, there is no sense that the narrative voice is questioning Kien's version of events. As in the 'Mobilmachung' crowd scene, it narrates what he thinks is happening as if it really were taking place. The distance between Kien's point of view and the narrator's is then further reduced by the introduction of free indirect discourse: 'Therese behandelte ihn wie Luft, wie Stein verbesserte er. [...] Vor Stein wird sie sich hüten. Wer wäre so dumm, sich an Stein die Hand zu verletzen? [...] Stein ist gut, Steinkanten sind besser'

(Canetti, I, 171). With the change from the past to the present tense, the reader no longer experiences the petrification delusion from an accepting external viewpoint, but instead empathetically, from Kien's own perspective.

The second example is Kien's fantasy that he carries a library around with him in his head. This delusion begins as a mere metaphor for his photographic memory, but he comes to understand it ever more literally. After having been thrown out of his apartment by Therese, he goes from bookshop to bookshop, asking for long lists of titles, convinced that in this way he is literally expanding the library in his mind. Every evening after leaving the last bookshop he immediately takes a room in a hotel because carrying all the books around in his head has tired him out: '[er] benützte den Lift, weil ihn die Bibliothek im Kopf, abends, bei seiner Müdigkeit, schwer drückte' (Canetti, I, 184). When he gets to his room he unloads the books, demanding wrapping paper from the hotel staff, which he lays out on the floor to protect them. Owing to his many new acquisitions, it soon becomes necessary to make large piles of books and he asks for a ladder too. Again these events are narrated as if they take place just as Kien sees them. The identification of the reader's experience with his is only broken by the introduction of a non-implicit outside perspective – that of the maid who brings the ladder. She remarks: 'Unheimlich ist er [...]. Erst hat er ein Packpapier wollen und jetzt will er eine Leiter. Das ganze Zimmer liegt voll Packpapier' (Canetti, I, 185). She does not see the masses of imaginary books, only the paper, and her interjection reveals how differently Kien's world looks from within and without.

In response to Foucault's distinction between experiencing madness through the eyes of the madman and through those of the psychiatrist, Derrida suggests that the interiority which literature is capable of evoking may offer the closest possible approximation of the insane mind.²² Whereas Canetti's account of the Schreber case in *Masse und Macht* is very much that of an external observer organizing Schreber's delusions in his own rational system, his manipulation of the narrative perspective on Kien's madness in *Die Blendung* certainly achieves a sense of immediacy closer to that which he praised in the *Denkwürdigkeiten* when he wrote of Schreber: '[man] kann ihm überallhin folgen.' His portrayal of Kien produces an empathetic 'Verwandlung' of the sort he believed could, like the crowd, overcome the struggle for power inherent in the relationships between individuals, and which he saw as the primary task of the author. Incidentally, the manner in which he presents Kien's delusions to the reader also mirrors the method practised by Georges in the asylum he runs. Whereas Georges's predecessor as director of the asylum represents the traditional practice of psychiatry as the systematization of the irrational, Georges himself adopts the opposite approach, throwing himself into his patients' worlds and playing along with their fantasies: 'so lebte er in einer Unzahl von Welten zugleich' (Canetti, I, 435). This kind of empathy is lost, in contrast, in Canetti's analysis of Schreber's memoir, as he projects his theory onto the object of study. In this respect, if his narrative technique in *Die Blendung*

²² Jacques Derrida, *L'Écriture et la différence* (Paris: Seuil, 1967), p. 84: 'tout philosophe ou tout sujet parlant [...] devant évoquer la folie à l'intérieur de la pensée [...] ne peut le faire que dans la dimension de la possibilité et dans le langage de la fiction ou dans la fiction du langage.'

reflects Georges Kien's empathetic psychiatric practice, in *Masse und Macht* he is more like the narrator of *Der Augenzeuge* in his treatment of AH.

Of course, evocative as Canetti's representation of Kien's madness may be, and even allowing for the fact that his equation of insanity with hyper-individualism may have a basis in medical reality, as suggested by the comparison with Minkowski and Laing, this assessment does not account for the important difference between the madman of literature and his real-life counterpart. As Lillian Feder stresses, imaginative representations of madness are consciously structured to convey particular insights and must thus be analysed not only for their reflection of real-life madness, but as aesthetic creations.²³ In contrast with Schreber's memoir but as in *Masse und Macht*, there is nothing random about Kien's insanity. The reader is not simply abandoned to empathize indulgently with his madness. Although the message the novel communicates is not imposed with the same unequivocal force as in *Masse und Macht*, Kien's fantasies are shaped just as Schreber's are to reflect his hyper-individualism. His belief in his ability to petrify himself reflects his excessive cerebralism, his obsession with preserving the integrity of his body and personal space, and his withdrawal from the outside world. The fantasy of the library in his head reflects his sterile intellectualism and represents a heightening of his previous isolation: where at the beginning of the novel he shuts himself off from other people in his real library, he later retreats completely into the realm of his own mind. And the symbolic significance of Kien's madness is made even

²³ Feder, p. 9.

more explicit in the ‘Mobilmachung’ crowd scene, in which Canetti expands his portrayal of hyper-individualism as madness to indicate that its natural consequence is a will for power over crowds.

There are various schools of thought on the figurative use of illness in literature. In *Illness as Metaphor* (1978) Sontag criticizes metaphorical understanding of disease, which she believes encourages us to blame individuals for their own suffering. Feder on the other hand argues that the stylization of madness in literature is perfectly acceptable, for ‘[the madman of literature] is rooted in a mythical or literary tradition in which distortion is a generally accepted mode of expression’.²⁴ That is to say, when we read a literary account of madness we know not to treat it as pure fact. This is an important argument for my comparison of *Die Blendung* with *Masse und Macht*. For although both texts ultimately convey the same message about individualism, power and crowds, albeit in very different ways, the novel endows insanity with symbolic significance in a context where, following Feder, it is ethically acceptable to do so. The treatise, on the other hand, connects paranoia and crowd leadership while making claims to scientific truth and epistemological superiority over fiction. Yet, not only does Canetti shape his reading of Schreber’s memoir imaginatively in order to heighten the elements of crowds and power within it as I have discussed, but certain aspects of his reading of the *Denkwürdigkeiten* are more reminiscent of Kien than of Schreber himself.

²⁴ Feder, p. 9.

I have previously pointed out, for instance, that Canetti's reading of the crowd elements in Schreber's delusional world focuses as much on the role of God as on that played by Schreber himself. Further to this, Canetti's portrayal of Schreber's God is notably similar to his characterization of Kien. Specifically, the attitude towards humanity which Canetti ascribes to the God of the *Denkwürdigkeiten* echoes Kien's reaction to his fellow men. He writes:

Gott *darf* den Menschen gar nicht zu nahe kommen, denn die Nerven der Lebenden haben eine derartige Anziehungskraft für ihn, daß er von ihnen nicht mehr loskommen könnte und in seiner eigenen Existenz bedroht wäre. Er ist also immer auf der Hut vor den Lebenden, und wenn es doch einmal geschieht, daß er sich durch ein inbrünstiges Gebet oder durch einen Dichter in die Nähe locken läßt, so zieht er sich schleunigst wieder zurück, bevor es zu spät ist. (Canetti, III, 518)

Much of the substance of this summary is also contained in the source text. Schreber, too, states that under certain circumstances, such as when a particularly fervent prayer is made to him, God may come into closer contact with humanity than he normally would, although this does not happen often because the nerves of the living exert too great an attraction on him and thus pose a threat to his existence. However, the last line of Canetti's account ('so zieht er sich schleunigst wieder zurück, bevor es zu spät ist') is an addition not found in the memoir and describes Schreber's God less accurately than it does Kien's occasional impulses of sympathy and interest towards other people, and his habit of recoiling from them immediately afterwards.

From the many aspects of his state of mind Schreber describes, one of the examples on which Canetti chooses to focus is what he calls 'die Übung seiner *eigenen*

Allwissenheit' (Canetti, III, 536). He observes that during periods of incarceration Schreber liked to test his memory by learning poems off by heart, counting in French, and reciting lists of Russian governorates and French departments. Canetti discerns in this behaviour a desire to possess the world through knowledge, but here, again, he imposes an interpretation on Schreber which does not accurately correspond to the memoir. Schreber does report that he would pass time in the asylum by reciting poetry and various lists from memory, and reviewing his knowledge of foreign languages. However, what Canetti calls the desire for 'Allwissenheit' is explained much less dramatically by Schreber: 'Noth macht erfinderisch und so habe ich den im Laufe der betreffenden Jahre zu allen möglichen Auskunftsmitteln gegriffen, um nur in irgend erträglicher Weise die Zeit zu verbringen' (Schreber, 139). Rather than the manifestation of a craving for power, Schreber's various activities are, in his own perfectly convincing explanation, simply a way to keep boredom at bay. Kien, in contrast, *does* fixate on his impressive powers of memory, of which he is extremely proud and which aid him in his quest for knowledge and control.

A still more striking similarity between Schreber's madness and Kien's lies in the comparison of Kien's petrification delusion with a period during Schreber's confinement when he would remain immobile for hours on end. Just as Kien's belief in his ability to petrify himself arises from concern for the integrity of his physical person, Canetti maintains that all Schreber's fantasies are connected to the penetration of his body: 'Von diesen Erscheinungen dürfte vielleicht eines, das sie alle gemeinsam haben,

festzuhalten sein: Es geht um eine *Durchdringung* seines Körpers' (Canetti, III, 548). In the case of his immobility, Schreber remembers having for a time spent most of his days sitting motionless in a desk chair, moving only when forced to take walks in the morning and evening. This period saw a change in his strategy towards the souls: he treated his immobilization as a religious obligation, in the hope that if he remained completely still he would destroy fewer of the souls which were attracted to him and thus reduce his negative impact on God and the state of Seligkeit. Canetti describes Schreber's immobilization as '*Erstarrung*' (Canetti, III, 545, emphasis in original) – the same term he uses to describe Kien's petrification. Like Schreber, Kien too takes morning and evening walks, spending the days in between motionless at his desk. Just as Kien thinks of himself in his petrified state as an ancient Egyptian statue, in describing Schreber's immobilization Canetti writes: 'Um Schreber zu verstehen, muß man schon an die Mumien der Ägypter denken, bei denen die Persönlichkeit der Leiche erhalten, gepflegt und bewundert wird' (Canetti, III, 546). However, '*Erstarrung*' is very much Canetti's term, not Schreber's. Schreber uses '*Regungslosigkeit*' (Schreber, 100) instead. Likewise, the mummy metaphor is not Schreber's, but part of Canetti's interpretation of his illness. Schreber actually thinks of himself as a corpse. Canetti ostensibly employs the metaphor to make Schreber's report more easily understandable to the reader. He explains: 'Gott zuliebe hat Schreber sich monatelang als Mumie, nicht als Leiche verhalten; sein eigener Ausdruck in diesem Falle ist nicht ganz treffend' (Canetti, III, 546). Yet the change does not simply elucidate Schreber's account. It casts his behaviour

in a subtly different light so that it conforms to Canetti's claim that all paranoiacs are obsessed with preserving the impenetrability of their bodies. Schreber's description of himself as a corpse in fact makes perfect sense within the confines of his own delusional system, according to which contact with corpses does not pose the same danger to God as interaction with living beings. In referring to his immobilization as 'Erstarrung' and employing the mummy metaphor Canetti renders Schreber more like Kien's than he really is.

Finally, further to the association addressed above between Canetti's description of Schreber and his characterization of Kien in the 'Mobilmachung' chapter of *Die Blendung*, there are other likenesses to be noted between Schreber and Kien as crowd leaders. Taking a similar view to Schneider, Ritchie Robertson finds Canetti's insistence on Schreber's fascination with crowds the least persuasive element of his account. While he accepts that Schreber thought he was surrounded by vast numbers of souls and that those souls merged into a single mass as they lost their individual consciousness after death, he maintains that what Canetti portrays as 'the merging of all souls into a single crowd' is actually the opposite of a crowd phenomenon: the mass of souls becomes a single unit.²⁵ However, the reduction of the crowd from an agglomeration of individuals to a single unit is precisely what happens when Kien democratizes his army of books, turning their spines to the wall and stripping them of their individual identities. Lastly, Canetti draws an analogy between Schreber, surrounded by celestial bodies, and a

²⁵ Robertson, p. 121.

threatened crowd leader who surrounds himself with soldiers: ‘Wer es vermag, umgibt sich mit Soldaten und schließt die Festungen ein. Schreber, der sich auf vielfache Weise bedroht fühlt, halt sich an den Sternen fest’ (Canetti, III, 517). The chosen comparison once again recalls Kien, who, when threatened by Therese’s encroachment into his library, calls on his army of books to defend his territory against the enemy.

In *Masse und Macht* Canetti likens Schreber’s illness to the political despotism of fascist mass politics, writing: ‘Sein Wahn, in der Verkleidung einer veralteten Weltauffassung, die eine Existenz von Geistern voraussetzt, ist in Wirklichkeit das genaue Modell der *politischen* Macht, die sich von der Masse nährt und aus ihr zusammensetzt’ (Canetti, III, 523). He also adds: ‘Man wird nicht leugnen können, daß sein politisches System es einige Jahrzehnte später zu hohen Ehren gebracht hat’ (Canetti, III, 531). Here, again, his emphatic use of language (‘genaue Modell’, ‘Man wird nicht leugnen können’) gives the impression that he is dealing with undeniable truths. Yet, taking stock of the imaginative dimension of *Masse und Macht*, one suspects that his statements about the authority of his treatise in comparison with his literary writing were, like Broch’s, essentially strategic. As in the case of Broch’s *Die Verzauberung* and *Massenwahntheorie*, traces of Kien in Canetti’s portrayal of Schreber provoke one to ask whether his novel influenced the development of his theory. While Canetti was moved by the urgency of the political context to couch his ideas about crowds and power in the form of scientific truth, he did not quite make the break from imagination he claimed.

CONCLUSION

As both an aspect of and a symbol for fascist society, then, the crowd plays a number of roles in 1930s German narrative fiction. The bustling cafés and tourist-thronged beaches of Torre di Venere in Mann's *Mario und der Zauberer*, and the football spectators and packed courtroom gallery in Horváth's *Jugend ohne Gott* are features of an incipiently fascist mass society. In Weiss's *Der Augenzeuge* mass rallies are central to H's political campaign. The mass rally features in Horváth's novel too, where it is a microcosm for the conformism of fascist society as a whole. In his portrayal of the audience at Cipolla's show Mann allegorizes a nation's submission to charismatic leadership. The leader cult of fascism is also symbolized by Marius's mob in Broch's *Die Verzauberung* and Kien with his army of books in Canetti's *Die Blendung*. The depiction of the murderous mob in *Die Verzauberung* alludes to Nazism's malevolent irrationalism, and in the novels of both Broch and Canetti the instinct and emotion of the crowd offers itself as an antidote to the atomization of modern existence. As this study has shown, 1930s authors treated the subject in relation to such themes as power, free will, moral responsibility and community.

In one sense, the observations literary authors of the period made about the crowd were very similar to those stated by contemporary theoretical writers and those which had been stated by crowd theorists in the course of the previous century. In the works of fiction discussed here the crowd is frequently shown to be irrational, hysterical and easily led, whether by a magician with uncanny hypnotic powers, a skilled orator or

a mysterious wanderer who promises to free its members from their existential emptiness. Even in those texts where the crowd is seen as a potentially positive force the focus remains on its irrationality as a counterbalance to extreme rational individualism. Historians of the crowd such as McClelland argue that continuing widespread acceptance of the tenets of nineteenth-century crowd theory in the twentieth century was evidence of reactionary, anti-democratic attitudes on the part of intellectual elites. Yet, given the political background to the crowd narratives discussed here, their authors' interpretations should come as no great surprise. They were not concerned with the crowd as it was understood by Le Bon and his predecessors, as the driving force of proletarian revolution, but rather as a manifestation of and symbol for mass complicity with a totalitarian regime. Moreover, rather than attributing blame for the madness of the fascist crowd solely to the lower classes, they attacked the complacency of bourgeois intellectuals and their abdication of moral responsibility.

In other ways, my readings have revealed differences between the approaches literary authors take to the theme of the crowd and the way it is handled by crowd theorists. While writers in both fields show interest in similar issues, including, most notably, the relationship between crowds and their leaders, by and large authors of fiction seek to evoke the spirit of the crowd experience whereas theorists deconstruct it in search of causes. For example, in 'Massenpsychologie und Ich-Analyse' Freud examines the structure of the psychological bonds between the crowd members and the leader, which he claims explains their obedience to his authority. In contrast, the narrator

of *Mario und der Zauberer* is at a loss to explain his personal psychological transformation in the crowd. Unable to provide a definite rational explanation for the subservience of Cipolla's audience, he instead records his feelings of confusion and disorientation. The flexibility of narrative perspective available to Mann as an author of literary fiction enables him to fill a gap in the account of the crowd experience left by Freud's affectless, scientific viewpoint.

While Mann himself wondered if it was ethically questionable for artists to engage in such inconclusive perspectivism at a time when political and social circumstances demanded decisiveness and commitment, Weiss's novel demonstrates its value. More obviously than Mann, in *Der Augenzeuge* Weiss incorporates ideas very similar to notions found in theoretical treatises on mass psychology, including the claim that the crowd is possessed of a collective soul and is a haven for the satisfaction of repressed unconscious drives. However, he does not present these ideas uncritically. The unreliability of his narrator, the doctor, not only casts doubt on the statements the novel seems to make about crowds but undermines the claims of medicine and psychiatry to pure objectivity. Owing to a preconceived understanding of all human relations in terms of domination and subjugation the narrator sees every kind of crowd phenomenon as symptomatic of a universal will to power. His tendency to reduce all crowd action and human psychology more widely to this single motive is juxtaposed with the thrill of power his medical knowledge gives him. Thus his unequivocal diagnoses are revealed to be motivated by a sinister desire to master and control others. So although Weiss shared

Mann's concerns about the political inefficacy of pluralist literature in the face of fascism, the crowd portrayals in *Mario und der Zauberer* and *Der Augenzeuge* provide a valuable counterpart to theoretical descriptions of crowd phenomena. They temper the scientific impulse to reduce the particular to the general and, more importantly, question the quasi-fascist authoritarian epistemology – what Broch called the 'aggressiv wahnhafte Ethik und Moral' (see p. 26) – to which it could lead if left unchecked.

Horváth, Broch and Canetti responded to the problems of epistemological ethics and political commitment in other ways. In *Jugend ohne Gott*, although Horváth allows for greater psychological diversity within the crowd than either Mann or Weiss, he still represents the fascist collective as a conformist herd. He sets out two alternatives to the herd mentality: On the one hand there is the individualism of the loner T, who engages with the world on the purely empirical, emotionless level of 'Wirklichkeit'. While T's cold attitude sets him apart from the other characters in the novel, his amoral attitude nonetheless links him with the 'Lügner' in the Oberplebejer's crowd, such as the headmaster, who equates the exertion of free will with acting purely in one's own interests. On the other hand there is the narrator's individual courage and resistance, which, based on instinctive knowledge of good and evil, or 'Wahrheit', provides the tentative foundation for a benevolent moral community as posited by Adler. That is to say, whereas much writing on the crowd, including the fictional crowd depictions of Mann and Weiss, is characterized by a predominantly negative view of group

psychology, in *Jugend ohne Gott* Horváth entertains the possibility of a positive collective founded on common values apprehended intuitively.

Similarly, Broch and Canetti suggest that the crowd can be a wellspring of positive feeling – a source of community and equality. For the villagers of Kuppron in *Die Verzauberung*, however, such experience has largely been lost to the rational individualism of modernity. In *Die Blendung* Kien suppresses his natural crowd instincts, thus isolating himself from the companionship and sympathy of others. In both novels the disappearance or suppression of benevolent collective feeling gives rise to repercussive crowd violence. In Broch's text, the villagers' sense of alienation and existential doubt provides fertile ground for the murderous hysteria Marius incites. In *Die Blendung* Kien's self-imposed solitude drives him mad and leads to his death by fire, the ultimate crowd symbol.

According to Broch, the artist was responsible for cultivating a benign intuitive consciousness which would forestall and counteract malevolent crowd madness. For Canetti the goal of art was 'Verwandlung', a capacity for deep empathy which would break down the distances and differences between individuals, contributing to a sense of equality otherwise found only in the crowd. Yet both authors ultimately concluded that the best way for them to respond to Nazism was to write theoretical treatises. They believed that rational scientific research into crowds and mass hysteria would provide a more practical answer to the political tyranny of the age than literature could. However, as discussed in Chapters 4 and 5, it is debatable to what extent they really broke with

literature in the *Massenwahntheorie* and *Masse und Macht*. The imaginative dimension of both texts precludes any rigid distinction between literary and theoretical crowd representations, between the concepts of fiction and reality.

It is also curious that Broch and Canetti chose to give their ideas a scientific gloss while continuing to advance ideas about the limitations of reason that they had first explored in their fiction. In writing the *Massenwahntheorie* Broch sought to benefit from the prestige of the very scientific rationalism which, he believed, was the cause of the modern 'Wertzerfall'. In *Masse und Macht* Canetti's reduction of Schreber's paranoia to a disease of power over crowds mirrors the narrowness he attacked in Freud's analysis of the *Denkwürdigkeiten*. If the lack of attention paid to *Masse und Macht* and the *Massenwahntheorie* in the social sciences reflects the imaginative basis of both works, the sceptical responses they have elicited from literary scholars suggest that Broch and Canetti underestimated the value of artistic responses to political power. When in 1934 Musil reflected on twenty years of growing collectivism in Europe, he argued that the *Dichter* had a duty to bring to bear the pluralist values which defined his art:

Mit unseren Ausführungen über diese Dinge sind wir längst in das Verhältnis des Dichters zur Gegenwart verwickelt worden. Aus politischen Gründen sind vielerorten die Begriffe der Humanität, der Internationalität, der Freiheit, der Objektivität und andere mißliebig geworden. Sie gelten als bourgeois, als liberal, als abgetan. [...] Es sind aber für den Dichter die Begriffe seiner Überlieferung, mit deren Hilfe er sein persönliches Selbst mühsam gefestigt hat. (Musil, VIII, 1250)

Indeed, one might infer from his words that the age had arrived in which the *Dichter* would come into his own, for the qualities he represented stood in direct contrast to the

mentality of violent crowds. He more than anyone was associated with the capacity for openness and balance so often lacking in the crowd mind.

BIBLIOGRAPHY

Primary Sources

- Adler, Alfred, *Psychotherapie und Erziehung: ausgewählte Aufsätze*, 3 vols (Frankfurt am Main: Fischer, 1982-83)
- Adorno, Theodor W., *Gesammelte Schriften*, ed. by Rolf Tiedemann and others, 20 vols (Frankfurt am Main: Suhrkamp, 1970-86)
- Arendt, Hannah, and Hermann Broch, *Briefwechsel*, ed. by Paul Michael Lützeler (Frankfurt am Main: Jüdischer Verlag, 1996)
- Benjamin, Walter, *Gesammelte Schriften*, ed. by Rolf Tiedemann and Hermann Schweppenhäuser, 7 vols (Frankfurt am Main: Suhrkamp, 1991)
- Brecht, Bertolt, *Werke. Große kommentierte Berliner und Frankfurter Ausgabe*, ed. by Werner Hecht and others, 30 vols (Berlin: Aufbau; Frankfurt am Main: Suhrkamp, 1988-2000)
- Broch, Hermann, *Kommentierte Werkausgabe*, ed. by Paul Michael Lützeler, 13 vols (Frankfurt am Main: Suhrkamp, 1976-81)
- Canetti, Elias, *Gesammelte Werke*, 10 vols (Munich: Hanser, 1992-2005)
- *Crowds and Power*, trans. by Carol Stewart (London: Phoenix, 1962)
- *Die gespaltene Zukunft* (Munich: Hanser, 1972)
- Cassirer, Ernst, *Gesammelte Werke. Hamburger Ausgabe*, ed. by Birgit Recki, 26 vols (Hamburg: Meiner, 1998-2008)
- de Man, Hendrik, *Zur Psychologie des Sozialismus* (Bonn: Hohwacht, 1976)
- Freud, Sigmund, *Gesammelte Werke: chronologisch geordnet*, ed. by Anna Freud and others, 18 vols (London: Imago, 1940-52)
- Geiger, Theodor, *Die Masse und ihre Aktion: ein Beitrag zur Soziologie der Revolutionen* (Stuttgart: Enke, 1967)
- Goethe, Johann Wolfgang von, *Werke: Hamburger Ausgabe*, ed. by Erich Trunz, 14 vols (Munich: Beck, 1981)

- Hoffmann, E.T.A., *Fantasie- und Nachtstücke*, ed. by Walter Müller-Seidel (Munich: Winkler, 1960; repr. 1976)
- Horváth, Ödön von, *Gesammelte Werke*, ed. by Dieter Hildebrandt, Walter Huder and Traugott Krischke, 4 vols (Frankfurt am Main: Suhrkamp, 1970)
- *Gesammelte Werke: kommentierte Werkausgabe in Einzelbänden*, ed. by Traugott Krischke, 14 vols (Frankfurt am Main: Suhrkamp, 1983-88)
- Jentsch, Ernst, 'Zur Psychologie des Unheimlichen', *Psychiatrisch-Neurologische Wochenschrift*, 22-23 (1906), 195-98; 203-05
- Jung, C.G., *Gesammelte Werke*, ed. by Marianne Niehus-Jung and others, 20 vols (Olten: Walter, 1958-98)
- Kant, Immanuel, *Gesammelte Schriften: Akademie-Ausgabe*, 29 vols (Berlin: Reimer [now de Gruyter], 1902-)
- Klemperer, Victor, *LTI: Notizbuch eines Philologen* (Leipzig: Reclam, 1970)
- Kracauer, Siegfried, *Werke*, ed. by Inka Mülder-Bach and Ingrid Belke, 9 vols (Frankfurt am Main: Suhrkamp, 2004-)
- Kraus, Karl, *Schriften*, ed. by Christian Wagenknecht, 20 vols (Frankfurt am Main: Suhrkamp, 1986-94)
- Le Bon, Gustave, *Psychologie des Foules* (Paris: Alcan, 1905)
- Mann, Thomas, 'Die Stellung Freuds in der modernen Geistesgeschichte', in *Die Psychoanalytische Bewegung*, 1 (1929), 3-32
- *Gesammelte Werke*, 13 vols (Frankfurt am Main: Fischer, 1960)
- *Briefe 1889-1936*, ed. by Erika Mann (Frankfurt am Main: Fischer, 1961)
- and Karl Kerényi, *Gespräch in Briefen* (Frankfurt am Main: Fischer, 1972)
- *Briefwechsel mit Autoren*, ed. by Hans Wysling (Frankfurt am Main: Fischer, 1988)
- Musil, Robert, *Gesammelte Werke*, ed. by Adolf Frisé, 2nd edn, 9 vols (Reinbek bei

- Hamburg: Rowohlt, 1981)
- Nietzsche, Friedrich, *Werke: kritische Gesamtausgabe*, ed. by Giorgio Colli and
Mazzino Montinari, 8 divisions (Berlin: de Gruyter, 1967-)
- Reich, Wilhelm, *Die Massenpsychologie des Faschismus* (Cologne: Kiepenheuer &
Witsch, 1971)
- Schaeffer, Albrecht, *Josef Montfort* (Leipzig: Insel, 1922)
- Schiller, Friedrich, *Sämtliche Werke*, ed. by Gerhard Fricke and Herbert G. Göpfert,
5 vols (Munich: Hanser, 1959; repr. 1993)
- Schreber, Daniel Paul, *Denkwürdigkeiten eines Nervenkranken* (Frankfurt am Main:
Syndikat, 1985)
- Simmel, Ernst, *Psychoanalyse und ihre Anwendungen* (Frankfurt am Main: Fischer,
1993)
- Tarde, Gabriel, *L'Opinion et la foule* (Paris: Les Presses Universitaires de France, 1989)
- Weiss, Ernst, *Gesammelte Werke*, ed. by Peter Engel and Volker Michels, 16 vols
(Frankfurt am Main: Suhrkamp, 1982)
- Zweig, Arnold, *Berliner Ausgabe*, ed. by Frank Hörnigk and others, 6 divisions (Berlin:
Aufbau, 1996-2006)
- Zweig, Stefan, *Die Welt von Gestern: Erinnerungen eines Europäers* (Frankfurt am
Main: Fischer, 1981)

Secondary Sources

- Ächtler, Norman, 'Hitler's Hysteria: War Neurosis and Mass Psychology in Ernst
Weiß's *Der Augenzeuge*', *German Quarterly* 80 (2007), 325-49
- Arnason, Johann P., and David Roberts, *Elias Canetti's Counter-image of Society:
Crowds, Power, Transformation* (Rochester, NY: Camden House, 2004)
- Bance, Alan, 'Preface', in *Weimar Germany: Writers and Politics*, ed. by Bance
(Edinburgh: Scottish Academic Press, 1982), pp. vi-viii

- ‘The Narrator in Thomas Mann’s *Mario und der Zauberer*’, *Modern Language Review*, 82 (1987), 382-98
- ‘The Political Becomes Personal: *Disorder and Early Sorrow* and *Mario and the Magician*’, in *The Cambridge Companion to Thomas Mann*, ed. by Ritchie Robertson (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2002), pp. 107-18
- Barrows, Susanna, *Distorting Mirrors: Visions of the Crowd in Late Nineteenth-Century France* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1981)
- Bässler, Andreas, ‘Cagliostro als Menetekel des Verführers in Goethes Lustspiel *Der Groß-Cophta* (1791)’, *Neophilologus*, 95 (2010), 267-89
- Bell, David, and Gerald Porter (eds.), *Riots in Literature* (Newcastle upon Tyne: Cambridge Scholars Press, 2008)
- Böhme, Hartmut, ‘Thomas Mann: *Mario und der Zauberer*: Position des Erzählers und Psychologie der Herrschaft’, *Orbis Litterarum*, 30 (1975), 286-316
- Borch, Christian, ‘Modern Mass Aberration: Hermann Broch and the Problem of Irrationality’, *History of the Human Sciences*, 21:2 (2008), 63-83
- Cadow, Carmen, and Gretel Wich-Trapp, ‘Horváth: Ein Exilautor?’, in *Österreicher im Exil 1934 bis 1945*, ed. by Helene Maimann and Heinz Lunzer (Vienna: Öerreichischer Bundesverlag, 1977), pp. 400-12
- Carroll, David, ‘The Aesthetics of Nationalism and the Limits of Culture’, in *Politics and Aesthetics in the Arts*, ed. by Salim Kemal and Ivan Gaskell (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2000), pp. 112-39
- Casey, Timothy J., ‘Questioning Broch’s *Der Versucher*’, *Deutsche Vierteljahrsschrift*, 47 (1973), 467-507
- Cixous, Hélène, ‘La fiction et ses fantômes’, *Poétique*, 3 (1972), 199-216
- Cohen, Percy S., ‘Theories of Myth’, *Man*, 4 (1969), 337-53
- Connerton, Paul, ‘Freud and the Crowd’, in *Visions and Blueprints: Avant-garde Culture and Radical Politics in Early Twentieth-Century Europe*, ed. by Edward Timms and Peter Collier (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1988)
- Darby, David, *Structures of Disintegration: Narrative Strategies in Elias Canetti’s Die*

- Blendung* (Riverside: Ariadne Press, 1992)
- Derrida, Jacques, *L'Écriture et la différence* (Paris: Seuil, 1967)
- Deschner, Karlheinz, *Kitsch, Konvention und Kunst: eine literarische Streitschrift* (Munich: List, 1957)
- Dierks, Manfred, 'Die Aktualität der positivistischen Methode: am Beispiel Thomas Mann', in *Stationen der Thomas-Mann-Forschung: Aufsätze seit 1970*, ed. by Hermann Kurzke (Würzburg: Königshausen & Neumann, 1985), pp. 190-209
- 'Thomas Mann und die Tiefenpsychologie', in *Thomas-Mann-Handbuch*, ed. by Helmut Koopmann (Stuttgart: Kröner, 1990), pp. 284-300
- Dilman, Ilham, *Free Will: An Historical and Philosophical Introduction* (London: Routledge, 1999)
- Dissinger, Dieter, *Vereinzlung und Massenwahn: zu Elias Canettis Roman Die Blendung* (Bonn: Bouvier, 1971)
- Dove, Richard, and Stephen Lamb, 'Introduction: Commitment and the Illusion of Power', in *German Writers and Politics 1918-1939*, ed. by Dove and Lamb (Basingstoke: Macmillan, 1992), pp. 1-12
- Duebbert, Carole, 'Hermann Brochs *Verzauberung* als "Anti-Heimatroman"', in *Brochs Verzauberung*, ed. by Paul Michael Lützel (Frankfurt am Main: Suhrkamp, 1983), pp. 226-36
- Durzak, Manfred, 'Zur Entstehungsgeschichte und zu den verschiedenen Fassungen von Hermann Brochs Nachlaßroman', *Zeitschrift für deutsche Philologie*, 86 (1967), 594-627
- Ellenberger, Henri F., *The Discovery of the Unconscious: The History and Evolution of Dynamic Psychiatry* (New York: Basic Books, 1970)
- Ellison, David, *Ethics and Aesthetics in European Modernist Literature: From the Sublime to the Uncanny* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2001)
- Esteve, Mary, *The Aesthetics and Politics of the Crowd in American Literature* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2003)
- Feder, Lillian, *Madness in Literature* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1980)

- Felman, Shoshana, *Writing and Madness: Literature/Philosophy/Psychoanalysis*, trans. by Martha Noel Evans and Barbara Johnson (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2003)
- Fetz, Bernhard, 'Hermann Broch: *Die Verzauberung*: zum Verhältnis von dichterischer Praxis und Massenwahntheorie', *German Life and Letters*, 40 (1987), 200-11
- Foucault, Michel, *Folie et déraison: histoire de la folie á l'âge classique* (Paris: Plon, 1961)
- Fritz, Axel, *Ödön von Horváth als Kritiker seiner Zeit* (Munich: List, 1973)
- Fröhlich, Hans Jürgen, 'Arzt und Dichter: Ernst Weiß', *Literatur und Kritik*, 1 (1966), 50-53
- Frye, Northrop, *Anatomy of Criticism: Four Essays* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1957)
- Fuhrmann, Alexander, 'Der historische Hintergrund: Schule-Kirche-Staat', in *Horváths Jugend ohne Gott*, ed. by Traugott Krischke (Frankfurt am Main: Suhrkamp, 1984), pp.129-46
- Gamper, Michael, *Masse lesen, Masse schreiben: eine Diskurs- und Imaginationsgeschichte der Menschenmenge 1765-1930* (Munich: Fink, 2007)
- Ginneken, Jaap van, 'The Killing of the Father: The Background of Freud's *Group Psychology*', *Political Psychology*, 5 (1984), 391-414
- *Crowds, Psychology and Politics 1871-1899* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1992)
- Golec, Janusz, 'Von der Individual- zur Massenpsychologie: Ernst Weiß' Roman *Der Augenzeuge*', in *Ernst Weiß: Seelenanalytiker und Erzähler*, ed. by Peter Engel and Hans-Harald Müller (Bern: Lang, 1992), pp. 284-91
- Gottwald, Herwig, 'Der Mythosbegriff bei Hermann Broch', in *Elias Canetti und Hermann Broch*, ed. by Penka Angelova, Marianne Gruber and Paul Michael Lützeler (St. Ingbert: Röhrig, 2009), pp. 141-63
- Grenville, Anthony, 'Idealism versus Materialism in the Representation of History in

- Literature: The Dictator Figure in Thomas Mann's *Mario und der Zauberer* and Brecht's *Der unaufhaltsame Aufstieg des Arturo Ui*, *Journal of European Studies*, 17 (1987), 77-105
- 'The Failure of Constitutional Democracy: The SPD and the Collapse of the Weimar Republic in Ödön von Horváth's *Italienische Nacht*', *Modern Language Review*, 82 (1987), 399-414
- Gros, Peter, *Plebejer, Sklaven und Caesaren: die Antike im Werk Ödön von Horváths* (Bern: Lang, 1996)
- Hardin, James, 'Der Versucher and Hermann Broch's Attitude towards Positivism', *German Quarterly*, 39 (1966), 29-41
- 'Hermann Broch's Theories on Mass Psychology and *Der Versucher*', *The German Quarterly*, 47 (1974), 24-33.
- Harrington, Austin, 'Dilthey, Empathy and Verstehen: A Contemporary Reappraisal', *European Journal of Social Theory*, 4 (2001), 311-29
- 'Hermann Broch as a Reader of Max Weber: Protestantism, Rationalization and the "Disintegration of Values"', *History of the Human Sciences*, 19:4 (2006), 1-18
- Hatfield, Henry C., 'Thomas Mann's *Mario und der Zauberer*: An Interpretation', *Germanic Review*, 21 (1946), 306-12
- Heil, Stefan, *Die Rede von Gott im Werk Ödön von Horváths: eine erfahrungstheologische und pragmatische Autobiographie- und Literaturinterpretation mit einer religionsdidaktischen Reflexion* (Ostfildern: Schwabenverlag, 1999)
- Heizmann, Jürgen, 'Poetic Reflection in Broch's *Der Tod des Vergil*', in *Hermann Broch: Visionary in Exile: The 2001 Yale Symposium*, ed. by Paul Michael Lützeler (Rochester, NY: Camden House, 2003), pp. 187-200
- Hergershausen, Lore, 'Au sujet de *Mario und der Zauberer* de Thomas Mann: Cesare Gabrielli, prototype de Cipolla?', *Études germaniques*, 23 (1968), 268-75
- Hertz, Neil, *The End of the Line: Essays on Psychoanalysis and the Sublime* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1985)
- Holl, Adolf, 'Gott ist die Wahrheit oder Horváths Suche nach der zweiten religiösen

- Naivität', in *Horváths Jugend ohne Gott*, ed. by Traugott Krischke (Frankfurt am Main: Suhrkamp, 1984), pp.147-56
- Jay, Martin, "'The Aesthetic Ideology" as Ideology: Or, What Does it Mean to Aestheticize Politics?', *Cultural Critique*, 21 (1992), 41-61
- Jenny, Urs, 'Horváth realistisch, Horváth metaphysisch', *Akzente*, 18 (1971), 289-95
- 'Ödön von Horváths Größe und Grenzen', in *Über Ödön von Horváth*, ed. by Dieter Hildebrandt and Traugott Krischke (Frankfurt am Main: Suhrkamp, 1972), pp.71-78
- Kaiser, Wolf, 'Jugend ohne Gott von Ödön von Horváth: ein antifaschistischer Roman?', in *Faschismuskritik und Deutschlandbild im Exilroman*, ed. by Christian Fritsch and Lutz Winkler (Berlin: Argument, 1981), pp. 36-53
- Kajtár, Mária, 'Hermann Broch und Friedrich Torberg: Demokratie und Totalitarismus', in *Hermann Brochs literarische Freundschaften*, ed. by Endre Kiss, Paul Michael Lützel and Gabriella Rác (Tübingen: Stauffenberg, 2008), pp. 293-303
- Kershaw, Ian, *The Hitler Myth: Image and Reality in the Third Reich* (Oxford: Clarendon, 1987)
- *Hitler 1889-1936: Hubris* (London: Allen Lane, 1998)
- Kindt, Tom, *Unzuverlässiges Erzählen und literarische Moderne: eine Untersuchung der Romane von Ernst Weiß* (Tübingen: Niemeyer, 2008)
- Kirchberger, Lida, 'Death in Venice and the Eighteenth Century', *Monatshefte*, 58 (1966), 321-34
- Kliche, Dieter, 'Der Versuch, einen politischen Roman zu schreiben: Ernst Weiß: *Der Augenzeuge*', in *Erfahrung Exil: antifaschistische Romane 1933-1945: Analysen*, ed. by Sigrid Bock and Manfred Hahn (Berlin: Aufbau, 1979), pp. 309-27
- Koebner, Thomas, 'Mythos und "Zeitgeist" in Hermann Brochs *Die Verzauberung*', in *Brochs Verzauberung*, ed. by Paul Michael Lützel (Frankfurt am Main: Suhrkamp, 1983), pp. 169-185
- Koopmann, Helmut, 'Mario und der Zauberer', in *Thomas Mann: Romane und Erzählungen*, ed. by Volkmar Hansen (Stuttgart: Reclam, 1993), pp. 151-83

- Lacoue-Labarthe, Philippe, and Jean-Luc Nancy, 'The Nazi Myth', *Critical Enquiry*, 16 (1990), 291-312
- Laing, R.D., *The Divided Self* (London: Tavistock, 1960)
- Längle, Ulrike, *Ernst Weiß: Vatermythos und Zeitkritik: die Exilromane am Beispiel des Armen Verschwenders* (Innsbruck: Institut für Germanistik, 1981)
- Lehnert, Herbert, 'Joseph und seine Brüder', in *Thomas Mann: Romane und Erzählungen*, ed. by Volkmar Hansen (Stuttgart: Reclam, 1993), pp. 186-227
- Leneaux, Grant F., 'Mario und der Zauberer: The Narration of Seduction or the Seduction of Narration', *Orbis Litterarum*, 40 (1985), 327-47
- Leydecker, Karl, 'Introduction', in *German Novelists of the Weimar Republic: Intersections of Literature and Politics*, ed. by Leydecker (Rochester, NY: Camden House, 2006), pp. 1-17
- Loos, Beate, *Mythos, Zeit und Tod: zum Verhältnis von Kunsttheorie und dichterischer Praxis in Hermann Brochs Bergroman* (Frankfurt am Main: Athenäum, 1971)
- Lukács, Georg, *Thomas Mann* (Berlin: Aufbau, 1953)
- Luserke-Jaqui, Matthias (ed.), *Schiller-Handbuch: Leben – Werk – Wirkung* (Stuttgart and Weimar: Metzler, 2005)
- Lützeler, Paul Michael, 'Hermann Brochs *Die Verzauberung* als politischer Roman', *Neophilologus*, 61 (1977), 111-26
- 'Hermann Brochs *Die Verzauberung* im Kontext von Faschismuskritik und Exilroman', in *Broch heute*, ed. by Joseph Strelka (Bern: Francke, 1978), pp. 51-75
- 'Hermann Broch and Georg Lukács: zur Wirkungsgeschichte von James Joyce', *Études germaniques*, 35 (1980), 290-99
- 'The Avant-Garde in Crisis: Hermann Broch's Negative Aesthetics in Exile', in *Hermann Broch: Literature, Philosophy, Politics: The Yale Broch Symposium 1986*, ed. by Stephen D. Dowden (Columbia, SC: Camden House, 1988), pp. 14-31

- ‘Vom “Zerfall der Werte” zur “Theorie der Demokratie”: Hermann Broch als Philosoph und Politologe’, in *Wegbereiter der Moderne*, ed. by Helmut Koopmann and Clark Muenzer (Tübingen: Niemeyer, 1990), pp. 163-70
- Mack, Michael, ‘*Die Blendung* as a Negative Poetics: Positivism, Nihilism, Fascism’, *Orbis Litterarum*, 54 (1999), 146-60
- ‘The Politics of Sacrifice: Hermann Broch’s Critique of Fascism in *Die Verzauberung*’, *Orbis Litterarum*, 55 (2000), 15-36
- *Anthropology as Memory: Elias Canetti’s and Franz Baermann Steiner’s Responses to the Shoah* (Tübingen: Niemeyer, 2001)
- Maia, Rousiley C.M., ‘Elias Canetti’s *Auto-da-fé*: From the Antithesis of the Crowd-Man to the Madness of Power’, *Thesis Eleven*, 45 (1996), 28-38
- Matenko, Percy, ‘The Prototype of Cipolla in *Mario und der Zauberer*’, *Italica*, 31 (1954), 133-35
- McClelland, J.S., *The Crowd and the Mob: From Plato to Canetti* (London: Unwin Hyman, 1989)
- McIntyre, Allan J., ‘Determinism in *Mario and the Magician*’, *Germanic Review*, 52 (1977), 205-16
- Meinert, Dietrich, ‘Hermann Broch: *Der Versucher*: Versuchung und Erlösung im Bannkreis mythischen Erlebens’, in *Sprachkunst als Weltgestaltung: Festschrift für Herbert Seidler*, ed. by Adolf Haslinger (Salzburg: Pustet, 1966), pp. 140-52
- Meister, Jan Christoph, ‘Sprachloser Augenzeuge: Geschichte, Diskurs und Narration in Ernst Weiß’ Hitler-Roman *Der Augenzeuge*’, in *Ernst Weiß: Seelenanalytiker und Erzähler*, ed. by Peter Engel and Hans-Harald Müller (Bern: Lang, 1992), pp. 292-304
- Menges, Karl, *Kritische Studien zur Wertphilosophie Hermann Brochs* (Tübingen: Niemeyer, 1970)
- Meyers, Jeffrey, ‘Caligari and Cipolla: Mann’s *Mario and the Magician*’, *Modern Fiction Studies*, 32 (1986), 235-39
- Meyers, Mark, ‘Feminizing Fascist Men: Crowd Psychology, Gender, and French Antifascism 1929-1945’, *French Historical Studies*, 29 (2006), 109-42

- Michel, Karl Markus, 'Der Intellektuelle und die Masse: zu zwei Büchern von Elias Canetti', *Der neue Rundschau*, 75 (1964), 308-16
- Mills, Nicolaus, *The Crowd in American Literature* (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 1986)
- Minkowski, Eugène, *La Schizophrénie: psychopathologie des schizoïdes et des schizophrènes* (Paris: Brouwer, 1953)
- Morford, Mark P.O., and Robert J. Lenardon, *Classical Mythology* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2007)
- Moscovici, Serge, *L'âge des foules: un traité historique de psychologie des masses* (Paris: Fayard, 1981)
- Müller, Karl, 'Einheit und Disparität: Ödön von Horváths "Weg nach innen"', in *Horváths Prosa*, ed. by Traugott Krischke (Frankfurt am Main: Suhrkamp, 1989), pp.156-77
- Müller-Funk, Wolfgang, 'Faschismus und freier Wille: Horváths Roman *Jugend ohne Gott* zwischen Zeitbilanz und Theodizee', in *Horváths Jugend ohne Gott*, ed. by Traugott Krischke (Frankfurt am Main: Suhrkamp, 1984), pp. 157-79
- 'Fear in Culture: Broch's *Massenwahntheorie*', in *Hermann Broch: Visionary in Exile: The 2001 Yale Symposium*, ed. by Paul Michael Lützeler (Rochester, NY: Camden House, 2003), pp. 89-104
- 'Die Angst vor der Masse bei Broch und Canetti', in *Elias Canetti und Hermann Broch*, ed. by Penka Angelova, Marianne Gruber and Paul Michael Lützeler (St. Ingbert: Röhrig, 2009), pp. 179-200
- Müller-Salget, Klaus, 'Der Tod in Torre di Venere: Spiegelung und Deutung des italienischen Faschismus in Thomas Manns *Mario und der Zauberer*', *Arcadia*, 18 (1983), 50-65
- Nancy, Jean-Luc, *La Communauté désœuvrée* (Paris: Christian Bourgeois Éditeur, 1986)
- Nairn, Tom, 'Crowds and Critics', *New Left Review*, 1: 17 (1962), pp. 24-33
- Nisbet, H.B., "'Das Dämonische'": On the Logic of Goethe's Demonology', *Forum for*

Modern Language Studies, 7 (1971), 259-81

Pan, David, 'The Struggle for Myth in the Nazi Period: Alfred Baeumler, Ernst Bloch and Carl Einstein', *South Atlantic Review*, 65 (2000), 41-57

— 'Revising the Dialectic of Enlightenment: Alfred Baeumler and the Nazi Appropriation of Myth', *New German Critique*, 84 (2001), 37-52

Parkes, Stuart, 'Ödön von Horváth', in *Weimar Germany: Writers and Politics*, ed. by Alan Bance (Edinburgh: Scottish Academic Press, 1982), pp. 121-37

Parry, Idris, 'Elias Canetti's Novel *Die Blendung*', in *Essays in German Literature I*, ed. by F. Norman (London: Institute of Germanic Studies, 1965), 145-66

Plotz, John, *The Crowd: British Literature and Public Politics* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2000)

Quinn, Thomas, "'Dialektik der Verzauberung": Mystification, Enlightenment, *The Spell*', in *Hermann Broch: Literature, Philosophy, Politics: The Yale Broch Symposium 1986*, ed. by Stephen D. Dowden (Columbia, SC: Camden House, 1988), pp. 110-24

Reich-Ranicki, Marcel, 'Horváth, Gott und die Frauen: die Etablierung eines neuen Klassikers der Moderne', in *Über Ödön von Horváth*, ed. by Dieter Hildebrandt and Traugott Krischke (Frankfurt am Main: Suhrkamp, 1972), pp. 83-91

Ritzer, Monika, *Hermann Broch und die Kulturkrise im frühen zwanzigsten Jahrhundert* (Stuttgart: Metzler, 1988)

Roberts, David, *Kopf und Welt: Elias Canettis Roman Die Blendung* (Munich: Hanser, 1975)

— 'Crowds and Power or the Natural History of Modernity: Horkheimer, Adorno, Canetti, Arendt', *Thesis Eleven*, 45 (1996), 39-68

Robertson, Ritchie, 'Between Freud and Nietzsche: Canetti's *Crowds and Power*', *Austrian Studies*, 3 (1992), 109-24

Roche, Mark W., 'Die Rolle des Erzählers in *Brochs Verzauberung*', ed. by Paul Michael Lützeler (Frankfurt am Main: Suhrkamp, 1983), pp.131-46

- Rochelt, Hans, 'Die Ohnmacht des Augenzeugen: über den Schriftsteller Ernst Weiß', *Literatur und Kritik*, 29 (1969), 552-56
- Rohrwasser, Michael, 'Schreibstrategien: Canettis Beschreibungen von Freud', in *Psychoanalyse in der modernen Literatur: Kooperation und Konkurrenz*, ed. by Thomas Anz (Würzburg: Königshausen & Neumann, 1999), pp. 145-66
- Royle, Nicholas, *The Uncanny* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2003)
- Rudloff, Holger, 'Zur Darstellung des Themas Schule und Faschismus in der deutschen Literatur', in *Horváths Jugend ohne Gott*, ed. by Traugott Krischke (Frankfurt am Main: Suhrkamp, 1984), pp.180-197
- Rutigliano, Enzo, 'Die Verwandlung des Begriffes der Verwandlung: über den Wandel einer Kategorie der Anti-Macht bei Elias Canetti', in *Tod und Verwandlung in Canettis Masse und Macht*, ed. by John Pattillo-Hess (Vienna: Kunstverein Wien, 1990), pp. 69-77
- Ryan, Judith, 'The Self-destructing Message: A Response to Paul Michael Lützeler', in *Hermann Broch: Literature, Philosophy, Politics: The Yale Broch Symposium 1986*, ed. by Stephen D. Dowden (Columbia, SC: Camden House, 1988), pp. 32-41
- Sandberg, Glenn Robert, *The Genealogy of the Massenführer: Hermann Brochs Die Verzauberung as a Religious Novel* (Heidelberg: Winter, 1997)
- Sass, Louis A., *Madness and Modernism: Insanity in the Light of Modern Art, Literature, and Thought* (New York: Basic Books, 1992)
- Sauerland, Karol, 'Hermann Broch and Hannah Arendt: Massenwahn und Menschenrecht', in *Hermann Brochs literarische Freundschaften*, ed. by Endre Kiss, Paul Michael Lützeler and Gabriella Rácz (Tübingen: Stauffenberg, 2008), pp. 319-33
- Sautermeister, Gert, *Thomas Mann: Mario und der Zauberer* (Munich: Fink, 1981)
- Schlant, Ernestine, *Die Philosophie Hermann Brochs* (Bern: Francke, 1971)
- Schmid-Bortenschlager, Sigrid, 'Der Einzelne und seine Masse: Massentheorie und Literaturkonzeption bei Elias Canetti und Hermann Broch', in *Experte der Macht: Elias Canetti*, ed. by Kurt Bartsch and Gerhard Melzer (Graz: Droschl, 1985), pp. 116-33

- Schnapp, Jeffrey T. and Matthew Tiews (eds.), *Crowds* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2006)
- Schneider, Manfred, 'Kritik der Paranoia: Elias Canetti und Karl Kraus', in *Der Überlebende und sein Doppel: Kulturwissenschaftliche Analysen zum Werk Elias Canettis*, ed. by Susanne Lüdemann (Freiburg: Rombach, 2008), pp. 189-213
- Schober, Wolfgang Heinz, 'Die Jugendproblematik in Horváths Romanen', in *Horváth-Diskussion*, ed. by Kurt Bartsch, Uwe Baur and Dietmar Goltschnigg (Kronberg: Scriptor, 1976), pp.124-37
- Schoolfield, George C., 'Notes on Broch's *Der Versucher*', *Monatshefte*, 48 (1956), 1-16
- Schor, Naomi, *Zola's Crowds* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1978)
- Schröder, Jürgen, 'Das Spätwerk Ödön von Horváths', *Sprachkunst*, 7 (1976), 49-71
- Schwarz, Egon, 'Fascism and Society: Remarks on Thomas Mann's Novella *Mario and the Magician*', *Michigan Germanic Studies*, 2 (1976), 47-67
- Sebald, W.G., *Unheimliche Heimat: Essays zur österreichischen Literatur* (Salzburg: Residenz, 1991)
- Shils, Edward, 'The Theory of Mass Society: Prefatory Remarks', *Diogenes*, 10 (1962), 45-66
- Skwara, Erich Wolfgang, 'Mind and World and no Way out: A Response to Joseph Strelka', in *Hermann Broch: Literature, Philosophy, Politics: The Yale Broch Symposium 1986*, ed. by Stephen D. Dowden (Columbia, SC: Camden House, 1988), ed. by Dowden, pp. 87-92
- Sontag, Susan, *Under the Sign of Saturn* (London: Vintage, 1980)
- Sorin, Raphaël, 'Souvenirs', in *Elias Canetti*, ed. by Martine Blanc-Montmayeur (Paris: Édition du Centre Pompidou, 1995), pp. 51-57
- Speirs, R.C., 'Some Psychological Observations on Domination, Acquiescence and Revolt in Thomas Mann's *Mario und der Zauberer*', *Forum for Modern Language Studies*, 16 (1980), 319-30
- *Mann: Mario und der Zauberer* (London: Grant and Cutler, 1990)

- Steets, Angelika, 'NS-Sprache in Horváths Romanen', in *Horváths Prosa*, ed. by Traugott Krischke (Frankfurt am Main: Suhrkamp, 1989), pp.113-32
- Stieg, Gerald, 'Früchte des Feuers: der 15. Juli 1927 in der *Blendung* und in den *Dämonen*', in *Blendung als Lebensform: Elias Canetti*, ed. by Friedbert Aspetsberger and Stieg (Königstein: Athenäum, 1985), pp. 143-75
- *Frucht des Feuers: Canetti, Doderer, Kraus und der Justizpalastbrand* (Vienna: Falter, 1990)
- Stern, J.P., *Hitler: The Führer and the People* (Glasgow: Fontana, 1975)
- Strawson, Galen, 'The Impossibility of Moral Responsibility', *Philosophical Studies*, 75 (1994), 5-24
- Strelka, Joseph, 'Politics and the Human Condition: Broch's Model of a Mass Psychology', in *Hermann Broch: Literature, Philosophy, Politics: The Yale Broch Symposium 1986*, ed. by Stephen D. Dowden (Columbia, SC: Camden House, 1988), pp. 76-86
- Swales, Martin, 'In Defence of Weimar: Thomas Mann and the Politics of Republicanism', in *Weimar Germany: Writers and Politics*, ed. by Alan Bance (Edinburgh: Scottish Academic Press, 1982), pp. 1-13
- Széll, Zsuzsa, 'Stadt und Land: ein Motiv und seine Bedeutung', in *Romanstruktur und Menschenrecht bei Hermann Broch*, ed. by Hartmut Steinecke and Strelka (Bern: Lang, 1990), pp. 71-82
- Tatar, Maria M., *Spellbound: Studies on Mesmerism and Literature* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1978)
- Thomson, Edward A., 'Elias Canetti's *Die Blendung* and the Changing Image of Madness', *German Life and Letters*, 26 (1972), 38-47
- Timms, Edward, *Karl Kraus: Apocalyptic Satirist: Culture and Catastrophe in Habsburg Vienna* (New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 1986)
- Trapp, Frithjof, *Der Augenzeuge: ein Psychogramm der deutschen Intellektuellen zwischen 1914 und 1936* (Frankfurt: Gutenberg, 1986)
- Vaget, Hans R., 'Die Erzählungen', in *Thomas-Mann-Handbuch*, ed. by Helmut Koopmann (Stuttgart: Kröner, 1990), pp. 534-618

- Vajda, Mihály, *Fascism as a Mass Movement* (London: Allison & Busby, 1976)
- Verhey, Jeffrey, *The Spirit of 1914: Militarism, Myth and Mobilization in Germany* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2000)
- Wagener, Hans, 'Mann's Cipolla and Earlier Prototypes of the Magician', *Modern Language Notes*, 84 (1969), 800-02
- Watson, Ian, 'Elias Canetti: The One and the Many', *Chicago Review*, 20/21 (1969), 184-200
- Weigel, Robert G., *Zur geistigen Einheit von Hermann Brochs Werk: Massenpsychologie, Politologie, Romane* (Tübingen: Francke, 1994)
- Welch, David, 'Nazi Wartime Newsreel Propaganda', in *Film and Radio Propaganda in World War II*, ed. by K.R.M. Short (London: Croom Helm, 1983), pp. 201-19
- Werlen, Hansjakob, 'Ohnmächtige Hoffnung: die Stimme des Individuums in *Masse und Macht*', in *Einladung zur Verwandlung: Essays zu Elias Canettis Masse und Macht*, ed. by Michael Krüger (Munich: Hanser, 1995), pp. 151-63
- White, Hayden, *Metahistory* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1973)
- Whitebrook, Joel, 'Freud, Foucault and the "Dialogue with Unreason"', *Philosophy and Social Criticism*, 25: 6 (1999), 29-66
- Widdig, Bernd, *Männerbunde und Massen: zur Krise männlicher Identität in der Literatur der Moderne* (Opladen: Westdeutscher Verlag, 1992)
- Williams, C.E., *The Broken Eagle: The Politics of Austrian Literature from Empire to Anschluss* (London: Elek, 1974)
- 'Writers and Politics: Some Reflections on a German Tradition', *Journal of European Studies*, 6 (1976), 75-99
- *Writers and Politics in Modern Germany* (London: Hodder and Stoughton, 1977)
- Williamson, George S., *The Longing for Myth in Germany* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2004)

Winkler, Michael, 'Die Funktion der Erzählungen in Hermann Brochs Roman *Der Versucher*', *Seminar*, 4 (1968), 81-99

Zeller, Regine, *Cipolla und die Masse: zu Thomas Manns Novelle Mario und der Zauberer* (St. Ingbert: Röhrig, 2006)