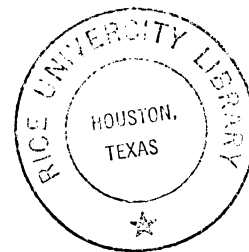


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THOMAS MANN'S USE OF
CHRISTIAN CONCEPTS IN HIS
JOSEPH TETRALOGY

BY

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INTRODUCTION

The purpose of this thesis is to contribute to our knowledge of Thomas Mann's attitude toward Christianity by an investigation of his use of Christian concepts in his novel-tetralogy, Joseph und seine Brüder, which is based on the Joseph story in the Old Testament.¹

A survey will be made of the author's remarks pertaining to the message he wishes to convey in his Joseph story. He commented on the purpose of his novel before he started writing it, while work was in progress, and after the book was finished. These remarks will be surveyed in a chronological order, and any change in the author's purpose will be brought to the reader's attention.

Mann wrote the Joseph tetralogy, a work of seventy thousand lines, over a period of sixteen years (1926 - 1942). During this time he fled from Germany to Switzerland and then later settled in California. Mann began writing the first volume, Die Geschichten Jaakobs, in 1926 and completed it two years later. The second volume, Der Junge Joseph, was finished before the author left

¹Since the earliest days of Christianity, there have been some theologians who believe the life of Joseph foreshadows the life of Jesus, just as other lines in the Old Testament are considered prophecies of the New Testament. Ambrosius of Milan, for instance, wrote an essay entitled "De Joseph patriarcha," in which Joseph is viewed as a predecessor of Jesus. See Jonas Lesser, Thomas Mann in der Epoche seiner Vollendung (Munich, 1952), pp. 55-56. Henceforth cited as Lesser.

Germany in 1933. Thus, the first two volumes were written entirely in Germany. The third volume, Joseph in Ägypten, was started during Mann's break with Germany and was written mostly during his exile in Switzerland. It was finished before he emigrated to the United States in 1938. The last and fourth volume, Joseph der Ernährer, was written in the United States and completed in 1942.

The first mention Mann made of his intention to write a book dealing with Egypt is to be found in his Pariser Rechenschaft, published in 1926. This work, written in the form of a diary, summarizes his experiences during a short stay in Paris in the spring of 1926. That part of the German press which represented the right-wing element in German politics accused Mann of favoring the French political viewpoint during his visit in Paris. Mann's answer to this accusation was Pariser Rechenschaft.

The right-wing press maintained that Mann had given up his stand for the irrational element in German culture which he had previously taken in his novel, Betrachtungen eines Unpolitischen, published in 1918.² In Pariser Rechenschaft, Mann does not reply to the press directly but accepts Alfred Baeumler³ as a proponent

²Harry Slochower, Thomas Mann's Joseph Story (New York, 1938), p. 57. Henceforth cited as Slochower.

³Alfred Baeumler, Professor at the University of Berlin, Director of the "Institut für Politische Pädagogik."

of irrationality. He refers to Baeumler's introduction to Auswahl aus Bachofens Schriften. Mann reports that in this introduction Baeumler extols the element of irrationalism in German culture. Baeumler points to Arndt, Görres, Grimm, Bachofen and even Nietzsche as being truly German because they represent irrational thought. In his comments on Baeumler, Mann draws attention to members of the first group of Romanticists, such as Novalis and Friedrich Schlegel. He claims that they represent a more rationalistic type of Romanticism, and that they give the period as a whole a balance between rationalism and irrationalism. Mann thinks an exclusive belief in the irrational is a one-sided view of life which should be tempered by rationalism. This opinion can be derived from the following quotation: "Ich sprach fernerhin von den Mächten der Tiefe, die heilig, und von denen des Lichtes, die göttlich seien; von der Gottesunmittelbarkeit des Ich und des Volkes und von Vernunftemanzipation, Universalität und Gesellschaftlichkeit, die ein anderes Wort für Demokratie ist - von Kultur also und Zivilisation." ⁴

Mann believes Baeumler's introduction is unsound from a pedagogical standpoint. He maintains that it is dangerous for Baeumler, as an influential professor, to foster this tendency toward

⁴Thomas Mann, Pariser Rechenschaft (Berlin, 1926), pp. 22-23.

irrationalism in Germany.⁵ Mann by this time had come to feel that he, as well as any artist or intellectual, had a certain obligation toward society and that he could be held responsible for the influence he exerted, especially on youth. In his Introduction, Baumler quotes the following aphorism of Nietzsche to illustrate the irrational element he describes: "Apollinisch werden: das heisst seinen Willen zum Ungeheueren, Vielfachen, Ungewissen, Entsetzlichen zu brechen an einem Willen zum Mass, zur Einfachheit, zur Einordnung in Regel und Begriff. Das Masslose, Wüste, Asiatische liegt auf seinem Grunde; die Tapferkeit des Griechen besteht im Kampfe mit seinem Asiatismus: die Schönheit ist ihm nicht geschenkt, so wenig als die Logik, als die Natürlichkeit der Sitte - sie ist erobert, gewollt, erkämpft - sie ist sein Sieg."⁶ This same aphorism is then used by Mann as an argument against irrationalism and for a rational approach to life. Mann writes: "Und vielleicht statt zum Mythos zu beten, täte man heute besser, seinem Volk bei der Gewinnung solcher Siege behilflich zu sein."⁷

It is within this framework of arguments, for a balance between rationalism and irrationalism in Germany, with emphasis on the

⁵"Having come more and more to stress the 'representative' role of the artist, during his Weimar period, he [Mann] emphasized his pedagogic role as guide and educator of the nation." See R. Hinton Thomas, Thomas Mann (Oxford, 1956), p. 115. Henceforth cited as Thomas.

⁶Mann, Pariser Rechenschaft, pp. 61-62.

⁷Ibid. p. 62.

political danger of an exclusive following of the irrational, that Mann first publicly mentions his intention of writing a book on Egypt.

Henry Hatfield in his book, Thomas Mann, stated that perhaps the most decisive factor for Mann's turning to mythology 'was the German intellectual climate of the 1920's with its tendency to glorify the non-rational and the subconscious, to give the concept of the myth a strongly anti-intellectual and often reactionary character. The revival, for example, of Bachofen's cult of the 'primeval motherly', or Ludwig Klage's attack on the intellect, or Alfred Baeumler's interpretation of Nietzsche's philosophy as a mythos of brutality, are cases in point."⁸

In his basically politically-oriented book, Pariser Rechenschaft, Mann discusses his early interest in Egypt. The occasion was a visit with a scholar who was familiar with Egyptian affairs and whose library contained many books on Egyptian culture. Mann writes that he enjoyed being one of the few people who knew that the new residence of Echnaton, south of Cairo, was called Chnit Aton, or Achet-Aton, and that the royal title "Pharao" meant "Per'o" or "Big House," a name for the majesty, as for instance, "Die Hohe Pforte" was used in German as a name for the Turkish government.

⁸ Henry Hatfield, Thomas Mann (Norfolk, Conn., 1951), pp. 96-97. Henceforth cited as Hatfield.

He draws attention to the fact that he searched for the name of Potiphre's wife, the woman who played such an important part in Joseph's life. No one knew it; nowhere had it been recorded.

Mann continues to write about Egypt, and relates an incident which proves his early interest in this ancient civilization. He was at the time a young boy in school. The instructor asked for the name of the holy bull of the Egyptians. Mann proudly answered: "Hapi." The instructor said he was wrong, the correct name was "Apis." Mann writes that he knew "Apis" did not sound Egyptian and that it must have been a change due to Greek and Roman influence. Mann then comments that if it had not been for the autocratic atmosphere in the classroom, which was a reflection of the political conditions at the time, he would have stood up for what he knew to be right.⁹

It may be important that, in 1926, Mann digresses and speaks with such enthusiasm about Egyptian culture, at a time when he and the people around him were mostly concerned with the European political situation. His novel, Joseph und seine Brüder, which deals with Egyptian culture and which was started that very year, does, indeed, reflect some of his political views.

Two years later, in April, 1928, Mann made the following

⁹Mann, Pariser Rechenschaft, pp. 61-70.

statement about Joseph in the Berliner Tagblatt: "Aber es steht von ihm geschrieben, dass er 'gesegnet sei mit Segen oben vom Himmel herab und mit Segen von der Tiefe, die unten liegt.' " The meaning of this dual blessing is made clear in a speech Joseph makes to Pharaoh in the fourth volume, Joseph der Ernährer: "Das musterhaft Überlieferte kommt aus der Tiefe, die unten liegt, und ist, was uns bindet. Aber das Ich ist von Gott und ist des Geistes, der ist frei. Dies aber ist gesittetes Leben, dass sich das Bindend-Musterhafte des Grundes mit der Gottesfreiheit des Ich erfülle, und ist keine Menschengesittung ohne das eine und ohne das andere."¹⁰

On October 31 of this same year, 1928, Mann wrote on Die Erzählungen Jaakobs, the first volume of his Joseph tetralogy, in the Viennese Neue Freie Presse. In his article, he stated again that even as a boy he was interested in Egyptian civilization. With respect to mythology, he said: "Um was es mir geht, das ist das Wesen des Mythos als zeitlose Immer-Gegenwart; es sind die Ideen der Wiederkehr, der Fleischwerdung und des 'Festes'; es ist damit zugleich eine bei aller relativen Neuzeitlichkeit dieser Menschen noch einigermaßen verträumte Psychologie des Ich, welches nämlich weniger fester umzirkelt erscheint als das unsrige und gleichsam nach hinten offen steht, mit Früherem, ausser seiner engeren Individualität Gelegenen, fromm und spielerisch

¹⁰ Thomas Mann, Joseph und seine Brüder, Stockholmer Gesamtausgabe der Werke. (Frankfurt/Main, 1952), p. 1592.

verfliesst...." Speaking about Joseph, Mann said in this same article: "...bei diesem [Joseph] aber bereits als eine Art von lebenswürdiger religiöser Hochstapelei, denn mit vielem Bewusstsein macht er seine Laufbahn in Ägypten auf Grund einer blendenden Anpassung seiner Person an das Tammuz-Osiris-Schema...." The "Tammuz-Osiris-Schema" is one of death and resurrection. Tammuz-Osiris,¹¹ the young and beautiful god, is buried as a sacrifice by the women of Hebron, and on the third day he arises from the grave. This celebration takes place once a year. Toward the end of the article, Mann says: "Man sieht wohl, dass das Religionsgeschichtliche... für mich eine der Hauptanziehungskräfte des Gegenstandes bildet."

Thus far, Mann's concern with politics and his interest in Egyptian civilization and mythology have been mentioned. The next record of Mann's views on Joseph und seine Brüder is contained in his letters to Karl Kerényi¹² in which the main discussion concerns

¹¹Tammuz, or Thamuz, is a Babylonian sun god of agriculture and the spirit of vegetation. In times of drought and at the time of the summer solstice, the women of Phoenicia and Syria generally "wept" for Tammuz. Osiris is the great Egyptian god of the underworld and judge of the dead. He was considered as the principle of the good. He was often identified as the source of life and fruitfulness. See Gods, A Dictionary of Deities of All Lands, ed. Bessie G. Redfield (New York, 1931). Henceforth cited as Gods, A Dictionary.

¹²Károly Kerényi, born 1897, Hungarian philologist in classical studies, especially known for his research in mythology.

mythological motifs.¹³ The political and mythological motifs appear combined in the idea of the possibility of a "humanized" myth.

In a letter dated February, 1934, to Karl Kerényi, Mann writes:

"Ja erlauben Sie mir das Geständnis, dass ich kein Freund der ... geist-und intellektfeindlichen Bewegung bin. Ich habe sie früh gefürchtet und bekämpft, weil ich sie in allen ihren brutal-anti-humanen Konsequenzen durchschaute, bevor diese manifest wurden...

Um jene 'Rückkehr des europäischen Geistes zu den höchsten, den mythischen Realitäten,' von der Sie so eindrucksvoll sprechen, ist es wahrhaftig eine geistesgeschichtlich grosse und gute Sache, und ich darf mich rühmen, in meinem Werke gewissermassen Teil daran zu haben."¹⁴ The term "'humanized' myth" signifies a god-man

relationship. Since the mythical world in question is that of the Bible, the idea of a being which is considered God and man suggests itself. Mann's hero, Joseph, has, indeed, certain obvious god-like characteristics, and, as will be shown in this study, he can be compared in numerous ways to Jesus. In a letter to Karl Kerényi in March, 1934, Mann refers to one of Kerényi's remarks: "Einen Gott zu spielen, das bedeutet nach primitiver Denkweise immer ein wenig auch Gott zu sein..."¹⁵ Then, Mann says about Joseph:

¹³The correspondence between Mann and Kerényi during the years 1934-1945 was published in 1945 under the title: Romandichtung und Mythologie.

¹⁴Karl Kerényi, Romandichtung und Mythologie (Zürich, 1945), p. 20-21. Henceforth cited as Kerényi.

¹⁵Ibid., p. 30.

"Tatsächlich hilft mein Joseph selbst seiner Laufbahn besonders durch eine blendende und verschmitzt hochstaplerische Anpassung an das Tammuz-Osiris-Schema nach wodurch er, im Verein mit der Schönheit seiner 'Erscheinung' die Menschen bestirmt, ihn halb und halb aber auch wieder mehr als halb und halb, für einen Gott, für den Gott zu halten." ¹⁶

Mann mentions again that Joseph knowingly follows the pattern of Tammuz-Osiris. He points out that he has god-like traits and even has the ability to impress the people as being the God. It sounds as though Mann may be referring to the Christian God and the man who embodied Him, Jesus. Mann makes no definite statement about this, however.

Seven years later, Mann speaks for the first time about psychology with reference to his Joseph tetralogy. In February, 1941, in a letter to Karl Kerényi, he writes: "...und was sollte mein Element derzeit wohl sein als Mythos plus Psychologie. ¹⁷ Längst bin ich ein leidenschaftlicher Freund dieser Combination; denn tatsächlich ist Psychologie das Mittel, den Mythos den fascistischen Dunkelmännern aus den Händen zu nehmen und ihn ins Humane 'umzufunktionieren.'"

¹⁶Kerényi, p. 30.

¹⁷Mann "decided on a characteristic manoeuvre: to combine the mythical element with a highly rational, sophisticated psychology, to treat a 'dark,' primitive subject under the aspect of reason and light." See Hatfield, p. 97.

Diese Verbindung repräsentiert mir geradezu die Welt der Zukunft, ein Menschentum, das 'gesegnet ist oben vom Geiste herab und aus der Tiefe, die unten liegt.'¹⁸ From this comment, it is apparent that Mann wishes his work, which has an Old Testament setting, to express certain political convictions appropriate to the current situation.¹⁹ He still associates politics with his book as he did in 1926 in Pariser Rechenschaft. He is passionately opposed to the fascistic use of the myth, which was determined to destroy the humanistic tradition of Europe.

In 1948, six years after the completion of the Joseph tetralogy, Mann writes in the introduction to an English version of Joseph und seine Brüder about Joseph and his god-masks. He says Joseph's last god-mask looks remarkably American, because it is the mask of an American Hermes,²⁰ "a brilliant messenger of shrewdness, whose New Deal is unmistakably reflected in Joseph's magic administration of national economy."²¹ In the entire introduction

¹⁸Kerényi, p. 82.

¹⁹"Joseph ranges between tribal society and contemporary problems of twentieth century capitalism with its perspectives of emergent socialism." Thomas, p. 116.

²⁰Ibid., pp. 130-131.

Lesser, pp. 47-49.

²¹Thomas Mann, Joseph and His Brothers, trans. Helen Lowe-Porter (London, 1956), p. xiii.

to his work, Mann makes no comment on his views on Christianity, although he speaks again about myth, politics, religion, and Joseph's god-like traits.

A collection of essays by Mann, entitled Neue Studien, published in 1948, includes a lecture by the author on his novel, Joseph und seine Brüder.²² This lecture contains some of the author's most recent views on this work. It is known that Mann was a great admirer of Goethe, especially while writing the Joseph tetralogy. He even interrupted his work on this Old Testament story to write Lotte in Weimar, published in 1939. In this lecture, Mann relates that it was while reading the Old Testament Joseph story that the idea of elaborating upon the theme first occurred to him. He immediately thought of Goethe's reaction to the story. In Dichtung und Wahrheit, Goethe tells that as a boy he had dictated a story about Joseph to a friend of his, but had then destroyed the manuscript. At the age of sixty, Goethe writes: "Höchst liebenswürdig ist diese natürliche Geschichte: nur erscheint sie zu kurz, und man fühlt sich versucht, sie in allen Einzelheiten auszuführen."²² Mann says one might consider this comment as his motto while working on the tetralogy. Only after having mentioned at various times the political and cultural reasons for his writing the Joseph story, does

²² Thomas Mann, Neue Studien (Berlin, 1948), p. 159.

Thomas Mann point to a literary motivation. This fact emphasizes the importance he places on the political and cultural ideas he wishes to convey in his book. In the lecture, Mann speaks about the relationship between myth and current politics. He repeats the statement that the myth had fallen into disgrace through fascistic use.²³ He attempts to withdraw mythology from the immediate political context and "humanize" it. He even goes so far as to say that if the world should find anything remarkable about his Joseph tetralogy, it would be just this "humanizing" of the myth at a time when mythology was being used by fanatic political groups to enhance their power.²⁴

Mann further discusses the political situation in Germany, particularly the anti-Semitic movement: "Man hat in 'Joseph und seine Brüder' einen Juden-Roman, wohl gar nur einen Roman für Juden sehen wollen. Nun, die alt-testamentliche Stoffwahl war gewiss kein Zufall. Gewiss stand sie in geheimem trotzig-polemischen Zusammenhang mit Zeit-Tendenzen, die mir von Grund aus zuwider waren, mit dem in Deutschland besonders

²³"It is... Mann's mythical reply to fascist anthropology and sociology." See Slochower, p. 16.

²⁴J. M. Lindsay, Thomas Mann (Oxford, 1954), pp. 101 and 109. Note also: "In Joseph, then, and the other works from the same period, we have the fullest treatment Thomas Mann has given us of the idea of humanity." p. 112. Henceforth cited as Lindsay.

unerlaubten Rasse-Wahn, der einen Hauptbestandteil des fascistischen Pöbel-Mythos bildet. Einen Roman des jüdischen Geistes zu schreiben war zeitgemäss, gerade weil es unzeitgemäss schien."²⁵

Thus, in the afore-mentioned comments on his Joseph tetralogy, Mann speaks about his fondness for Egyptian culture, his late-developed interest in mythology combined with psychology, the political implications he wishes to make by "humanizing" the myth, the dual blessing, Joseph's god-like character, and his reminiscence of Goethe.

In summary, one must conclude from this survey that Mann did not significantly change his attitude or intentions during the years from 1926 to 1948. Nowhere does he mention the allusions he has made to the New Testament in his novel, nor does he offer any specific comments on his attitude toward religion in general or Christianity in particular. One might expect him to remark about Christianity while speaking about the political situation or the persecution of the Jews, but he remains silent. There are, however, three exceptions to this general statement. Mann's first remark about Jesus can be found in his lecture held in Vienna in 1936, on "Freud und die Zukunft." Here he mentions Jesus

²⁵ Mann, Neue Studien, p. 170.

along with several historically important people: Cleopatra, Alexander, Caesar, and Napoleon. He maintains that these people consciously associated their own lives with important figures, real or mythical, of previous times. They knowingly patterned their lives after a particular character. In other words, they lived according to a mythical pattern. The mythical pattern which Jesus follows is, of course, that of the Messiah, as described by Isaiah. Mann does not reveal any subjective feelings toward Jesus in this lecture, but only mentions him along with several other historical figures.²⁶

The second cautious remark Mann makes on Jesus is contained in a letter to Dr. Kuno Fiedler,²⁷ dated March, 1940, four years after his lecture in honor of Freud. Here he suggests that it is perhaps necessary to connect the teachings of Jesus with a hierarchy of dogma and the age-old popular tradition of the myth of the sacrificed god with the wound in his side, in order for the teachings and the belief in Jesus to be passed down through generations. The god (with the wound in his side) to which Mann refers here is Tammuz-Osiris. Mann then states that Tammuz-Osiris is his hero. This is the first time that he connects Jesus

²⁶ Thomas Mann, Adel des Geistes (Stockholm, 1945), pp. 595-596.

²⁷ Author of the book, Glaube, Gnade und Erlösung nach dem Jesus der Synoptiker, which Fiedler sent to Thomas Mann in 1940.

with Joseph. Even here, the association is indirect with the aid of mythology and Tammuz-Osiris. After making this reference to his novel, Mann raises the question as to whether historical Christianity is perhaps not more important than the historical Jesus. However, he leaves the question unanswered.²⁸

In a private letter to Ernst Bertram in December, 1926, which was not published until 1960, Mann makes his most subjective statements on Jesus and Christianity. He starts by saying that he is convinced that the figure of Joseph is based on the figures of Seth, Tammuz-Osiris, Adonis, and Dionysos, but that this does not necessarily mean that Joseph did not exist. He draws a parallel to Jesus and states that Jesus' life has been imbued with the entire existing religious heritage, and that His life also seems to be only a "Sonnennmythus."²⁹

These three statements are the only ones in which Mann speaks about Christianity. Thus, in view of Mann's reticence on religion, the question may be raised as to why he makes several obvious references to the New Testament while writing on an Old Testament

²⁸Thomas Mann, Gesammelte Werke in Zwölf Bänden (Frankfurt/Main, 1960), vol. 10, pp. 769-771. This letter is dated Princeton, New Jersey, March 19, 1940, and first appeared in Maas und Wert, 3. Jahrgang, Heft 4, 1940.

²⁹Thomas Mann, Thomas Mann an Ernst Bertram, Briefe aus den Jahren 1910-1955 (Pfullingen, 1960), pp. 154-155.

theme. It is hoped that the following investigation of Thomas Mann's use of Christian concepts in his Joseph tetralogy will contribute to our knowledge of his attitude toward Christianity.³⁰

For the sake of clarity, it seemed advisable to divide Mann's references to the New Testament into the topics dealt with in the following pages. Each topic has been treated separately. There is, of course, some overlapping of themes, as for instance in Sacrificial Lamb, Eucharist, and Resurrection. It is easier, however, to discern implications and make comparisons if these motives are dealt with independently. Occasionally, where deemed necessary, cross-references have been indicated.

³⁰ The Biblical citations in this thesis are taken from Die Bibel, oder Die ganze Heilige Schrift Alten und Neuen Testaments, nach der deutschen Übersetzung D. Martin Luthers, 2 vols., (St. Louis, Mo., 1882.)

VIRGIN BIRTH

Virgin birth was foreshadowed in the Old Testament in Isaiah 7:14: "Siehe, eine Jungfrau ist schwanger und wird einen Sohn gebären, den wird sie heissen Immanuel." Two of the Gospels mention the birth of Jesus, St. Matthew and St. Luke. They both state that Jesus was born of the Holy Ghost and conceived by the Virgin Mary. Some scholars believe the lines of Luke 1:26-38 are a transference from a popular heathen mythological theme from Egyptian, Babylonian, and even Indian legends about the relationship between gods and mortal women from which were born heroes and famous men. These legends, however, do not speak of virgin birth.¹

The Nicene Creed cites the fact that Jesus was of virgin birth. "... Welcher um uns Menschen und um unser Seligkeit willen vom Himmel kommen ist, und leibhaftig worden durch den heiligen Geist von der Jungfrauen Maria and Mensch worden...." ²

The Old Testament does not refer to Joseph's birth as being

¹ Bibel-Lexikon, ed. Haag und van den Born (Zürich, Köln, 1956), see entry "Maria." Henceforth cited as Bibel-Lexikon.

² J. T. Müller, Die symbolischen Bücher der evangelisch-lutherischen Kirche, deutsch und lateinisch... (Glittersloh, 1912). Henceforth cited as Müller, Die symbolischen Bücher.

a virgin one. Genesis 30:22-24: "Gott gedachte aber an Rahel und erhöhte sie und machte sie fruchtbar. Da ward sie schwanger und gebar einen Sohn und sprach: Gott hat meine Schmach von mir genommen. Und hieß ihn Joseph. . . ."

Thomas Mann's version of the Joseph story relates that Joseph was born of a virgin.³ Mann writes that Rachel gave birth to Joseph after having been barren for twelve years. The birth occurred at the time of the sign of the virgin, and Jacob liked to think of Rachel as being a heavenly virgin and a mother-goddess, a Hathor and Isis.⁴ Jacob calls Joseph a lamb, but with an emotion which is described as follows: "Aber der Tonfall, in dem er es tat, und von dem Lamm redete, das aus der Jungfrau hervorgegangen, hatte nichts mit Scherz zu tun, sondern schien für den kleinen Balg in der Hängewiege die Heiligkeit des

³Lesser, p. 36.

Hans M. Wolff, Thomas Mann (Bern, 1957), p. 94.

Slochower, p. 25.

Käte Hamburger, Thomas Mann's Roman 'Joseph und seine Brüder' (Stockholm, 1945), p. 55.

⁴Hathor, Egyptian goddess of the sky; also goddess of love and joy. See Gods, A Dictionary, entry "Hathor."

Isis, Egyptian goddess of fecundity. See Gods, A Dictionary, entry "Isis."

fleckenlosen Erstlingsopfers aus der Herde in Anspruch zu nehmen."⁵ By attributing to Rachel the possibility of being a mythical virgin at the time of Joseph's birth and by speaking of Joseph with the reverence that is reserved for a spotless sacrificial lamb, Mann lends to his Joseph a Christ-like quality.

Another reference to Jesus is contained in Mann's choice of words when he speaks about Joseph's birth: "...dass ein Kind uns geboren, ein Sohn uns gegeben sei...."⁶ These are the words used in Isaiah 9:5 and are generally considered as a prophecy of the birth of the Messiah. These words are also contained in the Christmas liturgy. Mann uses the expression: "in Windeln gewickelt," which is taken from the Christmas story, Luke 2:7-12, to describe the little Joseph.⁷ The words "Licht" and "Klarheit," which are used in a few passages in the Bible⁸ as attributes of the Messiah, are used by Mann in order to describe an aura around the infant son.⁹ Jacob called his son "ein Reis und einen Zweig,

⁵Mann, Joseph und seine Brüder, p. 387.

⁶Ibid., p. 384.

⁷Ibid., p. 385.

⁸Isaiah 9:1, Luke 2:9, John 1:9, 8:12.

⁹Mann, Joseph und seine Brüder, p. 385.

der aus der zartesten Wurzel gebrochen sei."¹⁰ This image is used also in the seventeenth century folksong "Es ist ein Reis entsprungen (now frequently 'Ros') aus einer Wurzel zart...." This refers to "Wurzel Jesse," in English "rod of Jesse," i. e., Jesse as being the father of the line of David, or in other words, to the family tree of Jesus.¹¹ Mann, of course, knows that the expression "Wurzel Jesse" remains popular through the folksong. While lamenting Joseph's death, Jacob cries: "Über das Reis, dessen Wurzeln ausgerissen sind, über meine Hoffnung, die ausgerissen ist wie ein Setzling - Wehklage."¹² On his death bed, Jacob addressed his son: "Joseph, mein Reis, du Sohn der Jungfrau...."¹³

Joseph himself claims that he is of virgin birth. In an interview with Potiphere he speaks about his birth and says: "Sie

¹⁰ Mann, Joseph und seine Brüder, p. 387.

¹¹ In Isaiah 11:1, "...wird der Messias als 'Reis' und 'Schössling' aus der Wurzel Jesajas angekündigt. Darauf beruhen die Bez. Marias und Christi als 'Reis' und 'Blüte aus der Wurzel Jesses,' ... sowie die Darstellungen des 'Baumes Jesse' in der Kunst, die seit dem 11. Jh. nachweisbar sind." See Lexikon für Theologie und Kirche, eds. Joseph Höfer und Karl Rohner (Freiburg, 1957), entry "Isai."

¹² Mann, Joseph und seine Brüder, p. 708.

¹³ Ibid., p. 2017.

Lesser, p. 60.

war jungfräulich. "¹⁴ Mann's description of Joseph as he stands before Potiphre alludes to Jesus teaching in the temple.¹⁵ "Nicht anders stand er da im dämmernden Säulenbau dieses Baumgartens als im Tempel ein begeistertes Kind, in dem Gott sich verherrlicht und ihm die Zunge löst, dass es kündigt und lehrt zum Staunen der Lehrer. "¹⁶ Later, Potiphre explains that, of course, his birth could not have been a virgin birth, but he does it with a feeling which Mann describes as follows: "Er sagte es aus gesundem Sinn für die praktisch ihm zugewandte Seite der Wirklichkeit und gleichsam, um den Gott nicht merken zu lassen, dass er ihn erkannte. "¹⁷

¹⁴ Mann, Joseph und seine Brüder, p. 995.

¹⁵ Luke 2:41-52.

¹⁶ Mann, Joseph und seine Brüder, p. 999. See also Lesser, p. 61.

¹⁷ Mann, Joseph und seine Brüder, p. 1002.

TRINITY

Most theologians do not consider any threefold mention of God in the Old Testament as equivalent to the Divine Trinity in the New Testament. There are some, however, who believe that the Old Testament statements foreshadow later Christian belief in the Trinity.¹

The oldest mention of the Trinity in the New Testament is found in Paul's letters. Paul expresses his conviction that the Divine Unity consists of God, Christ, and the Holy Ghost. He makes it clear that this Trinity is not related to the heathen concept of a divine family of three,² as for example the Egyptian triad of Osiris-Isis-Horus, in which Osiris is the god of the underworld and judge of the dead, and often identified with the sun god, Ra; Isis is the goddess of fecundity, wife and sister of Osiris and mother of Horus; and Horus is the rising sun, one form of the sun god, Ra.

The belief in the Christian Trinity rests mostly on the following statements: ³ 2 Corinthians 13:13: "Die Gnade unseres

¹Bibel-Lexikon, see entry "Dreifaltigkeit."

²Ibid., see entry "Dreifaltigkeit."

³Ibid., see entry "Dreifaltigkeit."

Herrn Jesus Christi und die Liebe Gottes und die Gemeinschaft des Heiligen Geistes sei mit euch allen...." Matthew 28:19: "Darum gehet hin und lehret alle Völker und taufet sie in Namen des Vaters und des Sohnes und des heiligen Geistes...." The accounts of Jesus' baptism do not refer to the Divine Trinity. The spirit of God which appears as a dove is not the third part of the Trinity, but is the spirit which leads Jesus as the Messiah.⁴

Both the Apostles' Creed and the Nicene Creed mention the Trinity. The Apostles' Creed in the official version of the Lutheran Church reads: "Ich glaube an Gott Vater Allmächtigen, Schöpfer Himmels und der Erden. Und an Jesum Christum, seinen einigen Sohn, unsern Herrn... Ich glaube an den heiligen Geist...."⁵ The Nicene Creed reads: "Ich glaube an einen einigen allmächtigen Gott, den Vater, Schöpfer Himmels und der Erden... Und an einen einigen Herrn Jesum Christum, Gottes einigen Sohn, der vom Vater geboren ist vor der ganzen Welt... Und an den Herrn, den heiligen Geist. Der da lebendig macht. Der vom Vater und Sohn ausgehet. Der mit dem Vater und dem Sohn zugleich angebetet und zugleich geehret wird...."⁶

⁴Bibel-Lexikon, see entry "Dreifaltigkeit."

⁵Text according to version in J. T. Müller, Die symbolischen Bücher.

⁶Text according to version in J. T. Müller, Die symbolischen Bücher.

In Joseph und seine Brüder, the theme of a trinity occurs in various forms. It appears for the first time when Joseph explains the feast of the solstice to Benjamin. There are several groups of three in this story. There is the father, the daughter, and their son, Tammuz-Adonai, all of whom are divine. The people of Hebron believed Tammuz-Adonai to be son, brother, and spouse of Ashtar. "Tammuz was a Babylonian sun god of agriculture and the spirit of vegetation. Ishtar became his wife and he was slain by her. Later, he was brought back from the lower world, his life thus symbolizing the dying vegetation in the winter, and its return in the spring. In times of drought, and at the time of the summer solstice, the women of Phoenicia and Syria generally 'wept' for Tammuz."⁷ Ishtar was the earth mother, goddess of the reproductive forces of nature and called, in Babylonian mythology, "the brilliant goddess," the "goddess who rejoices mankind." As earth mother, she destroyed her lover, Tammuz, the god of vegetation.⁸ Ishtar was worshipped by the Semitic peoples under different names, such as Astarte, Ashtat, and Ashtoreth.⁹

⁷Gods, A Dictionary, see entry "Tammuz."

⁸Ibid., see entry "Ishtar."

⁹A Dictionary of Non-Classical Mythology, comp. by Egerton Sykes (New York, 1952), see entry "Ishtar." Henceforth cited as Dictionary of Non-Classical Mythology.

The next tale of a threefold divinity in Mann's story concerns the Egyptian city of On. "On also... das Haus dessen, der Chepre am Morgen ist, Re an seinem Mittag und Atum am Abend...." ¹⁰ Re, or Ra, was the "Lord of the two horizons," the great god of the sun, the principal Egyptian diety. ¹¹ Chepre or Khepera is another form of the sun god. He is the morning sun, and with him is associated the idea of birth and resurrection. ¹² Atum, or Aten, was the solar disc. ¹³ The doctrine of On was symbolized, according to Mann's story, in the geographical situation of the city. On stood at the apex of a triangular region, at the source of two rivers. The streets and houses were spaced according to this triangle. The diety was named Atum-Re-Horakhte of On; he stood for tolerance, complaisance and harmony. ¹⁴

In Mann's chapter dealing with Jacob's discussion of Elohim, as to whether it is plural or singular in meaning as well as form,

¹⁰ Mann, Joseph und seine Brüder, p. 815.

¹¹ Gods, A Dictionary, see entry "Ra."

¹² Dictionary of Non-Classical Mythology, see entry "Khepera."

¹³ Gods, A Dictionary, see entry "Ra."

¹⁴ Mann, Joseph und seine Brüder, p. 820.

a point is made of the fact that Jacob experienced God as a three-fold unity.¹⁵ "Er sprach nämlich erstens vom Vater-Gott oder auch Gott, dem Vater, zweitens von einem guten Hirten, der uns, seine Schafe, weide, und drittens von einem, den er den 'Engel' nannte, und von dem die siebzig den Eindruck gewannen, dass er uns mit Taubenflügeln überschatte. Sie machten Elohim aus, die dreifaltige Einheit."¹⁶ The Old Testament Joseph story does not relate Jacob's mentioning Elohim on his trip to Egypt. Mann mentions first "Gott, der Vater," secondly, "ein guter Hirte, der uns, seine Schafe, weide," and thirdly, "der 'Engel'." This enumeration refers to the New Testament concept of God the Father; Jesus the shepherd; and the Holy Ghost. The term, "Engel", which to those listening to Jacob seems to have dove wings, might refer to the spirit of God which leads Jesus as the Messiah and appears as a dove. Although this dove is not considered part of the trinity,¹⁷ it is to popular belief that Mann probably alluded. The statement that these three concepts constitute Elohim, the threefold unity, emphasizes the allusion to the Christian Trinity.

The above-mentioned references to a trinity are irrelevant to the Joseph story itself. Mann may wish to tell the Christian

¹⁵ Lesser, p. 57.

¹⁶ Mann, Joseph und seine Brüder, p. 1941.

¹⁷ Bibel-Lexikon, see entry "Dreifaltigkeit."

reader how the three articles of the Apostles' Creed or Nicene Creed were used prior to Jesus. The idea of a divine trinity had existed among the people of Hebron in the Tammuz story, among the Egyptians in the city of On as the god Atum-Re-Horakhte, and among the Jews as Elohim, the threefold unity.

IDENTIFICATION WITH A DIVINE PATTERN

Both Jesus and Joseph identify themselves with a divine pattern.¹ Jesus believes he is the Servant of the Lord about whom Isaiah prophesies. Albert Schweitzer states in his book, The Quest of the Historical Jesus: "This thought Jesus found in the prophecies of Isaiah, which spoke of the suffering Servant of the Lord. The mysterious description of Him who in His humiliation was despised and misunderstood, who, nevertheless, bears the guilt of others and afterwards is made manifest in what he has done for them, points, He feels, to Himself."² Joseph identifies himself with a mythical pattern, with that of the mangled and arisen God, with Tammuz and Osiris.³ "Eingeräumt, dass Josephs Art, seinem Leben durch die Anknüpfung ans Obere Richtigkeit und Wirklichkeit zu verleihen, ein anderes, weniger gemüthafes, sondern witzig berechnenderes Gepräge trug als in Jaakobs Fall: mit der Überzeugung, dass ein Leben und Geschehen ohne den Echtheitsausweis höherer

¹Lesser, p. 35.

²Albert Schweitzer, The Quest of the Historical Jesus (London, 1945), p. 388. Henceforth cited as Schweitzer.

³Lesser, p. 36.

Gustaf Lundgren, "Das Ich als Weltnabel. Schicksalsphilosophie in Thomas Manns Joseph-Roman," Die Neue Rundschau, Sondernummer, Juni, 1945, pp. 185-187.

See also Wolff, p. 261; Thomas, p. 119; Hans Eichner, Thomas Mann (Bern, 1953), p. 79; and Hatfield, p. 99.

Wirklichkeit, welches nicht auf Heilig-Bekanntem fusst und sich darauf stützt, sich in nichts Himmlischem zu spiegeln und sich darin wieder zu erkennen vermag, überhaupt kein Leben und Geschehen ist. . . . " ⁴

Both Jesus and Joseph accept death voluntarily; they believe their fate is so willed by God, and intentionally put themselves in the hands of their opponents. It is for the purpose of dying that Jesus goes to Jerusalem. He deliberately invokes the anger of the Pharisees by his behavior in the temple: "...thinks only how He can so provoke the Pharisees and the rulers that they will be compelled to get rid of Him. That is why He violently cleanses the Temple, and attacks the Pharisees, in the presence of the people, with passionate invective." ⁵ While in the pit, Joseph realizes that he brought death upon himself and that he had actually wished it. At the same time, he believes God meant it to be. "Staunend blickte er in das Rätsel selbstverderbischen Übermuts, das ihm durch sein eigenes vertracktes Benehmen aufgegeben war. Es zu lösen, ging über seinen Verstand, aber es geht über jeden, weil allzuviel Unberechenbares, Widervernünftiges und vielleicht Heiliges darin einschlägig ist." ⁶ It was his "selbstverderbischer

⁴Mann, Joseph und seine Brüder, pp. 646-647.

⁵Schweitzer, p. 389.

⁶Mann, Joseph und seine Brüder, p. 644.

"Übermut" that caused Joseph to smuggle the coat of many colors out of Jacob's tent, and to wear it when he approached the brothers at Dothan. His self-assured appearance in the coveted coat provoked the brothers and gave the last impetus for their attack upon him.

In the pit, Joseph recalls having related his dreams to his brothers, which he admits he never should have done. Mann comments: "...es war ganz unmöglich und über jede Statthaftigkeit taktlos gewesen. Dass es das war, darüber war er sich auch, wie er nun zugab, im stillen und geheimen jederzeit und auch im Augenblick, da er also handelte, vollkommen, im klaren gewesen, - und dennoch hatte er es getan. Warum? Es hatte ihm unwiderstehlich gejackt, so zu tun: er hatte es tun müssen, weil Gott ihn eigens so geschaffen hatte, dass er es tate, weil Er es mit ihm und durch ihn also vorgehabt hatte, mit einem Wort, weil Joseph in die Grube hatte kommen sollen - und, ganz genau gesagt, hatte kommen wollen."⁷ In the Old Testament story, Joseph does not reflect while in the pit; he undergoes no change. There is also no mention of the length of his stay. Mann has Joseph spend three days in the pit. This addition on Mann's part is an obvious allusion to Jesus' three day internment.⁸

⁷ Mann, Joseph und seine Brüder, p. 639.

⁸ Hans Meyers, Thomas Mann (Berlin, 1950), p. 261.

Another allusion to the New Testament is Joseph's concept of God's responsibility for his suffering.

Christ says the following after His resurrection: Luke 24:45-46: "Da öffnete er ihnen das Verstandnis, dass sie die Schrift verstanden, und sprach zu ihnen: Also ist's geschrieben, und also musste Christus leiden und auferstehen von den Toten am dritten Tage. . . ." ⁹

Mann's Joseph also believes that God intended him to suffer, and that it was not by chance that he was mistreated and thrown into the pit. After meeting his brothers in Egypt, he says to them: "Das musste alles so sein, und Gott hat's getan, nicht ihr. . . ." ¹⁰

In the Old Testament, Joseph says to his brothers, Genesis 45:4-5: "Ich bin Joseph, euer Bruder, den ihr nach Ägypten verkauft habt. Und nun bekümmert euch nicht und denkt nicht, dass ich darum zürne, dass ihr mich hierher verkauft habt; denn um eures Lebens willen hat mich Gott vor euch hergesandt. " In this instance, Mann may have intended to remind the reader of Jesus' conviction that His life was in the hands of God.

⁹See also Matthew 26:54.

¹⁰Mann, Joseph und seine Brüder, p. 1888.

SELF-REVELATION

Jesus reveals himself as the Son of God and as one of the Divine Trinity. One way in which He reveals himself is by the simple statement: "Ich bin es."¹ John 13:19: "Jetzt sage ich's euch, ehe denn es geschieht, auf dass, wenn es geschehen ist, ihr glaubet, dass Ich es bin."²

Mann alludes to the Bible by having his Joseph, who has certain Christ-like characteristics, use the phrase "Ich bin's" at two important places in the story - first, at the time of his imprisonment; and second, when he makes himself known to his brothers in Egypt. The Old Testament description of Joseph's imprisonment reads as follows: Genesis 39: 20-21: "Da nahm ihn sein Herr und legte ihn ins Gefängnis, darin des Königs Gefangene lagen; und er lag allda im Gefängnis. Aber der Herr war mit ihm und neigte seine Huld zu ihm und liess ihn Gnade finden vor dem Amtmann über das Gefängnis...."

When Mann's Joseph enters the state prison at Zawi-Re, Mai-Sachme, the governor of the prison, asks Joseph if he is the former

¹Eichner, pp. 79-80.

²Erich Heller, Thomas Mann (Frankfurt/Main, 1959), p. 303.

See also John 18:5.

steward of the great courtier, Potiphre. Joseph replies in all simplicity: "Ich bin's." ³ It is evident from Mann's reflections on his hero's answer that he intended to bestow on him a mysterious quality. Joseph has the ability to impress others as having an affinity with the divine. "Und doch war das eine etwas starke Antwort ... spielte das 'Ich' eine alarmierende Rolle darin - im Zusammenhang mit dem 'Es,' das den unbestimmten Verdacht erregte, mehr zu beinhalten, als bloss die Hauswirtschaft, die nach der Frage zu bestätigen war, also dass Frage und Antwort sich nicht recht zu decken schienen, sondern diese über jene hinausging und man zu der Rückfrage: 'Was bist du' oder auch 'Wer bist du?' versucht sein mochte...." ⁴

When Mann's Joseph reveals himself to his brothers in Egypt, he uses the same phrase, slightly modified. Before stating Joseph's exact words, the author reminds the reader of Joseph's ability to impress people as a person closely associated with God. He recalls the effect Joseph had on the governor of the prison at Zawi-Re. One might expect Joseph to impress upon his brothers who threw him into the pit the importance and dignity of his position, his power, and vast influence. He does indeed state "Ich bin's," but he lessens the effect of awe the assertion usually evokes by putting it in the following context: "Kinder, ich bin's ja.

³ Mann, Joseph und seine Brüder, p. 1464.

⁴ Ibid., p. 1464.

Ich bin euer Bruder Joseph." ⁵ Joseph still sees himself as having a special rapport with the divine, but he wishes also to be known as the brother. The Old Testament, on the other hand, does not use the formula "Ich bin's." Genesis 45:3 reads: "...Ich bin Joseph. Lebt mein Vater noch?" Scholars differ on the interpretation of this passage in Thomas Mann's novel. Erich Heller believes that Joseph reveals himself only as brother and that he does not infer a close association with the divine. ⁶ Henry Hatfield is of a similar opinion; he writes: " 'It is I' was the formula in which Joseph had formerly implied his association with the divine figures, but he uses it here in a purely human sense. He has given up his mythical pretensions to superhuman status; his boyish dream of pre-eminence prophesied only secular glory, for he is 'no messenger of divine salvation, but only an economist.' After his installation as Pharaoh's minister, he had relinquished the 'mythical' name Osarsiph. Joseph's recognition of his own limitations is the final mark of his maturity; in the tradition of the Goethean Bildungsroman, he has renounced." ⁷

Jonas Lesser, on the other hand, states that the phrase "It is I." is pronounced by a god, especially at the time of

⁵Mann, Joseph und seine Brüder, p. 1887. Eichner, pp. 79-80. Hamburger, p. 94.

⁶Heller, p. 303.

⁷Hatfield, p. 114.

revelation to the brothers: "Nachdem Joseph sich seinen Brüdern⁸ zu erkennen gegeben, lehnt er jedes 'Hosiannah' ab, denn diesmal hat sich nicht der Mensch als Gott zu erkennen gegeben, wie so oft zuvor, sondern umgekehrt der Gott als Mensch."⁸

⁸ Lesser, p. 62.

THE RIDE TO DOTHAN

In both the Old Testament and in Mann's story, Dothan is the site at which Joseph is thrown into the pit, where he is sold to the merchants, and where the animal is killed whose blood is to stand for his own in the eyes of his father. Mann elaborates all these events with the purpose of alluding to the story of Jesus.

Just as Dothan is the place at which three important events in Joseph's life took place, so Jerusalem and its vicinity are the surroundings in which Jesus partakes of his last meal, was betrayed, and interred for three days. Jesus rides to Jerusalem on a donkey: Matthew 21:2: "... Gehet hin in den Flecken, der vor euch liegt, and bald werdet ihr eine Eselin finden angebunden, und ein Füllen bei ihr; löset sie auf, und führet sie zu mir. " At the time of His entrance in the city on Palm Sunday, he is hailed: Matthew 21:9: "Das Volk aber, das vorging und nachfolgte, schrie und sprach: Hosianna dem Sohn Davids! Gelobet sei, der da kommt in dem Namen des Herrn! Hosianna in der Höhe!"

In the Old Testament story, there is no mention of Joseph's riding on a donkey to Dothan and being cheered. In Mann's version, however, Joseph rides on a white donkey and is welcomed by the people in the streets. They call to him and talk to him at the city gates and fountains. He interprets a dream. They are impressed

with his beauty and wisdom. He is wearing the coat of many colors.

Mann comments: "Manche hielten ihn, wiederum vermöge des Schleiers, aber auch auf Grund seines vielen Mundvorrats, geradezu für einen Gott und zeigten Neigung, ihn anzubeten."¹

¹Mann, Joseph und seine Brüder, p. 592.

SALE OF JOSEPH AND JUDAH'S KISS

Thomas Mann's account of the sale of Joseph does not adhere to the Old Testament version but alludes to the betrayal of Jesus.

The Old Testament story reads as follows: Genesis 37:26-28:

"Da sprach Juda zu seinen Brüdern: Was hilft's uns, dass wir unsern Bruder erwürgen und sein Blut verbergen? Kommt, lasst uns ihn den Ismaelitern verkaufen, dass sich unsere Hände nicht an ihm vergreifen; denn er ist unser Bruder, unser Fleisch und Blut. Und sie gehorchten ihm. Und da die Midianiter, die Kaufleute, vorüberreisten, zogen sie ihn heraus aus der Grube und verkauften ihn den Ismaelitern um zwanzig Silberlinge; die brachten ihn nach Ägypten."

In Mann's story, the Ishmaelites pull Joseph out of the pit. The brothers see the group of merchants traveling by, and Judah suddenly thinks of selling Joseph. Judah believes it would be the best way to do away with Joseph without staining their hands in blood. The brothers beckon the Ishmaelites to come to them. After some introductory conversation, the leader of the merchants asks the brothers whether they know who this person is whom they have just pulled out of the pit. Dan replies that he is a good-for-nothing and a villain. Judah, with the sale in mind, tries to rate him higher. The Ishmaelites offer to buy him. Judah enumerates his brother's

skills and praises him. While doing this, he walks over to Joseph and kisses him. The merchants ask the brothers to quote a price, and Judah replies, thirty pieces of silver. When the buyers object, Judah reduces the price, first to twenty-five and then to twenty pieces of silver.

Judah's kiss and his attempt to sell Joseph for thirty pieces of silver are reminiscent of the Gospel's account of the betrayal of Jesus. The similarity to the New Testament is striking when one considers the total setting of the sale of Joseph in Mann's story. Immediately following the sale, the brothers slay a lamb and invite the Ishmaelites to celebrate with them. There is no mention of such a meal in the Old Testament story. The total picture suggests the betrayal of Jesus and the Lord's supper. This meal is Joseph's last meal with his brothers. He eats lamb with them. The idea of forgiveness is present. Judah's kiss and the asking price of thirty pieces of silver have been mentioned.

After having described Joseph as a sacrificial lamb,¹ Mann speaks more specifically about the sale. He has already established a similarity between the sale of Joseph and the betrayal of Jesus. He then proceeds to emphasize a point in which the two events differ. Mann judges the actual sale of Joseph less harshly than most Christians judge the betrayal of Jesus. Jesus remarks in Mark 14:21: "Zwar des Menschen Sohn geht hin, wie von ihm geschrieben

¹cf. this thesis, pp. 44-47.

steht; weh ' aber dem Menschen, durch welchen des Menschen Sohn verraten wird! Es wäre demselben Menschen besser, dass er nie geboren wäre." Mann, on the other hand, weighs the sin of the sale of Joseph not nearly so heavily. On the contrary, he compares it with other sales in a rather humorous way. ² The sin is completely absolved when Joseph returns the kiss to Judah upon reuniting in Egypt.

The Old Testament story reads, Genesis 45:15: "Und er küsste alle seine Brüder und weinte über ihnen...." In Mann's version, Joseph kisses only Judah and remarks: "Innig umarm ich dich zur Beglückwünschung, wie auch zum Willkomm und küsse dein Löwenhaupt. Siehe, es ist der Kuss, den du mir gabst vor den Minäern, - heute geb ' ich ihn dir wieder, mein Bruder, und ist nun ausgelöscht. Alle küss' ich in Einem...." ³ In this speech, Joseph is referring to the kiss Judah gave him at the time of the sale, which in turn, alludes to the betrayal of Jesus. In the Old Testament story, Judah does not kiss Joseph at the time of the sale.

Concerning the sin of the sale, Mann says: "Doch haben ihn [den Verkaufsgedanken] die Jahrtausende mit allzu hohem Posten

² Mann, Joseph und seine Brüder, pp. 668-669.

³ Ibid., p. 1888.

aufs Schuldkonto der Brüder verbucht ... Der Vater verkaufte
seine Töchter zur Ehe - und die Achte hier hätten überhaupt keinen
Atem gehabt und wären nicht dagesessen, wenn nicht Jaakob ihre
Mutter gekauft hätte von Laban um vierzehnjährige Fron."⁴

⁴Mann, Joseph und seine Brüder, pp. 668-669.

SACRIFICIAL LAMB

In gratitude for his crops, the farmer in Israel used to offer part of the first harvest to God. This was practiced in other lands, too. In ancient times, the gifts were probably given voluntarily, and the form of the offering varied. The Israelitic law insisted on this custom. Figuratively, Israel is named Yahweh's sacrificial lamb.¹

In the New Testament, the expression "sacrificial lamb" is used figuratively and separately for Christ, for the Holy Ghost, and for the Christians.²

Christ is called the Lamb of God twice by John the Baptist: John 1:29: "Siehe, das ist Gottes Lamm, welches der Welt Sünde trägt!" And John 1:36: "Siehe, das ist Gottes Lamm!" The origin, as well as the meaning, of the designation "Gottes Lamm" is not clear. Traditionally, one explains this term, used with reference to Christ, as meaning the lamb that was sent by God to be sacrificed for man as an atonement for his sins. According to this explanation, John the Baptist's remark contained a prophecy of Jesus' redeeming death. This interpretation may derive from

¹Bibel-Lexikon, see entry "Erstlinge."

²Ibid., see entry "Erstlinge."

Isaiah 53:7, or from the significance of the sacrificial lamb in the Jewish cult, perhaps at Passover.³

According to another source, the expression "Lamb of God" was originally the Aramaic equivalent to Servant of God, and John the Baptist was referring only to this when saying "Lamb of God."⁴

Nowhere in the Old Testament story is Joseph referred to as a lamb. Mann, however, uses this term with reference to his hero. In the chapter on Virgin Birth in this thesis, it is pointed out that Jacob refers to his son as a lamb, with an emotion suited for the "Heiligkeit des fleckenlosen Erstlingsopfers."⁵

When Joseph first stands in front of Pharaoh and is asked whether or not he is a "sogenanntes inspiriertes Lamm,"⁶ he replies that already as a child he was accustomed to being called the lamb of his father. His mother, whom he refers to as "die Sternenmagd," gave birth to him at the time of the sign of the virgin, and her name was Rachel, which meant "Mutterschaf."⁷ Joseph is here somewhat

³ Bibel-Lexikon, see entry "Lamm Gottes."

⁴ Ibid., see entry "Lamm Gottes."

⁵ See this thesis, pp. 19-20.

⁶ Mann, Joseph und seine Brüder, p. 1590.

⁷ Ibid., p. 1591.

more cautious about his claim to virgin birth. Pharaoh addresses him casually with the words "Lamm Gottes." ⁸ This expression is used in the mass, usually in Latin, "Agnus Dei."

One of the many titles Pharaoh gives Joseph is "guter Hirte des Volks." ⁹ Jesus, too, is often called the good shepherd. By calling Joseph a lamb, Mann lends his hero an additional Christ-like characteristic.

Joseph's silence at the time of the sale is a further allusion to the Bible. Deutero-Isaiah makes prophecies concerning the Servant of the Lord. Christians consider these lines as referring to Jesus' suffering, Isaiah 53:7: "Da er gestraft und gemartet war, tat er seinen Mund nicht auf wie ein Lamm, das zur Schlachtbank geführt wird, und wie ein Schaf, das verstummt vor seinem Scherer und seinen Mund nicht auftut."

At the crucial point preceding the sale when Dan tells the Ishmaelites that what they had found was a slave and a villain, Mann's Joseph is described as follows: "...denn in der Tat sagte Joseph nichts, sondern sass immer mit sanftmütig niedergeschlagenen Augen und benahm sich alles in allem wie ein Lamm, das vor seinem Scherer verstummt." ¹⁰

⁸ Mann, Joseph und seine Brüder, p. 1657.

⁹ Ibid., p. 1668.

¹⁰ Ibid., p. 676.

The choice of the words "ein Lamm, das vor seinem Scherer verstummt," in conjunction with the preceding suffering of both the Servant of God and Joseph, is a definite reference to the biblical passage just quoted, as well as an allusion to Jesus' silence before his trial.¹¹ The similarity between Joseph's last meal and the Eucharist will be dealt with in the next chapter. Years later, when Mann's Joseph is put into the pit for the second time, this time by Potiphre,¹² the latter, acting as judge at the trial, says to Joseph: "Du musst verstummen wie das Lamm, das vor seinem Scherer verstummt. . . ." ¹³

Another reference to the sacrificial lamb is the ambiguous word "einst" in the following sentence: "Mochte aber der Vater nur glauben über den Tod hinaus nach alter Zurechnung, dann würde dennoch, dachte Joseph im Grabe, das Blut des Tieres angenommen werden wie einst für das Blut des Sohnes." ¹⁴ Does the word "einst" refer to the past or to the future? Does it refer to the sacrifice of Isaac, or does it refer to the future sacrifice of Christ? Mann probably is pointing to both offerings. He is also recalling Jacob's inability to sacrifice Joseph, as stated in a

¹¹ Mark 15:5.

¹² Lesser, p. 63.

¹³ Mann, Joseph und seine Brüder, p. 1425.

¹⁴ Ibid., p. 651.

passage closely preceding the one just quoted: "Gott forderte vom Vater das Opfer des Sohnes, - von dem Weichen, der schaudernd bekannt hatte, dass er 'es nicht vermöchte.'" ¹⁵ When Jacob is reprimanded by Elizier for raging against God over the loss of Joseph, he screams: "Hat Gott seinen einzigen Sohn dahingeben müssen ... oder ich?" ¹⁶ This is again a reference to Jesus.

¹⁵ Mann, Joseph und seine Brüder, p. 649.

¹⁶ Ibid., p. 719.

Lesser, p. 63.

ISAAC'S DEATH

In the Old Testament story, there is no mention of Isaac's death.¹

Mann devotes one section of the chapter entitled "Urgeblök" to the death scene. While describing the dying Isaac, he alludes to the sacrifice of the lamb in the place of Isaac and to the sacrifice of the Son of Man, Jesus. Isaac, on his death bed, with his mind no longer clear, is described in the following manner: "...rede ... von 'sich' als von dem verwehrten Opfer und von dem Blute des Schafsbocks, das als sein, des wahrhaften Sohnes, Blut habe angesehen werden sollen, vergossen zur Sühne für alle."² The expressions "des wahrhaften Sohnes" and "vergossen zur Sühne für alle" allude to the New Testament. Later, Mann writes: "Einen Gott soll man schlachten, lallte er Isaac ...,"³ and closely following this one reads: "Siehe, es ist geschlachtet worden ... der Vater und das Tier an des Menschen Statt und des Sohnes, und wir haben gegessen. Aber wahrlich, ich sage euch,

¹Ferdinand Lion, Thomas Mann in seiner Zeit (Zürich und Leipzig, 1935), pp. 171-175.

Lesser, pp. 58-59.

²Mann, Joseph und seine Brüder, pp. 204-205.

³Ibid., p. 205.

es wird geschlachtet werden der Mensch und der Sohn, statt des Tieres und an Gottes Statt, und aber werdet ihr essen." ⁴ In this passage, Mann points back to earlier times when the ram⁵ was considered god, and forward to the time when the Son of Man would be sacrificed. Isaac's previous statement, "Einen Gott soll man schlachten," refers to "der Mensch und der Sohn." The association with the New Testament is stressed by the use of the expression: "Aber wahrlich, ich sage euch."

Jesus' death is described by St. Mark: Mark 15:37: "Aber Jesus schrie laut und verschied." The Gospel according to St. Matthew reads similarly: Matthew 27:50: "Aber Jesus schrie abermal laut und verschied." Mann draws a parallel to Jesus' death when he describes the dying Isaac, who feels himself to be partly the sacrificed ram, as follows: "Dann blökte er noch einmal

⁴Mann, Joseph und seine Brüder, p. 205.

⁵"The Thebans and all other Egyptians who worshipped the Theban god Ammon held rams to be sacred, and would not sacrifice them. But once a year at the festival of Ammon they killed a ram, skinned it, and clothed the image of the god in the skin. Then they mourned over the ram and buried it in a sacred tomb. ...the ram in this case was simply the beast-god of Thebes ... In other words, the ram was Ammon himself. It was killed, therefore, not as a sacrifice to Ammon, but as the god himself. ..." See Sir James Frazer, The New Golden Bough, ed. Dr. Theodor H. Gaster (New York, 1959), entry "Ram."

naturgetreu und verschied." ⁶ In this description, Mann's irony is unrestrained; he humanizes the lofty figure of one of the three fathers of the Hebrew religion, Isaac, and parodies the death scene of Jesus. He may, however, at the same time wish to remind the reader of the fact that myth, nature, and religion were interwoven in early undogmatic Judaism, the forerunner of Christianity.

⁶ Mann, Joseph und seine Brüder, p. 205.

HOLY COMMUNION AND EUCHARIST

The meal scene following the sale of Joseph¹ further alludes to the New Testament. The idea of forgiveness pervades, as it does also at the time of the Eucharist: Matthew 26:28: "...das ist mein Blut des neuen Testaments, welches vergossen wird für viele zur Vergebung der Sünden."

In Mann's version, this meal celebrating the sale, which is also Joseph's last repast with his brothers, is the first at which there is a feeling of friendship between the brothers. They no longer hate Joseph since now they do not feel he is a danger to them. They realize that their atrocities were committed more out of jealousy for Jacob's love than out of hatred of Joseph. Removing Joseph from the scene does not solve their problem; they will not receive the love they wish from Jacob. Their feelings toward Joseph have changed; they are kindly disposed toward him. Joseph, on his part, having already forgiven his brothers and having admitted his own guilt in the matter, leaves his brothers voluntarily. Jesus, too, faces death willingly and partakes of the last supper with his disciples.² Joseph might have

¹Cf. this thesis, pp. 39-42.

²See this thesis, p. 30.

objected to Dan's and Judah's speeches at the meal with the Ishmaelites, but he remains silent. He leaves willingly, primarily because he believes he is destined to follow a different way of life, but also because he realizes the gulf between himself and his brothers is too great to bridge. He steps out of their lives so that they may go back to the father and live peacefully. He forgives them their cruelties: "Arme Brüder! was mussten sie ausgestanden haben, bis dass sie sich verzweiflungsvoll an des Vaters Lamm vergriffen und es tatsächlich in die Grube geworfen hatten! In welche Lage hatten sie sich damit gebracht, - von seiner [Joseph's] eigenen zu schweigen, die freilich hoffnungslos war, wie er sich schauernd eingestand. ...desto verwunderlicher mag es scheinen, dass das Grauen vor dem eigenen Schicksal in seiner Seele Raum liess für Mitleid mit seinen Mördern."³

Hence, the compassion Joseph shows for his murderers in the midst of his own sufferings, the reference to himself as a lamb, "des Vaters Lamm," the use of the word "father" in the absolute construction, and the word "Grube" offer allusions to the New Testament.

Mann touches upon the argument between Luther and

³Mann, Joseph und seine Brüder, p. 639.

Zwingli as to whether the wine which is used during Holy Communion is actually the blood of Christ or simply a symbol of His blood. About the blood-stained cloth which is brought to Jacob to prove Joseph's death, Mann says: "Dass aber Jaakob das Blut des Tieres notwendig und unwidersprechlich für Josephs Blut halten musste, wirkte auch wieder auf Joseph zurück und hob in seinen Augen den Unterschied zwischen dem 'Dies ist mein Blut' und dem 'Dies bedeutet mein Blut' praktisch auf. Jaakob hielt ihn für tot; und da er's unwidersprechlicherweise tat - war Joseph also tot oder nicht? Er war es." ⁴

Mann here parodies the quarrel between Luther and Zwingli. The nature of that quarrel as explained by H. Grass in Die Religion in Geschichte und Gegenwart... was that Luther maintained: "An Gottes und Christi Wort darf nicht gedeutelt werden, die Gnadenmittel dürfen nicht spiritualisiert und subjektiviert werden, weil dadurch die Heilsgewissheit gefährdet wird." ⁵ Zwingli, on the other hand, insisted that: "'Gottes Geist ist frei und wäre gefesselt, wenn man ihn an die Sakramente bände. Also sind die Sakramente Zeichen oder Riten, durch die der Mensch der Kirche

⁴Mann, Joseph und seine Brüder, p. 746.

⁵Die Religion in Geschichte und Gegenwart... ed. Kurt Galling (Tübingen, 1957), see entry "Abendmahl." Henceforth cited as Die Religion in Geschichte und Gegenwart.

kundgibt, dass er ein Kandidat oder Streiter Gottes sei...'. "⁶

The quarrel between Luther and Zwingli is often referred to as a quarrel about "Sein und Bedeuten."

Mann wrote on the topic of "Sein und Bedeuten" as early as in 1926 in a letter to Ernst Bertram, saying that Joseph's contemporaries were little prone to distinguish clearly between: "Sein und Bedeuten.... Über diesen Unterschied zu streiten, wurde man erst 3000 Jahre später 'reif'." ⁷ By using the word "reif" in quotation marks, Mann seems to give evidence of his feelings toward the battle between the German and Swiss theologians.

⁶Galling, Die Religion in Geschichte und Gegenwart, see entry "Abendmahl."

⁷Thomas Mann, Thomas Mann an Ernest Bertram, Briefe aus den Jahren 1910-1955 (Pfullingen, 1960), p. 155.

RESURRECTION

Non-Israelitic influences on the concept of resurrection have been sought in the Canaanitic and Phoenician cultures, which deal with the concept of mother earth and the idea of a dying and reawakening deity. These people, however, did not believe in a single momentous resurrection, but in the annual death and re-awakening of the vegetation. This led to a belief in the resurrection of the gods, but it was never extended to include man.

The origin of a belief in resurrection of man came from the realization that Yahweh has power over life and death. The terms "hineinführen ins Totenreich, aus dem Totenreich heraufbringen," and "vor der Grube bewahren," are often used in the Old Testament, implying a release from the kingdom of the dead and a re-establishing of life. At times, the overcoming of a great difficulty is described as "Auferstehung von den Toten." The conviction that someone (the Messiah) will be resurrected after much suffering and death is definitely emphasized.¹

Belief in resurrection appears only very late in the Old Testament. Isaiah 24:27 is generally considered the oldest record

¹Bibel-Lexikon, see entry "Auferstehung."

of such a belief. According to this statement, the people believed Yahweh would enlarge the number of his followers through the resurrection of those who believed in him. This was to happen at the end of the world and after the enemy was conquered.²

A more convincing proof of a belief in resurrection is evidenced in Daniel 12:2, according to which one expects that "...Viele, so unter der Erde schlafen liegen, werden aufwachen: etliche zum ewigen Leben, etliche zu ewiger Schmach und Schande."³

In the New Testament, the idea of resurrection is accepted by all Jews except the Sadducees. Jesus speaks about resurrection and implies a general resurrection when referring to the Day of Judgment. In John 11:25, Christ designates himself as "die Auferstehung und das Leben." John 11:25-26 reads: "Ich bin die Auferstehung und das Leben. Wer an mich glaubet, der wird leben, ob er gleich stirbt; und wer da lebet und glaubet an mich, der wird nimmermehr sterben."

Three times Jesus prophesies his resurrection on the third day. The disciples at first did not believe the news of Christ's

²Bibel-Lexikon, see entry "Auferstehung."

³Ibid., see entry "Auferstehung."

resurrection. Paul refers to the Old Testament prophecy concerning the resurrection on the third day, 1 Corinthians 15:3-4: "Denn ich habe euch zuvörderst gegeben, was ich auch empfangen habe: dass Christus gestorben sei für unsre Sünden nach der Schrift, und dass er begraben sei, und dass er auferstanden sei am dritten Tage nach der Schrift." The Creed of the Nicene Council and the Apostles' Creed, of course, mention Christ's resurrection. The Nicene Creed reads: "... Welcher um uns Menschen und um unser Seligkeit willen von Himmel kommen ist, und leibhaftig worden durch den heiligen Geist von der Jungfrauen Maria und Mensch worden; auch für uns gekreuziget unter Pontio Pilato, gelitten und begraben; und am dritten Tage auferstanden nach der Schrift, und ist aufgefahren gen Himmel, und sitzt zur Rechten des Vaters...."⁴ The Apostles' Creed reads: "... Gelitten unter Pontio Pilato, gekreuziget, gestorben und begraben. Niedergefahren zur Höllen. Am dritten Tage auferstanden von den Todten. Aufgefahren gen Himmel. Sitzend zur Rechten Gottes, des allmächtigen Vaters...."⁵

With respect to the Joseph story, the Old Testament states: Genesis 37:28: "Und da die Midianiter, die Kaufleute,

⁴The text is taken from the version in Müller, Die symbolischen Bücher.

⁵The text is taken from the version in Müller, Die symbolischen Bücher.

vorüberreisten, zogen sie ihn heraus aus der Grube und verkauften ihn den Ismaelitern um zwanzig Silberlinge; die brachten ihn nach Ägypten. " Thus, when Joseph was pulled from the pit, there is no mention of death and reawakening, of overcoming a great difficulty, or of a change within Joseph. There is no description at all of the hero while he is in the pit, nor is the length of time indicated which he spent there.⁶

Thomas Mann devotes a whole chapter to Joseph in the well. He makes several allusions to the New Testament. For instance: "Aber die Vorstellung des Sterntodes, der Verdunkelung und des Hinabsinkens des Sohnes, dem zur Wohnung die Unterwelt wird, schloss diejenige ein von Wiedererscheinen, Neulicht und Auferstehung; und darin rechtfertigte Josephs natürliche Lebenshoffnung sich zum Glauben."⁷ In this passage, Mann uses the words "Sterntod, Verdunkelung," and "Hinabsinken," which are mythical in style and refer to natural phenomena. One would expect these words to be followed by "Sonne" instead of "Sohn" and similarly, in the parallel construction of "Wiedererscheinen,"

⁶"The worship of Adonis in Egypt, Greece, and elsewhere was associated with the rhythm of the seasons, with nature's death in winter and its rebirth in spring." See R. Hinton Thomas, Thomas Mann, The Mediation of Art (Oxford, 1956), p. 119.

⁷Mann, Joseph und seine Brüder, p. 650.

"Neulicht, " one would not expect "Auferstehung. " Continuing, Mann places "natürliche Lebenshoffnung, " which ties in with the concepts of nature used earlier in the sentence, next to "Glaube. " The deliberate combination of the words "Sohn," "Auferstehung, " and "Glaube" in one sentence which otherwise deals with mythical concepts, indicates a reference to the New Testament. The mythical words "Sterntod, " "Verdunkelung, " and "Hinabsinken, " because of their context in this sentence, can also be understood to refer to Jesus' death. Instead of adhering to the Old Testament tale, Mann compares his hero to Jesus. Another example of the similarity Mann establishes between his hero and Jesus can be seen from the following comparison, in which Mann's Joseph speaks to Benjamin about his own grave:⁸ "Das Grab ist freilich ein ernstes Loch, tief und dunkel; aber seine Kraft zu halten, ist wenig bedeutend.⁹ Es ist leer von Natur, musst du wissen, - leer ist die Höhle, wenn sie der Beute wartet, und kommst du hin, wenn sie sie eingenommen, so ist sie wieder leer, - der Stein ist abgewälzt."¹⁰ Note that Mann uses the phrase, "der Stein ist abgewälzt. " This same

⁸Wolff, p. 89.

⁹Mayer, p. 216.

¹⁰Mann, Joseph und seine Brüder, p. 1861.

expression describes Jesus' grave, Mark 16:4: "Und sie sahen dahin und wurden gewahr, dass der Stein abgewälzt war: denn er war sehr gross." Luke 24:2 reads: "Sie fanden aber den Stein abgewälzt von dem Grabe...." Mann describes Joseph after he had recovered from the pit: "Wirklich hatte er Gelegenheit gehabt, sich zu säubern und zu salben... und die Redensart 'sich wie neugeboren fühlen' traf danach genauer auf ihn zu als vielleicht jemals auf irgendein Menschenkind seit Erschaffung der Welt bis heute - denn war er nicht wirklich neugeboren?" ¹¹

Mann goes so far as to speak about "das Erstehen Josephs." He writes: "...die drei schwarzen Tage..., die dem Erstehen Josephs vorangegangen waren." ¹²

The town of Bethlehem is mentioned in Mann's Joseph story in connection with resurrection. Early in his book he notes that there, at Beth-Lahama, the "...siebentägige Klagen um den Wahrhaften Sohn, den Zerissenen" ¹³ takes place. Later, he talks about the cult "des Erstandenen und des Ernährers" at Beth-

¹¹Mann, Joseph und seine Brüder, p. 744.

¹²Ibid., p. 745.

¹³Ibid., p. 10.

Lachem. "¹⁴

Mann has death and birth take place close to Bethlehem. The death of Jacob's most beloved Rachel and the birth of his son, whom he called Ben-Oni, which can mean "Sohn des Todes,"¹⁵ are allusions to death and resurrection. Mann uses the expression "den Stein wälzen," when describing Rachel's grave.¹⁶

¹⁴Mann, Joseph und seine Brüder, p. 425.

¹⁵Ibid., p. 429.

¹⁶Ibid., p. 430.

SAVIOUR

In the next two quotations, Mann points to differences between his Joseph and Jesus. Joseph says to his brothers:

"...dass ich Israel speise mitsamt den Freunden in Hungersnot. Das ist zwar eine leiblich wichtige, aber ganz einfache, praktische Sache und ist weiter kein Hosiannah dabei. Denn euer Bruder ist kein Gottesheld und kein Bote geistlichen Heils, sondern ist nur Volkswirt...."¹

Joseph is not a "Gottesheld" or a "Bote geistlichen Heils." The concept "Gottesheld" and "Bote geistlichen Heils" refer clearly to the idea of saviour in Jesus, and by denying Joseph these qualities, Mann emphasizes his hero's human quality. Joseph refers to himself as a "Volkswirt" and as having accomplished "eine ganz einfache, praktische Sache." This word "Volkswirt" was first used in the year 1875,² and stands in striking contrast to the old biblical words "Gottesheld, Bote geistlichen Heils," and "Hosiannah." Mann's hero is an "Ernähr^{er}." The fourth volume of the tetralogy is entitled Joseph der Ernähr^{er}.

¹Mann, Joseph und seine Brüder, p. 1889.

Hamburger, p. 94.

²Deutsches Wörterbuch von Jacob Grimm and Wilhelm Grimm, (Leipzig, 1854-1954).

All the titles Pharaoh bestows upon Joseph connote "die Erhaltung des Lebens" and can be reduced to the one concept of "Der Ernährer."³

During the long years of famine, Joseph does indeed save the Egyptians, but Mann emphasizes that his hero is not a saviour but a provider.

Another illustration of contrast is found in Mann's word: "Denn für Brot sagt man 'Recht schönen Dank' und nicht 'Hosiannah'."⁴ Hosanna (Hebrew: ḥōšî'ānā) means "hilf doch," and, as used in Psalm 118:25, is a plea for continuing help after a victory. This plea eventually became a joyful call honoring God and/or the king. Jesus was greeted with this call on his entrance into Jerusalem.⁵ Mark 11:9-10 reads: "Und die vorne vorgingen und die hernach folgten, schrieen und sprachen: Hosianna! Gelobt sei, der da kommt in dem Namen des Herrn! Gelobt sei, das Reich unsers Vaters David, das da kommt in dem Namen des Herrn! Hosianna in der Höhe!" The two passages in Thomas Mann's

³ Mann, Joseph und seine Brüder, p. 1669.

⁴ Ibid., p. 1889.

⁵ Bibel-Lexikon, see entry "Hosanna."

story - "...euer Bruder ist ... nur Volkswirt" and "...für Brot sagt man... nicht 'Hosiannah' " - have a humanizing effect on the idea of Joseph's being the saviour of his brothers.⁶

On this same occasion, when Joseph explains his past to his brothers, Mann uses a phrase from the Old Testament story and modifies it slightly, Genesis 45:7: "Aber Gott hat mich vor euch her gesandt, dass er euch übrig behalte auf Erden und euer Leben errette durch eine grosse Errettung." Mann's version reads: "Er [Gott] hat mich vor euch hergesandt, euch zum Ernährer, - und hat eine schöne Errettung veranstaltet...."⁷ This change from "errette durch eine grosse Errettung" to "eine schöne Errettung veranstaltet" minimizes the significance of the "Errettung." The expression "schöne Errettung veranstaltet" seems to contain a note of irony, because the word "veranstalten" - "set up, organize" - is most frequently used as in "to organize an exhibition" and sounds extremely strange if used in context with salvation.

Another allusion to the concept of saviour, who carries the sin of man, is Cain's reply to God's inquiry about Abel. God

⁶Lesser, p. 54.

⁷Mann, Joseph und seine Brüder, p. 1888.

asks Cain what he has done to his brother, and Mann has Cain answer: "Allerdings habe ich meinen Bruder erschlagen, es ist traurig genug. Wer aber hat mich geschaffen wie ich bin, eifersüchtig["] bis zu dem Grade, dass sich gegebenen Falles meine Gebärde["] verstellt und ich nicht mehr weiss, was ich tue? Bist Du etwa kein eifersüchtiger Gott, und hast Du mich nicht nach Deinem Bilde erschaffen? Wer hat den bösen Trieb["] in mich gelegt zu der Tat, die ich unleugbar getan? Du sagst, dass Du allein trägst die ganze Welt und willst unsere Sünde["] nicht tragen?"⁸

Mann makes even a more definite reference to the Christian concept of saviour, God incarnate who takes the sin of the world upon himself, when he has Joseph think: "Das ist es eben, dachte er bei sich, dass Gott alles tut, uns aber das Gewissen davon gegeben hat, und dass wir schuldig werden vor ihm, weil wir's für ihn werden. Der Mensch trägt Gottes Schuld, und es wäre nicht mehr als billig, wenn Gott sich eines Tages entschliesse, unsere Schuld zu tragen. Wie er das anfangen wird, der Heilig-Schuldfremde, ist ungewiss. Meiner Ansicht nach müsste er geradezu Mensch werden zu diesem Zweck."⁹

⁸Mann, Joseph und seine Brüder, p. 1436.

⁹Ibid., pp. 1108-1109.

CONCLUSIONS

The purpose of this thesis is to contribute to our knowledge of Thomas Mann's attitude toward Christianity as illustrated by his use of Christian concepts in the Joseph story. The preceding pages show that Mann draws several parallels to the New Testament, yet parodies some Christian motifs, and contrasts the idea of saviour with that of provider. Furthermore, Mann implies that some concepts generally considered as Christian were known also to other civilizations. In addition to drawing a variety of comparisons to the New Testament, Thomas Mann offers psychological reasons for his hero's behaviour and beliefs in connection with some of the fundamental Christian concepts reviewed in this study. The psychological explanations help reveal Mann's position toward Christianity, and they will be considered in this chapter.

First, Thomas Mann's parallels, parodies, and contrast with respect to the New Testament will be discussed.

The parallels Mann draws from the New Testament concern the following themes. Mann implies that Joseph is "des Vaters Lamm," which parallels the idea of "Gottes Lamm." Both Joseph and Jesus identify themselves with a pattern - Joseph with the myth of the mangled and arisen god, Tammuz-Osiris; and Jesus with the Servant of the Lord as prophesied by Isaiah. Both Joseph

and Jesus believe in resurrection. Joseph behaved "wie ein Lamm, das vor seinem Scherer verstummt" at the time of the sale, and while he was being judged by Potiphre. These words are almost an exact quotation from Isaiah in regard to the Servant of the Lord. The description also refers to Jesus' silence before his trial. While in the pit, Joseph forgives his brothers their hate and cruelty. While on the cross, Jesus says: "Vater, vergib ihnen, denn sie wissen nicht, was sie tun."¹ Joseph explains to Benjamin that a grave does not have the power to hold its prey. He says that when one approaches the grave "der Stein ist abgewälzt." This phrase is taken directly from the New Testament description of Jesus' grave. The idea of forgiveness at the time of the meal celebrating Joseph's sale is a parallel to the forgiveness at the time of Holy Communion. Both Joseph and Jesus arise on the third day. Thomas Mann is original in applying to the Joseph figure these parallels to New Testament events. The Old Testament Joseph story mentions none of the parallels.

Mann parodies a few Christian motifs. His description of Isaac's death is a parody on Jesus' death. His humorous treatment of Judah's kiss and the sale of Joseph is a parody on Judas' kiss and the betrayal of Jesus.

¹Luke 23:34.

The author's comments on "Sein und Bedeuten" make light of the quarrel over the exact nature of the Eucharist. Mann's change of the Old Testament text referring to Joseph's accomplishments from "errette durch eine grosse Errettung" to "hat eine schöne Errettung veranstaltet" is a parody in the same humorous spirit, and it implies the saviour idea.

Mann contrasts Joseph with Jesus on one very important point. Joseph is not a "Gottesheld" or a "Bote geistlichen Heils," but simply a "Volkswirt," not a saviour, but an "Ernährer."

Mann implies that three Christian concepts - trinity, virgin birth, resurrection - were well known to the Egyptians, the Hebrews, and the Canaanites in the city of Hebron.

A closer examination of the Christian themes which he incorporates into his story, of those he parodies, and of the one he contrasts, may shed some light on his religious feelings. Mann may believe the traits which he has attributed to his hero and which are common to Jesus are desirable and necessary qualities for leading a civilized life and that these qualities - belief in resurrection, forgiveness, and the conviction "...dass ein Leben und Geschehen ohne den Echtheitsausweis höherer Wirklichkeit, welches nicht auf Heilig-Bekanntem fusst und sich darauf stützt... überhaupt kein Leben und Geschehen ist..." - fill a psychological

need, and constitute the great and lasting qualities of the Hebrew and Christian religions. They are the means by which Mann's Joseph rises to a position enabling him to provide for and serve mankind.

Mann's parodies of certain aspects of the New Testament may concern events which he thinks are not essential to religion, but which are really only part of what he considers the legendary story of Christ and which thus should be treated lightly. The events parodied are the betrayal of Christ, Judas' kiss, the Gospels' exact description of Jesus' death, the actual nature of the Eucharist, and the Old Testament emphasis on Joseph's achievement.

The one important aspect in which Mann contrasts Joseph with Jesus is in the concept of the Saviour. The author may be simply adhering to the Old Testament myth in which Joseph is, of course, not the saviour of mankind, or it may be that Mann believes his hero should be a model for man, since it is not necessary to give a model for a divine person. On the other hand, it may indicate that Mann does not believe in the Saviour. Thus, when one examines the parallels, parodies, and the one contrast, one can conclude that Thomas Mann believes that forgiveness of others, faith in resurrection, and the conviction that the individual's fate is of importance to the divine are the fundamental qualities in Christianity, and the qualities he extols. On the other hand, he

does not seem to accept the idea of a divine saviour, nor does he take seriously the betrayal of Jesus, the literal account of His death, and the exact substance of the Eucharist.

As was mentioned in the Introduction, Mann has made no direct public statement of his opinion on Christianity. In an address honoring Freud, he mentions Jesus while enumerating some great people whom he believes have followed a mythical pattern. In a letter to Dr. Fiedler, he asks whether historical Christianity is not more important than the historical Jesus, but leaves the question unanswered. The most private account published of Mann's thoughts on Christianity reveal that he believes the story of Jesus' life has been imbued with religious culture. These are the three exceptional occasions on which Mann expresses to some extent his views on Christianity. Myth and psychology, however, interest Mann greatly, and he states his fact repeatedly.

The author's knowledge of psychology is evidenced in the detailed description of Joseph's reflections while in the pit. Joseph gains insight into his own personality. He understands and is sympathetic with the feelings that motivated his brothers' actions toward him. He sees clearly the situation at hand, and he is able to adjust to the new conditions. Mann's descriptions of Joseph's

reflections answer the questions as to why Joseph is thrown into the pit, why he can forgive his brothers, why he is silent at the time of the sale, and why he chooses to go to Egypt instead of returning to his father. Other descriptions of Joseph's reasoning and feelings explain his belief in resurrection. Joseph's answer "Ich bin's" to the governor of the prison at Zawi-Re can be interpreted as being prompted by the very human desire to be treated as a special person. It is necessary for Joseph to differentiate himself from ordinary people at that particular moment, or he would be thrown into the prison and forgotten. The only means he has to attract attention is by his appearance and his answer, as any questioning or arguing on his part would be out of place. This lofty answer may be prompted by sheer necessity, and can be considered as a parody on Jesus' assertion of "Ich bin's," or simply as an additional reference to Jesus. The next occasion on which Joseph uses this phrase is when he reveals himself to his brothers in Egypt. This time it is not necessary for Joseph to give the impression of having a special rapport with the divine. Being Pharaoh's minister, he is, indeed, a very extraordinary person. Although he retains an allusion to his status of being closely associated with the divine, he wishes to emphasize his position as brother, son, and provider. He does not lay claim to

divinity, as Christ the Saviour did.² Throughout the story, Mann portrays a Christ-like character in many respects, but at the same time he paints a figure which seems human and familiar to the reader.

This is in keeping with Mann's attempt to humanize myth by means of psychology.³ By drawing Joseph in many ways similar to Jesus, Mann provides psychological explanations also for Jesus' behavior and thereby makes the story of Jesus more human.

In Joseph und seine Brüder, Mann retells a Hebrew myth and uses concepts which are generally viewed only as belonging to Christian dogmatic belief. Thus, these concepts regain their mythical quality. For instance, he speaks of resurrection, one of the main dogmatic concepts of Christianity, in mythical terms: "Wiedererscheinen, Neulicht und Auferstehung." The concepts of virgin birth, trinity, and resurrection already had a mythological basis. This historical fact is brought out by Mann when he mentions Hathor and Isis in connection with virgin birth, and Elohim, Atum-Re-Horakhte of On, and Tammuz-Osiris with reference to a divine trinity.

²John, 14-16.

³Cf. this thesis, p. 10.

See also Lesser, pp. 204-209.

From Mann's attempt to permeate dogmatic concepts with their original mythical quality, it is apparent that he does not like dogma. Other indications of the author's aversion to dogma are the possible parody on Jesus' assertion "Ich bin's," the parodies on themes Mann thinks are not essential to religion, and the contrast he makes to the saviour idea. The qualities he does think important - the forgiving of others, the belief that the individual's fate is of importance to the divine, and faith in resurrection - have validity because of the psychological need they fulfill, rather than the fact that they are incorporated in a dogma. Furthermore, the hero of the book is certainly not dogmatic. He leaves Jacob and his immediate influence and takes with him only those spiritual essentials which are common to both him and Jesus. He voluntarily enters the kingdom of the dead,⁴ precisely that land against which his father had warned him. From Mann's comments on Joseph in the Neue Freie Presse, in 1928, which are cited in the Introduction to this thesis, it is apparent that Mann does not wish his hero to be dogmatic. He speaks of Joseph's "Psychologie des Ich" as "eine Art von lebenswürdiger religiöser Hochstapelei."

Mann does not publicly state that he is against dogma. On a

⁴A name for Egypt, frequently used by Mann in his Joseph tetralogy.

few occasions, however, he points out that he disapproves of the way in which the Fascists used myth.⁵ In a lecture published in Neue Studien, Mann states that myth has fallen into disgrace through fascistic use, and that he would like to withdraw mythology from political context. In the Joseph story, Mann deals with religious concepts rather than political ones, but from quotations cited in the Introduction to this thesis, it is evident that Mann associates religion and politics closely with one another. For example, in Pariser Rechenschaft, Mann associates the ideas of the powers of "der Tiefe, die heilig, und von denen des Lichtes, die göttlich seien" and the "Gottesunmittelbarkeit des Ich" with "Demokratie" and "Kultur."⁶ In the article printed in 1928, in the Neue Freie Presse, Mann associates his hero's religious attitudes with his political career in Egypt.⁷ In the introduction to an English version of the Joseph tetralogy, Mann writes that Joseph's last god-mask is the mask of an American Hermes. He compares Joseph's religious qualities with his "magic administration" in Egypt.

While writing the Joseph tetralogy, Mann stood under Goethe's

⁵Cf. this thesis, p. 12.

⁶Cf. this thesis, p. 3.

⁷Cf. this thesis, p. 8.

influence. It is, therefore, important to know what he believed to be Goethe's stand on religion and politics. In a lecture held first at Oxford and repeated at Uppsala in 1949, Mann implies that Goethe, too, associated politics and religion with one another.

He says the following with respect to Goethe's views on religion:

"Er vertraut auf das obere Wohlwollen, auch wenn, oder gerade wenn, er's sich nicht im bergenden Hafen eines Glaubens bequem macht, sondern in schutzloser Freiheit, auf eigene Hand, sein Bestes tut."⁸ From this quotation, it is apparent that Mann be-

lieved Goethe was not dogmatic in his attitude toward religion.

Later in this same lecture, Mann refers to Goethe's views on

politics: "Die Aufmerksamkeit auf Veränderungen in Bilde der Wahrheit und des Rechten und der intelligente Gehorsam, der ihnen Rechnung trägt, - das ist eigentlich seine politische Religion."⁹

Mann evidently believes Goethe is not dogmatic in his political views and that he associated religion with politics. He goes so far as to speak of Goethe's belief as a "politische Religion."

In a letter to Karl Kerényi, dated 1936, Mann expresses his own feelings on religion which are strikingly similar to those he

⁸ Thomas Mann, Goethe und die Demokratie (Uppsala, 1951), p. 19. Henceforth cited as Mann, Goethe und die Demokratie.

⁹ Mann, Goethe und die Demokratie, p. 23.

attributed to Goethe: "Religion als Gegenteil der Nachlässigkeit und Vernachlässigung, als achtgeben, beachten, bedenken,

Gewissenhaftigkeit, als ein behutsames Verhalten, ja als metus [Furcht] und schliesslich als sorgend achtsame Empfindlichkeit gegenüber den Regungen des Weltgeistes...."¹⁰ Mann, like

Goethe, does not believe in a dogmatic religion. From Mann's statements, one can infer that he is against dogma in both religion and politics.¹¹

In his comments on the Joseph tetralogy, Mann says that he would like to take myth out of the hands of the Fascists and "humanize" it. In this work, however, he seems to "humanize" Christian dogma.

Now the question might be raised as to why Mann did not state this intention when speaking about the Joseph tetralogy. Why did he speak of politics instead of Christianity?

One plausible reason for Mann's not openly criticizing the church is that along with Goethe he felt the church had exerted

¹⁰Kerényi, p. 57.

"It is clear ... from the tone of Joseph that Mann's god is developing toward a goal more humanistic than dogmatically Christian." Hatfield, p. 117.

¹¹Hamburger, p. 148.

the one most civilizing influence on western Europe throughout the centuries, in spite of the intolerance and bigotry within the institution. In his lecture at Uppsala, Mann says the following about Goethe's relationship to Christianity: "Die sittigende Macht des Christentums ist es, die Goethe hervorkehrt, als er spät im Gespräch mit Eckermann sein Verhältnis zur Religion endgültig festlegt."¹²

A second possible reason for Mann's silence may be due to a purely practical consideration. Mann may have thought that in his political strivings, such as his fight against Fascism, the fanatic cult of the Arian race, and the cruelties committed against the Jews, he would be more successful had he the support of the Christian church, than if he alienated it. Although he disliked dogmatic belief in Christian religion, he was aware of the "humanizing" influence non-dogmatic Christian faith exerts.

¹² Mann, Goethe und die Demokratie, p. 20.

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